

Were Israel's Covenant Promises Already Fulfilled?

(Debunking Covenant & Reformed Theology)

Pastor Kelly Sensenig



Reformed Theology which has roots in the teaching of the Reformation concludes that Israel is abandoned by God and has officially and forever been canceled as God's people. They have been erased from God's plan and purpose. In other words, the Jews have no specific promise of future blessing from God. Of course, Scripture categorically denies this anti-Zionism and antibiblical conclusion (Rom.

11:1-2). Some Reformed teachers and speakers try and twist the historical records in the Old Testament to prove their theory of the cancellation of Israel and her covenant promises. According to those within the Reformed movement the Church has allegedly replaced Israel as the new people of God because Israel's promises have already been historically fulfilled, and as a result of Israel's sins, the Jewish people have been officially canceled as a future channel of God's blessing.

Joshua 21:43-45 is one such passage that is used to teach Israel's covenant promises have already been fulfilled: "And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the LORD gave them rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."

The question must now be raised. Were all the covenant promises fulfilled in Israel's history when conquering Canaan? Has Israel received all of her land promises? Have all the promises given to Israel been fulfilled during the days of Joshua? Hank Hanegraaff thinks so and boldly states that **"All the promises to Israel have already been fulfilled according to Joshua 21:43-45."**

Gary DeMar in his book "Last Days Madness" also believes this. Concerning Israel's future he states: "The text says nothing about the restoration of Israel to her land

as a fulfillment of some covenantal obligation. All the land promises that God made to Israel were fulfilled (Joshua 21:43-45).” DeMar’s perspective should not surprise us since he is a preterist that believes virtually all prophecies have already been fulfilled.

Anti-Zionist, Stephen Sizer, also believes that the Joshua 21 passage ends any future claims by the Jews to the Land of Israel. Sizer says, “To the claim that certain promises have yet to be fulfilled, Joshua is emphatic, ‘Not one of all the Lord’s good promises to the house of Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.’” Replacement theologian, Keith Mathison, declares, “Joshua 21:43–45 explicitly declares that all the land that God promised Israel was given to them.”

Are these men correct? Do these statements made in the book of Joshua undermine Israel’s covenant program and a future for the nation of Israel? Have the land promises to Israel been totally fulfilled so that there is no hope for national Israel in the future? The answer is an emphatic NO! It’s true that the Scripture states that “the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass” (Josh. 21:45). However, this did not mean that every corner of the land was in Israel’s possession since God Himself had told Israel they would conquer the land gradually (Deut. 7:22). Neither do these concluding statements ignore the tragedies that would develop during the period of the Judges.

As seen in the above quotes, these specific verses in Joshua are sometimes misconstrued by anti-Zionists and amillennialists to mean that Israel has already experienced her full covenant promises and that these promises have been historically fulfilled while Israel ruled in the land of Palestine during olden days. But this is not the case for several reasons. First, Israel did not possess all of the land (Judges 1:19, 21, 27-36; 2:1-3). Second, Israel did not possess it forever (Gen. 13:15; 17:7-8; 2 Sam. 7:16).

Some passages in Joshua seem to imply that the entire land had been conquered (Josh 10:40-42; 11:16-23; 21:43-45). However, there are other passages that conclude that there was more land to conquer (Josh 13:1; 18:3). As to the Abrahamic covenant being fully fulfilled, 1 Kings 4:20-21 states that Solomon ruled all the land by the Abrahamic Covenant according to the specified boundaries (Gen. 15:18). However, it is important to note that this land was promised to Israel as an

“everlasting possession” (Gen. 17:8) which is something that was not fulfilled either in Joshua’s day or in Solomon’s. In addition, God had given to Israel the land as a whole, but, just as God had said, there still remained land to be conquered within each tribe’s territory. In fact, many of the subjected kingdoms retained their identity and territory but paid taxes (tribute) to Solomon (1 Kings 4:21). Israel’s own geographic limits were “from Dan to Beersheba” (1 Kings 4:25).

Adrian Jeffers, professor at Temple Baptist Theological Seminary gives us the broader context of Joshua: “The Book of Joshua clearly shows that Israel conquered the land in Canaan in two major campaigns (Joshua 10, 11). At the end of these campaigns a summary is given (‘So Joshua took all that land, the hill-country . . .’ 11:16-20) which indicates that his work was done, the Conquest was completed. That this also is somewhat ideal is seen in that chapter 13:1-6 says ‘there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed . . .’ and describes the various areas remaining with a list of unconquered cities (cf. Judges 1:27ff.).

