

LOST GOSPEL OF THE ANCIENTS

“And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.” — Galatians 3:8

What many preach today as *the Gospel* is only **half** of the message of salvation. An examination of this topic has proven that there is actually **good news** in a fuller sense than most Christians have ever dreamed! Now, in this *end time* of the Christian era, Bible research has revealed amazing clarity on this important doctrine. Discover the complete and harmonious Gospel message which many Christians have lost sight of.

In Galatians 3:8 the Apostle Paul makes an astounding statement: “... *foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall **all** nations be blessed.*” Yes, the Gospel message was presented to the faithful ancients of Old Testament times in a much more comprehensive form than most Christians appreciate today. At the core is the belief based upon this *Gospel preached to Abraham* — that Messiah will come and bless **all** humanity through Abraham’s descendants — *his seed*. This blessing will be extended to not only the living, but in addition, through resurrection, to all those who have died — *all!* What a beautiful Gospel — promising that all mankind will be blessed! Genesis 12:3, 22:15-18; Galatians 3:16, 29; Act 24:15

TRADITIONAL CHRISTIANITY VERSUS TRADITIONAL JUDAISM WHICH “GOSPEL” IS CORRECT?

The traditional Christian teaching of the Gospel advocates a **heavenly** resurrection, which is offered **only** to believers in Christ, while all others are condemned. The Old Testament is more compassionate and encompassing — including an opportunity of life for **all** right here **upon the earth**. The teachings of Judaism and traditional Christianity are both *partially correct*, but each viewpoint, *separately*, is incomplete.

Jesus, who was a Jew, never disputed the Gospel as preached to Abraham. Still, we must also acknowledge that Jesus taught

that only faithful Christians will go to heaven. This teaching of Jesus does not negate the Jewish hope of salvation. Judaism never learned about the Christian half of the Gospel, and Christianity

overlooked the Judaism half, but both of these expectations are true. By *rightly dividing the word of truth*, we learn that to accept the complete Gospel message we must accept the *entire* testimony of God’s Word.

THE COMPLETE GOSPEL

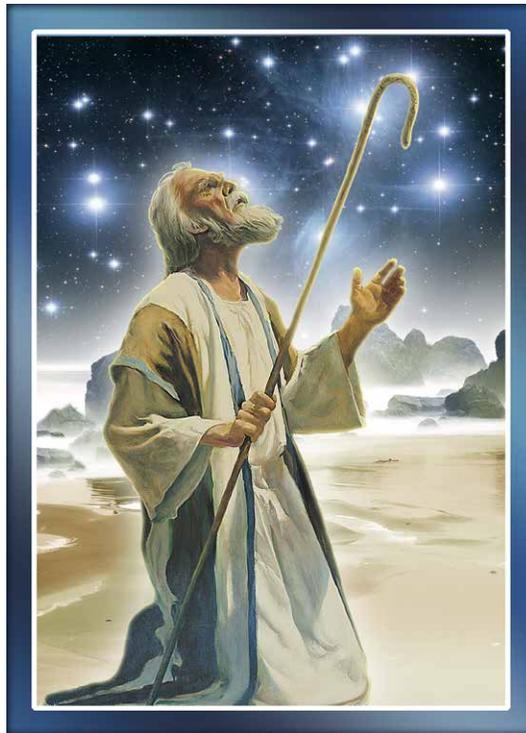
We have found that the Gospel in its entirety is summarized in God’s promise to Abraham: “...*I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore... and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed...*” (Genesis 22:18) Notice that it involves **two** distinct and separate parts: **1) Abraham’s seed**, and **2) all nations of earth**.

The Apostle Paul defines this *seed* of promise: “*If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.*” (Galatians 3:29) This

is the **key** to our understanding. It states that faithful Christians are counted by God as being Abraham’s *heavenly seed*. It also states that because of this they become *heirs according to the promise*. This promise was that *the heavenly seed* would bless *all others*. Thus, if faithful Christians are *the seed*, God’s eventual purpose for them is to **bless all the nations of the earth**, both the living and the dead. Herein is the harmony of the entire Gospel message: **1) those who go to heaven will 2) bless those here upon earth!**

TWO OPPORTUNITIES FOR SALVATION

Both halves of the Gospel are required for Scriptural harmony. Acts 15:14-17 clarifies this point: “*God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name [the heavenly seed or stars of heaven]... After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen*



down; and I will build again the ruins thereof [the earthly seed or sand upon the seashore], and I will set it up; that the residue of men [all the nations of the earth] might seek after the Lord...”

