

***Bible Study Series:
The Tribes of Israel Part 1***

Israel

the Apple of God's Eye

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V4.1**

Why Israel? Are they a special people and if so why? Why does God call them "the pupil of His eye"?

Are the Abrahamic Promises (British-Israel) doctrine racist? Does the Bible teach the 'brotherhood of man'?

Is God playing favourites by demonstrating preference to Israel and thus being unfair toward others?

"Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands" (Isaiah 49:16)

Contents

Introductory Remarks	3
The Pupil of His eye	6
Why Israel?	8
Israel – a special people to God!.....	10
In what way is Israel a special people?	12
Replacement Theology.....	13
Concluding Remarks.....	17
Suggested Reading	19
Appendix. Israel’s Future as a Nation.....	20
Appendix. The importance of Israel throughout the Bible.....	28

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The purpose and desire is to foster Biblical, historical and related studies that strengthen the Church of God’s message & mission and provides further support to its traditional doctrinal positions.

Bible study articles in this series:

- *Israel – the Apple of God’s Eye (part 1)*
- *The True Roots and Origin of the Scots (part 2)*
- *The British Sense of Mission as a Ruling People (part 3)*
- *The Second Exodus and the Last Trump (part 4)*
- *What will Israel be doing in the World Tomorrow? (part 5)*

Introductory Remarks

Dove-tailing in with other Bible studies in this series and in particular *What will Israel be doing in the World Tomorrow?* and *Status and Role of the Nations in the World Tomorrow*, this short Bible study demonstrates God's consideration for His people. Beside the blessings promised to Abraham due to His faithfulness, we don't know all the reasons why this is the case or why He has this amazing love for Israel as a special people, but we are given enough information to be able to produce a common sense, rational deductive reason for this love that He passionately possesses.

Does He have national preferences – if so who are we to question Him? To answer this question we humans need to understand that His way is not our way – He does not think in the equalitarian and politically correct way we have been brought up to believe in –especially those linked to the 1968 uprisings against Western civilisation.

So, if He has preferences, what does He say about those whom He prefers and why?

The Apostle Paul explains it to human doubters:

“As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated [ie loved less in comparison]

What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth.

Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus?

Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?” (Rom 9:13-21)

What better explanation is there than that?

Israel has been set apart by God as His very own people (Lev 20:24-26) for the benefit of all nations **in their allotted time** (Gen 18:18; 22:18).

This was to be done by Israel being a light or example to the gentile peoples and whom, in turn, would glorify God and wish to come under His reign, covenanting with Him (Ex 9:16; Josh 4:23-24; 2:8-11) – thus being grafted spiritually into Israel. Prophecies abound that they will all gain their chance of

salvation and worship the Almighty (Ps 47:1, 8-9; 67:1-7; 86:9; 98:2; 99:2; 117:1; Is 42:6; 49:6; 56:7; 66:19; Rom 15:8-12).

What does He have to say about various peoples? Does he ‘stereotype’ them or is He ‘politically correct’?

Surely, as God and the One Who has developed or brought about (created indirectly, for want of a better term) the different nations of mankind, does He not have the oversight, knowledge and right to label and ‘stereotype’ entire nations? Of course, not every individual within a nation fits a particular national stereotype description in every detail – but He knows what He is saying and He knows what He is doing.

Here are some examples. Firstly, He ascribes the following negative stereotypes to the Babylonians:

“Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for *I* will work a work in your days, *which* ye will not believe, though it be told *you*.

For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, *that* **bitter** and **hasty** nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces *that are* not theirs.

They *are* **terrible** and **dreadful**: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves.

Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more **fierce** than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle *that* hasteth to eat.

They shall come all for **violence**: their faces shall sup up *as* the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand.” (Hab 1:5-9)

God Himself says that they are bitter, terrible and dreadful, fierce, violent. An entire nation is being stereotyped en masse!

You can read other descriptions throughout His Word regarding other nations.

Note also what Paul wrote about the Cretians of his day:

“One of themselves, *even* a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians *are* always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;

Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

Unto the pure all things *are* pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving *is* nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

They profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.” (Titus 1:12-16)

According to the *Adam Clark Commentary*

“The Cretans are always liars; destructive wild beasts; sluggish gluttons.

That the Cretans were reputed to be egregious liars, several of the ancients declare; insomuch that Κρητιζειν, to act like a Cretan, signifies to lie; and χρησθαι Κρητισμω, to deceive. The other Greeks reputed them liars, because they said that among them was the sepulchre of Jupiter, who was the highest object of the Greek and Roman worship. By telling this truth, which all others would have to pass for a lie, the Cretans showed that the object of their highest admiration was only a dead man.

Evil beasts - Ferocious and destructive in their manners.

Slow bellies - Addicted to voluptuousness, idleness, and gluttony; sluggish or hoggish men.”

God describes things, situations as they are, for He has no need to adopt an ‘age of diplomacy’ or compromise with anyone or any nation.

Then there are the Ishmaelites and Canaanites – the latter especially – the descriptions of them are not very glowing.

Thiessen throws further light on the subject and especially what Paul writes about the acceptance of the Gentiles in Ephesians:

“At first glance, it appears so. And yet, a few verses later the author rebuilds this wall even as he claims it has come down, portraying the former existence of Gentiles in Christ as being “without Christ, strangers with regard to the commonwealth of Israel, and foreigners with regard to the covenants of the promise, hopeless and godless in the world” (p. 18)

“A number of parallels exist between this description of Gentiles and the benefits Jews continue to enjoy according to Paul in Rom. 9:1-4 (NRSV): “They are Israelites ..., and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants ..., the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises ...: to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah ...?’ The Gentile situation is essentially the opposite of what Israel experiences according to Paul.” (p. 18)

“Paul’s distinction between Gentile sinners and, relatively speaking, righteous Jews” (p. 18)

“In Christ, the formerly impure Gentiles become holy (1:4, 18). According to Eph. 2:19, Gentiles in Christ have now become co-citizens with the holy ones”² Being holy themselves, Gentiles not only have greater access to the sacred, but they even become sacred space: those in Christ join and grow together “into a holy temple in the Lord” (p. 21)

“Entrance into the body of Christ entails redemption and the forgiveness of moral impurities associated with being Gentiles (1:7). In Christ, Gentiles receive the sacred pneuma. The author calls his Gentile readers formerly “dead in trespasses,” stressing the impure condition of their past existence. Now they are made alive and therefore purified, able to enter even into the heavenly places in Christ (1:5—6). The blood of Christ, a ritual detergent with immense purifying power, has enabled Gentiles to draw near (2:13).” (p.22) (M Thiessen, “The Construction of Gentiles in the Letter to

the Ephesians,” in IW Oliver & G Boccaccini (eds), *The Early Reception of Paul the Second Temple Jew*).

As one theologian admits concerning the nations of the earth

“It follows that this mutual relatedness, this dependence of one on another, is not merely part of the journey toward the goal of salvation, but is intrinsic to the goal itself.” (Lesslie Newbigen in *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, p. 82).

So, the Bible is not neo-Marxist or globalist or politically correct. **It nowhere expresses a ‘one world race’ concept; nor a ‘brotherhood of man’; or ‘humanity et al. It speaks instead of “all the nations” (Gen 22:18; 26:4; Zeph 12:3) and “all the families of the earth” (Gen 12:3; 28:14; Amos 3:2).**

He sees commonalities of course, but He also sees large differences amongst the nations and races in physiology; mentality; characteristics and potential. He, as Creator, wants diversity and it is up to us to both admire and protect it.

Who are we to question and superimpose neo-Marxism and 1968 revolutionary ideas of ‘one world’ upon His Word?

The Pupil of His eye

Israel is God’s nation - this may not seem fair to some today in a world pummelled by political correctness and lies from all directions.

In this context notice that Israel is called the “apple” of God’s eye in Deut 32:10. The Hebrew reads “pupil”

“For Jehovah’s portion *is* His people. Jacob *is* the lot of **His inheritance**.

He found him in a desert land, and in the deserted, howling wilderness. He led him about, He cared for him, He kept him as **the pupil of His eye.**’ (Deut 32:9-10)

Bullinger in the *Companion Bible* explains:

“First occurrence of Heb. ‘ishon, used of the small round dark pupil of the eye. Heb. = hole, gate, or door of the eye ... called ‘pupil’ [in English] = a little girl.” [refer also to this in Ps 17:8 and Zech 2:8]

Additionally, Israel is regarded as having been generated by God Himself! In Ps 48:2 Israel is referred to as the “sides of the north”. The word *sides* (Strong’s #3411) is the feminine of a related Hebrew word (Strong’s #3409) which is a euphemism for “the generative parts; ... x body, loins, shaft, side, thigh.”

From this we can see that God sees Himself as the Father of Israelites who are His offspring or children (cp Jer 1:15; Song of Solomon 8:5; Rom 8:29). Israel was also God’s bride and wife and He the husband according to Ex 19; 20; Jer 3:14; Ex 16; Jer 31:32.

Does this not demonstrate something very special about these people and God's love for them? There is a great mystery about this relationship that is overlooked in today's politically correct environment and those political bitter and twisted descendants of the 1968 uprisings. Their sheer hatred for God's stances on moral and ethical issues grows strongly in the world and churches.

