

Why Israel?

I want to note that much of this I gleaned from GotQuestions.org.
I want to encourage you all to use this wonderful website for many of your bible questions

With that let's pray.

God's choosing of Israel had nothing to do with them and everything to do with God and His purpose and perfect love and plan for mankind.

To understand why God chooses nations and people we must have a clear understanding of God, *Who He is; Why He does what He does and Why we should trust Him with our eternal future.*

Let's start,

S- **Genesis 1:1**, *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."*

PK- Stop and consider that God spoke and all creation came into existence, what power, what intellect, what selflessness, why would you not trust such an awesome being with your life?

Here's a synopsis of this question from an array of teachers that gives us a good beginning.

"God's choice of Israel emerged from two foundational commitments: **a promise made to Abraham and God's faithful love in keeping His promises.** Critically, both reasons have nothing to do with Israel's merit and everything to do with God's love.

S1- **Deuteronomy 7:7-9**, tells us, *“The LORD did not set His affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath He swore to your forefathers that He brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

S2- *Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; He is the faithful God, keeping His covenant of love to **a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commands.**”*

PK- The Abrahamic covenant established the theological foundation for Israel’s election. God promised Abraham’s descendants, land, and that through him...

S- **Genesis 12:3.** *“I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; **And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**” “*

PK- Israel’s selection served multiple purposes beyond mere privilege. God chose Israel as the people through whom Jesus Christ would be born—the Savior from sin and death. Beyond this messianic role, God desired Israel to teach others about Him, functioning as a nation of priests, prophets, and missionaries who pointed others toward God and His promised Redeemer.

Interestingly, God’s election strategy involved selecting the vulnerable rather than the powerful. Israel was chosen because they were the smallest group of people in the area at that time with

nothing but God—no kingdom, no land. God selected Israel specifically to demonstrate His radical love and how to address human sin through Israel’s own rebellion against Him. This paradoxical choice—of a weak nation to reveal divine strength—underscores that God’s selection rested entirely on His grace rather than human qualification or achievement.”

S- Ephesians 2:8-9, *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”*

God chose Abraham:

PK- The omniscient God knew Abraham and created and chose him to be the ***Father of Faith*** that would be a blessing to the all people, both Jew and Gentile through Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah. But within that blessing was a picture and example of total sacrificial belief that would lead to righteousness and eternal life.

S- Genesis 18:19 *“For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.”*

PK- We see in Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus, the Messiah came from Israel, through Abraham.

S- Matthew 1:1-2, *“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and **Jacob begot Judah and his brothers.**”*

PK- Note the Jacob's name was changed to *Israel*, and he had twelve sons who made up the nation of Israel.

Now one of God's purposes for His chosen people was to be a light to the world by way of their relationship with Yahweh and usher in the Messiah.

S1- **Isaiah 49:6-7**, *"Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be **My Servant** to raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth. Thus says the LORD, The Redeemer of Israel, their Holy One, To Him whom man despises, To Him whom the nation abhors,*

S2-*To the Servant of rulers: "Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship, Because of the LORD who is faithful, The Holy One of Israel; And He has chosen You."*

S- **Hal Lindsey helps here**, "On the surface, the statement '**You are My servant, Israel**,' explicitly identifies Yahweh's Servant as the nation Israel. But if that were the case, an apparent contradiction would arise in **Isaiah 49:5-6**, in which the Servant's task is to bring Israel back to Yahweh and to the land...**the view that 'Israel' is a title of the individual messianic Servant harmonizes** most satisfactorily with the passage and context."

PK- The New Testament carries this understanding through. The identity of the Servant, the King, and the Messiah is revealed in reference to the Isaiah passage:

S1- Luke 2:25-32, “At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him ²⁶ and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷ That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required,

S2- Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying, “Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised. I have seen **your salvation**, which you have prepared **for all people. He is a light to reveal God to the nations**, and he is the glory of your people Israel!”

PK- A question that often arises is, “**Is Israel *still* God’s chosen people?**” After all, the New Testament speaks of ***all* believers** in Christ as “*God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved*” (Colossians 3:12; cf. 1 Peter 1:1), and, **in Christ**, there is no difference between *Jew and Gentile* (Galatians 3:28).

