

Finding Grace
in the
Wilderness of Loss:

Lessons for Today from Israel's Exile

How a Glimpse of the "Latter Days" Offers Hope
and Change for Present Day Believers:
A Study of Jeremiah 29-31

Lesson 2 Answer Key – Jeremiah 30

Winnetka Bible Church
Adult Discipleship Seminar

Dear friends,

Thank you for sticking with this deep dive into some wonderful OT prophecy.

Lesson 1 looked at the historical setting of the exile of Judah to Babylon. We have called that experience a “wilderness of loss,” based on the bitter pain expressed in Psalm 137, and the hope offered in the reality that the survivors “found grace in the wilderness” (Jer 31:2). We noted that loss bring grief, and sometimes guilt, which calls us to repentance. But loss can also be God’s primary way to show us the grace he brings to our wilderness experiences.

Lesson 1 also looked at the encouraging message of Jeremiah to the exiles in 29:4-14. They were to settle down, build homes and gardens, produce children and crops, and seek the welfare of the city they were in. That would be how they would thrive. With that came the promise that God had a plan for them, plans to prosper them and not to harm them. They would find God if they would pray and seek Him with all their heart. And one day 70 years hence they would return to their land.

We looked at how God helped Paul discover grace in his personal wilderness of the “thorn in the flesh.” God’s answers to our prayers for relief are not always answered as we initially hope. Sometimes there is waiting; pray more. Sometimes there is a “No”, but with that God supplies grace for the next step of the journey. In that we begin to discover that in our weakness the strength of God can more clearly be displayed in our lives. And that is a gracious gift, helping us to endure and be more content in the face of trials and losses.

Finally, we looked at the latter day promises of God (29:14), focused on the return of Christ. This is our source of ultimate hope. Chapter 30 will expand the focus on the day when Jesus (“David their king”) returns to reign on earth (30:9, 21). God promises Israel a day of restoration to their land forever. This promise is linked to Christ’s return, which is the “blessed hope” of all His followers. In Lesson 1 we saw the hope offered in prophetic scriptures as a light shining in a dark place when all other lights go out. We looked at the promise given to those who “love His appearing,” and how that should motivate us to greater hope, greater purity, and greater outreach to the lost.

Our study of Jer 30 in Lesson 2 is still deep, but more straightforward, working through the text one section at a time. There are no more appendices, but you may wish to refer to the Appendices included in the Lesson 1 Answer Key for historical context.

May the hope of Christ’s return continue to brighten for you in these dark days as you study through these wonderful scriptures. Blessings, and good reading!

Pete

FINDING GRACE IN THE WILDERNESS OF LOSS: Part 2 – Jeremiah 30

Read Jeremiah 30. Pray for the Holy Spirit to illuminate this chapter for you as you work through the questions. As you consider the answers offered below, add to them your own insights as the Spirit and Word together breathe out the life of God into your heart.

Chapter Outline:

1. **Big Picture of this Chapter: The Restoration of Israel and Judah to the Land 30:1-3**
2. **The “Time of Jacob’s Trouble” 30:4-9**
3. **The Promise of Regathering, Accountability and Eternal Establishment of Israel 30:10-11**
4. **God’s Reasons for the Babylonian Captivity, this “Wilderness of Loss” 30:12-17**
5. **A Promise of Return and Restoration of the Covenant in the Last Days 30:18-24**

1. **Big Picture of What this Chapter is About: The Restoration of Israel and Judah to the Land 30:1-3**

“The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ² “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you. ³ For behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says the LORD, and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall take possession of it.” (ESV)

*In Jeremiah 29, the prophet wrote a letter to the exiles promising them a hope and a future if they would seek the Lord with all their heart. Now God tells him to write a book (30:2) about **the restoration of fortunes of His people, Israel and Judah (30:3)**. This restoration of fortune will involve bringing all the tribes of Israel back into the Covenant Land.*

- **Promise of Reunification of Israel and Judah – has this ever happened yet?**

No.

