

# Israel and Jerusalem

- in history and prophecy -

## Part II

### Who are Israel?

*compiled by Rachel Cory-Kuehl, July 2012*

*Last edited November, 2016*

*Scripture is from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.*

This study was difficult to write because so many have strong feelings concerning the present nation of Israel. I will try to share my views, and they are just that - my views.

The promises and prophecies concerning the coming Messianic kingdom were addressed to “Israel”. To understand the coming Kingdom of Messiah, we must define the “Israel” of prophecy - the *future* Israel. **Who then is an Israelite?**

#### IT DEPENDS ON YOUR CONTEXT

Genesis 32:28 [The LORD speaking] “And He said, ‘Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.’”

Explaining the concept of “Israel” for those without a background in theology, is difficult because the meaning changes depending on the context. It begins with the man Jacob, whose name the LORD changed to Israel. His descendants were then called the “Children of Israel”. Twelve sons produced twelve tribes. Others were joined to the tribes by vow and circumcision, or by marriage to an Israelite male.

Moses led the Children of Israel out of Egypt. A mixed multitude of Egyptians and fellow slaves also followed Moses into the wilderness. The larger group was simply called “the congregation”. It is interesting that our English word “church” means exactly that - “congregation”.

The LORD promised Abraham (grandfather of Jacob) that his “seed” would one day inherit “the land”. The promise was continued to Isaac (whom the LORD chose over Ishmael) and then to Jacob (whom He chose over Esau), and then to Jacob’s descendants. The LORD plainly stated that He “chose” Israel because of His promise to Abraham.

*In Galatians ---- The Apostle Paul makes it clear that the promised inheritance of “the land” would be fulfilled through Jesus Christ. He is the one true “seed” (Galatians 3:16).*

## ISRAEL DIVIDED

If your context is 945BC to 721BC, then “Israel” was the name taken by the 10 Northern tribes, which split away from the two Southern tribes after the death of King Solomon. The Southern kingdom was called Judah, for the larger of the two tribes. A “Jew” was from the nation of Judah. An “Israelite” would be one who belonged to the Northern kingdom.

The Northern kingdom didn’t last. They turned to idol worship. The LORD divorced them, and the Assyrians decimated the country, scattering the people into slavery. (Elijah, Elisha, Hosea, and Amos were prophets to the Northern Kingdom.) Before the Assyrian destruction, many families fled South - into the territory of Judah. These were merged into the Southern kingdom. After the Northern tribes were destroyed, what remained of “the Children of Israel” was concentrated in the nation called Judah. The people of Judah referred to themselves as “Israelites”.

Then the rulers of Judah also turned to idolatry, and the LORD sent the Babylonians to “humble” them. Jerusalem was destroyed and the citizens of Judah were carried into captivity for 70 years. (Prophets to the Southern Kingdom included Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk and Obadiah.)

When a remnant from the captives was allowed to return home to “the land”, they called themselves Israelites. Now your context is Ezra and Nehemiah. (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Joel were prophets to the returned remnant.) Even the Jews who chose to remain in Babylon, called themselves “Israelites”. (The Book of Esther tells one story concerning those who remained.) (Ezekiel and Daniel prophesied to the exiles in Babylon.) All of this history is reviewed in the books of Kings and Chronicles.

When finally Jesus of Nazareth was born in Bethlehem, the Jews of His day called themselves “Israelites” regardless of where they resided - within the territory of Judah or in the territory of some other nation. They were still descendants of Jacob, and they were still in the bond of “the Covenant” signified by circumcision. Covenant Law, and Covenant promises belonged to them. Your **context** is now the first century of the “Common Era”, otherwise known as AD.

Romans 9:3-5 [Paul writing] “For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh. 4 They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; 5 to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.” (NRS)

Romans 11:1-5 “I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? 3 ‘Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars; I alone am left, and they are seeking my life.’ 4 But what is the divine reply to him? ‘I have kept for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal.’ 5 So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.” (NRS)

In our last verse, Paul is not saying that all biological descendants of Jacob are still “the chosen” of God. Far from it. Only a small remnant has been preserved by grace - those biological descendants who are also “of faith”. Paul *is saying* that the LORD has not “cast off” all of the biological descendants. There are still a few of “the chosen” biological descendants left - those who believe in the Jesus as Messiah and LORD.

