

# The Return of Israel and Christian Zionism

By

Orlando Mostert  
Kingdomvision.co.za

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**The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 is hailed by all prophecy writers and preachers as the dramatic fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy (36:24) that the Lord will gather Israel from the nations and restore them to their land. This historic happening is for most evangelicals the primary sign that we are now living in the end times and that the battle of Armageddon described a few chapters later by Ezekiel (Chapters 38&39) is soon to take place but will be preceded by the Rapture of the saints in the Second Coming of Christ. Truly exciting times to be alive! But is this so? Here is the alternate historically and prophetically accurate interpretation: Israel indeed returned to the land and became a nation again but it was fulfilled in 143 BC and 103 BC just as Ezekiel 4:1-6 predicted after a period of 390 and 40 years. We are now already in the Kingdom Age, Jesus is now Lord and His Kingdom is spreading rapidly throughout the world. The evangelical church has lost its Kingdom vision and centered it instead on a Jewish state that is headed for collapse!**

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Ezekiel was one of the captured Jews, along with Daniel, taken by King Nebuchadnezzar in 604 BC when he attacked the Kingdom of Judah. Previously in 721 BC the Assyrians had taken the northern kingdom of Israel into captivity. This was truly a time of desolation for the Jews. In 586 BC the remnants of the Jews revolted against Babylon hoping that the Lord would save the remnant of Israel but the armies of Babylon destroyed what remained of Jerusalem, the Temple and the walls of the city.

In the midst of this national catastrophe the two prophets of the Babylonian exile, Ezekiel and Daniel turned in prayer and supplication to the Lord to try to get some word from God as to why this great tragedy upon their people and what lies ahead for them as a people. Both of them received incredible prophecies regarding the restoration Israel to their land and the coming of the Messiah that would bring about a universal Kingdom of righteousness fulfilling the prophecies of the Lord for His people. All was not lost!

Critical to both their prophetic writings were clear signs the Lord gave them to watch out for and even more crucially clear dates when these things would take place. Daniel already knew from the writings of Jeremiah that their captivity in Babylon would be 70 years long (Dan.9:2) But then the Lord told him that it would take 70 weeks or 490 years (Dan. 9:24-27) before the coming of the Messiah and His kingdom and that during this period Jerusalem would be rebuilt as well as the temple and that there would be a series of 4 intervening kingdoms starting with Babylon until the coming of the Kingdom of the Messiah. This Messianic kingdom he saw as a rock carved out of a mountain and striking the 4th world empire (Rome) and then growing and growing until it filled the earth.

Ezekiel also had a dramatic word from the Lord with regard to the return of Israel back to their land. In Chapter 36:18-19 the Lord says:

*"Wherefore I poured out my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed on the land and for their idols where-with they had polluted it; and I scattered them among the heathen and they were dispersed through the countries..."*

But then a few verses later in 36:24 the Lord makes the wonderful promise;

*"For I will take you from among the heathen and gather you out of all the countries and bring you into your own land"*

But not only will they go back to the land it will once again be **their land**. In addition He also promised to:

*"...sprinkle clean water upon you and ...from all your idols I will cleanse you...and a new heart will I put in you and a new spirit will put in you..."*

The critical question is: **When was this to happen?**

Modern day prophecy writers say it was only to happen 2500 years later starting in 1948 with the establishment of the modern state of Israel. In contradiction to thousands of prophecy books and thousands of prophetic sermons I am telling you that interpretation is wrong! I am going to show you that Ezekiel was prophesying the same 500 year historical period that Daniel was.

The key to understanding the date for the restoration of Israel is Ezekiel 4:1-8. The prophecy of 390 years and 40 years. Not one prophecy book you have read will touch this explicit date prophecy because if they do it will show that Israel became a nation again in 143 BC and the monarchy restored 40 years later in 103 BC! Not 1948!

## The History of the Return

In order to understand the historical fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy we need to go back into history to see how wonderfully our Lord is in control of all history. He rules over all and appoints rulers to do His bidding. This is dramatically shown by Isaiah's prophecy of Israel's future captivity and return to the land (Isaiah 11:11) and the name of the King who the Lord would raise up to do this deed of release: Cyrus the Great (Isaiah 45). This prophetic fulfillment is important to the point that I am making.