See Appendix 2 in the Answer Key for Lesson 1, Timeline of the Nation of Israel. The civil war in 930 BC brought on by Rehoboam’s harsh rule after Solomon died split the nation into North and South, leaving only Judah and Benjamin in the South. The return from Babylonian exile involved only a remnant of those who had gone into exile from Judah. That return was not as a sovereign nation, but as a vassal under a succession of world powers – Persia, Greece, Rome. And that era finally ended in total destruction of the Temple, Jerusalem, and their homeland. By AD 135 Jews were totally driven out of the Covenant Land. The promise of Jeremiah 30:3 has yet to be fulfilled, awaiting fulfillment in the latter days.

- **Promise of Return to the Land – Why is the Land So Important? Gen 12:1; 35:12; 48:3-4.**

In Gen 12:1, God called Abram to leave his people (“Go”). The very next phrase of that verse provides the goal of Abram’s journey – “the land” that God would show him. In Gen 15:18 the Covenant promise is more specific – Abraham’s offspring would one day inhabit all the land from Egypt to the Euphrates River. In Gen 35:9-12, God renewed the Covenant with Jacob, renaming him Israel and promising him that a nation, and a company (gathering) of nations, and kings, would come from his offspring. This Covenant renewal also promised that the land given to Abraham and Isaac would also be given to Jacob’s offspring. In Gen 48:3-4, as Jacob passed on the Covenant promise to Joseph, he referred to the land as promised to be an “everlasting possession” of his offspring.

In Hebrews 11 we are given a commentary on the faith of the patriarchs, believing God’s promise that the land was their “inheritance” from God (11:8). Abraham was looking forward to a city with foundations whose designer and builder is God (11:10). For the patriarchs, they were a people seeking a homeland, living as strangers and exiles, never having received the land that was promised (11:13-14). They were seeking a better, heavenly country (11:15-16). That is why God takes pride in their faith, because He has prepared for them a city (11:16).

God wants to grow our faith in His promises. Perhaps this is why He allows us to so often experience the wilderness, times of loss and wandering, times when we turn to His promises of the far better lands He has prepared for us in His eternal home. Do we really believe we are journeying to a far better place?

But God is also true to His word. The descendants of the patriarchs did enter the Promised Land centuries later. And just as He predicted, when they were unfaithful to the Covenant, he exiled them from the Land.

Yet God has said that the Land is Israel’s Covenant promise forever. Consider these “Forever Land” promises of God – either God will be true to His word, or He is not truly God:

Genesis 13:14 *The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, ¹⁵ for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever.*

Exodus 32:13 *Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, **and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.**'"*

Joshua 14:9 *And Moses swore on that day, saying, '**Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.**'*

1 Chronicles 28:8 Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, observe and seek out all the commandments of the LORD your God, **that you may possess this good land and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you forever.** (David's charge to Israel)

2 Chronicles 20:7 Did you not, our God, drive out the inhabitants of **this land** before your people Israel, and **give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend?** (Jehoshaphat's prayer)

Ezra 9:12 Therefore do not give your daughters to their sons, neither take their daughters for your sons, and never seek their peace or prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good of **the land and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.**'

Isaiah 60:21 Your people shall all be righteous; **they shall possess the land forever**, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I might be glorified.

Jeremiah 25:5 saying, 'Turn now, every one of you, from his evil way and evil deeds, and dwell upon **the land that the LORD has given to you and your fathers from of old and forever.**

Jeremiah 31:35 Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar-- the LORD of hosts is his name: ³⁶ **"If this fixed order departs from before me, declares the LORD, then shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation before me forever."**

Ezekiel 37:25 They shall dwell in **the land that I gave to my servant Jacob**, where your fathers lived. **They and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever.**

COMMENT: The eyes of faith will look beyond the wilderness of scattering from the Land and still find hope and grace that God is true to His word. One day Israel will dwell forever in the land with "David my servant" (Jesus, Son of David) as their King, even if not in their lifetime.

