

The UNION

Get Ready to Meet the King!

God Calls His Church to
Truth, Faith and Holiness

2019

Joan H. Richardson

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CHAPTER 14

Replacement Theology ⁴³

11 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. ...

²⁵ For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.

²⁶ And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

²⁷ For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

²⁸ As concerning the gospel, *they are* enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, *they are* beloved for the fathers' sakes.

²⁹ For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. (Romans 11:1, 25-29) [Paul refers to the physical seed of Abraham.]

The Comfort Zone

In the preceding passage, Paul did not call the gentiles Israel. Instead his words in Romans 11 disprove the teaching known as “replacement theology”/ “supersessionism,” in which the gentile church allegedly replaces Israel. Anti-Zionism is not an apostolic instruction but began to seep into the church in the earliest centuries, provoking Paul’s strong argument against it.

Gentiles hadn’t searched for Him, nor did we discover God apart from His sovereign grace. He chose each of us; we didn’t first seek Him. Despite our willful nature, He chose us so that He is justified in re-electing the descendants of Israel who have rejected Him in unbelief as we had. By saving us, God is righteous and just to save them. It’s clear that we have all sinned and have been slaves to pride, self-will, and lust.

We shouldn’t forget the promises God made to Israel, among which was a blessing to the nations through Abraham’s seed, Messiah. With the objective of provoking Jews to jealousy, God would pour out His Spirit on the nations, by His own words:

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They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. (Deut. 32:21)

The Scriptures repeatedly support the faithfulness of God for the sons of Israel. It would be unsuitable to His nature to cast away the ones He chose to love; He is not capricious, but He will draw them to salvation at last, revealing their Messiah to them.

While we confess we were sinners saved by grace through faith in a merciful, loving Savior, are we offended because the Jews are sinners, and God loves them too? In fact, let's not be foolish: He revealed His love for Jews before He showed His love to gentiles. Knowing this and seeing that He deals with them by us, we should reconsider His kindness and His severity:

¹⁶ For if the firstfruit *is* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*; and if the root is holy, so *are* the branches.¹⁷ And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree,¹⁸ do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, *remember that* you do not support the root, but the root *supports* you.

¹⁹ You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."²⁰ Well *said*. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.²² Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.²³ And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. (Romans 11:16-23 NKJV)

"The lump" is the seed in the first fruit as the seed in an avocado or in a fig is a lump. Spiritually, the seed in Yeshua is the Word; physically, He was the seed of Abraham. The root, made holy by the Word, was Abraham in his living faith, which fattened the tree to nourish its branches. Paul points to the partnership of disobedience and unbelief in a warning to pursue

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righteousness, and he flatly opposes the arrogance of gentiles who believe they are the superior Israel. He clearly said that we who enter by faith have been grafted into the olive tree, the tree that God cultivates and prunes, and its natural branches more easily adapt to its roots than the branches of a wild, uncultivated tree—the nations, or gentiles. He warned us to fear God and shun pride, or in our disobedience, we *also will be cut off*: But God will save a remnant, showing kindness to us who continue in Him while the warning of judgment pertains to professing believers who oppose His chosen race.

⁴⁷ Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.⁴⁸ If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

⁴⁹ And one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, ⁵⁰ Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.⁵¹ And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;⁵² and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.⁵³ Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. (John 11:47-53) [“The whole nation” here includes the ten lost tribes that scattered when the nation split after Solomon died. The Assyrians took Israel captive, and most never returned.]

If their leaders had believed Yeshua was their Messiah, the Jews would not have urged His crucifixion. They thought their salvation came by keeping the laws and offering sacrifices—only by outward obedience. They tripped over the stumbling stone God had sent: the ultimate Sacrifice, His only Son, would die on a tree, the judgment of the cursed.

Though Yeshua had fulfilled the prophecies, scholars were in disbelief that their Bible was more than a religion—it was actually true! The Savior carried a cross, but they couldn't believe God would sacrifice His Son for their eternal atonement and redemption. Nevertheless, God doesn't bless the reputations of liars, thieves, or destroyers. Yeshua was none of them but is

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internationally credited as the most righteous man who ever lived. The promise was fulfilled in Him: all nations have been blessed by Abraham's seed, the Christ [Messiah]. Two thousand years later, transformed lives continue to prove His resurrection.