Isaiah 11:11-12 says: *"and it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left...and he shall set up an ensign for the nations and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel and shall gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."*

In verse 16 he says, *"and there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people...like it was in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt."*

So Isaiah says that there will be a second gathering and return to the land. The first was when the Lord delivered them out of bondage in Egypt to return them to the promised land (Joseph made his children promise that they would take his embalmed corpse back to the land, when they return, for burial!). The second return would be some time in the future still to come when once again they would be in bondage to a great power.. Remember that Isaiah was prophesying sometime between 740 BC and 701 BC. The Assyrians had already taken Northern Israel into captivity in 721 BC. Isaiah had seen this happen in his time. But the southern Kingdom of Judah was also to go into captivity which happened in 604 BC when Babylon captured Jerusalem. Now comes the amazing part: In Isaiah 45 the Lord named a pagan king by name, Cyrus, and said that this Cyrus would be His instrument to release Israel so that they could return the second time to the land of Israel. This prophecy regarding Cyrus was 200 years before he was born! Cyrus became ruler of Babylon in 536 BC and after seeing the prophecies of Isaiah regarding himself, he released the Jews from their captivity in 533 BC.

Here is the important point: There are only two returns to the land prophesied in scripture. There is no third return in 1948! The first return was after Jacob and his clan moved from the promised land to Egypt and were delivered from Egypt with great miracles to go back to the promised land. The second return prophesied by Isaiah was to be facilitated by a king Cyrus whose name he prophesied 200 years before he was born!

## The Prophecy of Jeremiah

To accurately predict the 390 year prophecy of Ezekiel 4:1-6 regarding the return and re-establishment of the kingdom of Israel we need to have a starting date. The starting date is found in the prophecy of Jeremiah 29:10:

*"For thus saith the Lord, that after seventy years be accomplished in Babylon I will visit you and perform my good word to you in causing you to return to this place."*

Daniel who with Ezekiel was captured in the battle of 604 BC by the Babylonians knew of Jeremiah's prophecy (Dan.9:2) and as the 70 years captivity drew to a close he started in earnest prayer for the deliverance of Israel from captivity. Ezekiel also knew of this Jeremiah prophecy. He and Daniel knew that 533 BC would be the year that the Jews would leave Babylon and return to the promised land to rebuild the temple and the city of Jerusalem. But returning to the land is one thing, rebuilding the nation and achieving independence as a nation again would be a very difficult task as the Lord told Ezekiel in 4:1-8.

## Ezekiel's 390 and 40 year timeline to Israel's Independence

I mentioned earlier the fascinating word of the Lord to Ezekiel in Chapter 4:1-8. In verses 4-6 the Lord tells Ezekiel:

*"Moreover lie thou upon thy left side and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it; according to the number of days that thou shalt lie upon it, thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have appointed the years of their iniquity to be unto thee a number of days, even three hundred and ninety days; so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And again when thou hast accomplished these, thou shalt lie on thy right side and shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah, forty days; **each day for a year**, have I appointed it unto you."*

In verses 1-3 the Lord tells Ezekiel to lay siege to Jerusalem and in fact the whole chapter gives us the idea that this has to do with the struggles of Jerusalem and its wars. He was to lay siege to it to signify its coming struggles. He was to eat food cooked with dung to signify the troubled times to come. Not one Bible commentary that I have read knows what to do with these verses. God is clearly talking about a period of 390 years associated with Israel and 40 years associated with Judah. Commentators look to the past history of Judah and Northern Israel to find periods of iniquity but Northern Israel only lasted about 210 years from Jeroboam to the Assyrian captivity and certainly the iniquities of the Kingdom of Judah were a lot longer than 40 years. But the mistake they make is to look to the past of Israel instead of to its future. Ezekiel was the prophet of the return of Israel to its land. He was giving God's prophetic time line for the retaking of the land in troublesome times! So I searched the future...

Here is what I did: I added 390 years to 533 BC and came to 143 BC and then added another 40 years to 143 BC and came to 103 BC, and then asked myself, Did anything important happen to the Jews in 143 BC and 103 BC.? The answer to that I knew from history would have to be found during the wars of the Maccabees as these dates fall in those times. To get the answer I looked up the Maccabees in my "New Unger's Bible Dictionary". The answer was astounding, something I had never seen in any prophetic books on the subject of Israel's return!

