

Replacement Theology

“And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with My whole heart and with My whole soul. For thus saith the LORD; Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.” (Jeremiah 32:40-42)

Introduction

It is reported that King Frederick the Great, of Prussia, once asked his physician for proof of the existence of God. His physician replied, “Your Majesty, the continued existence of the Jews.”

Mark Twain wrote about the Jews in *Harper's Magazine* in 1899. This was 11 years before he died and 49 years before Israel became a nation. Keep in mind that Mark Twain was not a believer in Christ as far as we know. Indeed, he blasphemed the Lord as seen in his writings entitled, *Letters From the Earth*, in which he mocked the God of creation, the Genesis account and such foundational doctrines as the fall of man. And yet, it is quite remarkable what Mark Twain said about the Jews:

If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of stardust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly the Jew ought hardly to be heard of, but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people and his commercial importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk.

His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine, and obtuse learning are also way out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvelous fight in this world in all the ages and has done it with his hands tied behind him.

The Egyptians, the Babylonians and the Persians rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, and faded to dream stuff and passed away. The Greeks and the Romans followed and made a vast noise and they are gone.

Other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time. But it burned out, and they sit in twilight now or have vanished.

The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jew. All other forces pass, but he remains.

Replacement Theology

Israel as a nation has had one of the most remarkable histories of any nation of the world, surviving as a nation against insurmountable odds. Pharaoh could not wipe out the Jewish people; the Assyrians could not destroy them; the Babylonians were unable to totally ruin them; Haman had a plan to kill every Jew but he himself ended up on the gallows. The Romans exercised their great power against the Jewish nation and destroyed its temple and capital city. The Muslims have tried to defeat and destroy the Jewish nation but have failed. Hitler tried to exterminate the Jews, killing millions of them, but the Jews live on.

Israel became a nation in 1948, and immediately the Arab nations waged war. On more than one occasion, the Arab nations tried to push Israel into the Sea, but Israel against all odds won every war and the nation still exists. These wars included the Israeli War of Independence of 1948-1949, the Six Day War of 1967 and the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

The attitude of Israel's enemies has been verbalized in Psalm 83:4, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance." Replacement Theology represents another serious attack upon the nation Israel by claiming that the promises God has made to His chosen nation are null and void.

Replacement Theology insists that Israel has no future in the plan of God. They believe that the nation Israel is no different from any other nation; they are not special in the eyes of God. They teach that God has cast off those whom He once claimed as His chosen people.

Replacement Theology says that the chosen people of Israel have been replaced by the Church. They claim that Israel forfeited the right to be the people of God when they rejected and crucified Christ. Because the Jews rejected God, God has rejected them. They teach that God is forever finished with the nation Israel. Individual Jews can still be saved, but God's promises to the Jewish nation will not be fulfilled. God has a "new Israel" today, and that is the Church, which they refer to as "the Israel of God." The Church inherits all the blessings that were promised to Israel, but of course Israel will still receive the promised curses. They believe that the reestablishment of the nation Israel in 1948 has no spiritual or prophetic significance; it was merely an accident of history.

The Sad History of Replacement Theology

A debate once took place between a Christian and a Jew. The Christian argued that Christians are "the true Israelite race." In other words, he argued, "we are the true Israelites rather than the Jews!" This debate took place a little over one hundred years after Christ was crucified. The Christian was Justin Martyr and the Jew was a man named Trypho. This illustrates that Replacement Theology has been around for a long, long time! It has been a terrible black eye on the history of the Church from its earliest days.

The Church has had two major flaws in its history. The greatest flaw would probably be the failure to obey the Lord's Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8). Yet, how we thank God for the dedicated believers throughout the centuries who faithfully proclaimed the gospel to lost men and women. The second greatest flaw is the way the Church has treated Israel for 2000 years, primarily due to Replacement Theology.

David R. Reagan has written an excellent paper entitled *The Evil of Replacement Theology--The Historical Abuse of the Jews by the Church*. In this paper he gives example after example of how the Jewish people have been abused down through the centuries by those claiming to be Christians.¹ For time sake, I will share only two examples. First there were the atrocities of the Crusades. The so-called "Christian" crusaders were not only on a mission to kill Muslims but they also targeted Jews. The result was that many Jews were slaughtered by so-called Christians.

