

# The True Israel of God — Parts 1 & 2

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## I.

BASED upon the clear teachings of God's holy, inerrant, unbroken, verbally inspired Word, our purpose in this study on THE TRUE ISRAEL OF GOD is to show that the Scriptures teach in clear, bold, unmistakable truths, that all believers, God's children by the new birth, are the true Israel of God; and that they, and they alone, are God's chosen people upon the earth today and are the present heirs of the promises made to Abraham and his seed in Christ.

We will also be setting forth that the physical nation of Israel in the land of Palestine in the Near East today, is not God's chosen people or nation after the flesh, and neither will they ever again be dealt with as a nation in a so-called 1000-years of earthly prosperity with Christ sitting upon an earthly throne in Jerusalem. No, the Scriptures plainly teach that the nation of Israel was set aside at Calvary and that God's dealing with them now is the same as His dealings with the Gentiles: "For there is no respect of persons with God: there is no difference between Jew and Gentile for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom 2:11; 3:22,23).

This precious truth of true believers being the true Israel of God has been lost among the rubble and trash of the false teaching of the past 150 years which says that God will yet deal with Israel as a nation, His chosen nation, and that most all of the promises of the Old Testament given to Israel are physical promises and not spiritual and that the Jew will again arise as the chosen people of God in a so-called 1000-years reign of Christ upon this earth.

As I have studied this subject in the past years, I have been greatly blessed to see my spiritual position in Christ, based upon His election of grace, and how that I, as a child of God, am an heir of Abraham and the promises made to him in Christ as his seed. My one desire therefore in setting forth these truths is to magnify my risen, exalted Lord Jesus Christ who sits upon His throne in heaven now ruling over His people and over all of the inhabitants of this earth. "All power [all authority] is given unto me [Christ] in heaven and in earth" (Matt 28:18). "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (I Pet 3:22). For God has set Christ "at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph 1:20-23). We will seek to show from God's Word that our Lord Jesus Christ is now King of kings and Lord of lords and that He already sits upon David's throne in the heavenlies.

Another desire in this present study is that the Holy Spirit will be pleased to open the eyes of His people to let them see the vast array of precious promises which are theirs as the spiritual seed of Abraham; and that they will feed and live upon these promises as they wait for the Lord from heaven.

Also my prayer is that when we have seen this gracious truth, we will no longer hold out any false hope to the Jews that they are the chosen nation of God, but that through repentance and faith they must have a present hope in Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God—a hope, I say, in His shed blood and righteousness as their only means of approach unto God and entrance into heaven: “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God” (Rom 2:28-29). These Scriptures teach that only a work of grace wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit will prepare a man for heaven, Jew or Gentile; and that the true Jew is one who has been born again.

Now with your Bible in hand, let us see what the Word of God teaches upon this subject. “To the law and to the testimony” (Isa 8:20)—What saith the Scripture? First, there is one Scriptural truth that must be kept in mind and it is this: the Scriptures teach that in all of God’s dealings with mankind from the time of Adam we may discern the same principle at work: namely, “First the natural, then the Spiritual” (I Cor 15:45,46). God had progressively revealed His purpose through, first, His dealings with the natural Israel; second and finally, His dealings with spiritual Israel. There is no Scriptural basis for the regressive idea that God’s dealings will again be centered exclusively on natural Israel at some future date, this would be going from natural to spiritual and back to natural again. If you will check your Bible you will find that the writers of the New Testament did not violate this principle of God, for in relating over 100 Scriptures from the Old Testament they always gave them a Spiritual meaning and applied them to spiritual Israel, the Church, the born-again believers of all ages.

Now let us proceed. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul said that the revelation God gave him about the church unlocked a mystery which had been hidden in God since the beginning of the world, namely, that all of God’s people, whether Jews or Gentiles by natural descent, were to be members of the same body (Eph 3:5,6,9).

To Paul it was revealed that it was God’s eternal plan to have, not a small nation of His own, but a worldwide body of His people drawn from all “nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues” (Rev 7:9). This was the great and wonderful “mystery of Christ” (Eph 3:4) that Paul and the other New Testament writers came to understand and to preach.

