

# Israelology

## Israel Past

### Where/When did Israel Start?

Abraham was called to be the beginning of a specific nation out of all the nations. The account of the Tower of Babel is recorded in Genesis 11. This is where God dispersed people groups and languages. The idea of a nation has two aspects — first is the location, the second is language. In chapter 11, we see the creation of separate people groups and, in Chapter 12 we have God calling out one to be the beginner of His nation.

In Genesis 12:1-3 God says, “I will make you into a great nation and all the families of the earth will be blessed.” In Chapter 15:17-18, God reiterates the covenant, this time distinguishing the land they will have. Finally, in Chapter 17:4-8, God covenants with Abraham that many nations will arise from him. Many nations/kings will arise from Abraham, but still there will be a direct line that will possess the land.

Abraham is the beginning of Israel, but Abraham was not a Jew as there were several lines that came from him. Overall, Abraham had eight sons (Gen 25:1-6), but it was through Isaac that the promise was passed on. Isaac received the inheritance of the Abrahamic covenant. It was passed to Isaac by Abraham and confirmed by God to Isaac (Gen 25:5-6; 26:2-3).

Isaac had two sons, but as we know, Isaac gave only one the blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant. Esau sold his birthright was rejected by God. The promise was given to Jacob. First, Jacob stole the birthright to receive the blessing from Isaac then it was given by God as a promise (Gen 27:27-29; 28:3-5; Genesis 35:9-12). In Genesis 35:12 the word seed is in the singular. This is the promise to Abraham, not only the promise of a nation, not only the promise of land, but also the promise of the seed (Gal 3:16).

The promise to Israel (Jacob) is passed to all the sons; they are all children of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel. This is the specific line to which God has called a specific nation to carry His purpose.

As an Introduction we need to understand some points that will be developed as we proceed through Romans 9-11.

1. National election is not the same as individual salvation
2. The two distinctions in the Bible are now Israel and Gentile
3. Israel’s election means that God guarantees His purpose will be fulfilled through Israel
4. Israel’s election means that God will preserve them until the Eternal Program

After the Genesis account, the Hebrew Scriptures then speak of Israel as a nation that has been chosen (Deuteronomy 4:37; 7:6-8).

The purpose for God choosing Israel is also delineated in the Hebrew Scriptures

1. Exodus 19:6 – A kingdom of priests and a holy nation
2. Deuteronomy 4:5-8 – To attract the other nations to Israel
3. Isaiah 43:8-13 – Israel is God’s witness to the character of God

Israel is a specific people with a distinct heritage. Not just anyone can claim to be an Israelite. They are a chosen people for specific purposes.

Along with the choosing there are promises. Some of the promises are unconditional and some of them are conditional. An unconditional promise means that the person’s involvement has nothing to do with the outcome. A conditional promise means that it is claimed once the conditions are met.

### **What are the Unconditional Covenants?**

The Abrahamic covenant has been touched upon already as the promise to Abraham and to his seed (Messiah). The promise to Abraham was first and foremost the promise of the Messiah and that the One would come from Abraham’s line. This is why specifics about who carries the line is intrinsic and specific in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant

1. Great Nation (Israel)
2. Land Promise (Land Area of Israel)
3. Name Would be Great
4. Blessing to Others (Gentile Blessing)
5. Would be a Cause for God’s Retribution (Bless/Curse)
6. Other Nations would come from Abraham
  - a. 12 Sons of Ismael (Arabs)
  - b. Esau (Edom)

The land, the seed, the blessings — the covenant was to all of the people of the seed and was restated to all of the 12 tribes of Israel (Jacob) in Exodus 2:23-25.

The Palestinian Covenant was an amplification of the Abrahamic Covenant. This is found in Deuteronomy 30:5-10. Speaking to all of Israel, first He explains that they will be scattered but then gives a promise of restoration.

The Davidic Covenant is another amplification of the Abrahamic covenant; this is a precise covenant to someone who is already under the Abrahamic Covenant.

Provisions of the Davidic Covenant (2nd Samuel 7:8-17; 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 17:7-15)

1. Amplifies the Seed promise of the Abrahamic Covenant
2. Promises there will be a king from his line
3. An Eternal King
4. A Son King
5. An Eternal Kingdom

The Davidic Covenant is specific to the line of David. Before this promise we know the rightful kings would be from Judah (Gen 49:10), but this narrows the path significantly to one specific line.