The Pulpit Commentary understands this term as follows:

“The apple of his eye; literally, the mannikin (אֵינֶן) of his eye, the pupil; so called because in it, as in a mirror, a person sees his own image reflected in miniature (Gesenius), or because, being the tenderest part of the eye, it is guarded as one would a babe (cf. Psalm 17:8; Proverbs 7:2; Zechariah 2:12). By Delitzsch and others this explanation of the word is rejected as not philologically justified, there being no evidence that the termination ם had a diminutive force; and as not in keeping with the earnestness of the passages in which this word occurs. They prefer the explanation man image to mannikin. Anyhow, **the use of the word here must be taken as indicating that Israel is ever in the eye of the Lord, the object of his constant and tenderest care.**” (emphasis mine)

Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

“he kept him as the apple of his eye; in the most careful and tender manner: **the apple of the eye is an aperture in it, which lets in rays of light into the "retina" or chamber where the images of things are formed;** this is wonderfully guarded in nature, for, besides the orbit of the eye, which is strong and bony, and the eyelids, which in sleep are closed, to prevent anything falling into the eye to disturb it; and the eyebrows, which are fringed with hair to break off the rays of light, which sometimes would be too strong for it; besides all these, there are no less than six tunics or coats to keep and preserve it: and in like manner did the Lord keep and guard Israel, while passing through the wilderness, from fiery serpents, scorpions, and the nations, that none might hurt ...” (emphasis mine)

The great Mystery of Israel is something that was addressed by the late Herbert W Armstrong in his book *Mystery of the Ages* (chapter five). How quickly apostate some have gone on this topic.

After reading an earlier version of this article, one insightful member wrote

“I really enjoyed that piece. Sadly it is being minimised and lost in the church as we follow the world at a respectable distance. I appreciated your frank assessment of the situation - when God chooses a people, who are we to argue. He has a purpose in all that He does. He purposes to bless all the world through (and not apart from) Israel. That is very humbling. Great work!

Here's a thought. Israel is the pupil of Gods eye. They say the eyes are a window on the soul. Perhaps Israel is called the pupil of His eye because they are to be a window into the soul of God? In other words, the other nations are meant to see into God's character by looking through Israel.” (e-mail dated 12 November 2015)

I think this reader has struck on something which deserves greater contemplation and brooding upon – all of us should be delving ever deeper into His endless treasures contained within the Scriptures.

“How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? ...

For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD” (Prov 1:22, 29)

Why Israel?

God says He has given Israel the **power** (Deut 8:18) and means to accomplish much – just by giving them land and blessings doesn’t mean that this nation will accomplish much by it or do much with it.

So let us examine what this means.

The Heb for **power** is Strong’s H3581:

“kôach kôach
ko'-akh, ko'-akh

From an unused root meaning to *be firm; vigor*, literally (*force*, in a good or a bad sense) or figuratively (*capacity, means, produce*); also (from its hardness) a large *lizard*: - ability, able, chameleon, force, fruits, might, power (-ful), strength, substance, wealth.”

From the above we can deduce that Israel has inherent attributes that provide it with the capacity to undertake its duty under God – global servant leadership. Thus these and other attributes must not be eliminated in any way.

While there are also other nations that have great blessings, some of them under-perform and accomplish little with their national blessings - unless the Israelitish peoples showed them the way or did it with or for them because Israel had inherent advantage. The problem today is that Israel doesn’t thank God or use the blessings fully in the way He would want – especially nowadays.

A number of scriptures demonstrating His love for Israel are listed below:

“For you *are* a holy people to Jehovah your God. Jehovah your God has chosen you to be a special people to Himself **above all people** that are upon the face of the earth.” (Deut 7:6)

“I *am* the LORD, your Holy One, **the creator of Israel**, your King.
This people *that I formed for Myself*; they shall declare My praise.” (Is 43:15,21)

“And now if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then you shall be a **peculiar treasure to Me above all the nations**; for all the earth *is* Mine.
And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” (Ex 19:5-6)

“Out of Zion, **the perfection of beauty**, God has shone.” (Ps 50:2)

“For as the girdle holds fast to the loins of a man, so I have caused the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah to cling to Me, says Jehovah; so that they might **be to Me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory**; but they would not hear.” (Jer 13:11)

“He declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and rules to Israel.

He has not dealt thus with any other nation; they do not know his rules. Praise the LORD!” (Ps 147:19-20)

“And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, **Israel is my son, even my firstborn**.” (Ex 4:22)

“When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called **my son** out of Egypt.” (Hos 11:1)

Some of the purposes or reasons for Israel was for His son to be above (ie rule) all peoples; formed for God’s glory; to be a treasure; be beautiful; for a name, praise and glory.

He calls Israel His children, adding further detail to their importance.

“Ye are the **children of the Lord** your God for thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, **above all the nations** that are upon the earth.” (Deut 14:1-2) [cp Ps 82:6]

There are a number of other places where He considers Israel as family, viz:

- Ex 4:22
- II Sam 7:14
- Ps 27:10
- Is 1:4; 51-2; 63:8-9; 64:8
- Jer 2:3, 27; 3:14, 19
- Hos 1:10; 11:1
- Mal 2:10

It would behove the reader to look up each of these scriptures.¹

Consider that

“Israel has been called the servant of God (cf. Isa 41:8-9), meaning a peculiar people (cf. Exod 19:5; Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Ps 135:4; Mal 3:17), a close people of God (cf.

¹ Paul Copan in *Is God a Moral Monster? Making Sense of the Old Testament God*, wrote:

“In fact, they were called “a kingdom of priests” and “a holy nation” (Exod. 19:6). Since God is holy or set apart, his people were to be so as well (Lev. 11:44). The Israelites were to be “marked off,” just as the Sabbath day was “marked off” or “set apart as holy” to the Lord (Gen. 2:3). We could rephrase the command “be holy, for I the LORD am holy” (Lev. 19:2) this way: “You shall be my people and mine alone, for I am your God and yours alone.” This relationship can be compared to the serious marriage vows we talked about earlier. Being God’s people meant living lives dedicated to God in every aspect of life.” (p. 74)

Exod 3:10; 7:4), and a child of God (cf. Isa 49:15). However, that servant of God has not always been a good child, trustworthy, reliable, and in good standing with God (cf. Isa 1:2-9). That servant has broken ties with God—spiritually (Isa 41:22-29), and it (Israel) was in need of redemption (cf. Isa 40:1-11).” (S Beaulieu, “Isaiah’s Messiah: Adventist Identity for the Last Days,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, vol 27, 2016:13).

Now comes a clincher:

“Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel. **You only have I known of all the families of the earth**; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.” (Amos 3:1-2)

Notice that only Israel is known of “all the families of the earth” – that is of the races and nations.

There is only one race of people that God ever calls His chosen people, His children, and that is the Israel race.

Whom is puny man to question this? The politically correct and 1968 revolutionaries and perverts in our midst are utterly out-of-step with God!

Israel – a special people to God!

First of all, let us ask the question “was Israel called by God because they were inferior?” Not so, look at the following scriptures:

“Jehovah did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people, for you *were* the fewest of all people.

But **because Jehovah loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn to your fathers**, Jehovah has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of slaves, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Therefore, know that Jehovah your God, He *is* God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations.” (Deut 7:7-9)

God was using a nation which was small in number comparative to other nations roundabout, yet with a power or potential – possessing qualities and abilities as we saw in Deuteronomy 8:18, to confound the other nations. There is nothing here to suggest that they were inferior which some with a politically correct bent believe and promulgate. Rather, Israel naturally possessed attributes which gave them a capacity to rule, be inventive and be sober, possessing the potential to be law-abiding over and above others. Yet this was minimised without the guidance of the holy spirit and an upright approach.

Genetically and religiously, Israel was to be a special people before God and to thereby bring light, truth and righteousness to the world. In Ex 19:5-6; Deut 28:1; Is 42:6; 43:1, 10-12, 21; 60:3; 61:6; 62:1-7 they are portrayed as God’s witness – to the world. This role will culminate during the millennium.

From the aforementioned scriptures the Israelites were to function as God's representatives on earth, to administer it under Him.

"And now if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then you shall be a **peculiar treasure to Me above all the nations**; for all the earth *is* Mine.

And you shall be to Me a **kingdom of priests and a holy nation**. These *are* the words which you shall speak to the sons of Israel." (Ex 19:5-6)

"And it shall be, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, Jehovah your God shall keep to you the covenant and the mercy which He swore to your fathers. And He will love you and bless you and multiply you. He will also bless the fruit of your womb, and the fruit of your land, your grain, and your wine, and your oil, the increase of your cattle, and the flocks of your sheep, in the land which He swore to your fathers to give you.

You shall be blessed above all people. There shall not be male or female barren among you or among your cattle.

And Jehovah will take away from you all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt which you know upon you. But He will lay them upon all who hate you.

And you shall destroy all the people which Jehovah your God shall deliver you. Your eye shall have no pity upon them, neither shall you serve their gods, for *they will be* a snare to you." (Deut 7:12-16) [this will find fulfilment during the Millennium]

" And it will be, if you shall listen carefully to the voice of Jehovah your God, to observe *and* to do all His commandments which I command you today, Jehovah your **God will set you on high above all nations of the earth**." (Deut 28:1)

"I Jehovah have called You in righteousness, and will hold Your hand, and will keep You, and give You for a covenant of the people, for a **Light of the nations**." (Is 42:6)

"The beasts of the field shall honor Me, the jackals and the ostriches; because I give waters in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to **My people, My chosen**.

This people that I formed for Myself; they shall declare My praise." (Is 43:20-21)

"So says Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, and the One who formed him, Do you ask Me of things to come? Do you give command to Me about My sons, and about the **work of My hands**?" (Is 45:11)

"... and said to Me, You *are* **My servant, O Israel**, in whom I will be glorified." (Is 49:3)

"But you will be named the priests of Jehovah; it will be said of you, **Ministers of our God**; you will eat the riches of the nations, and you will revel in their glory." (Is 61:6)

"For Zion's sake I will not be silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until its righteousness goes out as brightness, and her salvation as a burning lamp.

And the **nations will see your righteousness**, and all kings your glory; and you will be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah will name.

You also will be a crown of glory in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

You will no more be called Forsaken; nor will your land any more be called Desolate; but you will be called **My Delight** is in her, and your land, Married; for Jehovah delights in you, and your land is married.

