

**NEWS AND VIEWS**  
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*“Southern Baptists with the Full  
Gospel for the Whole World”*

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*Not all who wander are lost.* I saw that on the left side of a bumper sticker recently. The bumper shared its space on the right with the all too common “coexist” declaration. You know, the one with all the cute little designs involving the letters depicting world religions and cultural beliefs. I understand the sticker but not so much the belief. If my interpretation of that message is correct, the occupant, or at least the owner of the car, believes that all religious expression and practice share a common purpose and a common destiny. And all people have a need to worship their own gods. I will agree that humanity is hardwired with a desire to worship. But the destiny part is different. Instead of many paths to God, there is only one way to one God...there can be only one God...the universe is not big enough for two I once heard it preached. So after taking a little time to process that thought, let’s move on to the previous one. I can only deal with one thought at one time.

*Not all who wander are lost.* I guess those who think thoughts that bumper stickers wear might think, Wanderers wander...but not always aimlessly or without purpose. Not all wanderers can be accused of losing their direction. I’m trying to make a connection between this sticker and the other one. All I can come up with is this. When we think it doesn’t matter how, or who we worship, we can be lost and not even know it. But when I restate this catchy little phrase, it seems to clarify it for me. *Not all who wander are lost* can be rearranged to read, *Not all who are lost wander.* You see, our lostness can be reinforced when we never move at all. We can remain so rooted in our lostness we think we are in the right place and occupying the right position. In other words, it is we who are right. It’s everyone else that needs to be brought into order.

A Bible quote comes to mind when I am considering these words about wandering. In the following passage a reference is made to a wandering man. Consider the following: *Then it shall be, when you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance, and you possess it and live in it, that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground which you bring in from your land that the Lord your God gives you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place where the Lord your God chooses to establish His name. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to him, “I declare this day to the Lord my God that I have entered the land which the Lord swore to our fathers to give us.” Then the priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of the Lord your God. You shall answer and say before the Lord your God, “My father was a **wandering Aramean**, and he went down to Egypt and sojourned there, few in number; but there he became a great, mighty and populous nation. And the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, and imposed hard labor on us. Then we cried to the Lord, the God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction and our toil and our oppression; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with great terror and with signs and wonders; and He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. (Deuteronomy 26:1-9)*

This wandering Aramean was a man named Jacob, who the Lord had renamed Israel. His grandfather Abraham was given a promise, and a place, and received a covenant from a covenant-keeping God. I believe this covenant is still in effect today in at least one particular way. Hear the word of the Lord in Genesis 12:3: *And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse.* Increasingly, some folks in our government leadership seem quick to wander away from a national policy of blessing Israel. In a recent flare up, news sources quote one high level U.S. official as saying the Israeli Prime Minister needed to remember that the U.S President has a year and a half left to his presidency and there would be a price to pay. Sounds like a threat to me. I’m wondering about our wandering position. And how does God hear these words? Are we in danger of losing the blessing of God and bearing His curse for our treatment of Israel? I think we are already there and the ride is going to get rougher if there is no repentance from the highest places of authority in our land. We are lost...and wandering. And our leadership thinks we are right and everyone else is out of order. The Lord has not replaced Israel with the Church. And He is not finished with Israel’s redemption, despite some of the best thinking of some leading theologians and politicians. I pray they have another think coming. Here’s my best thought about that... and it is from a higher mind thinking higher thoughts...the Word of the Lord.

*Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. (Psalms 121:4)*

Blessings to you from a land that is losing its blessing...pray for those in authority to come under God’s authority.

Pastor Sam