

ISRAELOLOGY – ISRAEL PRESENT

ISRAEL PAST REVIEW

The origin of Israel begins with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with the promises and covenants made with them. The narrative of the Old Testament continues with the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob inheriting these covenants.

The covenants made to Israel are intended to establish a kingdom:

1. People
2. Land
3. King
4. Constitution

All of these promises are physical; there is no spiritual allegory.

The promises made to Israel are not yet fulfilled.

They broke their constitution, so God will reissue a constitution that will not/cannot be broken. When Israel is restored, they will never rebel again, they will never leave that land again, and Jesus will reign over them forever.

“An elect, sacred, and everlasting nation is the plan or purpose of God for Israel. This people miraculously came into being as the seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. They are the object of immeasurable covenants and promises and this becomes their major identification or destination, for the covenants are secured or sealed by the act of Jehovah. Israel stands alone, in distinction from all other nations combined. Those many nations are known as Gentiles, but Israelites as Jews.” ~ L.S. Chafer

What about now? Is current Israel that nation? Why do we have the church? What is Israel’s current role?

ISRAEL PRESENT

To understand the current state of Israel, we must establish the nature of the Nation of Israel. Is the current nation of Israel a people that are descendent of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

Language – They speak the language of the Old Testament

Religion – They hold to a belief of the Old Testament, albeit misguided.

Culture – The culture that is described in the Old Testament is followed by those of the nation (Holidays, dress, etc.)

DNA – Bennett Greenspan, the founder and president of Family Tree DNA, has demonstrated that Jews do have a heritage that has its origins in the Middle East. Harry Ostrer, a medical geneticist and professor at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York, also provides evidence that Jews have a distinctive genetic signature.

The argument that the current nation of Israel is not the Israel of the Bible is not viable and the only conclusion is that the current nation of Israel is the Israel of the Bible.

Since Israel exists today, what do we do with it? How does it impact our understanding of Scripture and the church? One of the most prominent views is that the Church has replaced Israel. Replacement Theology

(also known as Supersessionism) essentially teaches that the church has replaced Israel in God's plan. Adherents of Replacement Theology believe the Jews are no longer God's Chosen People, and God does not have specific plans for the nation of Israel. Some believe that the church is an expansion of Israel (Covenant Theology) or the church is completely different and distinct from Israel (Dispensationalism).

The Bible does not teach that the "ekklesia," the church, has replaced Israel, taken over for Israel, been grafted into Israel, or take on some of the promises of Israel. The Kingdom of God (Heaven) is not current, and its promises are not for this time.

With that as the conclusion, we search the Scriptures to identify how believers in this age should understand and treat Israel. Romans 9-11 is the most definitive section of Scripture that discusses what we do with Israel.

Romans 9:1-13

A literal rendering of verse 6 would be "The Word of God has not fallen, because not all those of Israel, these Israel." The typical interpretation of this verse is that there is a true spiritual Israel and a national Israel. The context dictates the meaning of this phrase.

"Nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "THROUGH ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL BE NAMED." If Paul intended to draw a spiritual emphasis, then this verse makes no sense.

Genesis 25:1-6 – The children of Abraham are usually distinguished into two lines, Ishmael and Isaac. But in fact, Abraham had six other sons for a total of eight: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, Shuah. The six others were given gifts and sent east - Moses marries Zipporah who is a daughter of Midian.

Paul is not referring to a "spiritual" Israel. There is nothing in this section (vs. 6-13) that indicates that Israeli non-believers are negated out of Israel, just as there is nothing that would indicate that non-Israeli believers are counted as Israel.

"Not all those of Israel are these Israel" because all the children of Abraham are not in the Seed line. Verse 7 literally – Not all children of Abraham are the seed, but in Isaac shall be to you (a) seed. Once again, the point of this paragraph 6-13 is not a spiritual seed but the actual seed.

Now, verse 8 is confusing if we approach it with a thought of spiritual children. Verse 8 literally –The children of the flesh are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are reckoned as seed.

Most commentaries claim that the children of the flesh are Jews in heritage only and that the children of promise are all believers regardless of nationality. Abraham, again, had 8 children. How many were the children of promise? One. The reference here is not to the spiritual promises of salvation but the promises of the seed blessing; those who are children of the flesh are children of Abraham's own efforts; the final six were by his second wife. But God chose the seed to come through Abraham and Sarah, and, as it says in Genesis, the other children were sent off away from the Promised Land.

In verse 9, the argument continues by ensuring what is meant by the children of promise being about the children of Abraham, but only one had the promise. This is the word of promise, "Sarah will have a son."

Verses 10-13 is the argument of Jacob and Esau. We understand that Israel is made up of the children of Jacob, not Esau. To be considered Israel, there must be a specific lineage: son of Abraham, son of Isaac, and son of Jacob.

Romans 11:1-36

1-6 – God has not forsaken or rejected Israel.

7-16 – God is now using the Gentile believers to stir non-believing Israelites to bring them to belief.

17-24 – Currently Gentile believers and Israelite believers are grafted into one tree, that tree is the administration of God. We must not become arrogant thinking that we are better than non-believing Israel. Eventually, the administrative responsibilities will return to Israel.

25-32 – This is the passage that tells us what we should think of Israel—enemies for the sake of the Gospel but beloved because of the choice of God for the sake of the fathers.

Romans 10:1-21

1-4 – Paul’s zeal for Israel

5-13 – For Israel to be restored they must believe and call upon the Lord

14-17 – Paul’s attitude and the one we should all have is to be supportive of Israel by being capable and willing to proclaim the truth of God to them so that they would believe.

18-21 – Our attitude toward Israel should follow the desire of God, that, although they have rejected their Messiah, God perpetually stretches out His hands to them. We must be both ready and willing to stretch out our hands to Israel to proclaim the wonderful truth of God to Israel.