The apostle said that in time past the Gentiles were “without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world” (Eph 2:12). But now God was freely offering His unsearchable riches (Eph 3:8) to people of all nations without requiring a change in their natural citizenship. Gentiles who had been aliens from the commonwealth of Israel were now, in Christ, “no more foreigners, but fellowcitizens” with the new and spiritual Israel. Those who had been strangers were now, in Christ, “no more strangers...but members of the household of God” (Eph 2:19).

So the commonwealth of Israel, the family and household of God, now contains both Jew and Gentile. Paul argued that this family and household was made up of only those who believed in Christ as their Lord and Savior. Those who were citizens of the Israel of Old, but who had not received Christ, were simply unsaved members of one of the many nations of the world. Thus, he

said: “They are not all Israel, which are of Israel” (Rom 9:6) and those who were not, he termed “Israel after the flesh” (I Cor 10:18).

Also, when we look into Galatians, we find the apostle Paul again dealing with this great subject of Abraham’s seed the true Israel of God. There had come among the believers at Galatia the Judaizers, who were teaching that a man could not be saved except he became a Jew outwardly, by circumcision of the flesh. Therefore, the grace of God had been perverted by these Jews who would not bow to the authority of God’s Word, that is, the truth that He was through with physical Israel as a nation. They took pride in the fact that they were the physical descendants of Abraham, and because of this, they were more favored than the Christians. So Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote this letter to refute this false teaching.

In chapter one he calls it “another gospel” which teaches that a man has certain advantages in the flesh because he was born a physical descendant of Abraham. In chapter two he states emphatically that a man is not justified before God on the basis of law-works (anything after the flesh), but justification comes only by the faith of Christ as he looks away from all merit and trusts his never-dying soul into the hands of the Lord Jesus on the basis of His cross-work and His resurrection.

In chapter three Paul said that Abraham’s standing with God came by grace, through faith, and that Abraham was saved by the same gospel that is preached today (v8). He states that Abraham “believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness” (v6 & Rom4:3). Also he said that Abraham’s children are only those people who are saved by the gospel: “They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham” (v7).

Therefore believers alone are the true descendants and offspring of Abraham. Natural descent is meaningless. To be a child of Abraham and the true Israel of God we must “walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham” (Rom 4:12). Abraham and his God-fearing descendants in those years before Christ, looked forward by faith to the coming of Christ; and all of those who today would be God’s children must look back by faith to that same event and to that same person of Christ.

So it matters not from which nation we came, for God “preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed” (Gal3:8). Therefore those of every nation who avail themselves of the truth of the gospel become the children of Abraham, the children of God. There is no other way, “for ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal3:26).

Also in this third chapter we note that the promises were made to Abraham and his seed. And who is the seed? “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ” (v16) So if Christ is the Seed then all who are in Him are included: “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (v29).

Dear friend, I ask you this, are you Christ’s? Have you been born again from above? Have you committed your life to Him? If you have, then you are the seed of Abraham, a Jew, which is

one inwardly (Rom2:29), and an heir with your fellow believers of all the Old Testament promises.

Further proof of this great truth is found in Romans 4:13-17. “For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith...it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham who is the father of us all, (as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations).”

Nothing could be plainer than this truth that only they who are in Christ are in Abraham, and therefore are partakers of the Old Testament promises.

“They are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed” (Rom9:6-8). “The flesh profiteth nothing, it is the Spirit that quickeneth” (John 6:63). “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (I Cor2:14).

The plain Word of God is not to be argued with. These verses tell us that the natural descendants of Abraham after the flesh are not the children of God. Therefore 20th century Israel is not the chosen nation of God; they cannot be, for they have rejected Christ as their Messiah just like the 1st century did. They abide under the curse of God as unbelievers. The only chosen nation today are both Jews and Gentiles who have been born again by the Spirit of God and have availed themselves of the blessings of the gospel of the grace of God in Christ. These only “are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people” (I Pet 2:9).

