

# Benefits of Understanding Israel's Program

A 3-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®  
Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

## About This Series

This three-lesson series by Keith Blades examines why every member of the Body of Christ today should invest time in understanding Israel's program. Although we do not live under Israel's prophetic program—we live in the Dispensation of the Grace of God revealed through Paul's epistles (Romans through Philemon)—God has specifically designed three major benefits that come to believers through careful study of Israel's scriptures (Genesis through Malachi, the Gospels, and Hebrews through Revelation). Drawing on Romans 15:4–8 as the doctrinal foundation, Keith demonstrates how understanding Israel's program provides patience, comfort, and hope; illuminates the details of Christ's earthly ministry; and gives believers a fuller grasp of God's ultimate purpose to gather together all things in Christ in the dispensation of the fullness of times.



## Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
Lesson 1	Why God designed Israel's program for our learning, and the doctrinal foundation in Romans 15:4–6
Lesson 2	How understanding Israel's program illuminates the details of Christ's earthly ministry and John the Baptist's role
Lesson 3	The Sermon on the Mount, Christ's Messianic authority, and God's ultimate purpose to gather all things in Christ

## Lesson Summaries

L1

### Understanding the Benefits of Israel's Program *The Doctrinal Foundation*

- We live in the Dispensation of the Grace of God, not under Israel's program — God is forming a new creation: the Church, the Body of Christ.
  - Ephesians 3:1–6: Paul reveals the mystery — Gentiles as fellow-heirs, of the

same body, partakers of the promise in Christ

- Romans 9–11: Israel's program is temporarily suspended but not abandoned
- Israel's program has God-designed value for believers today — we are not spiritual Israelites, but God expects us to study Israel's scriptures for our benefit.

### Three Major Benefits God Has Designed

- Benefit 1: Patience, comfort, and hope — Romans 15:4 states that “things written aforetime were written for our learning,” giving us patience and comfort through the scriptures.
- Benefit 2: Understanding the Lord's earthly ministry — Romans 15:8 establishes that Christ was a minister of the circumcision to confirm the promises made to the fathers.
  - Matthew 15:24: The Lord came specifically to the lost sheep of the house of Israel
- Benefit 3: Understanding the dispensation of the fullness of times — Ephesians 1:9–10 reveals God's plan to gather all things together in Christ, both in heaven and on earth.
- God's consistent methodology is patience and consolation — He is “the God of patience and consolation” (Romans 15:5) whether dealing with Israel or the Body of Christ today.
  - 1 Corinthians 10: Israel's experiences serve as examples written for our admonition

L2

## Israel's Program and the Lord's Earthly Ministry *Foundations in Prophecy*

- Christ confirmed the promises made to the fathers — every detail of His earthly ministry was rooted in covenants given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

### John the Baptist's Ministry in Prophecy

- John the Baptist's preparation ministry directly fulfilled Old Testament prophecy — his water baptism and message of national repentance were anticipated in Hosea, Isaiah, and Malachi.
  - Isaiah 40:1–2: “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people” — God's consolation preceding national restoration
  - Malachi 3:1: The forerunner of the Messiah was prophesied centuries before John's birth
- Without understanding Israel's program, believers cannot fully understand the Gospel accounts — every detail in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John has its foundation in Genesis through Malachi.

### Five Courses of Punishment and National Confession

- God outlined five courses of punishment for Israel's disobedience — John's ministry coincided with Israel's fifth course of punishment, which extended through the Babylonian captivity into New Testament times.
  - Leviticus 26:40: National confession of sin was required for God to remember His covenant and begin restoration
  - Daniel 9: The seventy-weeks framework provides the prophetic timeline for Israel's national program
- The temptations of Christ reveal Satan's strategy — understanding Israel's historical struggles explains the specific nature and sequence of Satan's temptations in Matthew 4.

- Grasping Israel's program gives believers doctrinal power — it illuminates God's character, His consistent methodology, and the patterns by which He deals with His people.

L3

## The Sermon on the Mount and God's Ultimate Purpose

*Messianic Fulfillment and the Fullness of Times*

- The Sermon on the Mount fulfills Isaiah 61 — Matthew 5 records Christ directly confirming Messianic promises as the Spirit-anointed Servant described in Isaiah 61:1–3.
  - Isaiah 61:1–3: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek”
- Christ taught as one having authority, not as the scribes and Pharisees — His teaching in the Sermon on the Mount directly exposed the false doctrine and tradition of Israel's religious leaders (Matthew 7:28–29).

