

Understanding the Role of Israel in God's End Time Plan

by Jeremy James



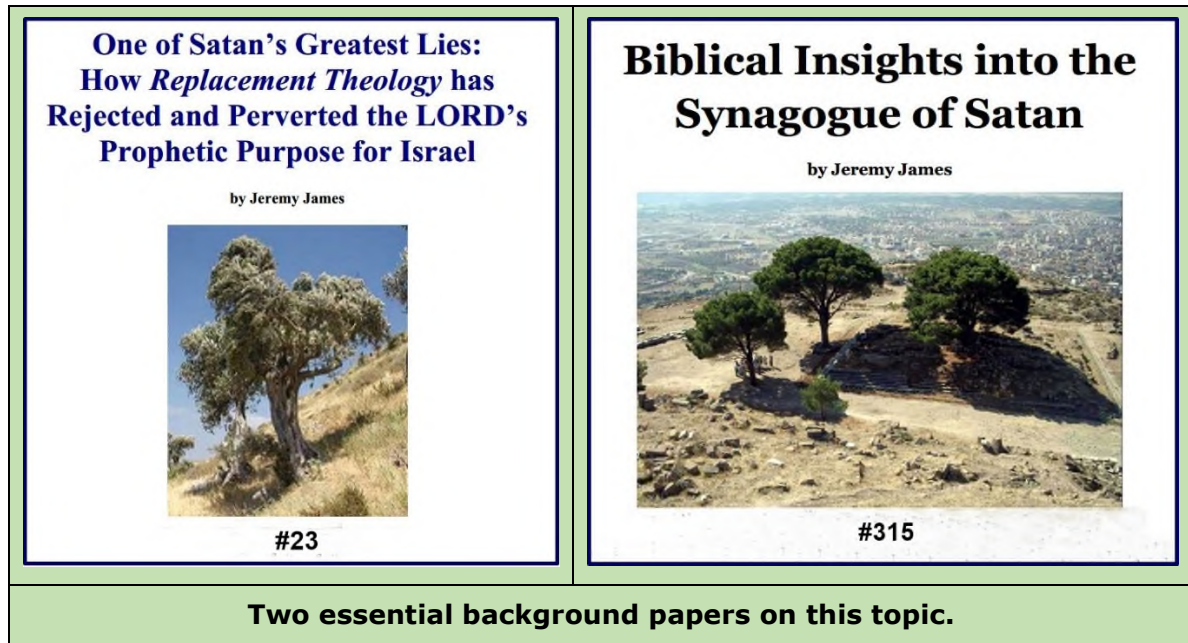
Over the past twelve years or so we have written a number of papers about Israel concerning its role in End Time prophecy. Along the way we have tried to show that the state of Israel was founded in accordance with international law (#13) and that replacement theology, which asserts that the Church has replaced Israel, has no Scriptural foundation (#23).

We have also addressed the rise of 'Christian' antisemitism (#67 and #369), the distinction between Christian Zionism and Biblical Zionism (#138 and #196), how Christians may identify the Jewish people (#276), the importance of Jerusalem in End Time prophecy (#137), and the continuity of the commitments that God made to Israel via Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David (#24 and #367).

We also took a close look at the Shoah (Holocaust) (#136) and the terrible threat posed by the Synagogue of Satan (#315).

Together these 12 papers comprise about 360 pages.

We don't expect our readers to review these papers in order to properly address the issues raised in this current paper. We will try as best we can to provide sufficient information herein to support our points and our case generally. We will also flag relevant papers, where appropriate, for readers who wish to look more deeply into a particular issue.



God's perspective on Israel is the ONLY one that matters

We want to keep this paper as short as possible, both to make it easy to digest and to record in one place a basic account of God's perspective on Israel. It is sad to relate that a great many professing Christians are entirely ignorant of God's perspective on Israel, even though it is the only one that matters.