For *as* a young man marries a virgin, so will your sons marry you; and *as* the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so will **your God rejoice over you**.

I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem, who will not always be silent all the day nor all the night; you who remember Jehovah, do not be silent.

And give Him no rest until He establishes and **makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.**" (Is 62:1-7)

"The Portion of Jacob *is* not like them; for He *is* the Former of all things, and *Israel is* the rod of His inheritance. Jehovah of Hosts *is* His name.

You are My war-club and weapons of war; for with you I will shatter nations; and with you I will destroy kingdoms.

And with you I will shatter the horse and his rider; and **with you I will shatter the chariot and his rider.**" (Jer 51:19-21) [cp Rev 2:26-27; Ob 20; Ezek 25:14; Jer 50:20-23]

In what way is Israel a special people?

Racially and religiously, Israel was to be a special people before God and to thereby bring light, truth and righteousness to the world. In Ex 19:5-6; Deut 28:1; Is 42:6; 43:1, 10-12, 21; 60:3; 61:6; 62:1-7 they are portrayed as God's witness.

From the aforementioned scriptures the Israelites were to function as God's representatives on earth, to administer it under Him. But there is more:

"And it shall be, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, Jehovah your God shall keep to you the covenant and the mercy which He swore to your fathers.

And He will love you and bless you and multiply you. He will also bless the fruit of your womb, and the fruit of your land, your grain, and your wine, and your oil, the increase of your cattle, and the flocks of your sheep, in the land which He swore to your fathers to give you.

You shall be blessed above all people. There shall not be male or female barren among you or among your cattle.

And Jehovah will take away from you all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt which you know upon you. But He will lay them upon all who hate you.

And you shall destroy all the people which Jehovah your God shall deliver you. Your eye shall have no pity upon them, neither shall you serve their gods, for *they will be* a snare to you." (Deut 7:12-16)

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And with you I will shatter the horse and his rider; and with you I will shatter the chariot and his rider." (Jer 51:19-21) [cp Ezek 25:14; Rev 2:26-27]

Israel was also God's bride and wife and He the husband according to Ex 19; 20; Jer 3:14; Ex 16; Jer 31:32. For God to court and choose as wife one of the nations, tells us something about the people He chose.

Other scriptures include: Deut 9:5; 4:33, 37; Ps 44:1-3; 47:4; IChron 17:20-21. Especially the latter:

"And who is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making for yourself a name for great and awesome things, in driving out nations before your people whom you redeemed from Egypt?

And you made your people Israel to be your people forever, and you, O LORD, became their God." (IChron 17:21-22)

From the above we see that Israel has the primacy and is regarded as God's firstfruits, firstborn and has been given the birthright of the world's bounties and potential over and above all peoples – these people will also possess this position during the Millennium.

Replacement Theology

One of the creeping heresies into God's Church is that the Church replaces Israel – that the Israel identity is either not true or Israel is rejected and no longer the Chosen People.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

These heretics misinterpret Matt 21:33-46:

"Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: ""The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you [Pharisees] and given to a people producing its fruits. [cp Matt 10:5-7]

And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them.

And although they were seeking to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because they held him to be a prophet." (Matt 21:33-46)

But notice *Young's Literal Translation* of verse 43:

"Because of this I say to you, that the reign of God shall be taken from you, and given to a **nation** bringing forth its fruit."

These heretics simply refuse to understand and accept the following Scriptures which, on the surface, appear to contradict the above:

"These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans,

but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" (Matt 10:5-7)

"... while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt 8:12)

"Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: "'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?" (Matt 21:42)

"So when they had come together, they asked him, "**Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?**"

He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight." (Acts 1:6-9)

With that background, let us return to Matt 21 and consider the word for *nation*:

"Strong's:

1484 e;qnoj ethnos {eth'-nos}

Meaning: 1) a multitude (whether of men or of beasts) associated or living together 1a) a company, troop, swarm 2) a multitude of individuals of the same nature or genus 2a) the human race 3) a race, nation, people group 4) in the OT, foreign nations not worshipping the true God, pagans, Gentiles 5) Paul uses the term for Gentile Christians

Origin: probably from 1486; TDNT - 2:364,201; n n

Usage: AV - Gentiles 93, nation 64, heathen 5, people 2; 164"

Which nation? The answer is Israel and/or the Church:

"He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt 15:24)

"And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham.

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." (Luke 19:9-10. cp 1:54-55; Matt 18:10-12)

"These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans,

but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt 10:5-6)

In Matt 21 He was railing against the Jewish authorities and Pharisees – so now the Work was going primarily to Israel.

So, the word nation may not be just the church at all - the Greek is *ethnos* or ethnic group or race. If Christ meant just the church, surely he would have used the word *ekklesia*? What we can determine from all of this is Christ's three-fold mission:

- To Judah, who rejected Him;
- then to the dispersed Northern House of Israel; and
- also to the Gentiles, ie other races who are not of Hebrew origin.

In this context, I recall a sermon where a minister stated that James 1:1 refers only to the Church. But the Church of God has always understood it to have a primary Israel meaning. There are those that are paid by their church but refuse to abide by their policies as well as refuse to teach or promote their doctrines, such as this one. So they draw a salary for something they don’t believe in.

We are distinctly told about the two aspects of God's people:

"For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree." (Rom 1:24)

Ralph Korner explains:

“Paul theologically unites his Gentile Christ-followers with historic Israel. Therein, he metaphorically depicts Gentiles as being grafted into the “tree” of historic Israel by virtue of their faith in the Jewish *Christos*.” (“*Ekklesia as a Jewish Synagogue Term: Some Implications for Paul’s Socio-Religious Location*,” *Journal of the Jesus Movement in its Jewish Setting*, No 2, 2015:71)

Another researcher, Donald Robinson, stated:

“Each Gentile church had its nucleus of Jews [or Israelites], or at least it had its Jewish apostle and his colleagues through whom the word of God had been mediated to it. Such Jews did not become so absorbed into the local membership that they lost their distinctive character. They remained, especially the founding apostle, as representing the royal priesthood ministering salvation to the Gentiles ... The place of the Jews, though theologically significant and of great practical usefulness, must not in any wise depress the status and dignity of the Gentile believers themselves, **for God had revealed to the apostles and prophets that the Gentiles were sharers on equal terms in the blessings of salvation. This mystery not previously revealed did not abolish the long-standing Old Testament picture of Israel’s role in the salvation of the Gentiles**, but it showed that the purpose behind it all was to create such an ultimate unity of Israel and the Gentiles that the resultant body would be nothing less than a new creation of mankind. This unity was in its full sense eschatological, but it was meant to find expression also here and now where Jew and Gentile met together with Christ in the midst. Thus it was that the local church embodied two conceptions of God’s purposes: it was a place where ten Gentiles took hold of the skirt of a Jew and learnt from him the knowledge of the truth as it was in Christ” (Donald W. B. Robinson, “Jew and Greek: Unity and Division in the Early Church,” in *Donald Robinson Selected Works Vol. 1: Assembling God’s People*, 2008:109) [emphasis mine]

“The significance of early Jewish Christianity is that it fulfilled the Old Testament promise of God to restore the tabernacle of David that had fallen and then to use the restored remnant of Israel as an instrument to save the Gentiles. **The popular view that God rejected the Jews [or Israelites] and that the gospel became a wholly Gentile matter is so far at variance with the New Testament as well as with the expectation of the Old Testament that a complete reappraisal of the New Testament is called for.**” (Donald Robinson, *Faith’s Framework: The Structure of New Testament Theology*, 1996:97) [emphasis mine]

Robinson is demonstrating that the New Testament continues the Old Testament theme that the gentiles are blessed through Israel. They do not become transformed into Israelites – instead, God will use Israel as a priestly nation to teach the nations the way of God under the Family of God. Israel’s destiny is to rule the world under the Messiah.

Israel is not replaced at all - it is one with the Church and much of what Israel is meant to be doing on God’s behalf is covered in the Bible study *What will Israel be doing in the World Tomorrow?*

In fact, the Church of God is in effect a component of Israel – it continues the spiritual aspect or the lineage of spiritual ones of Israel. While most of physical Israel are carnal, a small part are spiritual and these comprise the Church of God. There is one difference though: the few called gentiles are grafted into Israel to form a part of the spiritual Israel.

Note what other scholars have proven:

“The Messiah was the promised one who would embody in his own person the identity and mission of Israel, as their representative, King, leader and Savior. Through the Messiah as his anointed agent, YHWH, the God of Israel, would bring about all he intended for Israel. But what was that mission of Israel? Nothing less than to be “a light to the nations,” the means of bringing redemptive blessings to the nations of the world, as originally promised in the title deeds of the covenant with Abraham. For the God of Israel is also the Creator God of all the world.

“Through the Messiah, therefore, the God of Israel would also bring about all he intended for the nations. **The eschatological redemption and restoration of Israel would issue in the ingathering of the nations**”

“... the nations were portrayed in the Old Testament as witness of all that God was doing in, for or to Israel ... the expectation of Israel's faith and worship (if not always the outcome of their practice) was that the nations would come to benefit from that salvation and give thanks for it. **This meant that the nations would eventually acknowledge and worship Israel's God, YHWH, with all the concomitant responsibilities and blessings of such worship**”

“... **Israel definitely had a sense of mission**, not in the sense of *going* somewhere but of *being* something. They were to be the holy people of the living God YHWH. They were to know him for who he is, to preserve the true and exclusive worship [of] YHWH, and to live according to his ways and laws within loyal commitment to their covenantal relationship with him. In all these respects they would *be* a light and witness to the nations...” (Christopher J.H. Wright, *The Mission of God*, 2006:31, 455, 504).

“For according to the prophet’s meaning, to be ruled by the people of God is the true happiness of the nations, and to allow themselves to be so ruled is their true liberty” (Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament, Isaiah*, 1866-91:199).

