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Jews and Gentiles Unitedly Glorifying God



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #184 ~

What is your primary purpose in life, and that of all the Jews and Gentiles in this world? It's glorifying God, worshiping Him, loving Him with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. Indeed, this is a God-centered and soul-satisfying purpose, one that's found throughout the Bible. *"All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, and they shall glorify Your name."* This Old Testament verse, Psalm 86:9, is prophesying about the future. Today I want to look at Romans 15:4-13, a New Testament passage that takes this theme of worship from the past to the present to the future.

In verse 4, Paul is instructing the Christians, telling them that the Old Testament Scriptures (past) were written to encourage us (present), and to help us to persevere (present), so that we have hope (future). This passage starts and ends with hope (vss. 4, 13), which means it's a very important point. And it's God who gives us encouragement and perseverance so we might have hope (vs. 5). This hope, the expectation of good and glorious things to come, had been mentioned by Paul in

Rom. 5:3, when he said, *"We exult in hope of the glory of God."* This hope is looking ahead to that time when Jesus Christ will return and fill the earth with His glory. "*Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory."* Isaiah 6:3

In verse 5, we learn that God wants to unite Jewish and Gentile believers, and why? So *"with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (vs. 6). There had been open hostility between Jews and Gentiles in the first century, and to some degree there still is, and so Paul addresses this issue by saying, *"Accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us, to the glory of God"* (vs. 7, Eph. 2:11-18). Since Christ accepted Gentile believers, they needed to accept Jewish believers, and vice versa. Why? It is *"to the glory of God."* Again, your primary purpose and ultimate priority in this age and in the ages to come is giving glory and praise to God with both Jews and Gentiles. Rev. 5:13, 22:10-14

Paul continues to explain God's plan for both Jews and Gentiles (vs. 8). We learn that Christ was serving the *"circumcision,"* the Jews, for He was *"to confirm the promises given to the fathers."* How did this happen? When Christ came to earth, He died on a cross and rose from the dead so as to save sinners. This was part of God's plan to fulfill the promises He had given to Abraham, Isaac, Judah, and all Jewish believers, to *"those who are of the faith of Abraham"* (Rom. 4:9-16). These verses explain that Christ also came for Gentiles for He wanted them to experience His mercy too, and why? Again, so they would *"glorify God"* (vs. 9). To further expound on this point, Paul shares four Old Testament verses about both Jews and Gentiles praising God.

Romans 15:9 – *"I will give praise to You among the Gentiles, and I will sing to Your name."* (Ps. 18:49). This is directed to the Jews, that they are to openly praise God among the Gentiles, the nations. The Jews' public worship of God is also to be evangelistic in nature, with the result that some Gentiles will be saved and will worship God with these Jewish believers. *"Sing to the Lord, bless His name. Proclaim good tidings of*

His salvation from day to day. Tell of His glory among the nations" (Pss. 96:2-3, 98:1-4). To a small degree this happened in the past, before Christ's 1st coming. To a small degree it is occurring now, in this present church age, in that time before Christ's 2nd coming. But to a much greater degree, it will be taking place in the future, during the millennial kingdom age, when Christ is reigning over the earth.

Romans 15:10 – *"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people"* (Deut. 32:43). This command to the Gentiles, to the nations, is that they are to be glad, to be exulting, to be rejoicing in the Lord. And surely they are not to be Antisemitic, but are to be rejoicing with Jewish believers. In a limited way this rejoicing occurred in the past; in a limited way it is happening during this church age; and in a much greater and more glorious way, it will be taking place in the ages to come.