The second example involved Martin Luther. Luther did a lot of good for the Church, uncovering important Bible truths about justification and other key doctrines. Sadly, however, he said some terrible things about the Jews, especially later in life. Initially Luther had a love for the Jews but later turned in hate against them when the Jews refused to convert to Christianity.

He went so far as to say that the Jews should be removed from Christian lands, their books should be outlawed, their synagogues burned and even their houses destroyed. In the last of his sermons, preached shortly before his death, he concluded with a severe warning against the Jews as dangerous public enemies who ought not to be tolerated, and left the alternative of either conversion or expulsion.

At another time Luther said this: "I would threaten to cut their tongues out from their throats, if they refuse to acknowledge the truth that God is a trinity and not a plain unity." If you share the gospel with someone today, and they refuse to believe on Christ, would you then threaten to cut their tongues out from their throats?

About four centuries later Hitler justified his treatment of the Jews by appealing to the words of Martin Luther. How tragic! At a Christian gathering in Berlin, Hitler talked about the influence of Luther on his life:

Martin Luther has been the greatest encouragement of my life. Luther was a great man. He was a giant. With one blow he heralded the coming of the new dawn and the new age. He saw clearly that the Jews need to be destroyed, and we're only beginning to see that we need to carry this work on.

At the Nuremberg trials, Nazi propagandist Julius Streicher defended himself with the claim that he had not said anything worse about the Jews than had Martin Luther.

These are just two examples from church history regarding the terrible treatment of the Jewish people. If anyone should befriend Israel, it should be believers in Christ. They should be the friends of Israel!

¹ <https://christinprophecy.org/articles/the-evil-of-replacement-theology/> [accessed on 9/2/22]

How To Destroy the Jewish Nation

What does God say to those who claim that Israel has no future in the plan of God? God has told us very clearly how the Jews can cease from being a nation. God has given to us an unfailing formula for the destruction of Israel. If you want Israel to cease being a nation, then God has indicated exactly what must take place. Every Christian leader who denies that the nation Israel has a wonderful future in its land, under their Messiah, according to all the kingdom prophecies given by the prophets should give serious consideration to what God has said must happen if Israel is to cease being a nation.

To destroy the nation Israel one of three things must take place. All three are mentioned in one place, in Jeremiah chapter 31.

Jeremiah 31:35-36

“If these ordinances depart from Me.” The Lord is talking about the sun, the moon, the stars and the waves of the ocean. How then can Israel be destroyed? The enemies of Israel need to change their strategy. Instead of aiming their mighty weapons of destruction at the Jews and at Jerusalem, they need to aim their missiles at the sun, moon and stars! They could start with the moon and try to knock it out of orbit! Instead of spending time in their secret laboratories trying to figure out how to deliver chemical weapons, they need to devise a plan to neutralize the waves of the ocean! However, as long as the waves are roaring, and as long as the sun, moon and stars are shining, Israel’s future is secure!

Has God broken His promises to Israel? Is the sun still shining? Do you still see the moon at night? Are the waves of the ocean still hitting the shoreline, wave after wave?

Jeremiah 31:37

If the enemies of the Jews get frustrated by trying to vaporize the heavenly bodies and trying to neutralize the waves of the ocean, then God has another strategy which is guaranteed to effectively destroy the Jewish nation. All they need to do is measure the heaven above! The vastness of the heavens is beyond the comprehension of our feeble minds. Recent scientific findings have suggested that the number of stars in the universe is at least ten or more times the total number of grains of sand on earth. The further we investigate the vast expanse of space, the more stars we see. The universe cannot be measured by man, nor can the stars be counted.

The enemies of Israel again need to abandon their hostile attacks against Israel, and start to develop bigger and better telescopes so that they can measure the heavens and count all the stars! Only then will God cast off all the seed (descendants) of Israel.

Maybe they are hoping that the James Webb Space Telescope (launched in December 2021) will finally enable mankind to measure the heavens. That can’t be counted on!

Jeremiah 31:37

If looking up and measuring the heavens seems to be a task too great, then the enemies of the Jews can look down and seek to search out the earth beneath! Man's greatest efforts at searching the earth beneath and digging and drilling into it have barely scratched the surface! But if man can search out the very foundations of the earth, then God will cast off the seed (descendants) of Israel.