## THE ISRAEL WITHIN ISRAEL

To our short history we now must add another layer of understanding.

Romans 9:6 “It is not as though God's word had failed. For **not all** who are descended from Israel **are Israel**” (NIV).

Romans 2:28 “A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical” (NIV).

So having Hebrew DNA is not enough. Physical circumcision is not enough. To be an Israelite - in the eyes of God - one must be circumcised in heart, not just in the flesh. Only those who truly believe in heart, and whose actions are consistently motivated by this belief, are regarded as Israelites in the sight of God. That makes it *about faith* - not merely descent. You see, physical circumcision had become the national custom, not necessarily a statement of faith, as it was with Abraham.

There was the Israel of descent, and *within* that Israel (of descent) there was the Israel of faith - an “Israel” *within* “Israel”. Now do you understand why it gets so confusing! When we read a verse, or a prophecy, it’s hard to tell if the prophecy is speaking of DNA Israel, or faith Israel.

When the prophets spoke of future rewards and blessings - they were speaking to the Israel of faith. When they spoke of dire punishments, they were speaking to the Israel of descent only. Those without faith were actually in danger of being “cut off” from Israel. **Prophecy and type, warned that those not “circumcised in heart” would be “broken off” from Israel, until only the Israel of faith remained.** Jeremiah the prophet describes the sifting process.

Jeremiah 3:14 “Return, faithless people’, declares the LORD, ‘for I am your husband. I will choose you – one from a town and two from a clan--and bring you to Zion.” (NIV)

When Paul said “even at this present time *there is a remnant* according to the election of grace”, he was speaking about the Israel of faith. And to make it even more complicated, God would add a multitude of “grafted in” Gentiles to the Israel of Faith. They would be “grafted in” to the “Green Olive Tree”.

**NOTE: *The remnant of Israel which the LORD would preserve for Himself, solidly nullifies “Replacement Theology”.***

Any time you have an identity or a doctrine, which is more difficult to explain for those without a good deal of study in the Scriptures, Satan will take advantage of this general lack of understanding. I believe that is exactly how Satan will deceive the whole world into worship of the Beast and his image. If your understanding of “Israel” is distinctly and concretely linked to those of Hebrew descent - if you make it about race (rather than about faith in Jesus), then you are likely to become another victim of Satan’s masterpiece of deception - for the final days.

## REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY

According to “Replacement Theology” the Children of Israel (DNA descendants) were the chosen people of God, but after they rejected their Messiah, God rejected them as His “chosen”. He left them to their fate. He has now appointed “the church” as his chosen vehicle - to carry forward His plan to preach the gospel, and to baptize those won to His kingdom. Israel (and specifically those of the Jewish race) are no longer the “chosen people” according to this teaching. **The church has replaced Israel as “the chosen.”**

*I’ve already told you why **I have rejected this doctrine**. Because it’s not about race. It’s about faith. There are many people of Hebrew ancestry, who believe that Jesus is the Messiah. These people are part of Christ’s church. So of course they are also “chosen”.*

Replacement Theology is also known as “supersessionism”. Some point to this doctrine as the primary source of anti-Semitism from the early church, through Martin Luther’s day, and on through Germany during WWII. Let me just point out that the Apostle Paul did not give up on the Jewish people, and neither should believers in Christ today. Individuals of Hebrew descent can still be won to Christ.

*NOTE: Most do not realize that Martin Luther was extremely anti-Semitic.*

## DISPENSATIONALISM

Both Replacement Theology and Dispensationalism **define Israel as those of Hebrew decent from Jacob**. And both define “Israel” as separate and completely distinct from “the church”.

Replacement Theology says “the church” has *permanently* replaced Israel as God’s “chosen people”. Dispensationalism says “the church” has replaced Israel *temporarily*, during this Church Age (the Age of Grace). Israel will be restored to “chosen” status after the rapture.

