

Replacement Theology

A Preamble

The next three chapters, nine through eleven, in our study of Romans are focused on Israel. I think it is important to insert another Preamble to first address a movement in many Christian churches today regarding Israel the nation and how it relates to the Christian Church—made up of largely as Catholic and Protestant believers. There is a current, somewhat limited, trend among some churches who teach that the Church is actually a successor, or replacement to the nation of Israel. This “drifting away” from the totality of Biblical teaching about Israel is labeled *Replacement Theology*. We must pray that God will expose this movement and change the hearts of those behind it.

Replacement Theology contends that the Church has replaced Israel in terms of God’s blessings and promises. In short, the selection of Israel goes back to the Covenant God made when He established a chosen people. In our King James Version of the Bible, Israel’s name appears 2,241 times in the Old Testament, and 77 times in the New Testament. The word testament is another word for covenant. It is a promise and God doesn’t break His promises. It was one of many unconditional covenants with His people. Regardless of Israel’s obedience or disobedience, as noted by Old Testament books like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, God still will fulfill His covenants.

It is inconceivable that our faithful and loving God would decide to send His only Son to Earth, put Him in an earthsuit, let Him be born through a virgin (to prevent Him from carrying Adam’s fallen nature in His earthly body), then require Him to die on a Cross as payment for our sins and our fallen nature—and do all of that as a replacement for His called people, and His covenants with them. Really!

From a recent issue of *Decision Magazine*, I have taken from statements in an article by Gary Hamrick and others. I would remind my readers that there is only one way to Heaven, for Jews, Gentiles, and all of humanity. There are no alternatives—no shortcuts. **If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”**

God’s unconditional covenant was given thousands of years before Jesus Christ was revealed. When Paul said in Romans 9:6, **For not all who are born into the nation of Israel are truly members of God’s people!** Paul went on to say in 11:1-2 Select, **I ask, then, has God rejected his own people, the nation of Israel? Of course not! I myself am an Israelite... God has not rejected his own people, whom he chose from the very beginning.** All believers are “chosen people.” Further in 11:17-18 Paul reminds his readers... **But some of these branches from Abraham’s tree—some of the people of Israel—have been broken off. And you Gentiles, who were branches from a wild**

olive tree, have been grafted in. So now you also receive the blessing God has promised Abraham and his children, sharing in the rich nourishment from the root of God's special olive tree. But you must not brag about being grafted in to replace the branches that were broken off. You are just a branch, not the root.

God didn't make a covenant with Israel and then change His mind. Of all the people on earth, "the Lord your God has chosen you to be his own special treasure." Deuteronomy 7:6—**For you are a holy people, who belong to the Lord your God. Of all the people on earth, the Lord your God has chosen you to be his own special treasure.** He's talking to Israel.

Jack Hibbs in the same magazine writes: **If Israel has been condemned by God then how do you explain the supernatural Biblical survival of the Jewish people over the past 2,000 years, despite constant attempts by their enemies to destroy them? How do we explain Israel's reappearance as a nation (1948) after being driven to the four corners of the Earth after A.D. 70?**

And how do we explain God's statement to Abraham, **"I will confirm my covenant with you and your descendants after you, from generation to generation. This is the everlasting covenant: I will always be your God and the God of your descendants after you."** Genesis 17:7

And how do we explain what began in 1948, when Israel was re-established? **For I will gather you up from all the nations and bring you home again to your land.** Ezekiel 36:24

Add to that the prophecy noted in Matthew 24 showing us that Jesus clearly taught that Israel, and the temple in Jerusalem, will be rebuilt and exist at the time of the Great Tribulation. What is the purpose of this if Israel has been replaced?

Paul Chappell, in the same magazine noted, **If God's explicit promises to Israel can be spiritualized away, then the reliability of every promise in the Bible is weakened. The permanence of Israel's calling does not rest on Israel's faithfulness, but on God's. faithfulness. The conviction that God will yet fulfill His promises to Israel is not political, it is Biblical.**

From writings by Joel Rosenberg, the Jewish Christian, author, and speaker, who reminds us and his fellow Jews, of Paul's statement to the Romans... **I want you to understand this mystery, dear brothers and sisters, so that you will not feel proud about yourselves. Some of the people of Israel have hard hearts, but this will last only until the full number of Gentiles comes to Christ. And so all Israel will be saved. As the Scriptures say, the one who rescues will come from Jerusalem, and he will turn Israel away from ungodliness.** Romans 11:25-26

And finally, from O.S. Hawkins... **If God were to break His covenant with Israel, how could we trust Him to keep His promises to us? Silence in the face of replacement theology and antisemitism is not neutrality—it is neglect. To our Jewish friends: while some voices within Christianity have forgotten, the vast majority have not. We remember. We stand with you (Israel). As Ruth once declared so do we: "Your people shall be my people, and your God my God." (Ruth 1:16).**

History is replete with God's plan and purpose. God sent us Isaiah in the 8th Century B.C. **"I will say to the north and south, bring my sons and daughters back to Israel from the distant corners of the earth. Bring all who claim me as their God, for I have made them for my glory. It was I who created them. But you are my witnesses, O Israel! You are my servant. You have been chosen to know me, believe in me, and understand that I alone am God. There is no other God—there never has been, and there never will be."** Isaiah 43:6-7, 10

Before Isaiah it was Jeremiah in the 7th Century. Before that it was Ezekiel in the 6th Century—and on and on.

And lest we forget—our loving and merciful Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ ultimately was sent to earth, born to Mary and Joseph, who were both Israelites—descendants of the tribe of Judah, from the lineage of King David. My, my! Pray for Israel and the body of Christ!

'Nuf said!