The enemies of Israel, having failed to obliterate the sun, moon and stars, having failed to neutralize the roaring waves of the ocean, having failed to measure the universe and count all the stars, still have one remaining solution if they are to destroy Israel. They better start passing out shovels and start digging! Or they need to build better earth removing equipment and drills that will penetrate deeper.

Based on these three passages, the future of Israel is very safe and secure!

Key Passages of Scripture That Relate to Replacement Theology

Deuteronomy 4:29-31

In the days of Moses, God had an important message for the nation Israel: "When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto His voice" (Deut. 4:30).

Notice the phrase, "when you are in tribulation." Israel's entire history has been characterized by tribulation to one degree or another. They were in tribulation as slaves in Egypt. When Babylon invaded, it was a time of great trouble. When Antiochus Epiphanes was in power, it was a dreadful time of tribulation and distress. When the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, it was a horrible time of death and destruction. During Hitler's holocaust, it was a dark time of tribulation and trouble. The slaughter of over 1000 Jews on October 7, 2023 was a horrible time of trouble.

What tribulation or time of trouble is Deuteronomy 4:30 referring to? Notice that it is a tribulation of **the latter days**. This is the tribulation described in Jeremiah as "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7). This tribulation was also predicted by Daniel the prophet: "A time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation" (Dan. 12:1). The Lord Jesus also spoke of this future time of great trouble: "For then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matt. 24:21).

If the Jewish nation should turn to God during this tribulation of the latter days, what will happen? According to Deuteronomy 4:31, four things will happen:

- 1) God will be merciful.
- 2) God will not forsake His nation.
- 3) God will not destroy this nation. That is, Israel will not cease from being a nation before God.
- 4) God will not forget His covenant promises which He made to the nation.

The question is, will the nation Israel turn to the Lord in the latter days? Moses does not answer that question here in Deuteronomy 4. However, from other passages we learn that the nation Israel will repent and turn to the Lord in the latter days (Zechariah 12:10-14), and the Jews will some day welcome Christ with these words: “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Matt. 23:39).

Matthew 21:43

Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you,
and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Many claim that this verse supports Replacement Theology. The common interpretation of this verse is that the kingdom was taken away from Israel because of their unbelief and rejection of Christ and was given to the Church. Those holding to Replacement Theology believe that the Church has permanently replaced Israel in God’s program. They teach that God is forever finished with Israel as a nation, even though individual Jews can still be saved. According to their doctrine, God has a new Israel today, “the Israel of God,” and this new Israel is the Church, made up of believing Gentiles and believing Jews. They believe that Matthew 21:43 strongly supports God replacing Israel with the Church.

Although this is not the correct interpretation of Matthew 21:43, dispensationalists would agree that there is a sense in which the Church has replaced Israel today. For example, Israel was once God’s witness on this earth (Isaiah 43:10), but today the Church is God’s witness on earth (Acts 1:8). Formerly God’s witness was a nation; today God’s witnesses are among all nations (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8). Israel today is largely in unbelief (2 Cor. 3:14-16; Rom. 11:20-25), and today God is working through His local assemblies of believers throughout the world. God has not forgotten His covenant promises to Israel, and yet God’s program today centers in His Church which He is building (Matt. 16:18) and which will soon be completed (Rom. 11:26; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).

However, nowhere does the Bible teach that the Church has *permanently* replaced Israel in God’s program. The fact that Israel will play a major role in God’s future kingdom program is taught throughout the Bible. Here is but one example of many: “Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6) Notice that the disciples firmly held the belief that the Lord would restore the kingdom to Israel. This would have been the perfect opportunity for the Lord Jesus to correct them and establish Replacement Theology once and for all. He could have said, “You are wrong to look for an earthly kingdom where Israel is prominent. You

need to realize that the kingdom is here and now. It is a spiritual kingdom that is within you and within the hearts of all those who believe in Me. It's not a future expectancy but it's a present reality. I now rule in your hearts." Or, He could have corrected their concept that Israel was to have a restored kingdom: "You should not expect the kingdom to be restored to Israel. Israel, in unbelief, has rejected Me and crucified Me. Because of this, they have disqualified themselves from ever having the kingdom; their rejection has made them unfit. Instead, believers today have replaced Israel. They have now received what Israel was once promised. The kingdom has been taken from Israel and given to those who are worthy, namely the Church." No, the Lord made no such corrections. The disciples were right in their understanding of the kingdom. The kingdom would be restored to Israel. They simply needed some help understanding the timing of that event. It would happen in the future at God's appointed time.

