

JOSHUA (4) – Joshua and Christian Zionism (2)

Covenant Fellowship Church

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The Land, The People, and The Promise

A Five-Week Exploration

Week 2: The Scriptural Lens (Key Passages and Interpretation)

Goal: To look at the “Proof Texts” used by both sides.

Sidebar: If you need to be persuaded about the relevance and importance of clear headed thinking about this matter, consider this piece of news that came across my screen this morning:

This week a prominent Israeli rabbi published a lecture arguing that the American war against Iran is ancient Jewish prophecy fulfilling itself in real time, that Trump is a Messiah sent to prepare the way, that the Third Temple will be built this year, that nine billion people will be converted to the reality of the divine presence when the Shekhinah descends from the heavenly Temple to the earthly one, and that God must first remove the Israeli Supreme Court before redemption can proceed.

“Messiah,” “Third Temple,” “conversion of the Jewish people,” . . . There’s much at stake in this discussion.

Exposition of Key Passages

Genesis 12:1–3 and 15:18–21 (The Abrahamic Covenant):

- *Zionist View:* God promised a specific “plot of land” to Abraham’s physical descendants forever. It is an unconditional deed.
- *Covenantal View:* The promise was always intended to expand. In Christ, the “seed” of Abraham is Jesus, and the “land” becomes the whole world (*Romans 4:13; Galatians 3:29*).

Who is the “True Israel”?

<i>Passage</i>	<i>What the Text Says</i>	<i>Your Reflection</i>
Matthew 3:9	“God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.”	Does being a “child of Abraham” require DNA or God’s power?
John 8:39–44	Jesus tells the religious leaders that if they were Abraham’s children, they would do what Abraham did (believe).	According to Jesus, what defines a “true” child of Abraham?
Romans 9:6–8	“For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel . . .”	How can someone be “ethnic Israel” but not “true Israel”?
Galatians 6:16	Paul refers to the Church as “the Israel of God.”	If the Church is called “Israel,” does that leave room for a separate group?

- **The “Stones” in Matthew 3:9–10:** John the Baptist is attacking the idea of “Physical Entitlement.” He is saying that Jewish lineage provides zero spiritual standing without repentance.

(over, please)

- **The “Two Israels” in Romans 9:** This is the heart of covenantal election. Paul is saying that God’s promise didn’t fail just because many Jews rejected Jesus; it’s because the “Promise” was always for the **remnant** (those chosen by grace), not the whole nation.

Is physical Israel still God’s chosen people?

Read Matthew 8:10–12

Read Matthew 21:33–46

Compare Exodus 19:5–16 ~ 1 Peter 2:3–5, 9–10

- **The “Seed” Logic:** In the Old Testament, being “Israel” was about staying in the Covenant. If you broke the Covenant, you were “cut off.” (See *John 15:2a*.) Jesus is the only one who *kept* the Covenant perfectly—He is the “Last Man Standing.” He is Israel. To be in Israel, you must be in Him.

Who is the “S/seed” and who are the “sons of Abraham”? Read Galatians 3:15–18, and Galatians 3:26–29.

Read John 8:37–42

Romans 9–11

The problem to which the entire argument of these chapters is addressed is this: *Have the Word and promise of God failed due to the apparent unbelief of many of the “children of Israel”?*

The apostle’s resounding answer is: **NO!** Rather, God’s purpose according to election has been and is being realized (Rom. 9:11). Just as that purpose discriminated between some who were children of Israel *only according to the flesh*, and others who were true children *according to the promise and purpose of God*, so that purpose continues to be realized in the salvation of some and not others.

Romans 11:25–26: “and in this way all Israel will be saved”

- 1 The salvation of *Israel as a nation* (dispensationalism: Walvoord, Pentecost, Ladd, Hodge, Murray, Venema)
2. The salvation of *elect Jews and Gentiles* who are the new Israel (Calvin)
3. The salvation of the *total number of the elect among the people of Israel* (Anthony Hoekema, Herman Bavinck, Louis Berkhof, William Hendriksen, Herman Ridderbos, O. Palmer Robertson)

Here are the two important points to remember:

1. *There is only one way of salvation for Jew and Gentile alike:* faith in response to the preaching of the gospel (Rom. 10:1–17). (This contradicts “two covenant theology,” which teaches that one covenant is unique to Israel, and another different covenant is unique to the Gentile nations.)
2. Christian believers must never lose their enthusiasm for *preaching the gospel to Jewish people*.

Remember: Mosaic Judaism (Old Testament faith and obedience) and Rabbinic / Talmudic Judaism are two different religions

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Read Matthew 21:33–46