⁹ What then? Are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; ¹⁰ As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: ¹¹ There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. ¹² They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.
(Romans 3:9-12; also Psalm 14:1-3, 53:1-3)

What is the appropriate Christian response to the unbelief of the Jews? Perhaps we should understand the vantage point of today's Jew who adamantly opposes the suggestion that Yeshua is Messiah. Consider what the idea implies: nearly all Jews for almost twenty centuries have rejected their Messiah, even cursed His name and hated their brothers who have believed in Him.

Would faith in Yeshua the Jew turn a Jew into a gentile? Is Christianity actually the Jewish faith or a gentile myth? Had Yeshua fulfilled the prophets' words about Him as a suffering Savior? Did Jews fulfill Isaiah's words when they turned their faces from Him? Will God unveil the eyes of their hearts?

The ancestors are theirs, and from them, by physical descent, came the Messiah, who is God over all, praised forever. Amen. (Romans 9:5 HCSB) [Paul, supporting Israel]

Those who believe the promised seed of Abraham was in Jesus Christ are considered his spiritual descendants since just as the forefather of our faith, Abraham, begat Isaac by faith in the promise; we are his children by faith in his promised seed. Even so, God hasn't rejected the descendants of Jacob through whom Christ came in the flesh, but He remains faithful to His covenant with Abraham concerning his natural sons.

Though historically, Israel often turned from their LORD, those who rebelled were cut off. Why were they cut off? they had not believed His words.

Today many prefer judgment for the Jews, not the grace we

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easily presume is ours, but Paul warned us not to boast against the natural branches, because God will graft them in again, but He will cut us off if we refuse to repent. If what was true for Israel is true for us, our sins will find us out.

Most churches refuse to acknowledge the rightful inheritance of the Jews, believing the Jews' genetic heritage is now the spiritual heritage of the church. Presuming that's true, they misinterpret as spiritual the promise to possess Canaan, and they spiritualize everything else God intended as property rights for Jacob's descendants.

While Israel prefigures our experience in Jesus, revealing the ways of God to us, most of us reject the idea that our sins can disqualify us. Even though Israel's sins cut many off from God, replacement theologians deny being so close to Israel as that! Still He reminds us by His words to the churches in Asia: He knows our works and judges us accordingly.

Despite being warned, the church eats up grace like a child does candy; however, misinterpretations do not protect us from the truth by denying it. Anti-Semitic persuasions have turned many away from the writings of the apostles and prophets, and they are unafraid because they have eaten another lie: they need have no fear of God.

The Fear of God

We can be sure our interpretation is incorrect when it creates complicated problems that require distorted definitions. For an instance, a common alteration to the definition of *fear* circumvents its true meaning. As a rule, teachers have avoided researching the word *reverence*,⁴⁴ which is their choice in preference to "fear." It comes from the seventeenth century French *reverer*, or the Latin, *revereri*, with *re-* expressing, "intensive force," and *vereri*, which means "to fear." The original definition of *reverence* was, "intense fear," but cultures have a way of diluting and changing the accurate meanings of words. Of course we should be in awe of God, and in most applications, that means to fear Him. The Hebrew, *yare* or *yirah*,⁴⁵ means "fear," which is its translation in most versions of the Scriptures: *By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil. (Prov. 16:6)* The effect of fear turns people to God, not away.

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During the time of Jesus, Greek was the second language of the Hebrews. Over 70% of the funerary stones in Israel, which are dated 300 BC through AD 500, have Greek inscriptions.⁴⁶ In a graveyard just outside the walls of Jerusalem, archeologists uncovered 40% of the gravestones from the same era, which were inscribed in Greek, even though the graves include remains of Jewish priests and their families.

Since He came from Galilee, the province where Greek was most commonly spoken in Israel, Yeshua and his disciples surely spoke Greek, as well as Hebrew and probably Aramaic. It's reasonable to believe that after His ascension, the apostles spread the good news to the entire world by writing the gospels and letters to the churches in Greek, the second language⁴⁷ of the Roman Empire and how the name "Jesus Christ" came to be.

When translating the Greek New Testament, scholars have had to deal with the word *phobos*.⁴⁸ From its root, the word means "extreme fear, reverence, respect, or honor," depending on its context and usage. It is often translated as "fear." It could not be otherwise, since even Moses was terrified and didn't dare look at God. (See Acts 7:32) The terror of God was also known to Abraham, Job, Jonah, David, and the apostles, who clearly understood the importance of the great fear of God in the church. They had learned from our Lord's example and words, from the Tenakh, and from experience. Their warnings are sure.