Dispensationalism is a theory based upon time periods, called ages or “dispensations”. During each dispensation, God has a different test for human beings. Individuals are “saved” if they pass the test, or live up the standard, for the age in which they live. For this present age - the “Church age”, the test is belief in Jesus. If one believes, he will be “saved”. During the age from Mount Sinai to the death of Christ, the test was the Law. That age was called the “age of Israel” or the “age of Law”.

A good visual guide to understanding the ages of Dispensationalism, is the book “Charting the End Times” by Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice.

According to Dispensationalism, Israel was allotted “seventy weeks” to finish their testing. The death of Christ cut short this time period, by one “week” - seven years. After “the Church” is raptured, the Jews will have seven more years, during which time they can be “saved” (as they once were) by Law keeping.

*But what about all the Jews who have lived and died since the cross of Christ? I guess they just could not be saved, because they didn't live during the right “age”.*

***I strongly disagree with both Replacement Theology and Dispensationalism. I will explain more about why a little later.***

**According to Dispensationalism**, we are now living in the “Age of the Gentiles” or “the Church Age” (also called the “Age of Grace”). This age will end with “the rapture,” when all the “heavenly people” (the Church) will suddenly be caught up to Heaven. They will just disappear. This will happen 7 years before Jesus Christ returns in glory to rule on the earth. After the Church is raptured, the Jews will be tested by the Antichrist for 7 years. Individual Jews may be saved if they keep the Law. Sinai Covenant-Law keeping requires a Temple, and animal sacrifices, which is a strong reason why I believe that a Temple of Yahweh will be restored on the Mount in Jerusalem.

See the study “[A Secret Rapture? - Part II](#)”

**According to Dispensationalism**, during the first half of the 70<sup>th</sup> “week” (3½ years), the Jews will restore the Temple and the sacrificial system. They will return to “works of the Law.”

The Antichrist will deceive the Jewish people during the first half of the week, but then “in the midst of the week” (*Dan. 9:27*) he will reveal his true character. He “will bring an end to sacrifices at the Temple. He will then become a dictator who demands worship of himself, during the last 3½ years - called the “tribulation,” or the “time of Jacob’s Trouble.”

God will punish those who persecute his people (the Jews) with great plagues. Finally, at the end of the 7 years, Christ will return (with His Church) to set up His earthly kingdom. He will reign (with Israel) over the nations in peace for 1000 years. The church will come back to earth with Christ at His glorious return but only those of Hebrew descent (Israel) will rule over the nations.

*COMMENT: If you see an opening for Satan here, then you're with me. Satan could easily bring in a counterfeit Antichrist, to take over the Mount and persecute the Jewish people. He could bring the Trumpet plagues. (Most folks do not realize that the Trumpets come before the seven last plagues - the bowl plagues.) Then he could appear gloriously, with “fire from Heaven” acting like Christ come. How many would realize that he is NOT Christ? He is the great imposter! And his demons could appear as the saints who were raptured and then returned.*

*NOTE: Dispensationalism takes many forms. I have tried to summarize in a general way. The "Left Behind" fictional series is based upon Dispensationalism.*

## THIS AUTHOR'S VIEW

1. I believe "the true church" - **is** "Israel". This "congregation" has always been made up of those who believe in heart (regardless of race). The "church" in the world today, is made up of those who believe in Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God, as Messiah, our Savior and rightful King. Those who do not believe in Jesus, **cannot prevail with God**, because Jesus is the only way to the Father (*John 14:6*).

But once again, the church of faith exists *within* the visible church. There are many who take the name of Jesus only because it is expected of them, not because they truly believe. They take the name of Jesus only as "fire insurance" - to cover their sins. They have no repentance. Their actions do not spring from faith. These are not Israelites. They are Christians in name only. They certainly *will not* prevail with God.

The majority of biological descendants from Jacob did not continue in faith. They became branches "broken off because of unbelief" (*Rom. 11:17-20*). In this condition - apart from Christ - they **are NO LONGER Israelites in the eyes of God**. But notice – Paul says that "God is able to graft them in again" *if* they do not continue in unbelief (*Rom. 11:23*).