On page 795 of Unger's Bible Dictionary in the article on the Maccabees under "Simon" (Maccabee) it states..."Simon made overtures to Demetrius 11, in 143 BC and the independence of the Jews was at length formally recognized. The long struggle was now triumphantly ended and it remained only to reap the fruits of victory."

The war for independence fought by the Jews against Syria which started in 167 BC with the "Abomination of Desolation" prophesied by Daniel and fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes on 25 December 167 BC had finally won them their independence as a nation. A map on page 794 is titled "Kingdom of the Maccabees at its greatest extent" (100 BC.) The map shows an Israeli state larger in extent than what David ruled! But what happened in 103 BC.?

Under the heading "Aristobulus" on page 795 it states; "Aristobulus succeeded his father John Hyrcanus as high priest and governor (his father reigned from 135 BC to 104 BC). He was the first since the captivity to assume the title of king."

I had speculated that the 390 year and 40 year prophecy of Ezekiel 4:1-6 had something to do with the return of Israel to the land. Using the Bible's own chronology of a 70 year captivity in Babylon, then I assumed something important prophetically had happened in 143 BC and 103 BC. Imagine my delight when I discovered that those were the dates when Israel achieved its independence and when it had its first crowned king since 604 BC. A 500 year struggle to regain an independent kingdom. And just as the Lord had predicted, He would cure them of idolatry forever...the zealous Maccabees destroyed all idols in Israel, re-consecrated the temple and the priesthood and taught the law to all the nation. The nation, Jerusalem, the people and the Temple were being prepared for the coming of the Messiah!

### **The Abomination of Desolation**

Let me just digress here a moment for those of you who do not know the history of this period to also see how the remarkable prophecy of Daniel 12 regarding the "abomination of desolation" was fulfilled during this time and how it led to the Jewish independence of 143 BC.

After the Chaldean empire was overtaken by the Persians the Israelites were allowed to return to Palestine to rebuild Jerusalem and their Temple. After 200 years the Persians in turn were conquered by Alexander the Great. Upon his death his vast empire was divided into four separate kingdoms by his four principal generals (as prophesied by Daniel). Ptolemy ruled Egypt and Seleucus ruled Syria. At first Palestine fell under the Ptolemy Pharaohs but eventually Syria invaded Egypt under Antiochus Epiphanes' father and he annexed Palestine into the Seleucid empire of Syria. Antiochus hated the Jewish religion and was a mad despot. Antiochus called himself "Epiphanies" meaning "the god who appears or reveals himself". This gives you an idea of what a madman this was. He decided he needed to Hellenize all of Palestine to integrate it fully

into his empire and so forbade the worship of Yahweh in Jerusalem and built temples to Zeus forcing the people to sacrifice to the gods of Greece. Up to this time the reforms that Ezra the scribe had introduced to the people who emigrated out of Babylon had started to take hold among the Israelites. The temple had been rebuilt, the priesthood restored, the law was taught by the scribes and a strong movement calling itself the Chasidim or the Pious had been formed to see that the Law was being observed. As the Lord had promised to Ezekiel the time had come that He would rid Israel of their love of idols.

But Antiochus would have none of this and was determined to make good Greeks out of this lot and so introduced laws that forbade circumcision, Sabbath keeping, the reading of the Torah or sacrifices to Yahweh. Then the ultimate sacrilege was committed. On 15<sup>th</sup> December 167 BC a pagan altar was built on the great altar of the Jerusalem temple and on the 25<sup>th</sup> December the first sacrifice was made to Zeus; a pig! This was the "abomination that causes desolation" prophesied by Daniel. This stupid sacrilegious act by Antiochus was to cause an uprising among the Jews that was to eventually lead to their own independent state and their first king as prophesied by Ezekiel 4:1-8.