When Jesus' sweat poured down like blood at Gethsemane, was that merely reverence, or His *fear* of God? It is written, *who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;* (Heb. 5:7) If Jesus had been afraid of His imminent physical death, would that have prompted a response from His Father? God answered Him, saving Him from the second death because of His perfect fear.

Despite these facts, for years many teachers have agreed that *fear* actually means, "reverence," and they say *reverence* means, "respect." As a result, we have accepted a god, perhaps softened with age, one more to our desire; even so, the Father we call *Abba* is Maker of heaven and earth. He commands us to fear

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Him and shun evil. We can't be holy while we continue in sin unless we change the definition of holiness.

The abiding fear of God redirects our course, or His chastening hand corrects us. Though He is merciful and loving, and though He is gentle, He can also be severe, and so we are warned to shun sin. (See Rom. 11)

God-fearing scholars translated the word correctly as "fear." Notwithstanding that, your instructors have almost certainly told you, "'Fear' doesn't really mean '*fear*.'" That notion is simply untrue. There's no mistake in its frequent translation: the fear that shuns sin and draws us into holiness is partner to godliness. We who fear the Lord remind ourselves of our own weaknesses; if we tremble, we turn to Him to deliver us from temptation or from sin.

The fear of the LORD *tendeth* to life: and *he that hath it* shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.
(Proverbs 19:23)

One of the great wonders of our Father is His longsuffering toward us when we falter. His keeping power is great in all our trials and shortcomings. His love is unquestionable and undying for every believer; even when we were sinners, Messiah died for us to free us from sin. But we must not presume upon His grace, or we will abuse it. God is not mocked.

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep *for* the slaughter. ³⁷ Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.
(Romans 8:35-37)

²⁰ For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. ²¹ Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is* God; ²² Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. (2 Corinthians 1:20-22)

We have all heard the rationale of the teacher who quotes, "*the goodness of God leads you to repentance*" (Rom. 2:4b), then

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explains that because He is the God of love, His goodness makes us want to turn from sin. The idea is that we shouldn't fear His goodness, but that has never been the problem. We might suppose the fear of the Lord is *not* to shun evil; or that naturally, we should shun evil because we love Him. But perhaps we are not as affectionate as we think we are. If we have such love for God, and if our love keeps us from sinning, then why do we sin? The Word, and its solemn warnings are clear us. The context of his letter to the church in Rome warns us who judge others:

³ And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? ⁴ Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? ⁵ But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; ⁶ Who will render to every man according to his deeds: (Romans 2:3-6)

What is the goodness of God? His righteousness, holiness, and love: His perfect nature, which is *always* good. In patience He is good; in wrath He is good; in judgment He is good; in grace He is good; in hatred He is good; in love He is good. God is *always* good; no one compares to Him. His goodness should draw all men to Him who saves the penitent; otherwise, we are without excuse if we continue in sin.

We have been persuaded to be fearless of God; thus many of us have been just as casual about our sins as before we accepted His gift of life. We believe all things are possible with God except our holiness—that He can only perfect us in theory. If we are willing to love Him, then we are willing to honor Him with fear; but our love of Him does not keep us from sin.

The hypocrisy of teaching theories supports faith without works, leading to death, but we must recall His words to the churches that judge them for their *deeds* in *Revelation*, chapters 2-3 with which Paul agrees: *For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* (Rom. 8:13)

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Give no respect to distorted definitions of words. *Fear*⁴⁹ means nothing less than dread, terror, alarm, awe, or a deep reverential sense of accountability. The few who have met His holiness fear God and know the terror of the Lord. Others substitute their experience for faith, but we are wise who heed His warnings, fear His Hand, and obey His Word:

⁷ A messenger of Jehovah is encamping, round about those who fear Him, and He armeth them. ⁸ Taste ye and see that Jehovah is good, O the happiness of the man who trusteth in Him. ⁹ Fear Jehovah, ye His holy ones, for there is no lack to those fearing Him. ¹⁰ Young lions have lacked and been hungry, and those seeking Jehovah lack not any good. ¹¹ Come ye, children, hearken to me, The fear of Jehovah I do teach you. ¹² Who is the man that is desiring life? Loving days to see good? ¹³ Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking deceit. ¹⁴ Turn aside from evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it. ¹⁵ The eyes of Jehovah are unto the righteous, and His ears unto their cry. ¹⁶ (The face of Jehovah is on doers of evil, to cut off from earth their memorial.) (Psalm 34:7-16 YLT)

Here is another error: that we should not fear the loss of our salvation if we deliberately turn from God or continue to sin without repentance. But His Word calls us to holiness:

²⁵ See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven.²⁶ Whose voice then shook the earth, but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.²⁷ And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸ Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: ²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire. (Hebrews 12:25-29)

The world is full of fear, but most people don't fear God or keep His commandments. Those who do not trust in God fear

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other people, darkness, cramped places; they fear failure, success, death, germs, crowds, heights, elevators and escalators, airplanes and motorcycles! People are afraid of relationships, commitments, and responsibilities. The world is terrorized by many things that God commands us *not* to fear. The fear of things that could happen, even fear of the unknown, causes us torment. People have committed suicide because they feared things that never happened. Their imaginations multiplied and enlarged their trials, which never came to pass.

These fears have torment, but the fear of the Lord purifies us. In fact, the only one we *should* fear is God. He disperses all other fears because God makes us *more than conquerors* who fear Him, shunning sin. (See Rom. 8:37) Otherwise sin would destroy us.

³ Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees! Say to them *that are* of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: ⁴ Behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompense; he will come and save you. (Isaiah 35:3-4)

God loves us, and our faith in Him sets us free from the fears of this world. We overcome our trials without fear or cowardice but with power and boldness by faith. We know God is *with* us and not against us, but we are not foolish. Those who *fear* Him honor Him. The fear of God leads to life, love, and humility. It pleases Him—and oh, yes, we should please our Father! (See Gal. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:4; 1 Jn. 3:22; Php. 4:18; Col. 3:20; Heb. 13:21)

Queen Esther approached the throne to intervene for the Jews, fearing her king, Xerxes. Though she had intimately embraced him as her husband, when she approached the throne in Persia, she faced her possible execution. But she understood her calling to protect the Jewish people and obeyed because she feared God more than the king. [Read the OT book of Esther.]

¹⁵ Then Esther told *them* to reply to Mordecai:¹⁶ “Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which *is* against the law; and if I perish, I perish!” (Esther 4:15-16 NKJV)

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The underlying fear of God always keeps us; it keeps our hearts right with Him. Churches often neglect the gift of life because they have no fear of God, but instead, they fear the opinions of their peers. That is why they believe the lie that we should not fear Him who is on the throne. Refusing to face His warnings, they reject the fear of God that keeps us close to Him.

¹⁷ Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.¹⁸ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment.¹⁹ But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us.
(1 John 4:17-19 NKJV)

The journey to perfect love is a trek, leading us to wisdom that comes from the fear of the Lord. His fear sensitizes us to the Holy Spirit, but torment fills the soul of a man who practices sin, because the law continually affirms its righteous judgments against his unrighteous deeds. It doesn't let up until he repents. Clearly, he isn't made perfect in love, or he would not be in sin.

The apostle John, caught up to heaven to write *Revelation*, saw Christ in His glory and wrote, *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: (Rev. 1:17)* Does John condemn himself for having feared the One who stood before him? But the weakness of the church is her presumption; the fear of God ends lukewarm hearts, complacent sins, and the abuse of grace.

³⁹ And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: ⁴⁰ And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. (Jeremiah 32:39-40)

Walking in the Spirit, torment has no place in us. As we abide in Him, He abides in us, and we walk in His Word that cleanses us. Progressing in the faith, we gain the victories. With His fear as our friend, we walk securely. Knowing our boundaries, by our faith, we do not trespass them.

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³ Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴ He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. ⁶ He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. (1 John 2:3-6 NKJV)

If we presume familiarity with Him, perhaps we haven't begun to walk with Messiah. As we move forward with Jesus, we realize how poorly we've represented the Lord in the past. Jesus never approached the Father like a pal or raised His voice at Him. But we laugh about our sins as though we're drunkards who enjoy behaving like fools.

²¹ Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: ²² Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: Will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand *for* the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it? ²³ But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. (Jeremiah 5:21-23)

With virtue, God judges the nation that turns away from His fear:

- ²⁷ "Like a cage full of birds,
So their houses are full of deceit;
Therefore they have become great and rich.
- ²⁸ 'They are fat, they are sleek,
They also exceed in deeds of wickedness;
They do not plead the cause,
The cause of the orphan, that they may prosper;
And they do not defend the rights of the poor.
- ²⁹ 'Shall I not punish these *people*?' declares the
LORD,
'On a nation such as this
Shall I not avenge Myself?'
- ³⁰ "An appalling and horrible thing
Has happened in the land:
- ³¹ The prophets prophesy falsely,

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And the priests rule on their *own* authority;
And My people love it so!
But what will you do at the end of it?"
(Jeremiah 5:27-31 NASB)

How terrible it is when righteousness leaves the house of God, and the saltiness is gone! We have believed our nation can continue in sin, and God will not judge us. As a result, there is little fear of God in the land. Ignorant of His judgments, we suffer their effects because not even the church fears God!