We were prompted to write this paper by a number of unfounded assertions made by Chuck Baldwin in an open letter which he sent to a group of Christian Zionists that include Ralph Reed, James Dobson, Robert Jeffress, Jonathan Falwell, John Hagee, Richard Land, and Jack Graham. His message was dated 30 November 2023 and was directed against, and highly critical of, their interpretation of Scripture as it pertained to Israel in the End Time and, in particular, their call for continued US support for the Netanyahu government and its brutal military campaign in Gaza. The text of pastor Baldwin's message may be found at:

<https://chuckbaldwinlive.com/Articles/tabid/109/ID/4465/News-Flash-For-Ralph-Reed-James-Dobson-Robert-Jeffress-Jonathan-Falwell-John-Hagee-Richard-Land-Jack-Graham-Et-Al.aspx>

Pastor Baldwin's background

The pastor's biographical profile, posted on his website, includes the following:

From 1979-1989 Dr. Baldwin served as Pensacola Chairman and then as State Chairman of the Florida Moral Majority. Chuck often traveled with Dr. Jerry Falwell for meetings and rallies throughout the State of Florida, in Washington, D.C., and even overseas... Dr. Falwell featured Pastor Baldwin in his *Liberty Journal* and also on his *Old Time Gospel Hour* television broadcast. Chuck's efforts throughout the State of Florida helped to register over 50,000 new voters during the 1980 presidential campaign season.

In making our case we do not wish to call into question the pastor's sincere desire to interpret Scripture as God intended and to honor His holy will. We only wish to show that the substance of the case he is making – as it pertains to Israel in the End Time – is wrong and it is likely to cause a good deal of confusion among Christians.

A neglected issue in Bible study

Before we challenge some specific claims by Dr Baldwin, we need to review an issue impacting on Bible interpretation which is seldom mentioned, even by many well-respected commentators. If we are to give this issue a name, we might call it 'unbending Jewish exclusivity'.

When God created the nation of Israel and called it out of Egypt, He explained His purpose in doing so and what He expected of this special ("chosen") people:

"For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?"

(Deuteronomy 4:7-8)

They were recipients of extraordinary signs and wonders from God, plus remarkable evidence of His providential care in the form of great bounty, blessings, and protection.

As a nation set apart, they began to view the nations around them with disdain. For example, physical contact with a foreigner was forbidden since it ran the risk of incurring ritual uncleanness. The foreigner may have had contact with a dead body and was therefore polluted. This pollution would pass to a Jew who touched him and render him unclean. Thus social interaction between Jews and people of other nations was restricted to some degree under the Law, but this social segregation was greatly exaggerated by the Jews.

Pagans also had many unclean or abominable practices (such a temple prostitution) and were often referred to as ‘dogs’. This was not merely a term of contempt but in some respects a description of their spiritual condition. For example, Jews were strictly forbidden to consume animal blood, whereas pagans frequently consumed animal blood in their sacrificial rites.

Today believers may be taken aback by the reply that Jesus gave to the Syrophenician woman – a Gentile – when she asked that he heal her daughter:

“Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.” (Mark 7:27)

The “children” in question were the children of Israel, while the “dogs” were the Gentiles. Incredibly, the woman understood that the blessings received by the Jews would be passed on in due course to the Gentiles. Jesus commended her highly for her faith – as shown by this precious insight – and healed her daughter.

While Jesus used the word *kunarion* (“little dogs”, such as pet dogs) instead of *kyon* (street dogs), which was a harsher epithet, he was nonetheless drawing a clear distinction between the Jews and the Gentiles.

As John Gill stated in his commentary, re Mark 7:27:

“...by "the children" are meant the Israelites, who were not only the children of Abraham by natural descent, but the children of God, to whom pertained the adoption, by virtue of the national covenant made with them; so by "the dogs" are meant the Gentiles, who were reckoned as such by the Jews...”

The harsh reality is that, in our unregenerate state, we are all “dogs”. The Apostle Paul described our hopeless, alienated condition as follows:

“That at that time ye 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:” (Ephesians 2:12)

Only through faith in the sanctifying power of the Cross do we become children of God.



Unbending Jewish exclusivity

Over the centuries, from Sinai to the building of the first Temple, the Jews increasingly saw their separation from the nations as a mark of their ethnic superiority. Instead of witnessing to foreigners and inviting them to become proselytes of Judaism (like Cornelius the centurion), they viewed them as incorrigible reprobates who could not possibly aspire to the high spiritual and moral standards professed by the Jews.

We get a stunning example of this ‘unbending Jewish exclusivity’ in the book of Jonah, which was written sometime during the eighth century BC. The prophet was called by God to take His message to the people of Nineveh, but he balked at the whole idea. For him, the Ninevites were a brutal and rapacious people who deserved to be exterminated. He knew God was ever merciful and would probably defer their day of judgment if he went and preached to them. So he decided to disobey God and leave them to their fate. His planned destination was Tarshish, not Nineveh.