2. The “Time of Jacob’s Trouble” (30:7 in NKJV; “time of distress” in ESV) 30:4-9

“These are the words that the LORD spoke concerning Israel and Judah: ⁵ “Thus says the LORD: We have heard a cry of panic, of terror, and no peace. ⁶ Ask now, and see, can a man bear a child? Why then do I see every man with his hands on his stomach like a woman in labor? Why has every face turned pale? ⁷ Alas! That day is so great there is none like it; it is a time of distress for Jacob; yet he shall be saved out of it. ⁸ “And it shall come to pass in that day, declares the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off your neck, and I will burst your bonds, and foreigners shall no more make a servant of him. ⁹ But they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.”

- This speaks of a time when Israel and Judah return to the land together (30:3-4).

*Jeremiah describes a time of panic, terror and distress for Israel, yet promises that they will be saved out of it. They will be freed from a yoke, and **they will serve the Lord and David their King.***

- It is a time of great trouble unlike any other. Why is it so terrible? See Zech 12:1-3; 14:1-3

This “time of Jacob’s trouble” corresponds to the time of “great tribulation” referred to by Jesus in Matt 24:21. Jesus said this will be the time of the worst suffering the world has ever known. It is the last 42 months (3.5 years) before Christ returns – see Reve 13:5-9. In the Book of Revelation it corresponds to the events of chapters 12-18 (starting after the death and resurrection of the Two Witnesses in Jerusalem in chapter 11), which include the persecution of Israel, the revealing and reign of the beast and false prophet, the Harvest of the Earth, the Seven Bowls of Wrath (the last group of judgments poured out on earth), and judgment on “harlot Babylon”.

Zechariah gives much more detail about Israel’s condition just prior to the return of Christ than most any other prophetic book, even Revelation. All nations will be gathered to lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem (12:1-3; 14:1-3). The city will be taken and plundered. Two-thirds of the people will be destroyed, but one-third will be refined in the fire and will call upon God. These will join God’s Covenant people through this trial (13:8-9). Then Christ will return to the Mount of Olives, as the angels said at His Ascension, coming on the clouds with power and great glory. He will then be King over all the earth, and His Kingdom will finally be fully revealed for all the world to see (14:3-9; Acts 1:11; Matt 24:30).

- But Jacob (Israel) will be saved out of this “time of distress”. How? Zech 14:4.

By the Return of the King, Jesus their Messiah. He will protect Jerusalem and destroy the nations who come against her (Zech 12:8-9). And He will throw the beast and false prophet into the lake of fire, and destroy their armies (Rev 19:19-21).

- **Who was the last king of Israel? What happened to him?** 2 Kings 25:1-7

Zedekiah reigned for the last 11 years of the kingdom of Judah. In 586 BC, after a prolonged siege of Jerusalem causing severe famine, Nebuchadnezzar's army broke through the wall of the city. Zedekiah fled, but the Chaldeans (Babylonians) overtook and captured him. Zedekiah's army fled, and he was presented for judgment to the king of Babylon. Zedekiah's sons were slaughtered in front of him, then the Babylonians put out his eyes and took him captive to Babylon.

Following this brutal and ignominious end to the line of David on the throne of Israel, there has been no Davidic King on a physical throne in Israel. For more than two and a half thousand years (2,605 to be exact, as of this writing – the “many days” of Hosea 3:4), the people of Israel have dwelt “without king,” whether in the land or out of the land, as spoken of by Hosea 3:4.

- **The Promise of Liberation and the Return of the King (30:8-9).**

Who is the next King of Israel? See Hosea 3:4-5; Matt 20:30-31; 21:9.

Jeremiah 30:8-9 is a promise of liberation from an oppressor. “In that day” (a phrase in OT prophecy most often referring to the latter days), Israel will no longer be made a servant. Rather, they shall “serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.”

Hosea tells us that “the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king or prince.” How about more than two and a half thousand years? That is how long it has been since Zedekiah's eyes were gouged out – and Israel has been without king or prince, 2605 years and counting. But Hosea also promises that “afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God (Yahweh), and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days.”