Many descendants from Jacob are not knowingly persistent in rebellion against God. They are simply ignorant. They do not see. They do not understand. Their sin can be forgiven. Paul himself had to be "grafted in again" after he met the risen Christ on the road to Damascus.

*NOTE: The fact that a "blindness" and "hardness" has settled over most ethnic descendants of Jacob, is NOT EVER a legitimate reason to reject or to persecute those people. We are to love people of all nations for the sake of the Gospel of Christ!*

Do you see? There is *still* an Israel within "Israel". There are biological descendants who *do believe* in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. There are individuals, even within the current geopolitical nation called "Israel", who believe in Jesus as Messiah. These individuals are part of the larger "Israel" of faith, the congregation of Christ (the Church) which includes all of those who believe - regardless of race.

2. **God's "method" of saving individuals from sin**, and Satan's domination, **has always been the same** - by grace, through faith. Every sacrifice symbolized the "lamb of God" offered for our salvation. Every priest symbolized Christ, our High Priest in Heaven. Those living before the death of Christ looked forward in faith to God's provision of a "sacrifice". Those living since His death look back in faith, when they partake of the bread and the wine - symbols of His body and His blood which were offered for us. The reconciliation and justification was/and is, *effected by the same means* - by grace, through faith.

3. No one *has ever* - or *will ever* - be saved through “law keeping” (*Gal. 2:16*). We cannot “keep” the commandments, any more than the ancient Israelites could, unless Christ first fills us with His own sweet spirit - which is given to us *by grace*.

### “ADOPTED” AND “GRAFTED IN”

Romans 11:13-24 “For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I [*Paul*] am an apostle to the Gentiles . . .” “And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, . . . You will say then, ‘Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.’ Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith.”

*NOTE: The “root” of the tree “is holy” and “nourishes you.” That “root” is Christ. “We are rooted and grounded in Him” (Colossians 2:6-7; Isaiah 11:10).*

*NOTE: Paul makes it clear that Gentiles who have come to faith in Jesus as Messiah, are grafted into the Olive Tree. And the Olive Tree is Israel. These are made Israelites by Christ - not because of race, but through faith.*

Jeremiah 11:16-17 “The LORD called your name, Green Olive Tree, Lovely and of Good Fruit, with the noise of a great tumult He has kindled fire on it, and its branches are broken.” (*See also, Jeremiah 5:10-11.*)

*COMMENT: In referring to Israel as the Olive Tree, Paul is pointing his readers to this passage written by Jeremiah the prophet, just before the Babylonian destruction of Judah.*

Ephesians 2:11-22 [Paul - writing to Gentile believers] “Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh [*meaning uncircumcised*] . . . that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off [*uncircumcised Gentiles*] have been made near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of division between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity . . .

For through Him we both [*Jew and Gentile*] have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.”

In the time of Christ, there were only two kinds of people, so far as the Jews were concerned - circumcised law keepers, and uncircumcised Gentiles (also called aliens, strangers, or nations). Jews regarded themselves as Israelites and everyone else as unclean Gentiles. (See Lev. 17:8,10,13; Deut. 24:14; 2Chron. 2:17; Joel 3:17; Jer. 9:16, 10:2, 10:25.)

In Christ, the “strangers and foreigners” are made “fellow citizens” of “the commonwealth of Israel.” They become Israelites - “grafted in” and “adopted” by God!

John 10:16 [Yeshua speaking] “I have other sheep, which are not of this fold [*Israel*]; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.”

*The “one flock” will be Israel, and the “One Shepherd” - Yeshua Messiah.*

Ephesians 3:6 “. . . that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel . . .”

*Gentiles who believe, become Israelites - by faith. The one “body” is/and will be “Israel” - Israel redeemed. Which means that “Israel” is made up of people from many races!*

## THE CHOSEN - THE ELECT

*The word translated as “elect” means chosen.*

Psalm 4:3 “But know that the LORD has set apart for Himself, him who is godly.”

Deuteronomy 7:6 [Moses said to Israel] “For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.”