After undergoing a severe chastening by God, he finally arrived at Nineveh and did as he was told. When he saw the profound change that came over the people, he was intensely grieved. This was exactly what he feared! He decided to hang around and see if this expression of repentance would be acceptable to God. The weather conditions made his wait unbearable but, while there was still a slight possibility that God would send His judgment upon them, he was determined to stay put and witness their destruction.

Remember, Jonah was a prophet of God! Also – through God’s incredible mercy – he had been raised from the dead! And yet, when it appeared that the same mercy might be showered upon others – upon these filthy pagans! – he was greatly upset. They didn’t deserve it! Of course, he never paused to consider whether or not the mercy that God had shown him – by raising him from the dead – was itself deserved.

Jonah had forgotten what God had told Moses:

“For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” (Romans 9:15)

“And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.” (Exodus 33:19)

The same attitude that Jonah had was ingrained in most Jews up to the time of Christ and beyond. They knew, just as Jesus later confirmed, that **“salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22)** but they had forgotten that salvation would also be extended in due course, via the Jews, to the Gentiles.

The ‘Jonah attitude’ said, *But the Gentiles don’t deserve it!* Alas, the Jews had chosen to overlook a most important fact, namely that they didn’t deserve it either!

Salvation, whether in relation to the Jews or to the Gentiles, is an utterly unmerited GIFT of God! We can do NOTHING to deserve it.



The middle wall of partition

So when the Apostle Paul said that Jesus, through Calvary, knocked down the wall or partition between Jew and Gentile (Ephesians 2:14), he was alluding to this incredibly important truth. Calvary – not the Law – saved the righteous Jews just as Calvary saved the righteous Gentiles. We are all saved through the blood of Christ. There are absolutely NO exceptions to this.

Whether a person lived before the time of Christ, or afterwards, is irrelevant. It makes no difference. Calvary saved Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We are all saved through faith. Chapter 11 of Hebrews spells this out very clearly.

What we have been calling *unbending Jewish exclusivity* is perfectly expressed in the Book of Jonah. This ‘Jonah attitude’ hung heavily over the land of Israel in the time of Christ and greatly hampered the spread of the Gospel beyond the Jewish community. The Apostles themselves were astonished when Peter came up to Jerusalem and reported that the Holy Spirit had fallen on the Gentiles – Cornelius and his family – just as He had fallen on them.

In light of this we would think Peter, at least, had overcome his 'Jonah attitude', but it still clung to him through his deep respect for the Law. The Apostle Paul had to take him to task in public for avoiding communal meals with Gentiles when Jews were around. Barnabas, too, had the same attitude (Galatians chapter 2).

Paul had to battle with this tendency throughout his ministry, the belief that Jews were a distinct and separate class of Christian. There are even episodes in the New Testament where they appear to see themselves, not just as a separate class of Christian, but as a superior class. For example, Greek Christian widows were not treated with the same respect as their Hebrew counterparts (Acts chapter 6).

This brings us to the section in pastor Baldwin's letter – see below – where he quotes Scripture in support of his view that the Jews, as a chosen nation, ceased to exist after they rejected their Messiah and were replaced by what he calls "the New Covenant people of God":

You fellows deliberately and deceitfully choose to not tell your followers the truth about the New Covenant people of God. You willfully ignore or misapply the vast majority of the Book of Galatians, verses such as **Galatians 3:16**:

"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."

And **Galatians 3:28,29**:

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

You pretend that **Romans 9:6-8** is not in the Bible:

"For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children [of God]: 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."

The same is true for **Romans 2:28,29**:

"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."

The four passages in general

We will examine these four passages of Scripture in turn and see whether they are really saying what pastor Baldwin claims. Indeed, it should hardly be necessary to examine each individually since it ought to be apparent, in light of our discussion so far, that they are all expressing, and are predicated upon, the same truth, namely that the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles, as individuals, is grounded totally in their faith in Christ. When he refers to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants – national Israel – he wants the reader to understand that the Jews are not saved by virtue of their ethnic identity and that Jewish converts to Christianity are not a separate class of Christian.



He is addressing *unbending Jewish exclusivity*, the view held by many Jewish converts to Christianity at the time that, as members of the ‘chosen people’, they were somehow special. They failed to see that Gentiles who converted to Christianity were also ‘chosen people’ – being members of the *Ecclesia*, the ‘called out ones’:

“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:44)

“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.” (John 10:16)

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:” (1 Peter 2:9)

The Pharisees had twisted God’s Word and taught that *all* descendants of Abraham (through Isaac and Jacob) were saved on that basis alone. This was an extreme form of *unbending Jewish exclusivity*! Through these passages Paul wanted his Jewish readers to see that the Pharisees were wrong, that faith had ALWAYS been the basis of salvation and that they would have to revise their understanding of salvation under the Old Covenant.