We believe that, even as God is working through the church in this age, Israel is still God’s people in a unique way. The biblical basis for that statement is found in the Old Testament covenants and songs, Jewish history, the biblical prophecies, and **the New Testament insistence that God is faithful.**

Israel Is Still God’s People: The Covenants

God’s covenant with Abraham promised Abraham three things: a land, a posterity, and a blessing (Genesis 12:1–3). Through Abraham’s seed, the whole world would be blessed. God highlights the enduring nature of this covenant:

S- Genesis 13:15, *“All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring **forever**”.*

PK- Importantly, the covenant did not depend on Abraham’s power to keep it. In fact, Abraham was not even conscious when God ratified the covenant by Himself (**Genesis 15**). Since God alone took the responsibility of blessing Abraham’s seed, **the covenant was unconditional**.

PK- God reaffirmed the covenant with Abraham’s son Isaac

S- Genesis 26:3-4, *“Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to **Abraham your father**.”*

PK- And to Isaac’s son Jacob,

S- Genesis 28:14–15, *“Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.”*

PK- From then on, every time God referred to Himself as “**the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**,” that covenant was remembered. God chose to have a perpetual relationship with Abraham’s descendants from generation to generation.

The **covenant God made with David** (and with Solomon) was likewise a unilateral, unconditional promise. That covenant assured

David that God would “*provide a place for my people Israel*” where they will “*no longer be disturbed*” (**2 Samuel 7:10**).

And then God revealed to David the enduring nature of this covenant:

S- 2 Samuel 7:16 “*Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever*”

PK- From the beginning, Israel has had a unique relationship with God. Both the Abrahamic Covenant and the Davidic Covenant detail the special blessings God gave Israel, and both covenants are said to last forever. Even through their continued rebellion, God was faithful to His covenants.

S- Nehemiah 9:31, “*In your great mercy You did not put an end to them or abandon them, for You are **a gracious and merciful God***”).

PK- In fact, God returned Israel to their land (see the books of Ezra and Nehemiah). Multiple times.

Israel Is Still God’s People: The Prophecies

Throughout Israel’s history, God took pains to maintain His relationship with His chosen people through the prophets. Elijah, Isaiah, Hosea, Ezekiel, and others voiced God’s call for the nation to cease from their sinful indulgences and return to Him. And, in no uncertain terms, the prophets warned of the consequences of continued disobedience. God’s chosen people abused the prophets and ignored their message

S- Acts 7:52 *"Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers.*

PK- Despite that rebellion, God remained committed to His covenantal people.

In a passage concerning the restoration of Israel, the prophet Isaiah pictures the city of Jerusalem as despairing of God's help

S1- Isaiah 49:14, But Zion said, *"The LORD has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me."*

PK- In reply, God says,

S2- Isaiah 49:15, *"Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you!"*

S3- Isaiah 49:15–16, *"See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me."*

PK- In a similar passage promising restoration to the nation of Israel, the prophet Jeremiah relates God's promise of steadfast love:

S- Jeremiah 31:3, *"I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness."*

PK- Later in the same context, Jeremiah writes this to God's people, Israel:

S- Jeremiah 31:35–36, *“This is what the Lord says,
He who appoints the sun to shine by day,
who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night,
who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—
the Lord Almighty is His name:
“Only if these decrees vanish from My sight,”
declares the Lord,
“will Israel ever cease being a nation before Me.”
declares the Lord.*

PK- Then we come to our modern-day fulfillment of a prophecy that speaks of Israel’s rebirth into their land.

S- Isaiah 66:8, *“Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? **Or shall a nation be born at once?** For as soon as Zion was in labor, She gave birth to her children.”*

PK- THE NATION OF ISRAEL was destroyed in 70 AD, by the Rome army. It was gone, erased from maps and was no longer a nation. The Jewish people dispersed throughout the world for over 2000 years. Throughout history, once a people group loses its homeland it only takes about three generations to for that people group cease to exist and begin to be absorbed into other cultures.

But not God’s chosen, the Jewish people, kept their identity for over **2000 years!** Destroyed in 70 AD, **But God** in His divine prophetic plan would not allow that to be the end, His promises are unending. At midnight **May 14th, 1948**, the World League of Nations, which would become the United Nations, proclaimed the State of Israel, fulfilling Isaiah’s prophecy.