*Who is “David their king?” Clearly not the historical David, who lived hundreds of years before Jeremiah and Hosea. **The reference is to a future son of David, the one who was called by that royal title as he came toward Jerusalem to be presented as king. He is Jesus, called by His Messianic title “son of David,” first by two blind men on the roadside, then by the adoring crowds waving palm branches. Though Israel rejected Him at His first coming, He will return to claim His Throne one day. And the kingdom will then be restored to Israel, the ultimate answer to the disciples' question in Acts 1:6.***

3. The Promise of Regathering, Accountability and Eternal Establishment of Israel 30:10-11

“Then fear not, O Jacob my servant, declares the LORD, nor be dismayed, O Israel; for behold, I will save you from far away, and your offspring from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return and have quiet and ease, and none shall make him afraid. ¹¹ For I am with you to save you, declares the LORD; I will make a full end of all the nations among whom I scattered you, but of you I will not make a full end. I will discipline you in just measure, and I will by no means leave you unpunished.” (ESV)

- **What is God’s Future Plan for Israel and the Nations? Zech 14:9-19; Isa 2:1-5; 11:10-12**

Fear and depression are common, natural human reactions to a wilderness of loss. The current “shelter in place” response to the Covid-19 pandemic, with an indefinite duration and uncertain future, may lead some to be afraid and dismayed. In Jer 30:10, God commands the exiles heading for Babylon not to give in to fear and depression.

Fear is alleviated by future hope. God promises to save them from far away. Their offspring will be saved out of Babylon; this happened with the conquest of Babylon by Medo-Persia, and the decree of Cyrus to allow them to return to their homeland.

God again assures them his purpose is to save them (30:11). But then he makes another jump to the distant future, still unfulfilled today, when he says he will “make a full end of all the nations among whom I scattered you.” Clearly this final judgment on other nations, their “full end,” has yet to be fulfilled.

But of Israel, God promises he will NOT make a full end. They will yet be established as chief among the nations. The promises in the other prophets describe that Day when all nations will come to Jerusalem to seek justice and to worship King Jesus.

- **What does God’s dealing with Israel’s accountability demonstrate? 30:11**

God says he will by no means leave Israel unpunished. That implies they will be held to the same standard God holds all nations and people to. The soul that sins will die, unless there is repentance and turning in faith to the Messiah-King who offered himself as a sacrifice for many.

Some interpreters object to seeing all these promises to Israel as yet to be literally fulfilled in some distant future. Some object to what they see as a “Christian Zionism,” which somehow entails what they fear as unjustified political support of present-day Israel. Christians should avoid such political entanglements, and the blame for such distractions is sometimes placed at the feet of those who interpret scripture literally, as this study has done.

In response, it should be obvious that one can hold to the literal interpretation of God's prophetic promises, as this study does, without implying the necessity of blind support for some secular unbelieving government in any present-day state of Israel. All human governments are fallible and will be held accountable before God for their actions. We are not required to hold to any present-day political view, right or left, simply because we affirm the truth of God's last-days promises for Israel given in his inerrant word. To jettison the clear teaching of God's word because of some fear of potential political bias is short-sighted at best, and more seriously may threaten the integrity and clarity of scriptural truth and teaching.

The alternative to teaching the clear meaning of prophetic texts about last-days Israel is to explain them away as having some mysterious allegorical fulfillment in the Church age, the nearly 2000 years since Christ left this world. Such a hermeneutical model would be encumbered by purely subjective opinions of individual teachers as to what a reference to "Israel," "Judah," or Messiah's kingly reign in Jerusalem is actually supposed to be referring to.

So let us commit to avoiding unwarranted political applications of biblical prophecy. Let us avoid lurching to the either the right or the left. Let us also allow the prophetic word to speak for itself. Let us commit to the doctrine of the clarity of scripture – "the unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple" (Psalm 119:130).

Having said all this, we should be praying for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6). There is no real estate in all the world which is the subject of such intense, ongoing, and intractable religious wars as is the land of Israel. And it will be that way all the way up to and through the "time of Jacob's trouble," until Jesus returns.