This scripture illustrates that God’s plan of salvation is in progressive stages. The **first stage** of the Gospel offers salvation now to the *heavenly seed* — true Christians who will comprise the Church. The **second stage** offers salvation through this *heavenly seed* to the remainder of mankind — *all the nations of the earth*. The first of these nations will be the *earthly seed* of Abraham, the Nation of Israel. Jesus confirms this truth in Luke 22:28-30: “Ye [the faithful disciples] are they which have continued with me... And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may... sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

Paul also mentions *two opportunities* for salvation in 1 Timothy 4:10 where he says “...we trust in the living God who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe.” It is clear that Paul still had in mind *the seed* and *all men* as being the *two parts* of the Gospel because he says that salvation is: **1)** for all men, and **2)** especially for those that believe.

The New Testament states that the resurrection of the dead will be a two stage process. The Church of Christ will receive the *first resurrection* to heaven. (1 Thessalonians 4:16, Revelation 20:6) The *second resurrection* to God’s kingdom on earth, will be accomplished by Christ and his Church when they raise the remainder of mankind from the grave to a period of education and then judgment. God “hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained [Christ]; whereof He hath given **assurance unto all men**, in that He hath raised him from the dead.” Acts 17:31

As death came by the first Adam, so life comes by Christ — the second Adam. Everything that mankind lost through being in the first Adam is to be restored to those who believe into the second Adam. “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ’s, at his coming.” (1 Corinthians 15:20-23, ASV) When awakened, with the advantage of an experience with evil — which Adam lacked — those who thankfully accept the redemption as God’s gift may continue to live everlastingly on the original condition of obedience. Perfect obedience will be required, and perfect desire to obey will be achieved under the righteous reign of the Prince of Peace.

This is the salvation offered to the world. Christ’s life, death and resurrection dispel the **erroneous** idea that God placed our race on trial for life with the alternative of eternal torture — whereas nothing of the kind is even hinted at in the original penalty. Death — not eternal torment — was the penalty for sin.

(Romans 6:23) As surely as Jesus died for **all**, **all** must receive the blessings and opportunities which he purchased with his own precious blood. Hence we should expect blessings in God’s Kingdom upon all those who have ever lived. It is because of God’s plan for their release from death that those in the grave are called *prisoners of hope*. Zechariah 9:11, 12

UNDERSTANDING BOTH HALVES OF GOSPEL BRINGS CLARITY

Enlightenment on the Gospel found in both the Old and New Testaments brings hope and sheds light on many frequently asked questions which are sent in to *BibleStudents.com*:

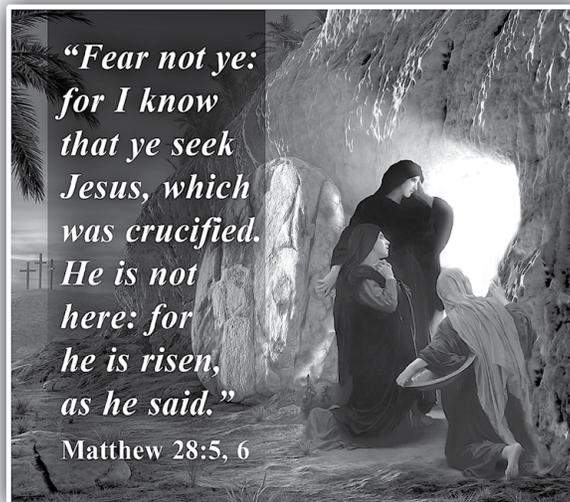
1. Why did God create the earth and mankind? God created intelligent beings, because one of His primary attributes is **love**. True love inspires a desire to give love and generates generosity. Therefore God formed the earth to be *inhabited* (Isaiah 45:18) by

perfect human beings who would love and serve Him freely and to whom He would freely give His blessings and life. This creation was *not in vain*. God will bring about harmony throughout all of His creation when His plan is complete. His word will “not return unto Him void but it shall accomplish that which He pleases...” Isaiah 55:11