## II.

IT was revealed unto the apostle Paul by the Holy Spirit that God’s purpose from eternity was to have a chosen people upon this earth at all times until the Lord’s return, and that this would be both Jews and Gentiles brought into one body, the church, of which Christ was the head: “Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him” (Eph 1:9-10). He continues to show that the middle wall of partition had been broken down between Jew and Gentile, the enmity between them abolished and that they had, by the grace of God through the atoning work of Christ, been made one in Him, and thereby make up the true Israel of God (2:14-15). He adds that God’s purpose was “that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel” (3:5,6,10)—the same as the Jews, thus making the true Israel of God those who had been made new creatures in Christ Jesus by the new birth and who were now spiritual Israel.

Now turning to the fourth chapter of Galatians, verses 21-31 bring before us Abraham’s two sons. The one was by the bondwoman, Hagar, born after the flesh; the other by a freewoman, Sarah, born by promise. The story shows in an allegory the difference between unbelieving

“Israel after the flesh,” and those of all nations who know Christ, have yielded to His claims, and thereby been made free. The apostle shows that the son of the bondwoman pictures the children of “Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children,” while the son of the freewoman pictures the church: “Jerusalem which is above,” which is free and “is the mother of us all.”

Thus Paul teaches that believers, as Isaac was, are the children of promise; but with respect to the unbelieving children of the flesh, the Scriptures say: “Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman” (Gal 4:30). In other words, as far as God’s eternal purpose is concerned, cast out, remove from consideration the physical, political nation of Israel and her unsaved citizens; for the inheritance belongs to spiritual Israel and not to natural Israel. Paul closes that 4th chapter with these gracious words: “So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwomen,” for the flesh profiteth nothing, “but of the free,” because Christ has made us free in Him.

So we see then that now and forever it is only of believers that it can be said: “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Rom 8:14), and “the Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ” (Rom 8:16-17). “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God” (Gal 6:15,16). To be a child of God, and of the true Israel of God, we can be so only by being a new creation in Christ.

After Paul spent one whole letter showing that Israel after the flesh is nothing, that only new creations in Christ avail, that these Judaizers profit nothing, that God now deals with His true Israel, the spiritual seed of Abraham—then he says: “From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus” (6:17). He is saying: I bear in my heart the mark of circumcision by the Spirit, and in my body the marks of the sufferings for the cause of Christ, as I have been persecuted by the Jews, the children of Abraham born after the flesh; so never speak to me again that Israel after the flesh is God’s chosen people, for they are not.

Now in the Book of Hebrews we see this same truth illustrated over and over again: the truth that God has done away with the types and the shadows, also the physical things of Israel, which stood for a time, but have now given way to the spiritual realities as found in Christ. Since this has been accomplished by God in Christ, then to go back to an earthly temple, an earthly altar, an earthly priesthood, an earthly tabernacle, earthly animal sacrifices, an earthly covenant, an earthly throne and an earthly king in a so-called 1000 years of Jewish prosperity with Christ sitting upon an earthly throne in present Jerusalem would be “to turn again to the weak and beggarly elements” (Gal 4:9). It would mean to put to naught this great Book of Hebrews and all its teaching that God in His eternal purpose has a better country, a heavenly, awaiting His people; in fact, better things than all the physical things of this life.

The book of Hebrews, perhaps more than any of the books of the Bible, stands as a source of frustration and embarrassment to those who teach that God plans to return one day to the natural trappings of the old Jewish economy, to the natural land and city, the natural law and ordinances, the natural kingdom and throne, and the natural temple and sacrifices.

The Holy Spirit through the writer of Hebrews shows the overwhelming superiority of the new and better age that dawned at Calvary. He shows that after Calvary the natural types and figures had served their purpose and were vanishing away, having been replaced forever by the eternal and spiritual realities (Heb 8:13).