Those who say that the kingdom has been given to the Church embrace a "kingdom now" theology. The errors of this theology have been clearly exposed in Andy Wood's book, *The Coming Kingdom* [Grace Gospel Press].

To identify this second nation as the Church is problematic because the Church is technically not a nation (see Romans 10:19 NKJV, NIV, NASB). Rather, the Church is composed of saved individuals from all nations, or as the hymnwriter says, "Elect from every nation" (Acts 15:14).

Is the Church called a nation? In 1 Peter 2:9, Peter says, "You are...a holy nation." Peter was using language that had been used of Israel in the Old Testament (Exodus 19:6). Also, many believe that Peter was writing to Jewish believers who had been dispersed from their homeland. We must admit that this "holy nation" is a spiritual entity, a heavenly people who belong totally to the Lord. This is unique, and unlike any other nation on earth. The only other place where it could be argued that the Church is referred to as a nation is Romans 10:19, but even in that verse it is said to be "not a nation" (NKJV, Darby's translation, Kelly's translation, NIV, NASB).

As David Cloud points out in his commentary on the Gospels,

Jesus did not say the kingdom of God would be taken from "Israel" but from "you," referring to the people He was addressing. He was addressing "the chief priests and elders of the people" (Mt. 21:23). Verse 45 makes this plain. "And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard His parables, they perceived that He spake of them."

And yet these rulers represented the Jewish nation, and because of the decisions and actions of these Christ-rejecting rulers, the Messianic kingdom was taken away from the nation as a whole.

The kingdom was taken from Israel, and every Jew understood this kingdom to be the literal, earthly reign of the Messiah in accordance with all the Old Testament prophecies. If this kingdom were then given to the Church, then this would also need to be the literal, earthly reign of the Messiah. The kingdom taken from Israel must be the same kingdom as the one given to the Church. And yet, those believing in Replacement Theology teach that the kingdom given to the Church is some kind of spiritual kingdom, quite unlike the kingdom the prophets foretold.

Matthew 21:43 is speaking of two different nations and of two different time periods, and yet both of these nations are composed of Israelites. The one nation rejected their King (John 19:15)

and the kingdom was taken from them; the other nation will receive their King just prior to His Second coming and the kingdom will be given to them. One nation was unbelieving (Rom. 11:20-25), and the other nation in the future will be believing. One nation refused to repent (Matt. 3:1-8); a future Jewish nation will repent (Zech. 12:10-12). One Jewish nation rejected Christ and crucified Him; a future Jewish nation will repent and embrace Christ, and to them will the kingdom be given.

How can one nation have two totally different characteristics? Here's an illustration: The German nation today is radically different from the German nation of Hitler's terrible years. Yet both may be described as the German nation, even though those two German nations are totally different in so many ways. The same could be said of the nation Japan during World War II and the nation of Japan today.

Likewise, this can be illustrated by the history of the nation Israel. The nation Israel that passed through the Red Sea and entered the wilderness was not allowed to enter the promised land because of unbelief. However, the nation Israel under Joshua was allowed to enter the promised land. The privilege of entering the promised land was taken away from that Red Sea generation but it was given to the next generation. Both of these generations represented the nation Israel.

In a similar way, God took away the kingdom from the Jewish nation because of its unbelief and rejection of its King. However, at the right time God will give the kingdom to a future nation Israel which will believe and repent and mourn over what they did to Christ. That nation will say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Matt. 23:39) Notice the following:

An unbelieving nation to be judged (Matt. 23:38)

"Behold your house is left unto you desolate."

A believing nation to be rewarded (Matt. 23:39)

"For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say,
Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Both of these nations were comprised of Israelites!

This correct interpretation recognizes that the kingdom was taken away from unbelieving Israel, but this same promised kingdom will be restored to Israel at a future time. This harmonizes with what all the prophets have taught concerning Israel's kingdom and the Messiah sitting on David's throne in Jerusalem (Luke 1:31-33; Isaiah 2:1-5; 11:1-9; Jeremiah 23:5-8; Jeremiah chapter 31, etc.). Israel still has a wonderful future awaiting them in the plan of God:

And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion [Zion] the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Rom. 11:26-29).

Galatians 6:16

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** (Galatians 6:15-16).