“A similar example is given near the end of the book (Joshua 21:43-35—Israel possessed all the land, all their enemies were delivered, and all that Jehovah promised came to pass). Yet the Book of Judges makes it plain that this was not the case. Again the command to dispossess all the enemies in the land and to occupy their territory (Genesis 15:18; Exodus 23:23-31, Numbers 34:2, Deuteronomy 1:7, 8, etc.) has a similar implication. Ideally Israel was to dispossess all their enemies, but in actual fact many were left behind, and these became a snare to them. In fact it is indicated that this was part of the will of God—in order to, discipline them (Joshua 23:12, 13, Judges 3:1,2).”

The following references are important to this discussion and need to be understood.

Joshua 13:1

“Now Joshua was old and stricken in years; and the LORD said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.”

Joshua 13:13

“Nevertheless the children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites, nor the Maachathites: but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day.”

Joshua 15:63

“As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.”

Joshua 16:10

“And they drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer: but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and serve under tribute.”

Joshua 17:12

“Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.”

It's clear that Israel did not fully possess all the land that God promised to them but did experience God's Abrahamic Covenant blessing in a partial way as they conquered their enemies. In fact, it was common among the Jews to regard a part of the whole as the whole (Deut. 26:5–10; 1 Kings 13:32; Jer. 31:5; 2 Sam. 5:6–10; Rev. 14:1; 22:2; Rom. 15:19–24). For this reason, some have suggested that occupying all of the land should be understood as “representative universalism” (A. J. Mattill Jr.). In other words, the writer was speaking in universal terms. He regarded the individual kings, towns, and areas that had been subdued as representative of the entire land of Canaan and viewed as a whole.

Paul Pierce observes:

“It is important to point out that the Israelites did indeed take the land God had promised and that God gave them the land (Josh. 11:23; 21:43–45). To take the land and have it given to them is to be differentiated from fully possessing the land. So while they took the land and lived in it, they never fully ‘dispossessed’ the enemies from the land. The fact that Israel “possessed and lived in the land” does not negate the fact that they might possess still more of it. At the very time Scripture records Israel's possession of the land (Josh. 21), their enemies (living among them) posed no threat. They had been subdued by Israel even though they were not completely driven out. It wasn't until the time of Solomon (not even David) that Israel's borders came close to the parameters that God described in His Word. Israel's borders extended to the border of Egypt (1 Kings 4:21) but not the river of Egypt mentioned in Genesis 15:18.”

Reformed and Covenant Theology which emphasizes only two imaginary and unscriptural covenants not mentioned in the Bible (a covenant of grace and works) claims that the promises of the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic, and New Covenants were simply an extension of the covenant of grace and in some way the other covenants were already fulfilled in the historical days of Joshua and Israel in the land (Joshua 21:43-45). Therefore, these covenants have no future significance for Israel. In addition, many Reformed theologians profess that these same covenant promises and blessings have been taken away from national Israel due to her sins and apostasy when in the land. The judgment upon Israel is seen in the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. As a result, God has abandoned the nation of Israel forever and these same covenant promises have been mystically, allegorically, and magically transferred to the Church in some spiritualized manner.



Bad Hermeneutics

Of course, this is a flawed hermeneutical or interpretive practice termed as “the process of illegitimate transfer.” How can one people (national Israel) magically become another people (the Church – a new Israel) bearing the same name? How can land promises become spiritual promises? How can a millennium or 1,000 years mentioned seven specific times (Rev. 20:1-7) be redefined as a kingdom of people (the Church) over which God is ruling today? To come to these conclusions is a severe case of eisegesis and is nothing less than exegetical fraud.

It’s very clear that God was not teaching during Joshua’s days that Israel exhausted the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant blessings. This certainly cannot be true since later the Bible gives additional predictions about Israel possessing the land after the time of Joshua (Amos 9:14–15), since Israel did not actually possess and conquer all of the land (Judges 1:19, 21, 27-36; 2:1-3), nor did she possess it forever as promised in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 13:15; 17:7-8).

This means it will take eternity to literally fulfill these promises and not the temporary control which Israel has over part of the land. History shows that God’s people failed to exercise their responsibility and possess their land to the full degree as outlined in the Abrahamic Covenant. Israel did not possess the land entirely nor eternally. Israel failed to take back all of the land and with her eventual apostasies the continual possession of the land was not fulfilled. Sadly, the actual conquest of the land fell far short of the originally prescribed boundaries.