The expression "all peoples" [in Gen 12:3] did not mean that every person on earth would universally believe in the Messiah, but that every ethnic group would receive this blessing of God's grace and the joy of participating in worshiping and serving him. God would do this both by his own sovereignty (for he bound himself by a unilateral oath, as we shall see later) and through the instrumentality of those who had previously experienced the blessing of God.” (Walter Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament. Israel as a Light to the Nations*, 2000:8-9)

Finally, the heretics – as usual – apply Isaiah 40:15 to all nations including Israel:

“Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are accounted as the dust on the scales; behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine dust.” (Is 40:15)

A very casual reading by anyone would reveal that the context reveals that He is addressing gentile nations. There appears to be a Tribulation context involved as well. But Israel is not referred to here.

Concluding Remarks

From the above Bible study there can be no doubt of Israel’s place in God’s Plan and is an essential or key aspect of His eternal plan for mankind. Many evangelical, messianic and other Bible students have identified this as a major Biblical theme, even if they do not understand where the ‘lost’ tribes of Israel are located today (see the example of this understanding in the Appendix).

Recall, we are told the following in Acts:

“So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time **restore the kingdom to Israel?**” (Acts 1:6)

So the Kingdom with all its glory will be restored to Israel – the central part of the Kingdom of God on earth.

“He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and **he will reign over the house of Jacob forever**, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” (Luke 1:32-33) [cp IISam 7:13, 16; Ps 89:4, 36-37; IChron 29:23; 28:5; IIChron 9:8; Is 9:7; Jer 23:5; Dan 2:44; 4:34]

What can a reader make of God’s love for Israel – a relationship that He describes as one that is family? It is not some little thing that had been later eschewed within the New Testament. Instead, it is something that is so important that God centres the Bible around Israel throughout its pages and mentions her thousands of times.

Even in the Book of Revelation - in the second last chapter of the entire Bible (chapter 21) we are told the following of God's headquarters for the entire universe (the New Jerusalem)

“And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.”

Christ is coming back to raise Israel to its intended status and all peoples will have to be 'grafted in to' Israel as Christians are today (Romans 11) to be accepted by Him.

The importance of Israel to God cannot be underestimated. Nor should it be ignored or undermined by those ignorant or that have a politically correct bent. They do so to their own destruction and lead many astray into apostasy.

Suggested Reading

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Appendix

Israel’s Future as a Nation

<https://bible.org/seriespage/3-israel-s-future-nation>

Israel’s Future As A Nation

Article contributed by www.walvoord.com

One of the central questions in prophecy relating to Israel is whether Israel has any future as a nation. The question is by no means easily answered because there is a confusing number of answers to the question. These can be itemized as follows: (1) The point of view that denies that Israel exists today and therefore has no future as a nation, as illustrated in the book *The Seed of Abraham* by Albertus Pieters. In Pieters’ opinion, Israel is nonexistent as either a race or a nation in the ordinary sense of the term. (2) The idea that Israel continues as a race but not as a nation. This concept is illustrated in conservative postmillennialism of the last generation in works like *Systematic Theology* by Charles Hodge and is held by some contemporary amillenarians such as William Hendriksen in his book *And So All Israel Shall Be Saved*. (3) The teaching of most premillenarians that Israel has not only continuity as a race, but a future as a nation in the millennial kingdom. This is the normal premillennial approach. Variations in the statement of these three major points of view abound. The opinion of Albertus Pieters has already been discussed and the evident facts pointing to the continuance of Israel as a race have been stated. The formation of a political state in the Middle East in 1948 bearing the name Israel as well as the continuance of Judaism as a religion seems a sufficient answer to the first point of view. The principal question which remains is whether Israel continues merely as a race without a future or whether it has promises which can be fulfilled only by its continuance as a nation and its revival as a people in the political government of the millennial kingdom.

The Continuance Of The Physical Seed Of Abraham

Though it is allowed by all conservative expositors of Scripture that Abraham had a physical seed, and in particular that Jacob was the father of the twelve tribes of Israel, an examination of this evidence serves to provide a basis for the theological implications which are based upon this fact. To be sure, modern liberals have asserted that the accounts of Abraham and his posterity are only traditional myths, but as this is done only by sweeping denial of the authority of Scripture, it does not require refutation in a discussion with orthodox scholars who accept the inspiration of the Bible. If the record of Scripture is valid, there can be little question concerning the fact that Isaac was born as a son to Abraham and Sarah when they both were past age, by miraculous intervention of God. Nor is there much question concerning the fact that Isaac had the twin boys Esau and Jacob. Much of the content of the book of Genesis deals with the story of Jacob, the birth of the twelve patriarchs, and the beginning of Israel’s history as such. Even unbelievers in Scriptural revelation will acknowledge that the modern Jew is a descendant of Jacob and recognize the historical sequence which has brought Israel to the present hour.

It should also be evident from Scripture and history that Israel is more than just a race. From the time they left Egypt they assumed the proportions of a great nation and, though for a time they lived with little political unity during the period of the judges, there is abundant evidence to sustain the rise of the nation under Saul, David, and Solomon. Their moral deterioration, the Assyrian and Baby-Ionian captivities, and the regathering and restoration of Israel recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah

and supported by Zechariah and Malachi provide a setting for the New Testament. When Christ was born, Israel was a nation even though it was under the heel of Roman oppression.

With the destruction of Jerusalem, however, and the scattering of the children of Israel, their national characteristics were blurred for many centuries. It is of tremendous significance, however, that the ties which bound together the race of Israel were of such character that in our modern day the nation Israel has once again returned to its ancient land, established itself as a political state, and is recognized as such by most of the civilized world. In any ordinary meaning of the term, Israel has continued as a nation and is in existence today in that capacity.

The Promises To Israel As A Nation

Much of the evidence which supports the concept of Israel as a nation is bound up in the promises which are given to her which will be discussed later. Sufficient for the present purpose, however, is to point out that the original Abrahamic covenant expressly promised that God would make a great nation out of Abraham’s seed (Genesis 12:9.). To this nation is given the promise of possession of the land, which implies national characteristics.

Relative to the express question concerning the perpetuity of Israel as a nation, the promise given to Abraham in Genesis 17:7, 8 is of special importance. Here the covenant with Abraham is declared to be an everlasting covenant, and the land is promised to Israel as an everlasting possession. It would be of course impossible for the covenant to be everlasting and the possession of the land to be everlasting unless the nation also continued forever. The Hebrew expression for “everlasting” is *olam*, meaning “in perpetuity.” While it might not quite be the equivalent of the infinite term “everlasting,” it would certainly mean continuance as long as this present earth should last. It is the strongest expression for eternity of which the Hebrew language is capable. Inasmuch as these promises are reiterated to Isaac and to Jacob and are constantly referred to throughout the Old Testament, the nature of these promises confirms the continuance of Israel as a nation.

The matter of Israel’s regathering, judgment, and restoration still to be fulfilled will be the subject of later discussion, and only can be anticipated here. It follows, however, that if the Scriptures teach Israel is to be regathered, brought back to their ancient land, and actually possess the area promised by God to Abraham in Genesis 15:18-21, these predictions in their very character would demand Israel’s continuance as a nation. Inasmuch as these promises do not rest on a few isolated texts, but on hundreds of prophecies in the Old Testament which directly or indirectly anticipate a future day of glory for Israel, it is hardly too much to say that there are few doctrines that are better attested in the Bible than that of the future of Israel, provided that these prophecies are interpreted in their normal and literal sense.

The Express Promises Of Israel’s Perpetuity As A Nation

In addition to the strong predictions of Genesis 17, the most pointed pronouncements are made elsewhere in the Old Testament concerning Israel’s continuance as a nation. One of these, which should be decisive in itself, is that expressed by Jeremiah at a time of Israel’s apostasy and captivity. In this context of Israel’s disintegration Jeremiah predicts a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah (Jeremiah 31:31) which will replace God’s covenant with them in the Mosaic law (Jeremiah 31:32). After defining the millennial situation in which this covenant will be fulfilled for the nation Israel, Jeremiah adds this word of assurance: “Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who stirreth up the sea, so that the waves thereof roar; Jehovah of hosts is his name: If these ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith Jehovah: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith Jehovah” (Jeremiah 31:35-37).

In view of the fact that some amillenarians contend that the Abrahamic promise concerning Israel is conditioned on their obedience and therefore is set aside upon disobedience, it is most significant that this strongest prophecy in the Old Testament for the continuance of Israel is given in a setting when Israel is manifestly in apostasy and about to be carried off into captivity. It would be difficult to provide a setting anywhere which would make it clearer that this is God’s sovereign purpose entirely apart from Israel’s worthiness and the fulfillment is determined solely by God’s power and will. As long as the sun and moon endure and as long as the heavens have not been measured, Israel will continue as a nation. The divine purpose to continue the nation Israel is supported by the continuance of these elements of natural creation as long as the present earth exists. It is not simply that they will continue as a seed, but as Jeremiah expresses it, Israel shall not cease “from being a nation before me for ever.”

The promise of Israel’s perpetuity in the new covenant in Jeremiah 31 is supported by the provisions which are itemized: (1) It is designated a covenant with “the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.” The covenant is therefore limited to the descendants of Jacob. (2) It is a covenant designed to replace the Mosaic covenant also made only with Israel. As such it will be written “in their hearts” rather than on tables of stone. (3) The fulfillment of the covenant may be expected after “the time of Jacob’s trouble” mentioned in Jeremiah 30:7. Jeremiah predicted in 31:28: “And it shall come to pass that, like as I have watched over them to pluck up and to break down and to overthrow and to destroy and to afflict, so will I watch over them to build and to plant, saith Jehovah.” The time of fulfillment is further identified as the time of Israel’s regathering, indicated in Jeremiah 30:10 and Jeremiah 31:8 and following. (4) The time of its fulfillment is described as a period when there will be universal knowledge of the Lord. Jeremiah speaks of this in these words: “And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah” (Jeremiah 31:34).

