

Romans 15:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

Analysis

Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God (λέγω δὲ Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν διάκονον γεγενῆσθαι περιτομῆς ὑπὲρ ἀληθείας θεοῦ, *legō de Christon Iēsoun diakonon gegenēsthai peritomēs hyper alētheias theou*)—Paul begins demonstrating (vv. 8-12) how Christ received both Jews and Gentiles. *Diakonon* (minister, servant) emphasizes Christ's servanthood—he became a servant of the circumcision (Jews). Christ's earthly ministry focused on Israel (Matt 10:5-6, 15:24), fulfilling God's covenant promises. *Hyper alētheias theou* (for the truth/faithfulness of God) indicates that Christ's Jewish mission vindicated God's faithfulness—God keeps his promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

To confirm the promises made unto the fathers (εἰς τὸ βεβαιῶσαι τὰς ἐπαγγελίας τῶν πατέρων, *eis to bebaiōsai tas epangelias tōn paterōn*)—Christ came first to Israel to confirm (ratify, establish) the patriarchal promises. The Abrahamic, Davidic, and new covenants find their 'Yes' in Christ (2 Cor 1:20). Jewish believers can trust that in Christ, God has fulfilled his ancient word. This establishes continuity between Israel and the church, OT and NT.

Historical Context

Paul's emphasis on Christ as servant to the circumcision counters any suggestion that Christianity abandons Israel or that God has reneged on his promises (cf. Rom

9-11). Writing to a mixed church, Paul affirms God's faithfulness to Israel while arguing this very faithfulness now includes Gentiles (vv. 9-12). This balance was crucial for Jewish-Gentile unity.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's faithfulness in fulfilling God's promises to Israel strengthen your confidence in God's promises to you?
2. What does Christ's servanthood 'to the circumcision' teach about God's commitment to keeping his word despite human unfaithfulness?
3. How should understanding Christ as the fulfillment of Israel's promises shape Christian attitudes toward Jewish people and heritage?

Interlinear Text

λέγω δὲ, Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν διάκονον γεγενῆσθαι

I say Now that Jesus Christ a minister was
G3004 G1161 G2424 G5547 G1249 G1096

περιτομῆς ὑπὲρ ἀληθείας θεοῦ εἰς τὸ βεβαιῶσαι
of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm
G4061 G5228 G225 G2316 G1519 G3588 G950

τὰς ἐπαγγελίας τῶν πατέρων
the promises made unto the fathers
G3588 G1860 G3588 G3962

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 15:24 (Parallel theme): But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

John 1:11 (Parallel theme): He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

2 Corinthians 1:20 (Covenant): For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

John 10:16 (Parallel theme): And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Romans 3:3 (References God): For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

Romans 11:30 (References God): For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:

Romans 4:16 (Covenant): Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

Romans 11:22 (References God): Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

Romans 15:16 (References Jesus): That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

Acts 13:46 (References God): Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.