This is another favorite passage used by those who advocate Replacement Theology. They teach that the church has replaced Israel with the result that the Church is now the true Israel, or the Israel of God.

On the Middletown Bible Church website is a paper entitled, “The Use of the Term ‘Israel’ in the New Testament.”² It is written by Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum. This paper examines every occurrence of the word “Israel” in the NT, including a six page discussion of this important passage in Galatians 6:16. The conclusion of this paper is significant: “The Church is never called, and is not, a ‘spiritual Israel’ or a ‘new Israel.’ The term ‘Israel’ is either used of the nation or the people as a whole, or of the believing remnant within. It is never used of the Church in general or of Gentile believers in particular” (p. 10).

In Galatians 6:16, what is “the Israel of God”? Why not simply take the phrase for exactly what it says? It is referring to the Israel “of God.” “Of God” is possessive. It is referring to the Israel that belongs to God. The Israel of God refers to Israelites who belong to God. These would be Jews who are believers in Jesus Christ.

Unbelieving Jews would not be considered the Israel of God because they do not belong to God. Our Lord once spoke to unbelieving Jews and said, “Ye are of your father the devil” (John 8:44). They did not belong to God; they were unsaved Jews.

Also, believing Gentiles must not be identified as the Israel of God because even though they are saved and belong to God, they are not Israelites! The Bible never uses the word “Israel” when Gentiles are being referred to.

Is R. C. Sproul Jr. Really a Jew?

R. C. Sproul Jr. is the son of the famous R. C. Sproul, and he is not of Jewish descent. He is a Gentile believer. R. C. Sproul Jr. wrote a very brief article or editorial which appeared in *Table Talk* magazine, a Reformed publication published by Ligonier Ministries. This article appeared in the December 1998 issue, p. 2 (inside cover). In this article, Mr. Sproul Jr. claimed to be a Jew. This is in line with his Reformed theology which teaches that every believer, including every single saved Gentile, is a spiritual Israelite and part of the “Israel of God.” Here is what he wrote:

We’re not dispensationalists here.... We believe that the church is essentially Israel. We believe that the answer to, “What about the Jews?” is, “Here we are.” We deny that the church is God’s “plan B.” We deny that we are living in God’s redemptive parenthesis.

² See <https://middletownbiblechurch.org/reformed/israelaf.pdf>

There, we are again one people. In His holy and heavenly temple there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, pre-mil nor post-mil. There, we are all together, the Israel of God, princes with God, and the *ekklesia*, the set apart ones.

I shared this comment with a friend of mine, Arnold Fruchtenbaum, who is a converted Jew. He was born in Russia after his parents were released from a Communist prison. With the help of the Israeli underground, his family escaped from behind the Iron Curtain. He received Orthodox Jewish training while living in Germany from 1947 to 1951 and then his family immigrated to New York. He is a dedicated servant of Christ and a respected author. When told about Sproul Jr.'s comment, "Here we are. [We are the Jews]" he commented, "It's a good thing he was not declaring this on the streets of Berlin, Germany around 1941!"

Are We "The Chosen Seed of Israel's Race"?

Replacement Theology is found in our hymnbooks. Consider the hymn *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*: "Ye chosen seed of Israel's race, ye ransomed from the fall." Thank God we have been ransomed from the Fall, but saved Gentiles are not the chosen seed of Israel's race. We are Gentiles, but we have put our trust in the One who is the chosen seed of Israel's race, even Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the *SEED* (singular) that Paul talks about in the book of Galatians (Gal. 3:16).

Romans 11 and Israel's Future

Romans chapter 11 is perhaps the strongest chapter as far as showing that Israel will have a wonderful future in the plan of God.

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 (Rom. 11:1).

Has God cast away His people Israel? Sadly, for the most part, the Church's answer to this question during the last 2,000 years has been, "Yes! God has indeed cast away His people, and Israel has been replaced by the Church."

Yet, Paul's answer is loud and clear, "God forbid! Let it not be! Perish the thought!"

According to Paul, there are two reasons why God has not cast away His people. The first reason relates to the present and the second reason relates to the future.

The first reason is seen in verse 1. Paul points to himself as proof that God has not cast away His people: "I am an Israelite!" God has not cast away His people because I'm a Jew and God has not cast me away. I'm saved and I belong to the Lord.

Paul's argument is that during this present time God has a remnant of saved Jews ("At this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Rom. 11:5). Paul, Peter, John, James, Stephen and so many more were all part of that believing remnant.