2. What is God doing in the earth today? At present, Jehovah has one primary plan being carried out at two levels. His ultimate goal is to bring all who have ever lived into harmony with Him again. One part

of accomplishing this goal is to *permit* evil to have full sway in the earth for a relatively short time. Feeling acutely the painful results of evil in this life will be a powerful, lasting lesson which the world will never want to experience again in the *ages to come*. Ecclesiastes 1:13; 3:10, Ephesians 2:7

While this evil is being *permitted*, God is accomplishing the second object of his plan — developing the Church of Christ. Because the Jewish Nation did not answer the call to become part of Christ’s Church, God is now “visiting the Gentiles to call out a people for His name.” (Acts 15:14) These *called out people* are now experiencing a special testing which will prepare them to implement the resurrection of all others — to rule and teach in righteousness those who are resurrected. This *people for His name* will be those who have faithfully suffered with Christ. “For if we suffer [with Christ] we shall also reign with him...” These will be “priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” (Revelation 20:6) This *reigning* will be for the purpose of teaching and blessing all the families of the earth. This is the very reason why James says God is selecting a *people for His name*: that “after this... the residue of men might seek after the Lord.” (Acts 15:13-18) During Christ’s reign of righteousness, mankind will be capable of making a free and intelligent choice between good and evil — having experienced both.



“Fear not ye:
for I know
that ye seek
Jesus, which
was crucified.
He is not
here: for
he is risen,
as he said.”

Matthew 28:5, 6

3. Have God's plans for salvation failed? The Gospel of salvation is working out in process of time. Notice the elements of *time* in these two scriptures:

- When the angel appeared to the shepherds at Jesus' birth, he declared: "*Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*" Luke 2:10-11
- Acts 3:19 clarifies that God "*shall send Jesus Christ [at his second advent], which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things [all that was lost in Adam], which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.*"

These two scriptures summarize the timing of salvation — *good news* that God's original plan *has not failed*, and that humanity *will* be restored to life and receive God's blessings eternally on a perfected earth. This is all to be accomplished by the promised **seed in due time**. 1 Timothy 2:6

4. Will the faithful ancients of old be resurrected to heaven or earth?

John the Baptist died before Jesus gave his life for the world. Jesus stated in Matthew 11:11 "*among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.*"

Jesus' own words are stating that John will not be included in the **first** or *heavenly resurrection*. (Revelation 20:6) John instead will have part in a *future* resurrection right here on the earth.

In fact, before Jesus "*gave a ransom for all,*" the ancient faithful were not offered, nor did they ever expect or receive, a spiritual resurrection. They all looked forward to the Kingdom of God here upon the earth, with Jerusalem as its capital and Israel (*Abraham's earthly seed*) as the Nation from which all blessings would flow to other people. Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:2-4

Acts 7:5 clarifies this point that the promise made to Abraham was earthly: God "*promised that He would give it [the Land] to him for a possession.*" Although this promise is even now in process of fulfillment to Abraham's natural descendants, Israel — yet Abraham has not received the promise himself: "*... none inheritance in it [the Land], no, not so much as to set his foot on.*" Abraham will return from the grave in the earthly resurrection to receive the inheritance that was promised to him.

This blessing cannot be fulfilled until the still higher, heavenly promises concerning Christ and his Church are fulfilled. The Apostle Paul states of Abraham and all those of faith who lived before Christ: "*These all died in faith, not having received [the fulfillment of] the promise, God having provided some better thing for us [the true Church], that they without us should not be made perfect.*" Hebrews 11:13, 39, 40

5. Why will the Jews be saved? Israel as a Nation has forever lost the opportunity of becoming *the Church* — the *Bride* of Christ; but Israel *never* lost the opportunity for atonement with

God in the earthly Kingdom. (Romans 11:25, 26) It is through the *natural seed* of Abraham — the Jew — that God plans to provide access to His New Covenant for the rest of mankind. Jeremiah 31:31-34