The final covenant actually replaces the main conditional covenant. The New Covenant is not a replacement of any of the unconditional covenants but rather a replacement to the Law of Moses. But this is an amplification to the blessing provision of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 – This covenant is of particular interest because of the New Testament implications. In fact, the term New Testament is really a term for the New Covenant.

The details of the New Covenant are:

1. I WILL make a New Covenant
2. With the house of Israel and the House of Judah – Split Kingdom at this time
3. Different than the Covenant after the Exodus
4. Law within them – Not a learned law
5. I WILL be their God
6. No Need to Teach
7. Sins Forgiven – Concerning the Covenant which was Broken

All covenants are sealed with blood, the cutting of this deal was the self-sacrifice of Jesus. This inaugurated the covenant. This was to a particular people — Israel. Just like the Abrahamic Covenant, we have advantages even though we are not the recipients. Nothing here speaks of the Gentile benefit.

The unconditional covenants are all rooted in the Abrahamic Covenant; the Palestinian, Davidic, and New are amplifications of the Abrahamic.

### **What are the Conditional Covenants?**

The main one is the Mosaic Covenant, and this did not replace any unconditional covenant (Galatians 3:15-18). The Law was given to Israel after their redemption, after the Abrahamic Covenant. The Law cannot and was never intended to save (Galatians 3:21).

The key component in the Mosaic Law was the blood sacrifice for atonement and was the main shadow of the Messianic sacrifice that was to come. The perfection of the sacrifice, the brutality, the purpose, the location, the presentation in the Temple, even the specifics in the Temple all had plan and purpose.

The purposes of the Law are:

1. To reveal the holiness of God
2. To provide the rule of conduct for righteous persons prior to Messiah
3. To make Israel distinct
4. To make Israel an attraction for Gentiles
5. To demonstrate the wall between God and man (sin), thus the need for atonement
6. To lead one to Messiah for the needed atonement

As we have seen, the Nation of Israel had everything given to them to understand the nature of God and the nature of man. They were the holders of the covenants and the entrusted witnesses to the world. They had knowledge of and access to the Law, but rejected God throughout history. They also rejected of the King of Glory, the Messiah of Israel, the Savior of the World. Because of their stubbornness and their rejection, the Nation of Israel is under discipline, just like the discipline of conquests and captivity.

### **Israel Present**

Currently, Israel is still known as the Chosen People although they have set themselves as enemies of the cross. Unfortunately, many terms and phrases that are intended for Israel are often attributed to the Church (ekklesia). The Kingdom of God (heaven) is not current and not promised for this dispensation. "The Kingdom" is a reference to the Messianic reign of Jesus. It will be on earth, it will be literal (Jesus on the throne), and it will take place after the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel.

As we saw on Christmas this year, the prophecy of Daniel's 70 periods of seven (490 years) has not yet been concluded (Daniel 9:24-26). **After** 69 weeks the Messiah will be cut off. Then the prince will make a covenant. There is a gap in the prophecy; we are in that gap.

Back to the present of Israel — even though they are set aside for now does not negate the promises that they have. They will be restored and God will finish His purpose in them.

The mistake most often made in the Bible is to attribute Israel as the Church. There are no references that indicate that the two are the same. Israel is Israel and the Church is something entirely new. The Church did not replace Israel in part or in whole; the Church did not replace Israel permanently or temporarily.

What we need to understand is that the Jew today is still part of the chosen nation. We are to respect and pray for them even if they are currently enemies of the cross. Remember that God's choice does not guarantee personal salvation, but God will use them for His purpose and they will be redeemed individually at the end as well — there is always a remnant. We respect, love, and defend Israel personally because of who God is, not because of who they are.

It is within this concept that we begin to understand Paul's point in Romans 9-11 and, as we examine the Scripture, this understanding of Israel is necessary to fully grasp all of the components of these three chapters. You cannot take Israel out of these chapters without ending up with some kind of bad doctrine.

Romans 9-11 develops three basic concepts

1. The fact that Israel rejected the Messiah
2. The reason the Gentiles can rely on God to fulfill His promises in light of Israel being set aside
3. The reason that God has not nullified His promises to Israel

Chapter 9 – National Israel rejects God

Chapter 10 – The method for reconciliation for National Israel

Chapter 11 – The final results for Israel even in her rejection of God (God is faithful).

Read Romans 11:25-32