Isaiah referred to this same time in Isaiah 11:9 when he predicted: “For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.” This was an especially strong prediction in view of the fact that both Isaiah and Jeremiah lived in a day when ignorance of the Lord prevailed and apostasy characterized Israel. The new covenant therefore is related to the future day of Israel’s glorious kingdom on the earth. (5) The period of its fulfillment will be one of great spiritual blessing. God will be publicly identified with Israel, and Israel will be God’s people. Their sins will be forgiven, and they will be the beneficiaries of God’s wonderful grace. It should be obvious to any student of premillennial interpretation that all of these prophecies fit naturally and easily into the context of the millennial hope.

The new covenant is frequently mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament. In Isaiah 61:8, 9, in a similar context speaking of Israel’s tribulation followed by regathering and blessing, it is affirmed that the covenant will be everlasting. Jeremiah himself reaffirms the covenant in 32:37-40 and mentions its everlasting character and fulfillment in the time of Israel’s regathering.

The Prophet Ezekiel repeats all the familiar elements found in earlier statements of the covenant, namely that Israel is to be regathered, to be reunited in one kingdom, to be ruled by one king, is to be forgiven and cleansed from idolatry, and will dwell forever in the land of their covenant of peace (Ezekiel 37:21-28). God is going to be present with them, and Israel will be known all over the world as a nation blessed of God.

Because these prophecies interpreted in their normal and natural way would unmistakably affirm the premillennial interpretation of prophecy, amillenarians deny these conclusions and usually hold that the new covenant as given to Israel is being fulfilled by the church today. Though this is quite foreign to the Old Testament presentation, they claim that the New Testament authorizes this transfer of promises from the nation to the church and that particulars such as the coming time of tribulation, regathering of Israel, their re-establishment in the land, their being ruled by one king, and being united as one nation must be interpreted spiritually as being fulfilled in the gathering out of the church from all nations into the one body of Christ. Before turning to other New Testament evidence confirming

the continuance of Israel as a nation, attention must be directed to this amillennial interpretation of the new covenant.

There are five references in the best texts of the New Testament in which the term *new covenant* (*kaine diatheke*) is found (Luke 22:20; I Corinthians 11:25; II Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:8; 9:15). In addition there are several other references which are properly within the sphere of this study as referring to the new covenant without the precise words being used (Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Romans 11:27; Hebrews 8:10, 13; 10:16; 12:24). It is, of course, hardly possible to treat the subject adequately without a more prolonged discussion than can be undertaken here. A more complete presentation is afforded in *The Millennial Kingdom*, chapter 18, by the writer, and in Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost’s *Things to Come*, chapter 8.

In regard to Israel’s continuance as it relates to the new covenant, it is significant that only one passage specifically identifies the new covenant with that spoken of by Jeremiah. This is found in Hebrews 8. It is not too much to say that amillenarians who are careful scholars consider this passage one of the most important in their argument identifying the church with Israel.

The argument of Hebrews at this point is that Jesus Christ as our High Priest has a more excellent ministry and is the Mediator of a better covenant providing better promises than that of the Aaronic priesthood built on the Mosaic covenant. This is stated in Hebrews 8:6: “But now hath he obtained a ministry the more excellent, by so much as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which hath been enacted upon better promises.” The writer of Hebrews then proceeds to prove this by quoting the new covenant of Jeremiah as demonstrating that the Mosaic covenant was faulty and needed to be replaced. He states in verse 7: “For if that first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second.” He continues by quoting Jeremiah’s new covenant with the words: “For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.” Verses 9 through 12 are a quotation from the provisions of the new covenant given in Jeremiah 31. The writer of Hebrews then concludes in verse 13: “In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away.”

The interpretation of this quotation as it relates to the new covenant is complicated by the fact that conservative scholars have no less than five differing points of view, one of which is the amillennial interpretation. Briefly stated, these five positions are these: (1) The postmillennial interpretation that the promise of future blessing for the Jews will be fulfilled in the people of Israel in the latter days of the period of the church on earth when the Jews are converted and accept Christ as Saviour. This was typical of the conservative postmillennialism of the nineteenth century. (2) That the new covenant in both the Old and New Testaments concerns Israel and Israel alone and has no relationship specifically to Gentiles or the church. This was the viewpoint of Darby and is one of several premillennial approaches. (3) That the new covenant has a twofold application to the church in the present age and to Israel in the future millennial age. This view was popularized by the *Scotfield Reference Bible*. (4) That there are in fact two new covenants, one for Israel to be fulfilled in the future, one for the church to be fulfilled in the present age, both founded upon the grace of God and the sacrifice of Christ. This view was supported by Lewis Sperry Chafer in his *Systematic Theology* and by Charles Ryrie in his book, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith*. (5) The amillennial position that the church is true Israel and that the prophecies given to Jeremiah and other prophets are being fulfilled in the church age in a spiritualized way.

The postmillennial point of view has been largely discarded with a defunct postmillennialism and does not figure prominently in current eschatological discussions. Interpreters usually choose either between the amillennial point of view or one of the three premillennial interpretations. Darby’s teaching that the new covenant both in the New and Old Testaments concerns Israel alone is not usually accepted by premillenarians, though it has many attractive arguments. The principal difficulty is that the Lord’s Supper seems to relate a new covenant to the church which makes it difficult to confine the term to Israel’s future. Usually the choice is between Scofield’s position or that of Chafer

in premillennial circles. For the purpose of our present discussion relative to the perpetuity of the nation Israel, it will suffice to show that the amillennial point of view is not that which is taught in Hebrews, though there are problems that remain in the premillennial understanding of this passage.

Oswald Allis defines the amillennial interpretation in these words: “For the gospel age in which we are living is that day foretold by the prophets when the law of God shall be written in the hearts of men (Jeremiah 31:33) and when the Spirit of God abiding in their hearts will enable them to keep it (Ezekiel 11:19, 36:26f)” (*Prophecy and the Church*, p. 42). He argues that the quotation before us in Hebrews 8 is a clear and unmistakable statement to this effect. Allis writes: “The passage speaks of the new covenant. It declares that this new covenant has already been introduced and that by virtue of the fact that it is called ‘new’ it has made the one which it is replacing ‘old,’ and that the old is about to vanish away. It would be hard to find a clearer reference to the gospel age in the Old Testament than in these verses in Jeremiah” (*ibid.*, p. 154). An examination of the passage in Hebrews, however, does not support what Allis claims. Though the writer quotes the entire new covenant as given by Jeremiah, in his exegesis he uses only one word, namely, the word *new*. His argument in brief is based on the fact that Jeremiah predicted a new covenant in the Old Testament. This prediction proved that the Mosaic covenant was not intended to be an everlasting covenant and would in fact be done away. He does not say that Jeremiah’s covenant is in effect now. While the New Testament in other passages alludes to the covenant of Jeremiah as in the quotation in Hebrews 10:16 and states that Jesus is the Mediator of a new covenant in Hebrews 12:24, nowhere in the New Testament is the church specifically put under the detailed provisions of the covenant of Jeremiah. The normal premillennial interpretation therefore considers these references (1) as an application of the general truth of the grace of God illustrated in the new covenant with Israel but also of the church, or (2) as two new covenants, one for Israel and one for the church. The problem yields to the patient exegesis of all passages relating to this subject in the New Testament, but even the New Testament, as in Romans 11:27, refers the detailed fulfillment of the covenant of Jeremiah to the second coming of Christ and the deliverance of Israel, a passage which amillenarians characteristically avoid as the plague. The amillennial point of view is the most extreme of the five possible viewpoints and is not supported by a careful study of the new covenant in the New Testament.

A study of further particulars in the New Testament related to the question of Israel’s continuity serves to confirm that the word *Israel* is used in the New Testament in the same sense as in the Old and that promises to Israel continue to be inviolate, including their future restoration.

Amillenarians, while denying any future to Israel as a nation, are, however, divided as to whether Israel continues as a race. Allis follows the traditional amillennial approach in making Israel and the church one and the same as far as New Testament teaching is concerned. More recently amillenarians of both conservative and liberal backgrounds have tended to regard Israel as something distinct from the church. William Hendriksen, for instance, a well-known amillennialist, takes the position that Israel means Israel in the New Testament, not the church. In a similar way Charles Hodge, the postmillennialist of the last generation, held that the term *Israel* is never used in the New Testament except for those who were physical descendants of Jacob. It would seem in view of the fact that some amillenarians and postmillennialists concede that Israel means Israel in the New Testament it would be unnecessary to debate this point. However, in view of the evidence that many amillenarians consider it, as Allis does, “an almost unprecedented extreme” to insist that Israel actually means Israel (*Prophecy and the Church*, p. 218), it is necessary to dispose of this point first.

New Testament Evidence

A study of the New Testament demonstrates beyond question that there is a continued contrast between Israel and Gentiles as such throughout the New Testament. Israel as a nation is addressed again and again after the beginning of the New Testament church in such passages as Acts 3:12; 4:8, 10; 5:21,31,35; 21:28, etc. A most significant illustration is Paul’s prayer for Israel that they might be saved found in Romans 10:1 which is a clear reference to the use of the term *Israel* as a nation outside

the church. The term *Jews*, derived from the tribe of Judah, is also used in I Corinthians 10:32. The argument of Paul in Romans 9 is certainly built on the idea of Israel as a separate nation. He surveys their peculiar promises and privileges in Romans 9:4, 5 and expresses the wish that he himself might be cursed if by this means his brethren, i.e., Israel, could be saved (Romans 9:3, 4).