Jeremiah 30:11 makes it clear that national Israel has no "favored status" when it comes to accountability for sin when standing before God. In fact, God will save only a remnant of Israel, even in the last day. Zechariah 13:8 indicates only a third will be saved, those who one day look upon the One whom they pierced, and mourn for him, and find in him a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's vein, for the cleansing of their souls.

Christians should affirm the truth of God's word – every word of God proves true (Prov 30:5). He will save a remnant of last-days Israel, those who trust in Messiah-Jesus. But that does not require that we blindly support any present-day government, whether in the USA, in Israel, or elsewhere. God will hold all people, including political leaders, accountable for their choices and actions. Ultimately, our accountability before God will be determined by what we choose to do about his crucified, risen, and returning Son. Those who trust in him will be spared punishment and will go into everlasting life; those who reject him will face eternal punishment.

4. God's Reasons for the Babylonian Captivity, the Wilderness of Loss 30:12-17

"For thus says the LORD: Your hurt is incurable, and your wound is grievous. ¹³ There is none to uphold your cause, no medicine for your wound, no healing for you. ¹⁴ All your lovers have forgotten you; they care nothing for you; for I have dealt you the blow of an enemy, the punishment of a merciless foe, because your guilt is great, because your sins are flagrant. ¹⁵ Why do you cry out over your hurt? Your pain is incurable. Because your guilt is great, because your sins are flagrant, I have done these things to you.

¹⁶ Therefore all who devour you shall be devoured, and all your foes, every one of them, shall go into captivity; those who plunder you shall be plundered, and all who prey on you I will make a prey.

¹⁷ For I will restore health to you, and your wounds I will heal, declares the LORD, because they have called you an outcast: 'It is Zion, for whom no one cares!'" (ESV)

- Israel went into Captivity because of its sin (30:12-15)

In verses 12-3, God describes the Babylonian Exile, this great "wilderness of loss," with the metaphor of a grievous illness. Like Covid-19, this illness has no cure. In verse 14, the metaphor shifts to Israel as a spurned lover for whom her former suitors no longer care. This is divine judgment, "the blow of an enemy," a punishment on Zion because she has great guilt because of her flagrant sins. Because of Israel's flagrant sins, God has done these things.

We sometimes want to say that God doesn't use natural disasters to punish people. We may see this as perhaps characteristic of God in the Old Testament, but not in the New Testament. And we shirk back from seeing the hand of God when a natural disaster, or war, or disease, or a mass tragedy occurs.

Scripture tells us otherwise. God is active in our world, constantly at work to accomplish his eternal purposes, for our good and for his glory. His wrath is stirred up every day (Psa 7:11). And this is not only true in the OT. In the NT, we see instantaneous divine discipline on Ananias and Sapphira for lying to the church (Acts 5:1-11). In Romans 1:18-27 we are taught that God reveals his wrath on sin by giving up sinful men to the due penalty of their sin. In 1 Cor 11:27-30, we are told that taking of the Lord's Table in an unworthy manner may result in illness or even death. Because of our sins as a human race, the wrath of God is coming (Colossians 3:5-6). And the ultimate description of the wrath of God on the world for its sin is found in Revelation, describing events yet to occur at the end of this age (Rev 6:16-17; 11:18; 16:1; 19:15).

But not all suffering is a direct punishment for sin. In the presence of the man born blind, Jesus was asked who sinned, the man or his parents. Jesus said that neither sinned, but this occurred that the works of God might be displayed (John 9:1-3). Some suffering may be divine pruning, that we may be more fruitful (John 15:2). Some suffering serves to grow our endurance, character, hope, and love (Romans 5:3-5). God has his reasons for allowing suffering in his

peoples' lives, and sometimes we can never fully understand why. Yet his purposes are always for our good (Rom 8:28) and for his glory (1 Peter 4:11).

Having said all this, when sudden disaster or a viral pestilence happens, we should not be asking who sinned, but rather we should be examining our own hearts for where we may need to repent, for the moment of our own death can come without warning, and we must be ready to stand before God (Luke 13:1-5).