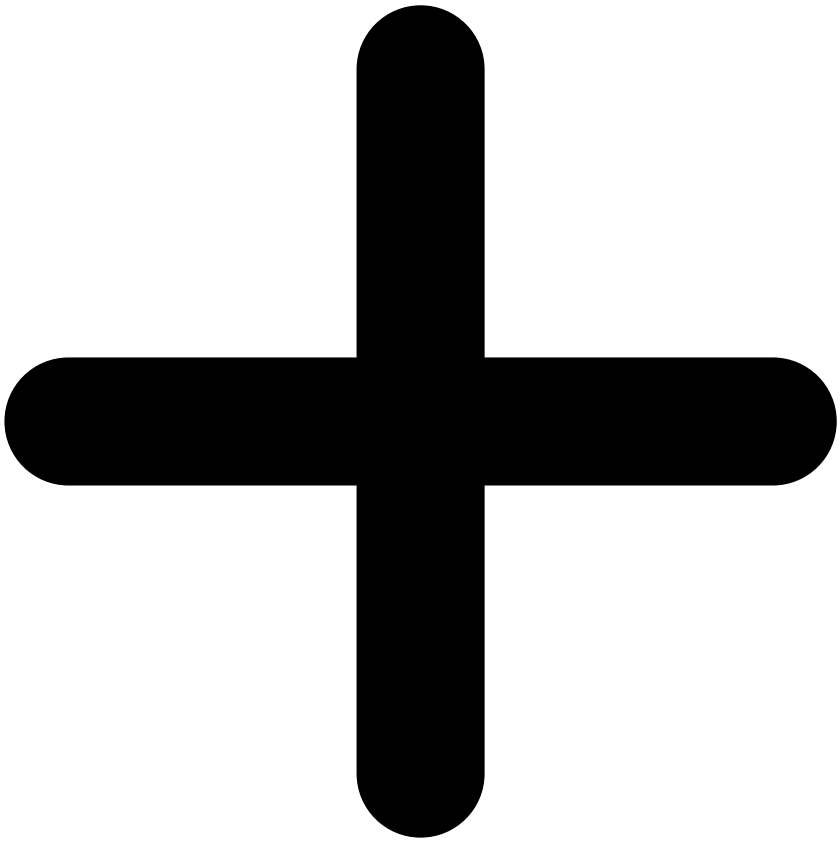
Romans 15:11 – *"Praise the Lord all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise Him"* (Ps. 117:1). Like vss. 9-10, this too is an eternal command. Now it is similar to vs. 10, but here it is a command to Gentiles that they are to praise the Lord, and let me say, regardless of how Jewish people may now be hardening their hearts during this church age. At this present time, two things are obvious: a minority of Gentiles are being saved (Matt. 7:13-14), and the vast majority of God-worshiping believers are Gentiles. Romans 11

Romans 15:12 – *"There shall come the root of Jesse, and He who arises to rule over the Gentiles, in Him shall the Gentiles hope"* (Isaiah 11:10). This is referring to Christ's 1st and 2nd comings. Jesus Christ came the 1st time to save sinners and to set up His church, a spiritual kingdom. Again, we see that word hope, and it can refer to the Gentile's hopes during this church age, but I believe it also, and more so, speaks of their hopes for the future. We know Christ is coming a 2nd time to earth to establish both a spiritual and physical kingdom, when He is ruling in our hearts, but also ruling over the world, over both Jews and Gentiles. Now that we live in the end-times, we know this hope will soon

be a reality, that it won't be long before Jesus is King over this world, and we are glorifying God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. Psalm 67:4-5 also confirms this Isaiah 11:10 prophecy – *"May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth. May the peoples praise You, God; may all the peoples praise You."*

Romans 15:13. *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."* The conclusion of this important big-picture passage is that God wants us to abound in hope! This hope is referring to the return of Christ and the age to come, when *"the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord"* (Hab. 2:14). Life can be distressing and difficult (Acts 14:22), and so you need this hope, this realization of a most glorious future. Believing the truth, that Christ is coming, that you will be glorified, and that you will be glorifying God like never before, will result in your heart being filled with joy and peace. Might you be excited about our great God and Father, who loves you so much, the Holy Spirit who is always with you, and Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who is coming soon to take you home to heaven, and then set up His kingdom on earth. *"I will extol You, my God, O King. And I will bless Your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless You, and I will praise Your name forever and ever."* Psalm 145:1-2

P.S. There is no more important thing than glorifying God, and we all know that. Might God give us the grace to be excitedly and wholeheartedly praising Him like never before. Two other posts I would encourage you to read on this God-glorifying subject are: *"The Most Important Thing for You!"* and *"The Glory of God – The Most Important of All!!!"*





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