

# The Significance of Israel

## Part 1

### “Israel’s Purpose to be a Blessing”

#### **Genesis 12** NIV

**1** The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

**2**

“I will make you into a great nation,  
and I will bless you;  
I will make your name great,  
and you will be a blessing.

**3**

I will bless those who bless you,  
and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and all peoples on earth  
will be blessed through you.”

#### **Deuteronomy 7**

**6** For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

**7** 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. **8** But it was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery...

#### **Replacement Theology:**

Replacement theology, or supersessionism, is the belief that the Christian Church has replaced national Israel as God's chosen people and heir to the biblical promises. It suggests that due to the rejection of Jesus as Messiah, the church has permanently superseded Israel, inheriting the blessings while Israel inherited

Justin Martyr (c. 100–165 AD) is widely recognized as the first early Christian writer to formally articulate "replacement theology"

Martin Luther (1483–1546) A Famous theologian who embraced Replacement Theology

John Calvin (1509–1564) A Famous theologian who embraced Replacement Theology

Does any one know what year Israel ceased was dismantled as a nation or state? 135-138AD

During the time of Justin Martyr, Martin Luther, John Calvin Israel had been dismantled and there was a sense in which Israel was no longer existed in a Biblical sense.

But something happened in 1948?

- 1917: The British government pledged support for a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine.
- 1922-1948 (British Mandate): Britain administered Palestine, managing growing tensions between Jewish immigrants and Arab residents.
- Nov 29, 1947 (UN Resolution 181): The UN General Assembly voted to partition Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem under international control. Jewish leaders accepted this plan, while Arab leaders rejected it.
- May 14, 1948 (Independence): The British Mandate ended. David Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of the State of Israel.

What does this mean?

This means the world witnessed the fulfillment of Prophecy concerning Israel in the Bible

## Ezekiel 36

**22** “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “I do not do *this* for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name’s sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went.

**23** And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I *am* the Lord,” says the Lord God, “when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. **24** For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land.

## Isaiah 11

**11**

It shall come to pass in that day

*That* the Lord shall set His hand again the second time

To recover the remnant of His people who are left,

From Assyria and Egypt,

From Pathros and Cush,

From Elam and Shinar,

From Hamath and the [d]islands of the sea.

**12**

He will set up a banner for the nations,

And will [e]assemble the outcasts of Israel,

And gather together the dispersed of Judah

From the four corners of the earth.

- One thing that may cause some to struggle concerning Israel, is with the fact that they are called “God’s Chosen People”. The truth is they are chosen because they are of Abraham who God made a covenant promise to. Abraham found favor with God because he believed God and it was counted unto him as righteousness. Abraham is the first to be made righteous by faith and thus is a foreshadow of the New Covenant.

- The fact that Israel is called God's chosen people doesn't mean they are better. It simply means the Lord has set his affection on them and with that has also assigned them a special place in this world and given them a special purpose.

### **God Uniquely Called Israel:**

**1. To provide the Lineage of the Messiah:** Jesus is born of the tribe of Judah and in Matthew 1 we see the lineage of Jesus from Abraham to Joseph. The most critical purpose that God had for Israel was to provide Jesus Christ, the Savior through whom all nations are blessed.

**2. To be a Model Nation and Light to the World:** Israel was intended to be a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6). They were called out by God to be different than the other nations; to live according to God's laws and demonstrating His wisdom and holiness to surrounding nations.

**3. To Preserve God's Word:** God entrusted Israel with the preservation of His Word, the Law, and the Prophets.

### **Romans 3**

**1** What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? **2** Much in every way! First of all, the Jews have been entrusted with the very words of God.

**4. To be Witnesses of God's Faithfulness:** By maintaining His covenant even through Israel's periods of disobedience, God uses Israel to demonstrate His unchanging character and faithfulness (Isaiah 43-44, Jeremiah 30-31).

**Of all these things we can't forget that one of the first things God called Israel to; was to be a blessing.**

## **Genesis 12**

**2b**

I will make your name great,  
and you will be a blessing.

**3b**

and all peoples on earth  
will be blessed through you.”

- So Israel is Chosen by God and Chosen to be a Blessing to all people...

It's important to remember in relation Israel being chosen that God also has the other nations in mind.

## **Isaiah 49:6**

“I will also make you a light for the Gentiles,  
that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.”

### **Examples:**

1. When Naaman, Commander of the Syrian Army is sick with leprosy and finds out from an Israeli servant girl that there is a Prophet in Israel who could cure him. Naaman then travels to Israel, and Elisha tells him to dip in the Jordan seven times. At first Naaman was angry and rejects Elisha's humble instruction, claiming the rivers of Damascus are better than Israel's. But at the wise advise of his servants he goes back, dips seven times in the Jordan and his flesh was restored like that of a young mans. Then Naaman says, “Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel.” **(2 Kings 5)**

- Through a Miracle of God, Elisha and an unimpressive river in Israel are used to reveal to a pagan idolatrous Syrian Commander that “there is no God in all the world except in Israel.”
- Then Naaman says to Elisha in **Vs. 17** “for your servant will never again make burnt offerings and sacrifices to any other god but the Lord.”
- God had in mind to bless Naaman and reveal himself to him. But If Naaman had hardened his heart towards this Jewish Prophet and this unimpressive river in Israel, he would have missed his blessing, and the revelation of God. Naaman would have died a bitter man.

