

## **God Ruling the World by Hope**

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In the last half of the fifteenth chapter of Romans, Paul explains how God's vision for the world is realized (Rom. 15:7-13). Paul finishes the line of thought he began in chapter fourteen: how to unite Jews and Gentiles to glorify the Creator with one voice. Saints were to receive one another as the family of God based on faith in Jesus, not personal opinions. However, Paul was not just trying to settle disputes among the saints in Rome. There is something bigger he was trying to accomplish. He explains how God's vision for humanity is realized through faith in Jesus, the resurrected Lord, and ruler of Heaven and earth. This text is the conclusion to Paul's opening lines of the letter (Rom. 1:1-5; 16-17).

### **The Gospel is for Everyone**

To bring his masterpiece to a close, Paul emphasizes a specific point. Mainly, God always intended to bring all nations of the world into His family. Paul cites several Old Testament prophecies to prove this had always been God's plan.

First, Paul inserts Psalm 18:49. David wrote this psalm after being victorious over Saul. He would celebrate this victory not just with Israel, but "among the nations."

Second, Paul mentioned Deuteronomy 32:43. This passage comes from the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 29-32. In this passage, Moses praises the Creator's victories and calls for the nations to join Israel in worshipping Him.

Third, Paul noted Psalm 117: "Praise the LORD, all nations! Extol him, all peoples! For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD!" This Psalm is only two verses. Paul quotes the first verse. All nations are commanded to worship the Creator.

Fourth, Paul quotes Isaiah 11:10: "In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious." This passage is a significant reference to the Messiah. Paul uses this verse to connect readers to his opening lines (Rom. 1:1-5).

### **More about Isaiah 11:10**

Isaiah chapter eleven begins with the prophet declaring that a new branch would grow from an old root: the royal family of Jesse. Regarding this new branch, the Spirit of Jehovah would be with Him. His rule would be different from other kings. His self-giving reign would bring justice to the poor. He would defend the meek.

Also, Isaiah describes the peace of His kingdom. The lion and lamb would lie down together. Creation would live in harmony. He would gather all nations into His kingdom. In

Romans 15:12, Paul quotes verse ten of Isaiah's prophecy. This single passage encapsulates the Gospel.

**The root of Jesse:** Jesus the Messiah was a descendent of Jesse, the father of David. This was an all but forgotten royal family of Israel. Jesus was the rightful heir to Israel's throne, biologically connected to the Messianic hope of Israel.

**He shall stand for/rise up:** The Hebrew term "*awmad*" is given a wide range of translations. The term, however, was used by Jews to describe the concept of resurrection. Jesus once spoke of overthrowing the ruler of this world by being lifted up from the earth (Joh 12:31-32). God made Jesus king by the cross. God overthrew the prince of this world, the devil, by raising up Jesus on the cross and raising Him from the dead. God declared Jesus was His Son by the resurrection (Rom. 1:4).

**For an ensign/signal of the people/to rule the people:** By the cross and resurrection, God made Jesus king of Heaven and earth. Paul identifies Jesus as "our Lord." Caesar declared himself to be lord; yet, the saints in Rome claimed Jesus was lord. Additionally, Isaiah mentions the Messiah ruling "the people." This refers to the Gentiles.

**His resting place shall be glorious/the nations shall hope in Him:** The Messiah becomes the hope of the Gentiles. In Colossians 1:27, Paul states how the Gentiles' obedience to the Gospel revealed the riches of God's glory: "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

### **Abounding in Hope**

Paul has expounded these concepts in detail throughout the letter. Now, he concludes by emphasizing the purpose of believing the Gospel: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 15:13). By the Messiah and Spirit, God planned to rule the entire world by hope.

Many people have tried to rule the world by hope; however, their hope is always without substance. Worldly hope is nothing more than wishful thinking. The hope of which Paul writes is based on what God did for the world through the Messiah. God's hope is offered not by catchy slogans, but by self-giving love. Hope for the future is based on Jesus' resurrection.

As the world comes to believe the Gospel, God promises to fill us with joy and peace. Then, we can begin living a life of faith. We will be met with obstacles; however, the Spirit will cause us to flourish in hope. These blessings are received by faith (Rom. 1:17).

### **Conclusion**

Paul has made a compelling argument for us to believe and obey the Gospel. The Gospel of God is good news! God has destroyed sin and death and offered salvation and eternal life. God has made Jesus king! He rules by love, mercy, and hope. We can become part of God family by believing the news and submitting our lives to the new king. Will you obey?