Israel is now reestablished as a Nation among nations. Soon, through the resurrected ancient faithful, Israel will be the Nation from whom the blessings will flow worldwide — for it is written that "*Many nations shall come and say; Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths, for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*" (Micah 4:2-4) Likewise, Zechariah said, "*Many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem and to pray before the Lord... In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold out of all*

languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." Zechariah 8:22, 23

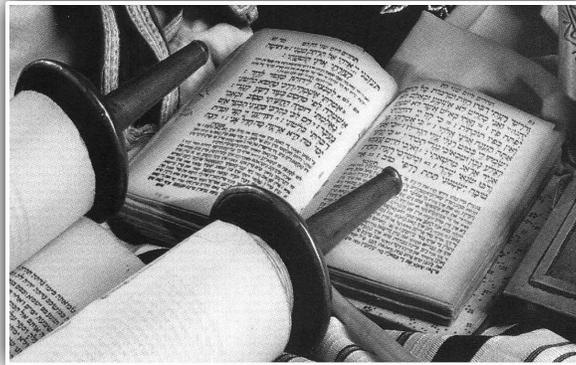
6. What about those who are not Christians or Jews — are they lost forever?

Certainly not! The mission of the Church is to bless all nations and kindreds and people and tongues! "*The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek*

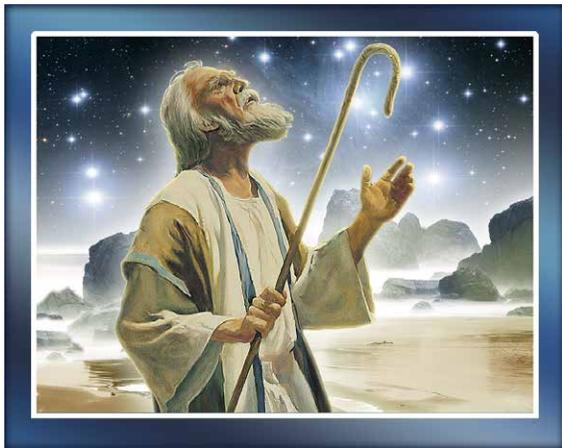
him: your heart shall live for ever. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee." (Psalms 22:26, 27) God is not dealing with the entire world now. He is first choosing out from among them those who will become members of the Church. After the faithful Church is completely chosen and she becomes the *Bride* of Christ during his second advent, then "*the Spirit [Christ] and the bride [the Church] will say Come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*" Revelation 22:17

7. When will these blessings be? At the birth of Jesus, the angels declared "*peace on earth, good will toward men.*" (Luke 2:14) But the world is certainly not experiencing, nor has it ever experienced this *peace and good will*. World conflict looms on the horizon and men's hearts are "*failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.*" (Luke 21:26) Yes, all prophecies indicate that we are living in the *time of the end* when these terrible troubles in the earth will be unprecedented. But these troubles are also termed as *birth-pangs* which will usher in God's peaceable Kingdom on earth. "*... I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come.*" Haggai 2:6, 7; 1 Thessalonians 5:3

Our Lord taught his disciples to pray "*Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth...*" (Matthew 6:10) This IS *the desire of all nations!* Praise God that the **complete Gospel**, with blessings promised to the Christian, the Jew and the entire world is truly **GOOD NEWS!**



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The End Times Bible Report Quarterly is a Free Online Publication of

The Associated Bible Students of Central Ohio

P.O. Box 813, Westerville, Ohio 43086-0813

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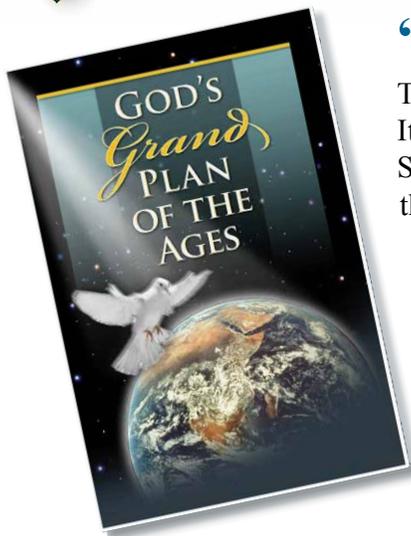
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