Deuteronomy 14:2 [Moses said to Israel] “For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.”

Let’s look in the New Testament to see if “the elect” are still exclusively those descended from Jacob.

Matthew 24:31 “And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

Ephesians 1:4 “For he chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight” (NIV).

*Here the chosen are all of those chosen of God, through Christ.*



Revelation 17:14 “They will wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will triumph over them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings-- and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers” (NIV).

Colossians 3:11 “where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all. 12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;”

*Did you get that? In the “elect of God” - the “chosen” - there no distinction between Jew and Gentile! There is no distinction because it’s not about race. It’s about faith.*

## TWO MEANINGS

So we have two definitions for “Israel” - a physical one (circumcised in flesh), and a spiritual one (circumcised in heart). And we have ancient prophecies addressed to “Israel” with meaning or fulfillment on at least these two levels.

Those prophecies which describe punishment and destruction were fulfilled *anciently* upon physical Israel, and upon those nations which persecuted Israelites. And these prophecies will be fulfilled *in future* upon the lost wicked of all ages, and upon the nations of this world who persecuted the people of God.

Those prophecies which describe victory and blessing and peace were fulfilled for faithful Israelites anciently, and they will be fulfilled for **greater faith Israel (which includes grafted in Gentiles)**. **The “Israel” of the coming Messianic Kingdom is simply the redeemed people of God** (circumcised in heart). Her citizens are from every nation, kindred, tongue and people!

Just as the term “Israelite” has more than one definition, the term “Gentile” is used in at least two ways. It may refer simply to one who is NOT circumcised OR it may refer to a non-believer. The context of the Bible passage, determines the meaning.

The 24 elders of Revelation 5:8-10, praise God who has **redeemed them “out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation” to be “kings and priests” to God**. Under the Sinai Covenant, priests were direct descendants of Jacob through his son Levi, and his great, great, grandson Aaron. Yet here are priests of every biological descent. Something has definitely changed!

*NOTE: Citizens of the present nation of Israel do not call themselves Israelites - but Israelis. I’m thankful for that!*

## THE PROMISES

Romans 9:4 [Paul speaking] “. . . Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises . . .”

The promises, and the covenants belong only to Israel. It might be well to point out that “the covenants” (each and every covenant promise in Scripture), including the “new covenant,” is made with Abraham or with Abraham’s chosen “seed”.

Romans 4:13-16 “For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. . .”

Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law [*Old Testament era sacrificial law keepers*], but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all [*New Testament era believers in the “sacrifice” of Christ*].”

Only Christ fulfilled the terms of the Sinai covenant - perfect faith, and perfect obedience. He did this by faith. He was filled with the Spirit of His Father. He is the only one who can rightfully receive the inheritance and the promises of THAT covenant. Christ is THE Seed of Abraham. He will be Heir of the world. We will share in that inheritance if we belong to HIM (*Psalms 37:9, Matthew 5:5*).

When we study the prophecies, especially those by Old Testament writers, we must consider the context carefully. The term “Israel” may refer simply to circumcised biological descendants of Jacob, OR it may refer to true believers who walk by faith. As used in the Revelation to the Apostle John, the term “Israel” refers to God’s remnant of the faithful.

In the prophecies, the term “Gentiles” may refer simply to the uncircumcised OR it may refer to non-believers - the “nations” who “know not God”.

Many prophecies have more than one application. The term “Israel” may have a physical application on one level, and a spiritual application on another.

Continued next page

## THOSE WHO WERE NOT - NOW ARE!

Hosea 1:10 “Yet the number of the sons of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered; And it will come about that, in the place where it is said to them, ‘You are not My people,’ it will be said to them, ‘You are the sons of the living God.’” NAS

*NOTICE how Paul uses the words of Hosea in our next passage. Paul applies the words of Hosea (the sons of Israel) to the Gentiles, who would come to faith in Christ Jesus as Savior.*

Romans 9:24-27 “. . . even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles. As He says also in Hosea (1:10 & 2:19), ‘I will call those who were not My people, My people, and her who was not beloved, Beloved. And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are Not My people,’ ‘there they shall be called sons of the living God.’”

