

God's Sovereign Choice of Israel

Why did God choose the people of Israel to be a “royal priesthood” and a “holy nation” (Ex. 19:6, ESV)? Was it because of some inherent good quality in them? Was it because they were better than other peoples? The Lord answered this question directly: “The Lord did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt” (Deut. 7:7–8, NIV).

Paul addressed this as well when he wrote, “For he says to Moses, ‘I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.’ It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy” (Rom. 9:15-16).

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Israel was chosen because of the sovereignty of God, not because of Israel’s own merit.

He set His love on Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and determined to bless the world through their offspring, meaning through the people of Israel and ultimately through the seed of the last Abraham, Jesus the Messiah. Because He made unconditional promises to the patriarchs, He has kept His word through the generations, preserving, disciplining, scattering and regathering the people of Israel.

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That's the only reason we are still here (I say this as a Jewish person myself), and that's why we are back in Israel today, all by the sovereign will of God.

As He said clearly, "This is what the Lord says, he who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—the Lord Almighty is his name: 'Only if these decrees vanish from my sight,' declares the Lord, 'will Israel ever cease being a nation before me.' This is what the Lord says: 'Only if the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth below be searched out will I reject all the descendants of Israel because of all they have done'" (Jer. 31:35–37).

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