### **The Maccabean Revolt**

Mattathias a priest and his five sons, disgusted at the sacrilege of the Temple started a revolt against the Syrian overlords ruling Palestine. Mattathias was called "maccabee" the hammer! He handed control of the revolt to his five sons; Simon, John, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan. Simon was the war counsellor and Judas the first general. Many pious Jews joined the revolt with the Maccabee sons and it took 1229 days until 164 BC to recapture the Temple Mount and cleanse the Temple. It then took another 1335 days of fighting until 160 BC to take full control of Jerusalem.

The prophecy of Daniel 12:11-12 had been fulfilled: "*And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away and the abomination that maketh desolate shall be set up, shall be a thousand, two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred, five and thirty days.*"

But this was not the end of the wars. They were to continue for more than 20 years under the different brothers until finally in 143 BC under the leadership of the last surviving brother, Simon, victory was secured that forced the Syrians to finally grant independence to Israel. This great year of victory was recorded in 1 Maccabees 13:41-42:

*"Thus the yoke of the heathen was taken away from Israel in the hundred and seventieth year. Then the people of Israel began to write in their instruments and their contracts, In the first year of Simon the High Priest, the governor and leader of the Jews".*

History tells us that the year celebrated here was 143 BC but their coins and written on their contracts and documents at the time listed it as year 1 of Israel's independence.! 390 years after the exodus from Babylon!

## Valley of Dry Bones

Ezekiel sees his vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezekiel 37), a vision of the death of Israel, and God asks him, "Can these bones live?" Is it possible to restore the nation, the vision and the promises? Ezekiel does not think so. But the Lord breathes on the bones and then puts on flesh and the Lord tells Ezekiel this amazing prophecy (Ezekiel 37:11-)

*"Then he said unto me, Son of man these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold they say our bones are dried up and our hope is lost and we are clean cut off. Therefore prophecy and say unto them; Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Behold I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, oh my people and I will cause you to come into the land of Israel."*

Almost 500 years after the Lord asked Ezekiel; "Can these bones live?" The answer of history was an emphatic yes! By 100 BC the people had been restored to the land, the extent of the kingdom was larger than in David's times, the temple and priesthood and monarchy had been restored. From national death to national renewed life, the word of the Lord had been true. What lay ahead though was the prophecy of Ezekiel 38 and 39, the invasion of the land by Gog and his armies while they dwelt in peace in un-walled villages. I will not handle that issue here as I have a separate article on the topic of Gog and Armageddon. Let me say however for those that have not read the article, that in keeping with my interpretation of the fulfillment of Ezekiel 36 by 103 BC, the invasion of Israel by Gog was also historically fulfilled by the invasion of 37 BC and the final destruction of true Israel's enemies in 70 AD with the destruction of Jerusalem, fulfilled all the historical prophecies of Ezekiel 38 and 39. There is therefore no Russian invasion of Israel coming because the Israeli state founded in 1948 was not a fulfillment of the prophecy of Ezekiel 36:24 and Isaiah 11:11!

### Objection!

Popular prophecy writers like Hal Lindsay are aware of the return of Israel to their land after the Babylonian captivity (but they totally ignore the time prophecy of Ezekiel 4:1-6 of 390 years and 40 years). But Hal Lindsey insists that 1948 is the true date for the gathering of Israel to the land for two reasons: it had to take place "in the latter days" (Ez.38:16) and Israel was to be gathered "out of all nations" and that could not apply to the return from the Babylonian captivity. (Ch. 4 of Late Great Planet Earth)

### Answer

The answer as always is to be found in scripture. Always let scripture interpret scripture! Jeremiah 30:24 describes the period after the Babylonian captivity as "the latter days". In addition the entire idea of "the last days" or the

"end times" as understood by all the New Testament writers was the time period of "this generation" which was their generation which was to see the fulfillment of the prophecies of the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem. Thus the period from 33 AD to 70 AD (the destruction of Jerusalem) was "the end times" (see my article "Matthew 24 and the End Times"). Not 1948!

As for Israel to come out of all nations and to be gathered into their land, this is true! But right after Jeremiah says in verse 29:10 that the captivity would last 70 years then several verses later in verse 14 he says that "...I will turn your captivity and gather you from all the nations whither I have driven you..." Historically this actually happened. After the Maccabees reestablished the Kingdom of Judea, Jews who had strong communities all over the Mediterranean world went back to Israel. Objections answered!