Not only is Israel regarded as a separate nation, but Gentiles as such are expressly excluded. In Ephesians 2:12: “Ye [Gentiles] were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.” In the discussion which follows it is important to note that Paul does not indicate that Gentiles come into these promises given to Israel, but rather pictures both Jew and Gentile as being joined in an entirely new entity, namely, the body of Christ. The fact, therefore, that in the New Testament Israel and Gentiles are contrasted to each other is strong evidence that the term *Israel* continues to mean what it meant in the Old Testament, namely, the descendants of Jacob.

Perhaps more to the point in this discussion is the New Testament contrast between natural Israel and the church. As has been previously pointed out, there is a tendency on the part of some amillenarians to regard the church as the New Testament Israel. The New Testament in continuing the contrast between Israel and the church first of all notes that natural Israel—that is, unsaved Israelites—are not in the church. There is then no teaching that the nation of Israel as such becomes the church as such. Instead the nation Israel is promised a future, and, though this future is largely fulfilled by spiritual Israel, the existence of these promises as distinct from God’s program for the church maintains the difference between the two terms.

A central passage in the New Testament on this point is found in Romans 11 where Paul raises the question that is before us: “I say then, Did God cast off his people?” (Romans 11:1). In his argument which follows he, first of all, answers this question in an absolute negative by asserting that there always has been a remnant of Israel and that there will be a remnant in the future. He notes the fact that the great majority in the nation Israel are spiritually blinded and that their hardness of heart has occasioned God’s turning to the Gentiles in the present age. He anticipates, however, that this is a temporary situation which will be followed by a future blessing of the nation Israel. He states in Romans 11:15: “For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?” He acknowledges that Israel at the present time is broken off from the olive tree or the place of divine blessing, but he predicts a future ingrafting of Israel into “their own olive tree” (Romans 11:24). This is to take place where Israel’s blindness is lifted (Romans 11:25), which will be followed by the fulfillment of Israel’s covenants and their restoration as a nation as indicated in Romans 11:26-32. This extended passage then expressly denies the contention that Israel has no future or continuance as a nation. The hope that is set before is not the hope given to the church which already is in the place of blessing in this present age and has no title to the promises given to Israel of possession of the land and other portions of their predicted future.

Not only is the nation Israel contrasted to the church, but spiritual Israel is contrasted to Gentile Christians who are in the body of Christ. This perhaps is the crux of the entire question, namely, are Gentile Christians ever designated Israelites? The argument of Romans 9:11 where this problem is expressly discussed makes clear that spiritual Israel and Gentile Christians continue to be contrasted. Spiritual Israelites never become Gentiles, and Gentile Christians never become Israelites. The statement of Romans 9:6, “For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel,” does not deny this, but rather indicates that all who are physical descendants of Abraham do not necessarily inherit the spiritual promises. The contrast is between Israel according to the flesh and Israel which is spiritual, rather than a reference to Gentile believers. As has been previously pointed out, Gentile believers are the spiritual seed of Abraham who received the promise of blessing to all nations which was to come through Abraham. This does not mean, however, that they received the promises that came through Jacob to the nation of Israel.

Probably the most important text used by those who attempt to prove that Israel and the church are one is that found in Galatians 6:15, 16, which reads as follows: “For neither is circumcision anything,

nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.” It has been argued that the expression “Israel of God” is used here of the church as a whole.

It may be observed first that if this passage does use the term “Israel of God” for the church, it is the only passage in the entire New Testament where there is any evidence in the text for such a conclusion. Seen in the setting of its context, it is by no means the clear assertion that the church is the Israel of God as is sometimes claimed by its proponents. Paul is stating in these closing verses of the epistle to the Galatians the pre-eminence of the cross of Christ before which neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availed. The important fact is that those who trust in Christ who died for them become a new creature quite apart from any rite of circumcision or its lack. Upon those who have thus apprehended the grace of God and have been delivered from the law and its religious regulations, Paul breathes a benediction of peace and mercy. Then he adds, “And upon the Israel of God.” The most natural explanation of this is that Paul is stating that anyone, whether Jew or Gentile, who walks by this rule is worthy of his benediction, but especially is this so for the Israel of God, i.e., Israelites who are the godly remnant of this age, that is, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. The use of the Greek *kai* is best translated by the word *and* and only rarely is used in the sense of *even* as would be required if the term Israel of God is entirely equivalent to the expression “as many as walk by this rule.” The passage does not state that the Israel of God and the church, i.e., the new creation, are coextensive. At the most, such identification is possible, but not probable. Paul’s statement is simply a recognition of his particular interest in Israelites who have come to know Christ and expresses the hope that they would enter into the freedom of grace of which he is such an able exponent in the epistle to the Galatians.

One of the familiar arguments against the continuance of Israel as a nation is the idea that when Israel rejected Christ they failed to meet the necessary conditions for the fulfillment of their promises and are in fact disinherited as far as national promises are concerned. According to this point of view, an Israelite today has only the possibility of entering spiritually into the promises given to the church, not the promises given to Israel as a nation.

This question is largely answered by the materials already presented. The fact of continued recognition of Israel as a nation and the presentation of their future hope in [Romans 11](#) would seem to be a sufficient answer. Two additional passages, however, may be considered.

In [Matthew 21:43](#) Christ said in connection with the parable of the householder: “Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” A casual examination of this text would seem to indicate the taking away of the kingdom of God from Israel. Even amillennarians, however, have seldom claimed this text, as a careful examination of it indicates quite another conclusion. First, those to whom He was addressing this verse were by no means the total of Israel. He could hardly say to the religious leaders of His day or to those within the hearing of His voice that their unbelief was sufficient to take away Israel’s future hope from the nation as a whole. Second, the question can be raised—To what nation is the kingdom of God going to be given? Certainly no other people or race are any more qualified to receive the kingdom of God than the nation of Israel. Third, what did He mean by the kingdom of God?

This declaration of Christ is understood when it is interpreted as a statement that the scribes and Pharisees who rejected Christ, illustrated in the rejection of the son of the householder in the preceding parable, would never enter into the blessings of the kingdom of God. The term *nation* here should be understood as a people, i.e., anyone who would bring forth the fruits of faith. Some have interpreted the word *nation* here as referring to Israel, but to another generation of Israel, namely, the godly remnant of the future. Still others refer it to the church. It is probably better to leave it undefined as referring to any people who meet the conditions. In any case, the passage is not a proper basis for Israel’s disinheritance. The Kingdom, as the sphere of divine blessing, is for all true believers.

A second major text in the New Testament has already been mentioned, namely, the question raised by Paul in Romans 11:1: “Did God cast off his people?” To this Paul gives a categorical negative in the

words, "God forbid." He not only expressly denies that God has cast off Israel, but he argues that this has never been God's method with His people when they have sinned. While the unbelieving in Israel bore their judgment, as is true even in the present age, there was a continuing program for the godly remnant in Israel as illustrated in the present age as well as in the Old Testament. The argument of Romans 11, which has already been reviewed, comes to a climax in the expression "All Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26). This certainly does not mean all the church shall be saved, nor is it simply a reference to all the elect in Israel. It is rather, as many scholars have pointed out, the concept of Israel's national deliverance at the time of the second coming of Christ at which time they are saved from their persecutors and delivered from physical destruction. The contrast is between the individual salvation of Israel in the present age through faith in Christ and the collective deliverance of Israel at the end of the age.

Summary

In this discussion three points of view concerning Israel's continuance as a nation have been considered: (1) The view that denies that Israel exists today, and therefore has no future. (2) The concept that Israel continues as a race, but not as a nation. (3) The premillennial interpretation that Israel has not only continuity as a race, but a future as a nation in the premillennial kingdom. It was shown that Israel's continuance as a nation depended first of all upon the nature of her promises as contained, for instance, in Genesis 17 where the Abrahamic covenant is declared to be everlasting and the land is promised to Israel as an everlasting possession. This was confirmed by the new covenant revealed by Jeremiah in which Israel was promised that it would continue as long as the moon endured. The New Testament interpretation of the new covenant was shown not to shake or alter this clear revelation in the Old Testament. New Testament evidence was cited to prove that Israel as a nation continues throughout the period of New Testament revelation. Israel continues to be addressed as a nation and is distinguished both from Gentries and the church. Both the nation Israel is contrasted to the church as a whole and spiritual Israel is contrasted to Gentile Christians in the body of Christ. Miscellaneous texts and arguments such as Galatians 6:15, 16, Matthew 21:43, and Romans 11, when properly interpreted, would seem to confirm the conclusion that Israel is promised continuance as a nation throughout human history. The faithfulness of God to Israel is a convincing proof that God keeps His word whether to Israel or to the church, and in this we can rest our faith.

[emphasis mine]

Appendix

The importance of Israel throughout the Bible

In particular refer to Deut 9:5; 4:33, 37; Ps 44:1-3; 47:4; IChron 17:20-21.

Deu 7:12 And it shall be, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, Jehovah your God shall keep to you the covenant and the mercy which He swore to your fathers.

Deu 7:13 And He will love you and bless you and multiply you. He will also bless the fruit of your womb, and the fruit of your land, your grain, and your wine, and your oil, the increase of your cattle, and the flocks of your sheep, in the land which He swore to your fathers to give you.

Deu 7:14 You shall be blessed above all people. There shall not be male or female barren among you or among your cattle.

Deu 7:15 And Jehovah will take away from you all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt which you know upon you. But He will lay them upon all who hate you.

Deu 7:16 And you shall destroy all the people which Jehovah your God shall deliver you. Your eye shall have no pity upon them, neither shall you serve their gods, for *they will be* a snare to you.

Isa 62:2 And the **nations will see your righteousness**, and all kings your glory; and you will be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah will name.