- ¹³ To fear the LORD *is* to hate evil.
I hate arrogant pride, evil conduct,
and perverse speech.
- ¹⁴ I possess good advice and competence;
I have understanding and strength.
(Proverbs 8:13-14 HCSB)

Without the fear of God, we have wandered from holiness, believing sin is permitted while it continues to bring forth death without respect of persons. That's not to say we never fall or we live perfect lives; but we would spare our souls by taking up the cross and surrendering our hearts to follow the Lord.

For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again:
but the wicked shall fall into mischief. (Proverbs 24:16)

¹⁷ And if you address as Father the One who judges impartially based on each one's work, you are to conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your temporary residence. ¹⁸ For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life inherited from the fathers, not with perishable things like silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. ...

²² By obedience to the truth, having purified yourselves for sincere love of the brothers, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, ²³ since you have been born again—not of perishable seed but of imperishable—through the living and enduring word of God.
(1 Peter 1:17-19, 22-23 HCSB)

⁷ So honor will come to you who believe, but for the unbelieving,

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**The stone that the builders rejected—
this One has become the cornerstone,**
⁸ and
**A stone to stumble over,
And a rock to trip over.**

They stumble because they disobey the message; they were destined for this.

⁹ But you are **a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His possession, so that you may proclaim the praises** of the One who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. (1 Peter 2:7-9 HCSB)

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God calls us *saints*, or holy ones, expecting us to act like we believe it. If the deceiver convinces us that, by fearing God, we don't have faith, when God warns us to turn from evil or die, we are not afraid and do not believe His words. The converse is also true: if we don't believe Him when He warns us, we won't fear or obey Him.

The fear of the Lord is an agent of purification, drawing us into His likeness and finding a refuge in Him. Disobedience is the fruit of unbelief just as righteousness is the fruit of believing. Many imagine He hides His eyes when we practice sin. If He did that, He wouldn't care for us: *He scourges every son whom He receives.* (See Heb. 12:6)

¹² Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. ¹³ For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure. ¹⁴ Do all things without murmurings and disputings: ¹⁵ That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; (Phil. 2:12-15)

¹³ "It is the LORD of hosts whom you should regard as holy.
And He shall be your fear,

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And He shall be your dread.

- ¹⁴ “Then He shall become a sanctuary;
But to both houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a
rock to stumble over,
And a snare and a trap to the inhabitants of Jerusa-
lem. (Isaiah 8:13-14a NASB)

² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. ⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

(1 John 5:2-4 NASB)

Shortly after Jesus said, *But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say unto you, Fear him (Lk. 12:5)*, He consoled His disciples, saying, *Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. (Lk. 12:32)* The first command is the warning; the second, the reassuring.

See now that I, *even I*, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither *is there any* that can deliver out of my hand. (Deut. 32:39)

¹⁸ For you have not come to a *mountain* that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind,¹⁹ and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which *sound was such that* those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them.

²⁰ For they could not bear the command, “IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED.” ²¹ And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, “I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling.” ²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect, ²⁴ and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel.

²⁵ See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who

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warned *them* on earth, much less *will* we *escape* who turn away from Him who *warns* from heaven.

(Hebrews 12:18-25 NASB)

³⁰ For we know Him who said, "*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,*" says the Lord. And again, "*The LORD will judge His people.*"³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

³² But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings:

³³ partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; ³⁴ for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.³⁵ Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

³⁷ "For yet a little while,
And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.

³⁸ Now the just shall live by faith;
But if anyone draws back,
My soul has no pleasure in him."

³⁹ But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

(Hebrews 10:30-39 NKJV)

By faith, Abraham received the covenants and promises for his descendants and for the nations. Isaac inherited them, and Jacob took them from God, becoming Israel. He gave Judah the promised scepter and gave the Law to Moses. The precedents of worship came by Israel, prefiguring heavenly things. He gave their prophets His words to bless the world. God made His Word the preeminent Son of God and Messiah, our Savior, who came into the world by the seed of Israel as the *Son of man* and by the Seed of the Word as the *Son of God*. (Read Is 7:14.) And He promised the Son of David His everlasting kingdom.