Israel Is Still God's People: The New Testament

PK- The apostle Paul directly answers the question, “**Is Israel still God's people?**” in **Romans** chapter **9–11**. (Please turn in your Bibles to **Romans 9**. In this extended passage, Paul begins by expressing his deep, sincere love for his fellow Jews (**Romans 9:1–4**). He follows that with a brief overview of how God blessed them and used them to bring the Messiah into the world (verses **4–5**).

Yet, Paul points out, it seems as if Israel has been rejected as God's people. After centuries of rebellion, culminating in their rejection of their own Messiah (**Acts 2:36; 3:13–15**), there has been a stumbling and hardening of heart (**Romans 9:6–33**).

“Israel is zealous for God but has no true knowledge of God” (**Romans 10:2**). They attempt to establish their own righteousness through keeping the law, and they reject the righteousness that comes through faith in Christ (**Romans 10:3–13**). In all this, they have become “a disobedient and obstinate people” (**Romans 10:21**, quoting **Isaiah 65:2**).

So, Paul asks, “*Did God reject His people?*” His answer is unequivocal: “***By no means! . . . God did not reject His people, whom He foreknew***” (**Romans 11:1–2**). Earlier in **Romans**, Paul had made the same point: “*What if some [Jews] were unfaithful? Will their unfaithfulness nullify God's faithfulness? **Not at all! Let God be true, and every human being a liar***” (**Romans 3:3–4**). That is, God's promises to Israel are still in effect, despite human unfaithfulness.

When he says, “*By no means!*” (**Romans 11:1**) and “*Not at all!*” (**Romans 3:4**), he absolutely repudiates any notion that God is done with Israel. In fact, Paul follows it up with personal proof: “*I am an Israelite myself*” (**Romans 11:1**). If God has permanently abandoned His people, then Paul would not be saved.

The rest of **Romans 11** is an explanation of Israel’s current state and God’s future plan for them. Currently, Israel has experienced a hardening of heart due to their rejection of the Messiah (**Romans 11:7**). They stumbled at the truth and have been set aside in God’s plan. To use Paul’s analogy, the “*natural branches*” of the olive tree have been set aside in favor of “*a wild olive shoot*” that has been *grafted in their place*. In other words, “*because of [Israel’s] transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles*” **Romans 11:11**. But even this has a goal of reaching the Jews: salvation was brought to the Gentiles “*to make Israel envious*” (**verse 11**).

In teaching the “*setting aside*” of Israel, Paul repeats the truth that they are still God’s covenant people: “*Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all [(mē genoito)!]*” (**Romans 11:11**). As he wraps up his discussion, Paul further clarifies: “*Israel has experienced a hardening **in part until** the full number of the Gentiles has come in, and in this way all **Israel will be saved***” (**Romans 11:25–26**). Note three important things here:

- 1) Israel’s current hardening is *partial* (“in part”).
- 2) Israel’s current setting aside is *temporary* (“until”).
- 3) Israel’s future involves *salvation*.

So, yes, Israel is still God’s chosen people, even though, in their current state of rebellion, they have been temporarily set aside

in God's plan to bless the world. **God is faithful. He will keep His promises to Israel, no matter what.** That's the meaning of **Romans 11:29**: "*God's gifts and His call are irrevocable.*"

We should follow Paul's lead and praise God for His faithfulness: "*To Him be the glory forever! Amen*" (**Romans 11:36**).

So, let's make sure we have answered the **big three questions**.

Who He God?; He is All Knowing, All Powerful, All loving and Eternally Faithful.

Why He does what He does? **John 3:16-17**, "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.*"

And finally, Why should we trust Him with our eternal future? I'll quote the Apostle Peter, "*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" Who else can we trust but the God of all creation.

David Jeremiah brings this all together, "Yes, Christianity has emphasized the biblical message of grace for two thousand years, and the spread of the Church has been extraordinary. But that message is ours because it was passed down from the Jewish people. The Gospel was born in Israel. It was nursed and cradled by the Hebrew nation in the land promised to their ancestors. It was Jewish apostles who carried the Gospel to the ends of the earth. The first churches were established by Jewish missionaries. Our faith—from beginning to end—flows through Israel.

Do you see now why Israel should have a place in your heart? Through Israel came the law. Through Israel came the Scriptures.

Through Israel came the Messiah—born in Bethlehem, of the house of David. Through Israel came the Church, carrying the Gospel to every nation. Through Israel came our salvation.”

Let's Pray