Isa 62:3 You also will be a crown of glory in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Isa 62:4 You will no more be called Forsaken; nor will your land any more be called Desolate; but you will be called **My Delight** is in her, and your land, Married; for Jehovah delights in you, and your land is married.

Isa 62:5 For *as* a young man marries a virgin, so will your sons marry you; and *as* the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so will **your God rejoice over you**.

Isa 62:6 I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem, who will not always be silent all the day nor all the night; you who remember Jehovah, do not be silent.

Isa 62:7 And give Him no rest until He establishes and **makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth**.

Some assert that Israel is seldom mentioned in the New Testament and is not important to God anymore. However, Israel is referred to in many places – just pick up a *Strong’s Concordance* and see for yourself. Israel is also referred to in Matt 10:6; James 1:1; Rev 7; 12; 21. Her tribulation is also referred to in Matt 24; Mark 13; Luke 21; Rev 18.

However, Israel is mentioned seldom in Job and Proverbs for instance – yet both are books of the Older Testament. Mentioning or not mentioning and the amount of mention has no bearing on the Plan of God. After all, the New Testament enriches the Old and builds upon its foundation, it does not replace the Older Testament. Whilst many do not say that it is replaced, by their theological positions, this is what they are saying in effect. Notice two key New Testament scriptures:

Mat 10:5 Jesus sent out these twelve, commanding them, saying, Do not go into the way of the nations, and do not enter into *any* city of *the* Samaritans.

Mat 10:6 But rather go to the lost sheep of *the* **house of Israel**.

Jam 1:1 James, a servant of God and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, to the **twelve tribes** in the Dispersion, greeting.

1). Deut 4:26-29 (cp Is 55:1; Hos 6:1-3; Lam 3:23-24; Deut 30:1-5), 30-31; 30:4 (cp Matt 24:31); Is 10:20-22; Zeph 3:18-20.

2). Is 1:11-16; 27:12-13 (it would appear that this will begin at the 7th Trump of Revelation). See also Zech 9:14; Is 10:20-22; Jer 16:14-15; 23:3, 7-8; 31:8-9; 43:1-6; 50:3-5; Ezek 20:42-43.

The major scriptures on this subject are: Jer 31:1, 7-9; 50:4-5; Ezek 11:17; 34:12-13; 37:19-22. Other related scriptures include: Jer 12: 14-15; 16:15; 23:3-4, 7-8; 24:6-7; 30:3, 8-10; 33:6-9; 50:4-5, 19-20; Ps 14:7; 53:6; 68:6; 30:4; Lev 26: 42-46).

Other scriptures on the reunion of Israel and Judah include: Jer 3:17-19; Zech 12:10-14; Rom 11:26; Acts 15:16-17; Hos 1:11; 2:14; Mic 2:12; 5:4-7; Zech 8:7-8; 10:9-12.

Eze 16:59 For so says the Lord Jehovah: I will even deal with you as you have done, who have despised the oath in breaking the covenant.

Eze 16:60 **But I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish to you an everlasting covenant.**

Eze 16:61 And you shall remember your ways and be ashamed, when you shall receive your sisters, your older and your younger. And I will give them to you for daughters, but not by *your* covenant.

Eze 16:62 And I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall know that I *am* Jehovah;

Eze 36:24 For I will take you from among the nations and gather you out of all lands, and will gather you into your own land.

Eze 36:25 And I will sprinkle clean waters on you, and you shall be clean. I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from your idols.

Eze 36:26 **And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you. And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.**

Eze 36:27 **And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My judgments and do *them*.**

Eze 36:28 And you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers. And you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

Eze 36:29 I will also save you from all your defilements, and I will call for the grain, and will increase it, and will lay no famine on you.

Eze 36:30 And I will multiply the fruits of the tree and the increase of the field, so that you shall never again receive the curse of famine among the nations.

Eze 36:31 And you shall remember your own evil ways, and your doings that *were* not good, and shall despise yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.

Hos 2:16 And it shall be at that day, says Jehovah, **you shall call Me, My Husband**, and shall no more call Me, My Baal.

Hos 2:17 For I will take away the names of the Baals out of her mouth, and they will no more be remembered by their name.

Hos 2:18 And in that day **I will cut a covenant for them**, with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the heavens, and *with* the creeping things of the ground. And I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely.

Hos 2:19 And **I will betroth you to Me forever**. Yea, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies.

Hos 2:20 I will even betroth you to Me in faithfulness. And you shall know Jehovah.

Hos 2:21 And it will be, in that day I will answer, says Jehovah. I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth,

Hos 2:22 and the earth shall hear the grain and the wine and the oil. And they shall hear Jezreel.

Hos 2:23 And I will sow her to Me in the earth. And I will have mercy on No-mercy. And I will say to Not-my-people, You are My people. And they shall say, My God.

Other scriptures on this important subject include: Ezek 34:25; Is 55:3; 59:20-21; 62:4-5.

In Dan 9:27 it indicates that Christ would be cut off after 3 ½ years of His ministry confirming the Covenant with Israel:

Dan 9:26 And after sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not *for* Himself. And the people of the ruler who shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. And the end of it *shall be* with the flood, and ruins are determined, until *the end shall be war*.

Dan 9:27 **And he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week.** And in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the offering to cease, and on a corner *of the altar* desolating abominations, even until *the end*. And that which was decreed shall be poured on the desolator.

In Is 60:9-17; 49:20 we see that the Holy Land will become too small for Israel due to its population explosion, that she would have to set out to colonise and populate again. Here, the gentiles will serve Israel (Is 49:21-23) and therefore the old colonial territories will be repopulated (Is 66:19-20; 61:4).

Is 26:15; 27:6; 49:8 speak of Israel's colonies as do Ezek 28:25-26; Amos 9:14-15; Ezek 19:10; (cp Gen 49:22); Ob 17 (Israel "shall possess their possessions" – ie the Holy Land, a colonies and treasures).

Isa 41:14 Do not fear, worm of Jacob *and* men of Israel; I will help you, says Jehovah, and your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

Isa 41:15 Behold, I make you a new sharp threshing instrument, a master of teeth; you shall thresh the mountains [nations] and beat *them* small, and shall make the hills like chaff.

Isa 41:16 **You shall winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away, and a tempest shall scatter them.** And you shall rejoice in Jehovah *and* shall glory in the Holy One of Israel.

Isa 45:14 So says Jehovah, The labor of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia, and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come to you, and they shall be yours [many African nations]. They shall come after you in chains; and they shall cross in chains and they shall fall down to you. They shall plead to you, *saying*, Surely God *is* in you; and none else, no *other* God.

Isa 45:15 Truly You *are* a God who hides Yourself, O God of Israel, the Savior.

Isa 45:16 They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them; they *who are* makers of idols shall go into disgrace together.

Isa 45:17 *But* Israel shall be saved in Jehovah *with* an everlasting salvation. You shall not be ashamed nor blush to the forevers of eternity

Isa 49:1 Listen, O coastlands, to Me; and listen, *lend your ear*, peoples from afar; Jehovah has called Me from the womb; He has made mention of My name from My mother's bowels.

Isa 49:2 And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand He has hidden Me, and made Me a polished shaft. He has hidden Me in His quiver,

Isa 49:3 and said to Me, **You are My servant, O Israel**, in whom I will be glorified.

Isa 49:4 Then I said, I have labored in vain; I have spent My strength for nothing, and in vain; *yet* surely My judgment is with Jehovah, and My work with My God.

Isa 49:5 And now, says Jehovah who **formed Me from the womb to be His servant**, to bring Jacob again to Him, Though Israel is not gathered, yet I shall be glorious in the eyes of Jehovah, and My God shall be My strength.

Isa 49:6 And He said, It is but a little *thing* that You should be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to bring back the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You for a light to the nations, to be My salvation to the end of the earth.

Isa 49:22 So says the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will lift up My hand to the nations, and have set up My banner to the people; and **they shall bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders.**

Isa 49:23 And kings shall be your nursing fathers, and their queens your nurses. **They shall bow to you, faces to the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet;** and you shall know that I *am* Jehovah; by whom they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me.

Isa 49:24 Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?

Isa 54:3 for you shall break out *on* the right hand and on the left. And **your seed shall inherit the nations, and people will inhabit ruined cities.**

Isa 54:4 Do not fear; for you shall not be ashamed, nor shall you blush; for you shall not be put to shame; for you shall forget the shame of your youth, and shall not remember the reproach of your widowhood any more.

Isa 54:5 For **your Maker is your husband;** Jehovah of Hosts is His name; and your Redeemer *is* the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called.

Isa 54:6 For Jehovah has called you as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when you were rejected, says your God.

Isa 54:7 For a little moment [3 ½ year Tribulation] I have left you; but with great mercies I will gather you.

Isa 60:5 Then you shall fear and become bright, and your heart shall throb and swell for joy; because the abundance of the sea shall turn to you, **the wealth of the nations will come to you.**

Isa 60:6 A host of camels shall cover you, **the camels of Midian and Ephah. All of them from Sheba [east Africa, southern India] shall come;** they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall proclaim the praises of Jehovah.

Isa 60:7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together to you; the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you. They shall come up on My altar pleasing Me, and I will glorify the house of My glory.

Isa 60:8 Who *are* these *who* fly like a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

Isa 60:9 Surely the coastlands shall wait for Me, and the **ships of Tarshish first, to bring your sons from far [the Japanese returning the Israelite slaves],** their silver and their gold with them, to the name of Jehovah your God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because He has glorified you.

Isa 60:10 **And the sons of strangers will build up your walls, and their kings will serve you;** for in My wrath I struck you, but in My favor I had mercy on you.

Isa 60:11 Therefore your gates will always be open; they will not be shut day nor night, **to bring to you the wealth of the nations,** and their kings may be led.

Isa 60:12 **For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you will perish.** Yes, *those* nations will be completely wasted.