## THOSE WHO WERE NOT - WILL BE - THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

Revelation 21:9-10 “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” . . . “And he . . . showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.”

Hosea 2:16 [Spoken to Israel] “And it shall be, in that day, says the Lord, That you will call Me ‘My husband.’ . . . (v.19) “I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in loving kindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the LORD” (v.23). “. . . Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, and I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy. Then I will say to those who were not My people, ‘You are My people!’ And they shall say, ‘You are my God!’”

ISRAEL was betrothed to the LORD.  
THE NEW JERUSALEM is the bride of Christ.

The gates are named for THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL.  
There is NO 13th gate labeled for “Non-Hebrews”.

Yeshua Messiah is now our High Priest who represents us in Heaven. How many stones are in His breastplate? Twelve! There is no 13th stone - to represent non-Hebrews.

On the table of shewbread in the Sanctuary, were twelve loaves - one for each tribe. If we are to partake of Christ as our “bread,” we must be *included* in the twelve tribes. There was no 13th loaf, for non-Hebrews.

## GATES AND FOUNDATIONS

In My view, the Israel of faith - true Israel - was continued in New Covenant Israel. The New Jerusalem has 12 gates, named for the tribes of Israel. Yes. It will be the meeting place of Israel. But consider! The City has **12 foundations**, named for the **12 Apostles**, Christ being the Cornerstone. **The foundation is what you build upon.** Israel victorious - is built upon the foundation laid by those 12 Apostles, NOT that laid by the 12 tribes. The message of the Apostles was the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is New Covenant Israel, NOT simply Sinai Covenant Israel. The earthly Jerusalem was only a TYPE - just as the wilderness Tabernacle was a COPY of Heaven itself.

Hebrews 12:18 “For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, . . . [rather] “you have come to Mount Zion and to the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, . . . to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven.”

Jesus is “*the* firstborn”. When you believe in Him, you become part of Him - part of “his body” (*Eph. 1:23, Eph. 5:30*). That is when your name is registered in Heaven as a citizen of The City. According to Ephesians 1:23, “the church” *is* “his body”.

Galatians 3:29 “If you are Christ’s then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

Abraham had sons (seed) by Hagar, Sarah, and Keturah - 8 sons in all. Every one went on to father many, many descendants. Yet the New Testament only recognizes one “Seed” - Jesus Christ. If you belong to Him, *then* you are counted as “seed” of Abraham.

The vast majority of Jews presently living worldwide, are not faith “sons of Abraham” by the New Testament definition, and are not blessed as such. God cannot legally protect them, because they do not legally belong to Christ. They have not entered into the New Covenant - through Christ. The vast majority are secular. Most do not believe in God - at all. For them, it is about protecting their race. It is not about serving the God of their fathers.

Now, the Jerusalem which is above is called “the mother of us all” (*Galatians 4:26*). If she is our “mother” that means she *existed* before we did. Think about that! The Jerusalem on earth was only a copy or TYPE. All those who have entered into the New Covenant with God through Christ and by faith, become citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, and citizens of Israel Redeemed.

Abraham “looked for a City whose builder and maker is God” (*Hebrews 11:10*). John the Apostle, in the last book of the New Testament, describes the 144,000 (of all the tribes of Israel) as “standing on Mount Zion”. These have come to the “heavenly Jerusalem”, not the physical mountain on planet earth.

## THE CHURCH vs ISRAEL

### Two different peoples ? No!

The word translated “church” in the New Testament portion of our Bible is “ekklesia” (strong’s #1577). The word means “assembly” or “congregation.” Ancient Israel *was* “the congregation” of Yahweh (*Acts 7:38*). Those who have entered into the New Covenant through Christ, *are now* “the congregation” of Yahweh. They are Israel! They will prevail with God.

Israel of old existed on two levels - the physical (or outward level) and the spiritual (heart) level. The same is true of “the church”. But the outward appearance, or the outward profession does not count with God. Only those “of faith” (in heart) will finally be saved.