The statement that says, “the LORD gave unto Israel all the land” (Joshua 21:43) emphasizes God’s sovereign action and the fact that “they possessed it,” is referencing all of the land that they had conquered. This is an indication of God’s blessing upon their lives as they went through the land and defeated their enemies (Joshua 21:44). That “the LORD gave unto Israel all the land” means they were given the authority and power to conquer and take the land from their enemies because of the Abrahamic covenant promise. They had only to exert themselves to complete its conquest. The land was God’s gift to Israel by promise but all of Canaan was not yet in Israel’s possession at the time of Joshua nor were all the enemies destroyed. However, God did give them “all the land” that they possessed as they moved throughout Canaan and claimed their inheritance.

By God’s sovereign decree Israel was in control of “all the land” as they went through conquering their enemies. In other words, all was securely in their hands. All they had to do was possess it. From this statement we gather that the children of Israel did possess the land of Canaan that God gave to them but at this time it was only a small segment of the land God had promised them. If they were to get any more land, they would have to go on and continue to possess it. The rule still stands that every place their feet stand upon will be theirs (Joshua 1:3).

Yes, God did shower His goodness upon the people in Joshua’s day and “gave unto Israel all the land (*as they went about and conquered it*) which he swear to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it (*through piecemeal conquest*), and dwelt therein.” Of course, this is a reference to only the land the Jews had conquered up to this point of time. And yes, it’s true that “all came to pass” (Josh, 21:45) in relation to God giving Israel her land and blessings in relation to her advancements and how much the Jews actually conquered. However, we must understand that these statements are not inclusive of all the land. They do not mean that Israel actually possessed all the land of Canaan. The facts do not substantiate this claim.

God giving Israel all of the land and the Jews possessing it in accordance with the promises given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob simply implies that by God’s decree and promise all of the land was put in their power to take, and only as Israel conquered the land the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant was coming true. This certainly was a blessing and gift that God had given to the Jewish people in that day as they began to realize the blessing of the covenant.

In other words, the land was theirs by divine promise and everything the Jewish people did possess what was given to them as a gift from God. Everywhere they went the land was given to them as promised to Abraham and Joshua (Joshua 1:3). The problem was that Israel did not take all of the land. The Lord had given His people a large and good land, but they didn't defeat their enemies and claim it all by faith (Josh. 15:63; 16:10; 17:11–13; Jud. 1:21–35). The Jews did not conquer all of the land, and this act of disobedience eventually became their demise.

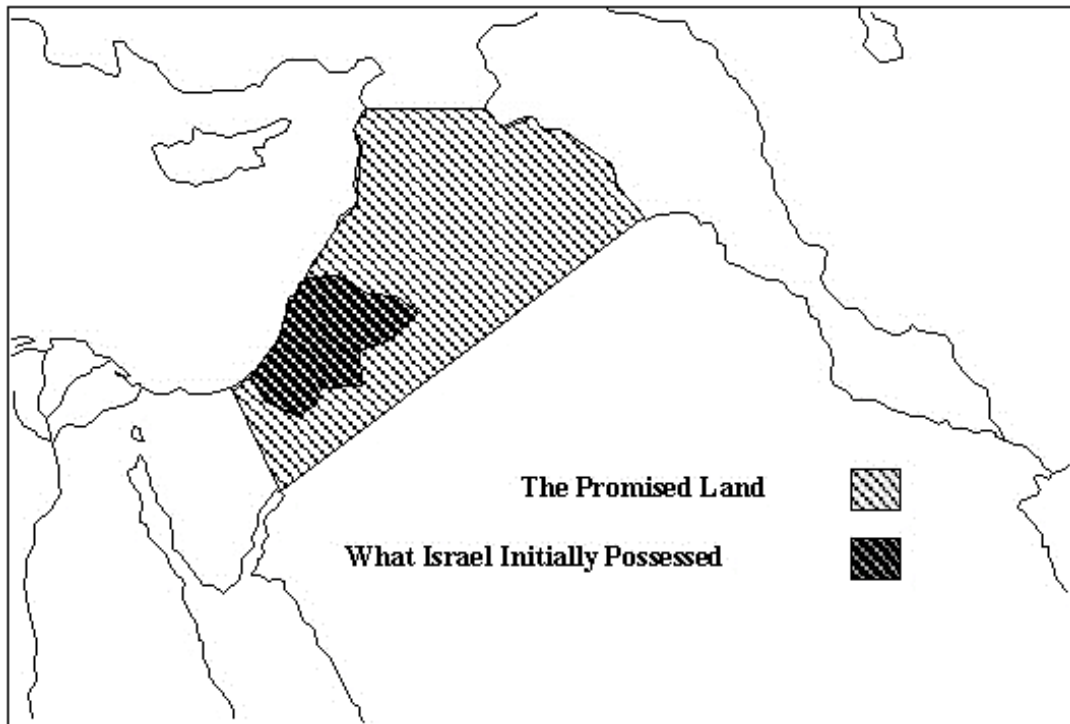
Warren Wiersbe states:

“Their eastern border didn't reach to the Mediterranean, for the Philistines still held that territory; nor did they get as far as Hamath on the north. On the east side of the Jordan, as you traveled north from the border of Manasseh, you would discover pockets of resistance in cities that Israel didn't conquer and destroy. Moses' prediction came true: the Canaanites became barbs in their eyes and thorns in their sides and led some of the Jews into sin (Num. 33:55).”

Keil and Delitzsch Old Testament commentary also remarks:

“Notwithstanding the fact that many a tract of country still remained in the hands of the Canaanites, the promise that the land of Canaan should be given to the house of Israel for a possession had been fulfilled; for God had not promised the immediate and total destruction of the Canaanites, but only their gradual extermination (Ex. xxiii. 29, 30; Deut. vii. 22). And even though the Israelites never came into undisputed possession of the whole of the promised land, to the full extent of the boundaries laid down in Num. xxxiv. 1–2, never conquering Tyre and Sidon for example, the promises of God were no more broken on that account than they were through the circumstance, that after the death of Joshua and the elders his contemporaries, Israel was sometimes hard pressed by the Canaanites; since the complete fulfillment of this promise was inseparably connected with the fidelity of Israel to the Lord.”

It's clear that these verses in Joshua 21:43-45 refer to the *temporary possession of part of the land* as the people initially entered Canaan (Numbers 34). This was not the ultimate and final possession of all the land as was outlined in Genesis 15:18–21 nor was it the full scope of the land that Israel will possess someday during the Millennial Kingdom. This was a partial fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise but not the entire fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant.



Even during this era of Israel's history, they did not reach the extent of possession as promised to Abraham. Of course, if the Jews had been obedient to God He would have eventually enlarged their border to include the whole area promised to Abraham (Deut. 7:22). The fact is this, Israel never possessed the land to the extent promised to Abraham. Their initial conquest was a far cry of what God had promised and what will be possessed by the Jews in the future. The promise of Genesis 15:18–20 which involves a larger territory will be fulfilled in the Millennium as explained in Ezekiel 47:13-23 and chapter 48.

John Calvin himself, an avowed amillennialist, concludes:

"How then can these two things be reconciled, that God, as he had promised, gave possession of the land to the people, and yet they were excluded from some portion by the power or obstinate resistance of the enemy?"

Calvin himself does not see this fulfilling God's land obligations to Israel. Yes, even Calvin, a hero worshipped in Reformed Theology, knew that the statement in Joshua 21:43-45 did not mean that Israel occupied all the original dimensions promised to Abraham. In fact, there are some who claim that the book of Joshua was deliberately corrupted to make it say that Israel had conquered all the land. Of course, this is not what the Bible teaches in Joshua. It simply states that Israel

occupied the land that they initially and progressively conquered, and this was a partial fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Donald Campbell speaks clearly about this issue:

“Some theologians have insisted that the statement in Joshua 21:43 means that the land promise of the Abrahamic Covenant was fulfilled then. But this cannot be true because later the Bible gives additional predictions about Israel possessing the land after the time of Joshua (e.g., Amos 9:14–15). Joshua 21:43, therefore, refers to the extent of the land as outlined in Numbers 34 and not to the ultimate extent as it will be in the messianic kingdom (Gen. 15:18–21). Also though Israel possessed the land at this time it was later dispossessed, whereas the Abrahamic Covenant promised Israel that she would possess the land forever (Gen. 17:8).”

Reformed and Covenant Theology must get rid of Israel and any future covenant promises and blessings associated with her past in order to support the theory that the Church of today has replaced the old Israel or people of God. In order to do this, they must find historical fulfillment of the covenants during the days of Joshua and allegorize hundreds of later prophecies given by the prophets regarding Israel's future destiny as a nation on earth in the land that was promised to them through the Abrahamic Covenant.