Isa 60:13 The glory of Lebanon will come to you, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box tree together, to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I will make the place of My feet glorious.

Isa 60:14 **Also the sons of your afflictors shall come bowing to you; and all your despisers will bow down at the soles of your feet.** And they will call you, The city of Jehovah, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

Isa 60:15 Instead of being forsaken and hated, so that no one passes through, I will make you for everlasting majesty, a joy of many generations.

Isa 60:16 You will also suck the milk of nations, and suck the breast of kings; and you will know that I Jehovah *am* your Savior and your Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob. [as kings don’t have milk producing breasts, this must mean that certain gentile kings will produce sustenance for Israel]

Isa 61:4 And they will build the old wastes, they will raise up the ruins of former times [the colonies]. And they will repair the waste cities, the ruins of many generations.

Isa 61:5 And **strangers will stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the stranger will be your plowmen and your vinedressers.**

Isa 61:6 But you will be named the priests of Jehovah; it will be said of you, Ministers of our God; **you will eat the riches of the nations,** and you will revel in their glory.

Isa 61:7 For your shame *you will have* double; and for disgrace they will rejoice in their portion; therefore in their own land they will possess double; everlasting joy will be theirs.

Isa 61:8 For I Jehovah love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

Isa 61:9 **And their seed will be known among the nations,** and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them will acknowledge them, that they *are* the seed Jehovah has blessed

Isa 66:19 And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those who escape [presumably escaped death in the Great Tribulation] from them to the nations, *to* Tarshish [Japan], Pul [Poles], and Lud [Albanian], drawers of the bow; *to* Tubal [Great Russians], and Javan [some descendants in southern Europe and others in east Asia], *to* the far away coasts that have not heard My fame, nor have seen My glory. **And they will declare My glory among the nations.**

Isa 66:20 And they will bring all your brothers *for* an offering to Jehovah out of all nations on horses [the gentiles will bring the Israelite slaves to the Holy Land], and in chariots, and in litters, and on mules, and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem, says Jehovah, as the sons of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel *into* the house of Jehovah.

Isa 66:21 And I will also take some of them for priests *and* for Levites, says Jehovah.

Oba 1:17 But upon Mount Zion shall be those who escaped [presumably escaped the Tribulation]; and it shall be holy. And the house of Jacob shall possess their own possessions.

Oba 1:18 **And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame. And the house of Esau shall be for stubble.** And they shall kindle in them and burn them up. And no survivor shall be to the house of Esau; for Jehovah has spoken it.

Oba 1:19 **And those of the south shall possess the mountain of Esau and the low country of the Philistines.** And they shall possess the fields of Ephraim and the fields of Samaria; and Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead.

Oba 1:20 And the exiles of this army *shall go* to the sons of Israel who shall possess *the land* of the Canaanites to Zarephath; even the exiles of Jerusalem who *are* in Sepharad shall possess the cities of the south.

Oba 1:21 And deliverers shall go up into the mountain of Zion to judge the mountain of Esau; and the kingdom shall be to Jehovah.

Eze 25:13 therefore so says the Lord Jehovah: I will also stretch out My hand on Edom, and will cut man and beast off from it; and I will make it a waste from Teman, even to Dedan they shall fall by the sword.

Eze 25:14 **And I will lay My vengeance on Edom by the hand of My people Israel.** And they shall do in Edom according to My anger and according to My fury. And they shall know My vengeance, says the Lord Jehovah.

Eze 25:15 So says the Lord Jehovah: Because the Philistines have taken vengeance; yes, have taken vengeance with spite in *their* soul, to destroy *with* never-ending enmity,

Eze 25:16 So the Lord Jehovah says this: Behold, I will stretch out My hand on the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethites, and will destroy the rest of the sea coast.

Eze 25:17 And I will execute great vengeance on them with rebukes; and they shall know that I *am* Jehovah, when I shall lay My vengeance on them. [how will God do this – via the might of revived Israel!]

Amo 9:11 In that day I will raise up the booth of David that has fallen, and close up its breaks; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old;

Amo 9:12 **so that they may possess the remnant of Edom**, and of all the nations *on* whom My name is called, says Jehovah who is doing this. (see Num 24:17-19)

Zep 2:7 And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed on them. In the houses of Ashkelon they shall lie down in the evening, for Jehovah their God shall visit them and turn away their captivity.

Zep 2:8 I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the curses of the sons of Ammon, *with* which they have cursed My people and have magnified *themselves* on their border.

Zep 2:9 Therefore, *as* I live, says Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be like Sodom, and the sons of Ammon like Gomorrah; a possession of nettles, and salt pits, and a ruin forever. **The remnant of My people shall plunder them, and the remnant of My people shall possess them.**

Zep 2:10 They shall have this for their pride, because they have cursed and magnified themselves against the people of Jehovah of Hosts.

Mic 4:13 Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion [this refers to both end-time Israel and the Church]; for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hoofs bronze; and **you shall crush many peoples.** And I will give their gain to Jehovah, and their wealth to the Lord of the all the earth.

Zep 2:11 Jehovah *will be* frightening to them; for He will make all the gods of the earth lean; *each* man from his place and all the coastlands of the nations shall bow to Him.

Zep 2:12 You Ethiopians also *shall be* slain by My sword.

Zep 2:13 And He will stretch out His hand against the north and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desert and dry like a desert. [God will use Israel to bring Edom, Assyrian, Moab, Ammon and Ashkelon (Philistines) into His realm]

Zec 9:13 **For I have bent Judah for me as a bow; I filled it with Ephraim, and I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece**, and make you as the sword of a mighty man.

Zec 9:14 And Jehovah shall be seen over them, and His arrow shall go forth like the lightning [how? Via the Ephraimites, led by Judah]; and the Lord Jehovah shall blow the ram's horn [Day of Trumpets – symbolising war?], and shall go out with the windstorms of the south [Judah].

Zec 9:15 **Jehovah of Hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour and trample the slingstones.** And they shall drink and be boisterous, as through wine. And they shall be filled like a bowl, and like the corners of the altar.

Isa 55:4 Behold, I have given Him *for* a witness to the people [gentiles], a Leader and Commander of peoples.

Isa 55:5 Behold, You shall call a nation that You do not know; a nation *that* did not know You shall run to You because of Jehovah Your God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified You.

Isa 49:6 And He said, It is but a little *thing* that You should be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to **bring back the preserved ones of Israel**; I will also give You for a light to the nations, to be My salvation to the end of the earth.

Isa 49:7 So says Jehovah, the Redeemer of Israel, His Holy One, *to Him* whom man despises, *to Him* whom the nation hates, the servant of rulers: Kings shall see and arise, rulers also shall worship, because of Jehovah who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, and He shall choose You.

Isa 49:8 So says Jehovah, in a favorable time I replied to You, and in a day of salvation I have helped You; and I will preserve You, and give You for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause them to inherit the wasted inheritances;

Isa 49:9 that You may say to the prisoners, Go out! To those who *are* in darkness, Show yourselves! They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.

Isa 49:10 They shall not hunger nor thirst; nor shall the heat nor sun strike them; for He who has mercy on them shall lead them; even by the springs of water He shall guide them.

The above scriptures, in context, are dual, referring to both Christ and Israel. Indeed, Christ will be working through Israel to reach the world.

Isa 14:1 For Jehovah will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel and set them in their own land; and the stranger shall be joined with them, and they shall cling to the house of Jacob.

Isa 14:2 And **the peoples shall take them and bring them to their place**; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for slaves and slave girls. And **they shall be captives of their captors; and they shall rule over their oppressors**.

From the above we see certain gentile nations, repentant, bringing Israel to the Holy Land and Israel taking them captive for a season. The logic is that the servitude of these peoples will be in accordance with Older Testament's laws on the subject and Biblical principles (Ex 21:1-6; Deut 15:1-5; 31:10) and will be for seven years. This servitude represents their repentance, at least in part. During this season of servitude, they will learn about God, learn new skills and come to understand that God's plan for mankind includes rulership through Judah and Israel.

Here are some further scriptures on the subject:

Isa 19:17 **And the land of Judah shall be a terror** to Egypt [Mizraim]; everyone who mentions it shall be afraid toward it, because of the purpose of Jehovah of Hosts, which He has purposed against it.

Isa 2:4 And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more [how will He do this? Through Israel]

Zec 10:3 My anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the he-goats; for Jehovah of Hosts has visited **His flock the house of Judah, and has made them as His beautiful horse in battle**.

Zec 10:4 Out of Him came the cornerstone; out of Him the nail; out of Him the battle bow; out of Him every oppressor together.

Zec 10:5 **And they shall be like mighty ones who trample the mud of the streets in the battle. And they shall fight because Jehovah is with them**, and they shall make the riders on horses ashamed.

Zec 10:6 And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will return to save them; for I have pity on them. And they shall be as though I had not cast them off; for I *am* Jehovah their God, and I will answer them.

Zec 10:7 **And Ephraim shall be like a mighty one**, and their heart shall rejoice as *by* wine. And their sons shall see and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in Jehovah.

Zec 10:8 I will hiss for them and gather them; for I have redeemed them. And they shall be many as they were many.

Zec 10:9 And I will sow them among the peoples, and they shall remember Me in the distances; and they shall live with their sons and return.

Zec 10:10 I will return them out of the land of Egypt, and I will gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; **for room shall not be found for them**. [this population explosion will necessitate them to become colonisers again]

Zec 12:7 Jehovah also shall save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the people of Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah.

Zec 12:8 In that day Jehovah shall defend around the people of Jerusalem. And it will be, he who is feeble among them at that day *shall be* like David; and the house of David *shall be* like God, like the Angel of Jehovah before them.

Zec 14:14 **And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the nations all around shall be gathered, gold, and silver, and clothing in great abundance** [those nations who stole Israel's wealth in the Tribulation, will have that wealth confiscated]