So in the face of a wilderness like Covid-19, we should all be seeking God with hearts of humility and repentance, seeking not only physical healing and deliverance, but drawing closer to God spiritually as well. He allows pestilence to draw us closer to him (2 Chronicles 7:13-14).

- **Those who plunder Israel will be devoured for their sinful actions against Israel (30:16)**

It is a common theme that those whom God chose to bring discipline or judgment on his people usually went beyond their mandate and were excessive in the use of force. God has a day of accounting for them as well.

- **God will heal Israel out of her shameful defeat and captivity (30:17)**

Once more, God promises to bind up Israel's wounds after he has brought discipline upon them. When others mock that Israel is abandoned with none to care for her, God reaffirms his care for her.

5. A Promise of Return and Restoration of the Covenant in the Last Days: Jeremiah 30:18-24

"Thus says the LORD: Behold, I will restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob and have compassion on his dwellings; the city shall be rebuilt on its mound, and the palace shall stand where it used to be. ¹⁹ Out of them shall come songs of thanksgiving, and the voices of those who celebrate. I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will make them honored, and they shall not be small. ²⁰ Their children shall be as they were of old, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all who oppress them. ²¹ Their prince shall be one of themselves; their ruler shall come out from their midst; I will make him draw near, and he shall approach me, for who would dare of himself to approach me? declares the LORD. ²² And you shall be my people, and I will be your God."

²³ Behold the storm of the LORD! Wrath has gone forth, a whirling tempest; it will burst upon the head of the wicked. ²⁴ The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intentions of his mind. In the latter days you will understand this." (ESV)

- Describe the “latter day” blessings for Israel promised in 30:18-21.

- *The LORD will restore the dwelling places of Israel*
- *The city (Jerusalem) will be rebuilt on its mound*
- *The palace will be rebuilt in its former location*
- *There will be songs of celebration*
- *The population will flourish*
- *God will punish their oppressors*
- *Their “prince” will be one of them; he will draw near to Yahweh*

- In 30:21, who is their “prince” from among them who will draw near to God and restore the covenant between God and Israel? Heb 10:19-23; 7:25

The “prince” is Jesus. He is “one of them,” a descendant of Jacob and David. He is the “Prince of peace” (Isa 9:6). He is the only one who could “enter through the curtain” separating us from the holiness of God; he did this on the cross, and the Temple curtain was torn in two. Because he drew near to God on our behalf, we too can now draw near to God. Because of this access he created for us, we can have peace with God (Romans 5:2).

- What is the significance of the covenantal language in 30:22?

“You shall be my people, and I will be your God” echoes the covenant relationship between God and his people in Old and New Covenants (Exod 6:7; Lev 26:12; Ezek 36:28; 1 Peter 2:10). In Ezekiel 36:28, as here in Jer 30:22, the reference is to the last days remnant from ethnic Israel who turn to Jesus as their Messiah, placing faith in him as Savior and Lord.

- In 30:23-24, what attributes of God will be exercised to accomplish all this?

The wrath of God in final judgment on his enemies is in view here, foreshadowing much of his wrath depicted in the book of Revelation, especially the final Seven Bowls of Wrath (Rev 16).

- When will the people “get it,” that is, understand the meaning of this prophecy? (30:24)

In the “latter days,” that is, the days just before the Return of the King, Jesus (Rev 19:11). The prophecy of Jeremiah 30 is clearly focused on the end of days, yet in the future even for us.

APPLY:

- **How should the wrath of God inform our faith and be part of our gospel and Christian life?**

John 3:36; Rom 1:16-18; 2:5; 5:8-10; 9:20-26; 12:19; 13:4-5

Eph 4:31-32; Col 3:5-9; 1 Thes 1:10; 1 Thes 5:9; Rev 19:15

- **How does the promise of Christ's return help us now?** To what should it motivate us?
 - Titus 2:13
 - 1 John 3:2-3
 - 2 Cor 5:10-21