Amazingly, without one shred of Biblical evidence and exegesis, Reformed Theology continues to promote the anti-Zionist teaching that the original Israel (the Jewish people of God) has been abandoned by God and replaced by the Church which today has become the new Israel and people of God. Of course, this results in huckstering the Word of God (2 Cor. 4:2) and taking away the literal meaning of many Biblical promises and prophetic texts regarding Israel's future blessings in the Millennial Kingdom (Matt. 8:11; 19:28; Luke 1:32-33).

Covenant Theology also commits the grievous error of mixing the teaching about the New Testament Church with many Old Testament texts. The promises about the restoration of the earthly kingdom given to Israel (Acts 1:6) as found in Millennial Kingdom are reinterpreted, redefined, and reapplied as Christ's rule over the Church today in a spiritual kingdom of people who are called the new Israel of God. The 1,000 years of Revelation 20 is also allegorized and viewed as the spiritual kingdom of the Church, the saints in Heaven, or is said to be a picture of the eternal state. In Reformed Theology the New Testament truth about the Church is

constantly read back into the Old Testament transferring the teachings about the Church of today into the Old Testament writings.

Of course, the “mystery” teaching of the Church was not part of Old Testament revelation and had nothing to do with Israel (Eph. 3:1-8; 5:32). But in the mad attempt to destroy Israel’s future, Reformed Theology allegorically interprets the Old Testament texts regarding Israel’s blessings in the Millennium, and the future fulfillment of her covenant promises, as a reference to spiritual truths about the Church today. This is a biased, nonliteral, nonhistorical, and nongrammatical hermeneutical practice that is designed to dismiss the notion that Israel has any future and that she will not inherit her God-given covenant promises found in the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic, and New Covenants.

John MacArthur asks a valid question:

"You show me ... in the Old Testament, which promises a kingdom to Israel, where it says that it really means the Church--show me! Where does it say that? On what exegetical basis, what historical, grammatical, literal, interpretative basis of the Scripture can you tell me that when God says 'Israel' He means the 'Church'? Where does it say that? That's where the burden of proof really lies. A straightforward understanding of the Old Testament leads to only one conclusion and that is that there is a kingdom for Israel."



And yet many allegorize the covenant promises given to Israel and spiritually apply them to the Church. The allegorizing becomes senseless and silly in trying to explain away Israel’s future. Take, for example, the 20th Century theologian Lorraine Boettner. In his book “The Millennium” he argued that the prophetic scene of the splitting of the Mount of Olives in Zechariah 14 which clearly envisions Israel being rescued by the returning Messiah is actually a symbol of the human heart. He concludes that the

enemy forces are a symbol of the evil in the world attacking the heart. When a person receives Jesus as Lord and Savior, He comes into their heart, causing the

heart to split in repentance. He then defeats all the enemy forces and begins to reign over that person's heart.

This, of course, is an utterly ridiculous and allegorical interpretation of this passage, but it represents the kind of Scripture twisting amillennialists must do in order to sustain their debunked position regarding no future for Israel. Normally amillennialists ignore the Old Testament passages about the Millennium, or they spiritualize them by linking them to the Church today, or they argue they have already been fulfilled in Israel's history under Joshua (Joshua 21:43-45) or King Solomon (1 Kings 14:21).

This once again brings up the questions which are the focus of this study. Were all the covenant promises fulfilled in Joshua's day of Israel's history? And is God really finished with Israel? Is it true that God had no more plans for Israel after the days of Joshua? To conclude that Israel received all of her promises in the land in the day of Joshua and that God has now abandoned Israel forever due to her apostasy is not only a false claim, but a grievous anti-Zionist and antibiblical conclusion in relation to what the Bible teaches concerning the future of national Israel. Joshua 21:43 obviously refers to a *partial possession* of the land but not to the *permanent* and *prophetic* possession of the land as it will be in the Messianic Kingdom (Gen. 15:18-21).

God promised Israel and David that his throne would be established forever (2 Sam. 7:12-16) in Jerusalem, which, though destroyed (Dan. 9:26; Matt. 24:2; Lk. 21:6.) would once again be restored (Jer. 31:38-40; Ezek. 37:26-28; Zech. 14:11-16). This was clearly not fulfilled in Joshua's day since Jerusalem didn't yet belong to Israel. There are hundreds of other promises to Israel contained in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and mentioned by other prophets which were not even given until centuries after the days of Joshua.