### The Beatitudes and Israel's Spiritual Condition

- The Beatitudes addressed Israel's specific spiritual condition under Roman dominion — “Blessed are the poor in spirit” called the nation back to dependence on God in the context of their covenantal program.
- Isaiah 5 prophesied the very judgment Christ pronounced on Israel's apostate religious leaders — understanding this prophecy explains the Lord's authority over religious hypocrisy.

### God's Ultimate Purpose: The Fullness of Times

- Ephesians 1:9–10 reveals the mystery of God's will — all things will be gathered together in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth, in the dispensation of the fullness of times.
- Understanding Israel's program is essential to grasping this eschatological purpose — God's plan for Israel and His plan for the Body of Christ both converge under Christ's headship.
  - Ephesians 1:3: Believers in the Body of Christ today have “every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ” — corresponding blessings designed for the heavenly realm
- Right division (2 Timothy 2:15) is the key that unlocks all three benefits — properly distinguishing Israel's program from the mystery of the Body of Christ enables full appreciation of God's complete purpose.

## Key Doctrinal Distinctions

### Israel's Program vs. the Body of Christ

God is operating two distinct programs in Scripture: Israel's prophetic program (rooted in covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) and the mystery program of the Body of Christ (revealed exclusively through Paul in Romans through Philemon). These programs must never be blended. During the present Dispensation of Grace, Israel's program is temporarily suspended — but studying it yields specific, God-designed benefits for believers today.

## Things Written Aforetime Were Written For Our Learning

Romans 15:4 establishes the doctrinal reason believers should study Israel's scriptures: they were written for our learning, so that through patience and comfort of the scriptures we might have hope. This is not a license to apply Israel's program directly to the Body of Christ — it is a recognition that God designed those scriptures to provide patience, consolation, and confident expectation for believers living in this dispensation.

## Christ as Minister of the Circumcision

Romans 15:8 makes clear that the Lord Jesus Christ came as a minister of the circumcision — His earthly ministry was directed to Israel for the purpose of confirming the promises made to the fathers. This is why the Gospels cannot be read as direct instruction to the Body of Christ. Understanding who the Lord's ministry was directed to, and why, is foundational to correctly interpreting the Gospel records.

## The Dispensation of the Fullness of Times

Ephesians 1:9–10 reveals that God's ultimate purpose is to gather together all things in Christ — both things in heaven and things on earth. This future dispensation cannot be understood without comprehending Israel's role in God's overall plan. Israel's earthly promises and the Body of Christ's heavenly blessings will both be fulfilled under Christ's imperial headship. Right division allows believers to see how each program contributes to God's complete purpose.

## Beneficiaries vs. Direct Recipients

While Israel's scriptures (Genesis–Malachi, Matthew–John, Hebrews–Revelation) were written TO Israel's program, believers in the Body of Christ are BENEFICIARIES of those scriptures — gaining patience, comfort, hope, and understanding of God's character and methods. Recognizing this distinction prevents the error of applying Israel's covenantal obligations to believers today while still allowing the full benefit God designed those scriptures to provide.

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## Key Scripture References

<b>Romans 15:4–6</b>	Foundation passage: things written aforetime provide patience, comfort, and hope for believers today
<b>Romans 15:8</b>	Christ was a minister of the circumcision to confirm the promises made to the fathers
<b>Ephesians 3:1–6</b>	Paul reveals the mystery — Gentiles as fellow-heirs and members of the same body in Christ
<b>Ephesians 1:9–10</b>	The mystery of God's will: to gather all things together in Christ in the fullness of times

<b>Isaiah 61:1–3</b>	The Messianic anointing fulfilled by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5)
<b>Isaiah 40:1–2</b>	God's comfort for Israel preceding national restoration — fulfilled in John the Baptist's ministry
<b>Malachi 3:1</b>	Prophecy of the Messiah's forerunner, fulfilled in John the Baptist
<b>Leviticus 26:40</b>	National confession of sin required for God to remember His covenant and restore Israel
<b>Matthew 3:1–6</b>	John the Baptist's ministry of repentance fulfilling Old Testament prophecy
<b>Matthew 7:28–29</b>	Christ taught as one having authority, unlike the scribes and Pharisees
<b>Daniel 9</b>	The seventy-weeks prophecy providing the prophetic timeline for Israel's national program
<b>2 Timothy 2:15</b>	Right division — rightly dividing the word of truth as the key to proper scriptural interpretation
<b>1 Corinthians 10</b>	Israel's experiences written as examples and admonition for believers today
<b>Romans 9–11</b>	Israel's temporary suspension in the present dispensation; future restoration guaranteed

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