Therefore, God has not cast away His people because even today there are Jews who are saved. Reformed theologians would agree with Paul's first argument. They would agree that Jews can be saved today.

The second reason Paul gives for why God has not cast away His people relates to the future. God has a remnant today but in the future the nation will be saved. To see this we will begin in verse 25:

For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in (Rom. 11:25).

Sadly, the nation Israel that should have embraced Christ as Saviour is hard-hearted, blind and in a state of unbelief. The good news is that we are told two positive things about this blindness:

- 1) **The blindness is partial, not total.** The key phrase is "blindness in part." Although most of the Jews around the world are blind, yet there are some who see very well. There is a small minority of Jews whose hearts have turned to the Lord and whose eyes have been opened. They have embraced Christ as Saviour. How thankful we are that this blindness is only partial.
- 2) **The blindness is temporary, not permanent.** The key word is "until." Today God is doing a special work with the Gentiles: God is "visiting the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name" (Acts 15:14). There is coming a day when the full number of Gentiles will come in, and the Church, the body of Christ, will be completed and raptured to the third heaven. And after that happens, God will deal with the nation Israel in a special and wonderful way.

Notice the expression "the fulness of the Gentiles." In the future God's program for Israel will involve "the fullness of the Jews."

I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; **how much more their fulness?** (Rom. 11:11)

Today God's plan is to bring in the fulness of the Gentiles; in the future God's plan will be to restore the Jews to their fulness, even to a greater fulness than they have ever had. Today the natural branches of the olive tree have been broken off; in the future they will be grafted back in:

And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? (Rom. 11:23-24)

Paul predicts a future salvation for the nation Israel:

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 (Rom. 11:26).

It does not say that the nation Israel *might* be saved, but it says “Israel *shall* be saved.” It is certain to happen. When will this great salvation take place? It will happen when the Deliverer (Jesus Christ, the Messiah) returns (Rom. 11:27). At that time God will keep His new covenant promises to the nation (Rom. 11:27; Jeremiah 31:31-34). Zechariah wrote of the repentance which will precede the nation’s salvation (Zechariah 12:10-14), and the Lord Jesus spoke of the time when Israel would have a total change of attitude resulting in the Jews embracing their Messiah (Matthew 23:37-39).

As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father’s sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Rom. 11:28-29).

The Jewish people were enemies of the early Christians. The unbelieving Jews were the chief persecutors of the Church. Everywhere Paul went he faced strong Jewish opposition to the gospel. And yet the Jews are “beloved for the father’s sakes.” God made promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David, and He will keep those promises. The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable. God has a special calling and plan for the nation Israel. God has promised this nation a wonderful future in their land with Jerusalem as the capital and with Jesus Christ as their King. God will never change His mind about what He has in store for Israel. God has made a commitment to His people, and He will not break it. He will fulfill all His promises to them.

Eternal Security??

Those who believe in Replacement Theology should be very concerned about their own eternal security. Consider God’s promise in John 10:27-28:

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand (John 10:27-28).

What a wonderful promise of eternal security! And yet, if God has broken His promises regarding the future of the nation Israel, then what guarantee do we have that God will not break His promise to us, even the promise of John 10:28? If God has broken His Word to Israel, how do we know He will keep His Word to us?

I’m so thankful that our faithful God, the covenant-keeping God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, will most certainly keep all of His promises to that nation. And likewise, God will keep all of the promises that He has made to us, including John 10:28. All the promises of God are YES and AMEN in Him (2 Cor. 1:20)!

Paul's Love For Israel

Paul had a great burden for the Jewish people, even those Jews who strongly opposed the preaching of the gospel and persecuted God's preachers. He said, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved" (Rom. 10:1). "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites" (Rom. 9:2-4). If it were possible, Paul was willing to be cursed, so that the Jews could be saved and be blessed.

Paul was demonstrating Calvary love! What is Calvary's love all about? It is about Christ becoming a curse for us (becoming accursed) so that we might be saved (Gal. 3:13). Paul was willing to be accursed so that his brethren the Jews could be saved. Paul could not really be accursed or go to hell to save the Jews, but Jesus Christ did go to hell, so to speak, during those three final hours on the cross when the wrath of God was poured out on Him. ***Hallelujah, what a Saviour!***

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