There are many prophecies and promises that deal with Israel being scattered among the nations but one day returning to the land from all parts or corners of the earth in answer to the covenant promises and blessings (Deut. 4:27-31; 30:3-5 with Isaiah 11:11-16; 14:1-3; 27:12-13; 43:5-7; 48:8-16; 60:20-21; 66:20-22; Jer. 3:17-18; 16:14-16; 23:5-8; 30:3, 10-11; 31:8, 31-37; Ezek. 11:17-21; 20:33-38; 34:11-16; 37:1-4; 13-14, 21, 24-25; 39:25-29; Hosea 1:10-11; 3:4-5; Joel 3:17-21;

Amos 9:11-15; Micah 4:4-7; 7:20; Zeph. 3:14-20; Zech. 8:4-8; Matt. 24:31; Rom. 11:25-26).

Isaiah 11:12 prophetically anticipates:

“And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.”

When Jesus returns to earth at His Second Coming the Jews will be nationally regathered (Duet. 30:3; Isa. 11:12; 43:6; Jer. 23:3; Ezek. 11:17; 20:34, 41; 34:12-13; 36:24; Matt. 24:31), regenerated (Ezek. 36:26; Rom. 11:26), restored to the land of Palestine (Jer. 12:15; 23:8; 24:6; Ezek. 20:42; 28:25-26; Amos 9:14-15), reunited as a nation (Jer. 3:18; Ezek. 20:40; 37:15-22; 39:25; Hos. 1:11), and related to Jehovah once again by marriage (Isa. 54:1-17; 62:2-5; Hos. 2:14-23). This is God’s covenant and clear prophetic promise for the Jews.

This means that God’s promise given to Abraham could not possibly have been completely fulfilled in Israel’s initial conquest of Canaan. It’s an absolute absurdity to come to this conclusion. We know that other promises given to Israel in the Abrahamic Covenant were not fulfilled during the days of Joshua. Consider God’s promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob which says, “In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Gen 12:3; 26:4; 28:14), referring to the Messiah, who came more than 1,000 years after Joshua. What about the promises and prophecies of Messiah’s coming to redeem Israel and all mankind which were given to Israel by her prophets (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Micah 5:2) centuries after Joshua led Israel into the Promised Land?

Surely their fulfillment was yet future and would take place long after Joshua led Israel into the Promised Land. The same is true regarding Israel’s future and final restoration to the land. God gave the land of Canaan to Abraham and to his seed “for ever” (Gen. 13:15) by “an everlasting covenant” (Gen. 17:7, 13, 19; 48:4) for “an everlasting possession” (Gen 17:8) which by its very nature will take eternity to fulfill its promises!

Isaiah 60:21 promises:

“Thy people also *shall be* all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.”

Psalm 89:35-37 reiterates the promise of the Davidic Covenant:

“Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and *as* a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.”

Luke 1:31-33 prophetically anticipates:

“And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

Romans 11:26 looks toward the future:

“And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

Jesus taught in Matthew 19:28:

“And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

These and many others promises were given to Israel that could never have been fulfilled in Joshua’s day. In fact, hundreds of other promises were given about Israel’s future centuries after Joshua’s day. This means that the covenant promises given to Israel were never fully realized and completely fulfilled during the day of Joshua and that God still had a future for His national people Israel. God has future plans to bring His ancient people back into the full and final blessings of the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants.

There are many events related to Israel which did not occur in Joshua’s day. For instance, there is coming a future “time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7), a time when two thirds of all Jews will be killed in the land (Zech. 13:8,9), a time when Israel will be rescued by the returning King (Jesus Christ) from the invading armies surrounding Jerusalem (Zech. 12:1-3; 14:1-3), and a time of national repentance and salvation for Israel as a nation (Zech. 12:10-13:1; Romans. 11:25-26). Yes, “all Israel shall be saved” (Rom. 11:26). None of these prophecies and promises regarding Israel which were made



long after Joshua died could have been fulfilled during the days of Joshua and correspond to Joshua 21:43-45.

In the coming days of the Millennial Kingdom Jerusalem will be made “Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, *is* mount Zion, *on* the sides of the north, the city of the great King (Ps. 48:2). “As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.” (Ps. 48 8).