New Testament believers love to quote Christ’s words, “I am the vine. You are the branches.” But don’t forget. “**The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel**” (*John 15:5, Isaiah 5:7*). If you are drawing life from Christ, then you *are* an Israelite!

## CLAIMING THE COVENANT PROMISES

I have a little book called “Promises”. It contains all of the promises of the Bible. Many are quoted from The Psalms, Jeremiah, Isaiah and other Old Testament books. If I were to look back at the context of those promises, I would find that they were spoken to Israel, and were based upon the Covenant with Abraham, yet they are presented in my little book, so that I may claim those promises for myself. But I am a Gentile by descent. How can I claim those promises? Praise Him! I *am* in covenant - an Israelite “grafted in.” Those promises belong to me.

## ISRAEL: DEFINITIONS

1. The man Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel (*Gen. 32:28*).
2. Biological descendants of the man Israel - the Twelve Tribes.
3. The ten Northern tribes who split off, under Rehoboam after the death of Solomon.

*Though these tribes were destroyed or carried away by Assyria, those within the North who remained faithful to Yahweh, will someday be resurrected and will be “returned to their land”. (The Southern tribes were called Judah.)*

4. The remnant of Judah, who returned from Babylon, and their descendants.  
*Paul called himself an Israelite - though he was of the tribe of Benjamin (Rom. 11:1).*
5. Those descendants of Jacob who had a heart toward God.  
*Jesus called Nathanael “an Israelite indeed” (John 1:47).*

6. **All who have entered by faith, into covenant with God thru Jesus Christ** (*Ephesians 2*).
7. Christ Himself - the One who prevails with God (*Hosea 11:1 & Matt. 2:15*).  
*The name Israel means "one who prevails with God."*

*Each one of the above definitions can be correctly applied. The context determines which definition is correct within a particular passage.*

*Most especially remember that in ancient prophecy, the LORD may be speaking on two levels - a physical level (to the nation) and a faith spiritual level (to faithful believers). BOTH apply.*

## THE FUTURE OF ISRAEL

Romans 11:26 "**And so all Israel will be saved**, as it is written, 'The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob, For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.'"

If "Israel" (here in Paul's letter) includes every person of faith - and *only* persons of faith - who have entered into covenant with God through Christ, who are humble at heart and strive to obey God, then I would wholeheartedly agree with Paul.

Everyone whose name remains in the Book of Life, will be saved, regardless of race. And everyone who remains a citizen of Israel will be saved, regardless of race (because non-Hebrew believers are grafted in). The name of those finally redeemed to live as citizens of Christ's kingdom - is Israel. **Israel is the name of the redeemed.** "And so all Israel will be [the] saved."

Some teach that *all* physical descendants of Jacob will eventually be saved. I cannot agree. Those who worshiped the golden calf (*Exo. Chpt 32*), Nadab and Abihu who offered "strange fire" and died in the "fire" of God Himself (*Lev. Chpt 10*), Korah, Dathan, and Abiram who led a rebellion against Moses with 250 princes (*Num. Chpt 16*), Achan who took forbidden goods from Jericho (*Joshua Chapter 7*), and those who sought the death of Jesus - these are just a few of those who rebelled against God, and were "cut off" from the people.

Romans 9:27 "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved."

*The "remnant" is what's left - a small portion of the whole.*

Others teach that only those of biological descent will be drawn to Jesus Christ, and thus be saved. Those with only Gentile DNA are not of the "chosen" and will feel no drawing of the Spirit. Really? I have no recognizable DNA connection with any tribe of Israel. Yet I definitely felt drawn to Christ. "God so loved the world . . . that whosoever believes in Him might . . . have everlasting life" (*John 3:16*).