### **1 Kings 17** NIV - **Widow of Zarephath**

**7** Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. **8** Then the word of the Lord came to him: **9** “Go at once to Zarephath (A Town in Lebanon) in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food.” **10** So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, “Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?” **11** As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me, please, a piece of bread.”

**12** “As surely as the Lord your God lives,” she replied, “I don’t have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die.”

**13** Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. **14** For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the land.’”

**15** She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. **16** For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

- Israel has been in a drought for three and a half years.
- This famine and drought has greatly affected the entire region including this widow and her son.
- God sends Elijah to the home of this widow not to be a burden, but to be a blessing.
- The widow almost missed the blessing God had for her and then Elijah said to her **Vs. 13,14** “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the land.’”
- Elijah in a sense is saying if you sustain me, God will sustain you...
- If she sustains the ministry of Elijah, God will sustain her supernaturally, until he provides rain.
- Naaman received a miraculous healing because he embraced the instruction of the Jewish Prophet Elisha. The widow of Zarephath is going to receive miraculous provision when she embraces the instruction of the Jewish Prophet Elijah.

**Both of these examples are from the OT but how about the NT?**

## **Matthew 8** NIV

**5** When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. **6** “Lord,” he said, “my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly.”

**7** Jesus said to him, “Shall I come and heal him?”

**8** The centurion replied, “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.

**9** For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and that one, ‘Come,’ and he comes. I say to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

**10** When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, “Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. **11** I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. **12** But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

**13** Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would.” And his servant was healed at that moment.

- The Centurion was a Gentile Roman Officer who was part of the Roman occupancy in Israel.
- Most every Jew felt a reason to hate Rome and Roman soldiers. Most likely most Roman soldiers carried some disdain for the Jewish people.
- Yet this Roman Centurion came to a Jewish Rabbi/Miracle worker for help and calls him Lord.

### **This is what the Centurion said to Jesus:**

“Lord, my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly.”

“Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.”

**Vs. 10** When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said this, “Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.

**Vs. 13** Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would.” And his servant was healed at that moment.

- This Gentile Centurion calls Jesus Lord and comes to him in faith...
- If he had been proud and spiteful towards the Jewish people, he would not have come to Jesus and received the blessing and miracle that God for him.

## **Matthew 10**

**40** “Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. **41** Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. **42** And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

The key to receiving a blessing from God like this, is first recognizing and honoring what God has already blessed. A prophet, a righteous person, a disciple of Jesus and even God’s choice of the Jewish people and Israel. This is Honors Reward. When we Honor what God has established.

## **Does this mean that all Israel and the Jewish people are saved and right with God?**

Not at all. The Jewish people are lost without Jesus like the rest of mankind. They must come to faith in Jesus or they will face judgement and eternal punishment in hell like everyone else.

## **So if Israel is lost without Jesus, how is it Blessed today?**

### **Romans 11**

**1** I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. **2** God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed to God against Israel: **3** “Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me”? **4** And what was God's answer to him? “I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” **5** So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace.

- God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12 still remains over Israel and the Jewish people.

### **Romans 11**

**25** I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, **26** and in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written:

“The deliverer will come from Zion;  
he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.

**27**

And this is my covenant with them  
when I take away their sins.”

**28** As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies for your sake; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, **29** for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.

If you really want to know how Israel is still a blessing today I would encourage you to Plan a future trip to Israel:

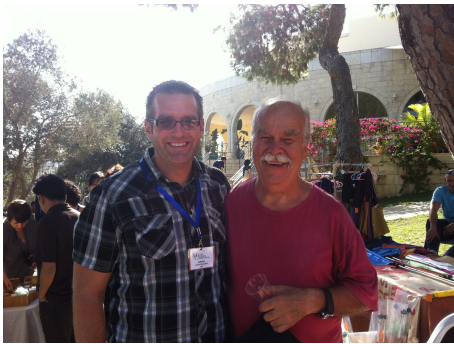
1. Drive down the ancient roads that Jesus and his disciples use to walk...
2. Go out on a boat on the Sea of Galilee and sing songs of worship to God where Jesus calmed the storm and walked on water...



3. Go down to the Pool of Bethesda where Jesus healed a man who was lame for 38 years.
4. Walk the streets of Jerusalem and see the city Jesus said.  
"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings..."
5. Meet some of the Israeli's who in many cases represent our lost brothers and sisters. We desperately pray for the veil to be removed from their eyes that they would see Jesus as Messiah.



6. Meet other Jewish people like Caleb who is Jewish and in love with Jesus/Yeshua



7. Go to the region of the Gerasenes where Jesus stepped foot on the shore and the Gadarene demoniac ran and fell at the feet of Jesus.
8. Go to The Garden of Gethsemane The Mount of Olives where the feet of Jesus will land when he returns.
9. Go to The empty tomb where Joseph of Arimathea placed Jesus and see that it is still empty.
10. Go to The Upper Room where 120 gathered and experienced the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with wind and fire.

Friends its all still there and when you see it, it will set your soul on fire and you will understand why Israel is still a blessing today.