Note the word “better” as used in Hebrews. Did the Israelites’ fathers hear the voice of the prophets? We, the true, spiritual Israel hear the “better” voice of God’s Son (1:1,2). Did the Israelites have a high priest after the Levitical order? We have a “better” One after the “better” and undying order of Melchisedec (6:20-7:28). Did they seek, unsuccessfully, for perfection through the law? We have a “better” hope through the grace of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (7:19). Did they have an earthly sanctuary with a candlestick, table and shewbread, and a tabernacle with the golden censer, the ark, and the mercyseat (9:1-5)? We have Christ: “a greater and more perfect tabernacle” (9:11). Did they have the blood of bulls and goats that could not take away sins (10:4)? We have the incomparably “better” “blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God” (9:14). Did the Israelites receive an earthly land? We have “a better country, that is, an heavenly” (11:16). Did they come to a mount that could be touched (12:18)? We have come to the “better” Mount Zion (12:22). Did they have the natural city of Jerusalem? We have the incomparably “better” “city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem” (12:22). To go further, we as spiritual Israel have a “better” covenant, the New Covenant, that was foretold by the Prophets, and since Calvary, has forever replaced the old and faulty covenant (8:1) that existed between God and Israel. The New Covenant is the covenant of which Jeremiah prophesied, and that was fulfilled once for all, for both Jews and Gentiles, at the first coming of Christ. The New Covenant that God has made with the new Israel is “not according to the covenant” that he made with natural Israel, which “covenant they broke” (Jer 31:32). “But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel...I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people...they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest” (vv 33,34).

The prophet Ezekiel expressed it in these words: “I will make a covenant of peace with them: it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: Yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Ezek 37:26-27).

In two places in Hebrews (8:6-13; 10:16-17), these prophecies are quoted as referring to the new spiritual Israel, the true Israel of God. These verses show this “better” covenant was already established in the first century, and that the old one even then was decaying and getting old, and was ready to vanish away. Not long after the writing of Hebrews, the temple rituals and sacrifices, the proudest features of the old covenant relationship, vanished completely as the city of Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Romans.

In II Corinthians, the old covenant made with the Jews, which they did not keep, is called: “The ministration of death, written and engraven in stones...the ministration of condemnation” (3:7,9); but the new covenant is: “The ministration of the spirit” (3:6). The glory of the old covenant, as once reflected in the face of Moses “was to be done away” (3:7) and was to be replaced by the new covenant that will “exceed in glory” (3:9). We draw this conclusion: the

New Covenant had forever replaced the old covenant in these words: “For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious” (3:11).

Since Calvary, and forever, the new covenant is God’s only covenant with man, and it is based upon the “better” promises of the crucified, buried, risen, exalted Lord Jesus Christ. Its inauguration was announced by Christ on the night in which He was betrayed when, “he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament [covenant], which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt 26:27,28). This covenant relationship with God, through the blood of Christ, is offered to as many as receive Him (John 1:12) prior to His second coming. There will be no opportunity after His coming; for then comes the White Throne Judgment of Revelation 20.

This covenant is the covenant of grace and therefore is based upon the operation of our Triune God by His Spirit working in the hearts of both Jew and Gentile, to call out a bride for Christ who is the Head of the spiritual race called—the true Israel of God.

One other thought on the book of Hebrews: it was written to show that Christ our Lord, God manifested in the flesh, is far greater and “better” than all creatures and things. In chapter one He is spoken of as being “better” than the angels; in chapter two He is shown to be greater and “better” than man; in chapter three He is spoken of as “better” and greater than Moses; in chapter four, “better” and greater than Joshua; in chapters 5, 6, & 7, He is shown as the Great High Priest, “better” than the priesthood of Aaron; in chapter 8, He is as the One who “obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.” In chapter 9, our Lord Jesus is shown to be greater than all the sacrifices, greater than the tabernacle and its ministry, and that He is the one great offering made for His people, the true Israel of God.

“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb 9:11-14). We see then that Christ the Mediator of the New Covenant is “better” and far greater than all, and therefore He has a name which is above every name. Also His work is complete: “For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified...We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once for all” (10:10,14).

This shows us that in Christ Jesus, the true Israel of God, made up of believers, born again by His Spirit, need no future earthy altar, temple, sacrifice or throne because we are forever complete in Christ by His “once for all” salvation which He finished at Calvary.