This is addressed directly in the epistle to the Hebrews, which states:

“But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.” (Hebrews 3:17-19).

None of this affected the promises made by God to the nation of Israel. The children of Israel had not been replaced by the Church (the *Ecclesia* or ‘called out’ ones). As long as they continued to exist as a nation, these irrevocable promises would stand. Jesus said national Israel *would* continue to exist as a nation but that, as a nation, they would turn to the LORD and accept Christ as their Messiah **only** when the “times of the Gentiles” had run its course (Luke 21:24) [#276]. Individual Jews could accept Christ at any time, but the nation as a whole would not do so until this severe judgment of God had been carried through to completion.

The four passages individually

We will now examine each of the four passages individually.

Passage #1

“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.” (Galatians 3:16)

Presumably this verse is taken by pastor Baldwin to mean that the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were really intended to apply to Jesus and to him alone. Thus the promises had no continuing application to Israel after the birth of Jesus.

The promises in question, to which Paul is referring, are those given in Genesis 22:17-18 –

“In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.”

It is manifestly obvious that the promises made in Genesis 22 were predicated on the ultimate arrival of a descendant (“seed”) who would enable them to be fulfilled as God intended. That is the point Paul was making. He was not saying that Israel would cease to exist as a nation in the eyes of God after the birth of Jesus [#24 and #367].

Passage #2

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Galatians 3:28-29)

Proponents of Replacement Theology are very fond of this passage and quote it frequently. They take it to mean that all converts to Christianity are children of Abraham, spiritually speaking, and appropriate or inherit the promises made to Abraham as though they were ethnic Jews. This interpretation obliterates the distinction between Jew and Gentile and denies the nation of Israel any further role in God's prophetic plan. The Church has become the new Israel and appropriates all of the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

A commonsense reading of the passage will show that this interpretation cannot possibly be correct. If it were correct, then there would be no gender distinction between Christians! Paul is simply grappling with the problem that we have already discussed, namely *unbending Jewish exclusivity*. He is saying that, spiritually speaking, there are no 'ethnic Jews' as such in the Church, only Jewish converts to Christianity. All members of the Church, the body of Christ, have an identical standing before God.

In saying this he is not claiming that the nation of Israel had ceased to exist in the eyes of God or that it had no further role in His prophetic plan [#24 and #367].



Passage #3

“For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children [of God]: 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.” (Romans 9:6-8)

Regarding this passage we would like to refer back to a comment we made earlier [reproduced below]:

Salvation, whether in relation to the Jews or to the Gentiles, is an utterly unmerited GIFT of God! We can do NOTHING to deserve it.

So when the Apostle Paul said that Jesus, through Calvary, knocked down the wall or partition between Jew and Gentile (Ephesians 2:14), he was alluding to this incredibly important truth. Calvary – not the Law – saved the righteous Jews just as Calvary saved the righteous Gentiles. We are all saved through the blood of Christ. There are absolutely NO exceptions to this.

Whether a person lived before the time of Christ, or afterwards, is irrelevant. It makes no difference. Calvary saved Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We are all saved through faith. Chapter 11 of Hebrews spells this out very clearly.

Ethnic Jews are not saved because they are descendants of Abraham. This had never been the case. All Jews in Old Testament times were saved through faith. How exactly their faith was assessed by God, given that their Messiah had not yet come, is not something we can say with certainty, though Chapter 11 of Hebrews gives some guidance in this regard.

This passage, Romans 9:6-8, cannot be taken to mean that the Church had replaced the nation of Israel or that the nation of Israel no longer had a distinct prophetic role in God's plan for mankind [#24 and #367].



Passage #4

“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.” (Romans 2:28-29)

This passage is another favorite of proponents of Replacement Theology, who often cite it with a glint of triumph. It's as though they are saying, “Now, refute *that* one – if you can!” But once again Paul is reiterating the point we have already made, namely that all Jews, as far back as the time of Abraham, were saved by faith and faith alone. The outward signs of their ethnicity – circumcision, lineage, rituals – were not of themselves a determining factor.