Others teach that biological descendants of Jacob will receive special place and honor in Messiah's coming kingdom on earth. According to this teaching, they will rule over all other nations during the millennium. They will be the teachers of the law. They will be the priests, and the judges. I CANNOT AGREE with this teaching either. **God rewards faith - not biological descent.**

*The message of Revelation 2:26 was spoken to Christ's church, not to those specifically of Jewish lineage. "To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations" (NIV).*

*According to Revelation 20:6, all those who are resurrected at the return of Christ will "be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years". Do you really believe that only those of Hebrew lineage will be resurrected at the Second Coming? 1Corinthians 15:22-23 says all of those who belong to Christ, will be raised at His coming.*

Galatians 3:29 [Paul] "There is neither Jew nor Greek [Gentile] . . . for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And **if you are Christ's then you are Abraham's seed**, and heirs according to the promise."

*NOTE: I recently read the book "When a Jew Rules the World" by Joel Richardson. He believes that biological descendants of Jacob (along with grafted in Gentile believers) will one day rule the world under Jesus Christ as their King. So far, I agree with Richardson. Where I strongly disagree with Richardson, is in regard to the timing of Christ's reign over "the nations".*

*Richardson believes that Christ with Israel, will rule the world during the upcoming 7<sup>th</sup> millennium. **I believe Christ will reign with Israel redeemed, during the 8<sup>th</sup> millennium.***

*During the 7<sup>th</sup> or sabbatical year, Israelites were NOT to sow their fields, and were NOT to harvest any crops. When Jesus said, "The fields are ripe for the harvest" (Matt. Cpt 9 & 13), He was not speaking of crops. He was talking about souls to be harvested for the kingdom. And this means the redeemed will not "sow" or "harvest" during the "rest" (7<sup>th</sup>) millennium. They WILL "sow" again in the 8<sup>th</sup> year (the 8<sup>th</sup> millennium). The reason why this makes sense, is because the plagues will wipe out all life on planet earth - for a thousand years. This earth will become "the uninhabited place". (Please see the study: "[Millennium](#)".)*

*If you believe that Christ will return in glory to reign - at the beginning of the upcoming 7<sup>th</sup> millennium, you will be looking for this, and expecting this. This is WHY I believe the teaching of the 7<sup>th</sup> millennial reign on th earth, is preparing believers to worship Antichrist, who **WILL make it appear that he** has fulfilled every prophecy (including the overthrow of an antichrist - most likely Muslim) and **IS CHRIST come.***

Revelation 5:8-10 [The twenty four elders sing to the Lamb.] “For You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.”

*These priests are NOT all biological descendants of Jacob, much less of Levi and Aaron.*

## A NEW COVENANT WITH ISRAEL & JUDAH

Hebrews 8:8-10 “. . . when I make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah . . . for this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (*Hebrews 10:15-17, Jeremiah 31:31-33, Ezekiel 36:22-29, Ezekiel 11:16-20*).

The author of Hebrews is quoting from Jeremiah and from Ezekiel. In the prophecy of Ezekiel, Israel is first resurrected. Then Israel and Judah are joined together again - as one nation - never to be parted. The context of Ezekiel 36 makes it very clear that the New Covenant will not be fully realized until the Israel of God has been resurrected, gathered, joined together, and settled “in their own land”. This does not happen UNTIL after the Second Coming.

For now - we are betrothed by the New Covenant to the risen Son of God. The wedding feast has not yet taken place, nor yet the consummation. We have the promise, and we have the indwelling spirit as confirmation.

Most importantly, the Israel of God includes all those “grafted in” by faith in Messiah!

## CONCLUSION

New Covenant Israel - the Israel of prophetic promise - represents and includes all of those faithful to God and to His Son - irrespective of race, kindred or genetic descent.

*We pray this study will prove a blessing.  
Prophecy Viewpoint*

## FOR FURTHER STUDY:

*Grafted In, “Israel, Gentiles, and the Mystery of the Gospel, Second Edition,”  
by Thomas Lancaster, First Fruits of Zion, 2009*

Go to Part One of this series - “[Temples of Yahweh](#)”.

Go to Part Three of this series - “[Another Temple](#)”.

Go to Part Four of this series - “[Masterpiece of Deception](#)”.



[EMAIL US](#)

[Home](#)

[Search Our Site](#)

[Site Map](#)

**Thank you for visiting Prophecyviewpoint.com - Please drop us a line and let us know how we are doing.**

ProphecyViewPoint.com