

Small Group Guide: Understanding God's Redemptive Story and Israel's Role

Opening Prayer

Begin by thanking God for His faithfulness throughout history and asking the Holy Spirit to give wisdom and understanding as you discuss His Word together.

Ice Breaker

What current events or news stories have caused you to question how Christians should respond? What questions have you been asking lately about God's plan?

Key Takeaways

1. The Consistent Message of Scripture

From Moses through the prophets, personified in Christ, witnessed by disciples, proclaimed by apostles, and handed down through the church—it's all the same story of God's redemptive plan through Christ.

2. Israel's Pattern of Rebellion

Throughout history, Israel has repeatedly rejected God's word and His Christ, resulting in covenant curses including blindness, deafness, lameness, and exile from the land.

3. Christ's Identity Confirmed Through Words and Works

Jesus demonstrated He was the promised Messiah through specific miracles (blind see, deaf hear, lame walk, lepers cleansed, dead raised, poor hear the gospel) that were signs pointing to Old Testament prophecies.

4. The Gospel Goes to the Nations

Because of Israel's rejection, the gospel has gone out to the Gentiles—this is exactly what Moses predicted in Deuteronomy 32 and what we're living in today.

5. Our Proper Alignment

The question isn't "Are you for or against Israel?" but "Are you for or against the Lord?" We align ourselves with Christ, not with any nation or political entity.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Story (15-20 minutes)

- 1. The Sermon walked through a sweeping view of biblical history. What was most surprising or new to you about how the Old Testament connects to the New Testament?**
- 2. Read Deuteronomy 28:15-68 (summarized in the sermon). How does understanding these covenant curses help you make sense of Israel's condition when Jesus arrived?**
- 3. What does it mean that Jesus' miracles were "signs" rather than just random acts of compassion? How does this change your understanding of the Gospel accounts?**

Applying to Current Events (15-20 minutes)

- 4. The pastor addressed recent events involving Israel. How does understanding the biblical storyline help you respond to current Middle East conflicts differently than you might have before?**
- 5. When the angel told Joshua "Neither—I am the commander of the Lord's army," what was the point?**
- 6. Read Luke 12:4-7. Jesus tells His disciples not to fear those who can kill the body. In light of world events and increasing hostility toward Christians, how does this passage encourage you?**

Personal Application (15-20 minutes)

- 7. The sermon emphasized that our hope is not in politicians, laws, or nations, but in Christ's return. Where have you been tempted to place your hope in something other than Christ? How can you redirect that hope?**
- 8. Jesus taught us to pray "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." How does this prayer take on new meaning when you understand we're in the "age of delay" waiting for Christ's return?**
- 9. Read Matthew 24:4-14. Jesus warns about deception, wars, persecution, and lawlessness before the end. How should these warnings shape:**

- How you consume news and media?
- How you respond to fear and anxiety?
- How you prioritize your time and resources?

Key Scriptures for Further Study

- **Deuteronomy 28-32** - The covenant curses and the Song of Moses
- **Isaiah 35, 40-66** - The suffering servant and Israel's restoration
- **Matthew 11-13** - Jesus' validation and Israel's rejection
- **Matthew 24** - Signs of the end and Christ's return
- **Romans 9-11** - God's plan for Israel and the Gentiles
- **Psalms 2 & 110** - The nations vs. the Lord's anointed

Closing Discussion

How has this study changed your perspective on:

- Current events?
- Your role as a Christian in a chaotic world?
- Where you place your hope?
- How you should pray?

Closing Prayer

Pray together:

- For peace that comes only through repentance and faith in Christ
- For boldness to proclaim Christ regardless of opposition
- For freedom from fear about world events
- For Christ's return: "Even now, come Lord Jesus"
- For endurance to "fight the fight, keep the faith, run the race"