Refusing in principle to permit a prophetic role for Israel

One of the most extraordinary arguments against the continued recognition by God of the nation of Israel was put to me by a young Calvinist pastor. He said that, since it gave Israel a role in prophecy that has yet to be fulfilled, it diminished the greatness of Christ. Seemingly all prophecy must refer to Christ. As he put it, someone who believed in the future role of Israel was allowing their “eschatology” to limit their “Christology.”

Seminarians today are so heavily indoctrinated by Replacement Theology that, even with a sincere heart and a genuine desire to honor God's Word, they find it exceedingly difficult to escape the constraints imposed on them by their theological elders.

Pastor Baldwin is making the same error when he says:

ALL of the Old Testament prophecies regarding national Israel have been fulfilled. Every last one of them! National Israel – or, more factually, the remnant of national Israel in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, including the city of Jerusalem and the Jewish temple – were annihilated by God, using the Roman army as His instrument of justice – in 70 AD. The Assyrians had already destroyed the ten northern tribes some seven hundred years earlier.

This assertion angrily rejects the countless verses – in both the Old and the New Testaments – which speak of national Israel in the End Time!

Since a plain reading of God's Word provides copious and specific references to national Israel in the End Time – the time of Jacob's trouble, Jerusalem as a burdensome stone [#137], the arrival of the Antichrist, the rebuilding of the Temple, the two witnesses in the Book of Revelation [#164], the astonishing testimony in chapters 12-14 of the Book of Zechariah, and many, many more – it beggars belief that an attitude like this should persist.

Perversely it is a modern form of *unbending Jewish exclusivity*, only this time the *Christian* is the one who is aghast at the possibility that a nation of diehard apostates should find salvation.



The Prodigal Son

The Parable of the Prodigal Son tells us a great deal about this strained relationship. The good son is horrified that his father should welcome his brazenly disobedient and selfish son back into the family home. *Look at how he behaved! He can't possibly deserve to be brought back into the loving bosom of my father.* The good son was deeply afflicted by *unbending exclusivity*.

Today the roles are reversed [#67 and #369]. The Christian has always dwelt in the loving bosom of his Father. He has been dutiful and obedient, doing all that his Father asked of him. Then one day this filthy, smelly, disobedient Jew turns up at the door. He brought great shame on the family and disgraced himself in ways too awful to relate, and yet our Father intends to welcome him in as a long lost son. This is outrageous!

Well, dear reader, get used to it because the Word of God says that this is exactly what will happen. When, at some future date, they are caught in the throes of the great tribulation, the righteous remnant among the nation of Israel will call out in great distress to their wonderful Messiah and say, just as Jesus foretold, “**Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.**” (Matthew 23:39)

The Book of Zechariah tells us that only one third of the nation of Israel will repent and accept Jesus Christ of Nazareth as their Messiah. The other two thirds will perish. Their ethnicity will not save them.



The prophet Zechariah, as portrayed by Michelangelo

Chuck Baldwin’s letter

Overall pastor Baldwin’s rejection of Biblical Zionism is among the most extreme we have seen. He is correct, in our opinion, when he contends that his ‘Christian Zionist’ audience is following an unbiblical agenda [#138 and #196]. The Word of God asks that we pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6). And peace means peace, not the senseless slaughter of innocent civilians. What the Netanyahu government is doing in Gaza – butchering thousands of women and children – is truly horrifying. In other respects, however, the pastor is greatly mistaken in his exegesis of God’s Word.

CONCLUSION

While Christians continue to allegorize large portions of God’s Word, converting all references to Israel after 70 AD into a reference to the Church or to Christ, and pretending that all prophecies relating to national Israel have been fulfilled, whether in Christ or in ancient history, the true meaning of End Time prophecy will be lost or greatly obscured.

The LORD will not cast off His People

by Jeremy James



#367

The Old Hatred **Why Satan wants the World to Loathe the Jews**

by Jeremy James



#369

A belief in the role of national Israel in End Time prophecy does not diminish Christ in the least! Rather, it shows just how much our Redeemer achieved on Calvary and how thoroughly he will purge the earth of all wickedness. He will destroy the Synagogue of Satan [#315] and free the righteous remnant – repentant national Israel – from the power of the Enemy [#367].

Praise the LORD! Great is His Mercy!

**“O fools, and slow of heart to believe
all that the prophets have spoken.”**

– Luke 24:25

Jeremy James
Ireland
December 7, 2023

- SPECIAL REQUEST -

Time is running out...

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