It's clear that none of these future events, including Jerusalem being the joy of the whole earth, the city which is established forever, and all Israel being saved had come to pass in the days of Joshua. This means that Israel's covenant blessings are not finished and somehow transferred to the Church or usurped by the Church as Covenant and Reformed Theology teaches.

Can it honestly be said that Christ establishing His rule over the earth on David's throne forever (Luke 1:31-33), with Israel being fully, finally, and eternally restored to fellowship with him in the land of Palestine (Isa. 9:6-7, Ezek. 34:11-16, Zech. 14:9-21) was fulfilled in the statement of Joshua 21:43-45? Hardly! The astonishing claim that all of God's promises to Israel have already been fulfilled in Joshua's day reveals the depths of the delusion that grips those who insist that Israel no longer has any significance in God's purposes. A distinctive of dispensational and Biblical theology

is the recognition that God has a future for Israel as a nation (Ps. 48:2; Isa. 55:11) that is distinct from the future of the Church (1 Cor. 6:2) and the Gentile nations (Rev. 21:24). Romans 11 teaches how Israel will be grafted back into the blessing of God following the Church Age (Rom. 11:1-2, 19-23) and that the Jews will be saved and experience their New Covenant promise at the Second Coming (Rom. 11:26-27).

Amos 9:14-15 prophetically declares:

“And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.”

No more pulled up from their land! This never happened to Israel historically, but it will prophetically. Someday Israel will be saved as a nation (Romans 11:26-27), be given a new heart (Ezekiel 36:26) as promised by the New Covenant and enter into the eternal blessing of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants. Again, we must never forget that God promised Israel and David that the throne would be established “forever” (2 Sam 7:12-16) in Jerusalem, which, though destroyed (Dan. 9:26; Matt 24:2; Luke 21:6), would one day be restored (Jer. 31:38-40; Ezek. 37:26-28; Zech. 14:11-16). Israel's originally promised boundaries in the land of Palestine will be fulfilled during the 1,000-year reign of Christ and throughout the eternal kingdom (Deut. 29:1-30:20; Isa. 9:7; Lk. 1:33).

2 Samuel 7:10 declares:

“Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime.”

Frankly, when people use Joshua 21:43-45 as a proof-text to say that God will not restore the nation of Israel to the Promised Land, it makes me wonder how they interpret Deuteronomy 30:1-10.

God states in Deuteronomy 30:4-5:

“If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the LORD

thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.”

How can this passage be fulfilled unless Israel returns to the land? In this passage, God says that one day after Israel is dispersed, He will bring her back into the very same land from which she was dispersed. Which land is that, and if the restoration to this land is not future, when did it happen? God promises, “But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers” (Jer 16:15). He is alluding to the promise He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give the land as an everlasting possession (Gen 17:8).

It’s certain that Paul believed in the literal and future fulfillment of the covenant promises when stating in Acts 26:6-7: “And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which *promise* our twelve tribes, instantly serving *God* day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?”

Paul believed he would be raised physically from the dead to enjoy the Messianic Age (the Millennial Kingdom) and enjoy the covenant promises given to Abraham and David with his beloved people. So who will you believe – Paul or Hank Hanegraaff? Can we really believe what Hank Hanegraaff and reformed/non-dispensational eschatology teaches: **“All the promises to Israel have already been fulfilled according to Joshua 21:43-45.”** The answer to this question is a resounding no!



Why are there still Jews in the world? Why did they officially become a recognized nation on May 14, 1948? They are still a nation because God has preserved them to enter into the full blessings of their covenants in the future. If Israel went out of existence there would be no way for God to fulfill His covenants. And so God has caused perpetuity in the Jewish stock.

Israel's covenant program has not been nullified. We need to call the bluff of Reformed Eschatology. The Church has not superseded Israel's covenant program and blessing. There is not one shred of evidence that would lead to this conclusion. No Biblicist would try and dismiss Israel as God's chosen people and ignore the clear statements that God still has a future program for the Jews.

The whole idea of anti-Zionist, Reformed, and Replacement Theology that concludes God has given up on Israel and that the Church of today has replaced Israel forever is an absolute travesty on God's covenant program and His unalterable Word. God is not finished with His national people Israel. God did not erase the blackboard and ended the promises given to Israel. This means the Church has not replaced Israel in the plan and purpose of God.

Romans 11:1 declares:

"I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, *of* the tribe of Benjamin."

Romans 11:29 adds:

"For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance."