### Scriptural Objection to 1948

Those of you with spiritual perception understand the difference between works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit. They can often time look the same, but we know that unless the Lord builds the house and that house is built on the rock of His Word it will not stand. On the basis of Deuteronomy 30:1-3 (and other scriptures like Neh.1:8-9) I can safely declare that the 1948 establishment of the nation of Israel was not the doing of the Lord!

*"It shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse...and you shall call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God drives you, **and you shall return to the Lord your God and obey His voice... then the Lord your God will bring you back from captivity...and gather you again from all the nations.**" (Deut. 30:1-3)*

The Jews who came out of captivity and reestablished the independent nation of Israel in 143 BC were zealous for the Lord and His Word. They reestablished the Temple worship and sacrifices, established again the priesthood, destroyed idols in the land and kept the law of the Lord. That is why they qualify as the gathering of the people by the Lord from the nations according to Deuteronomy 30!

The current nation of Israel was not established in righteousness or as a result of national repentance or turning to the Lord. They are in fact in constant rebellion against the Word of the Lord. They do not practice the Law of Moses and they persecute those who preach the Word and they are one of the few countries in the world where you can be imprisoned for preaching the Gospel. There is no Godly blessing on that nation as its existence is maintained by force and generous billions in subsidies from American and German taxpayers. God is no respecter of persons! Unless they repent and turn to Jesus as Lord they will be counted among the goat nations. I praise the Lord for any Jew who comes to repentance and I encourage anyone praying for Israel as we must preach the Gospel to all nations including those who reject the Gospel like Israel. But evangelicals must get back to the Word! There is no favoritism with the Lord on the basis of race or DNA! And that issue we must now address...

# The Problems with Christian Zionism

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**Christian Zionism is the belief that the Jews of today are the lineal descendents of Abraham and the heirs of the blessings of the covenant that the Lord made with him. As such they have a separate covenant with God which includes the possession of the land of Palestine, the bringing in of the Kingdom of God on earth through the reestablishment of the throne of David in Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem, thus all nations of the earth will be blessed through them. This will be accomplished after the Lord takes the Church in the Rapture and works through the Jews to bring in His Kingdom on earth during the last days of the 7 year Great Tribulation. This teaching is totally unscriptural!**

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Christian Zionism is the commonly held view among the vast majority of evangelical Christians and any preacher in any one of the major evangelical churches who holds an alternate view will have serious problems with his congregation and his head office. Since the founding of the state of Israel in 1948 it is surely the foolhardy who would doubt the clear evidence of his eyes and clear promises of scripture. Who could possibly deny that miraculously after 2000 years Jews are gathered from all over the world into their own Israel nation with Jerusalem as the capital, Hebrew is once again spoken in Palestine and the deserts are blooming. Be warned... looks can be deceiving!

But is this really the Lord's doing or are we evangelicals, like blind old Isaac, unaware that Jacob was making out to be Esau in order to steal Esau's birthright blessing; is Esau not now fooling us making out he is Jacob (Israel) in order to steal back the birthright blessing? Malachi 1: 3-4 says:

*"And I hated Esau and laid his mountains and his heritage waste...wherefore Edom says, we are impoverished but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, they shall build but I will throw down and they shall call them the border of wickedness and the people against whom the Lord has indignation forever."*

Watch out Church! Malachi prophecies that descendents of Abraham (Edomites, descendants of Esau) are going to possess the promised land and rebuild the waste places calling it their right, but the Lord is going to throw them out! You need to discern this very carefully in the spirit! The reason is that there are three very obvious problems with Christian Zionism:

- It is not historically accurate
- It is not scriptural
- It leads the Church into strategic dead-end.

In the previous section of this article I have given you the incredible historical fulfillment to the prophecy of Ezekiel and Isaiah that the Lord would bring Israel out from all the nations where He drove them and restore their nation, the temple and priesthood and that they would dwell safely in their own land again. It took 400 years of struggle to fulfill but the 390 year and 40 year prediction of Ez. 4:1-6 happened exactly as prophesied. Most preachers don't study history, they just read other people's prophecy books and accept it as gospel truth. So historically the 1948 state of Israel is not the fulfillment of Ez.36:24!

## What does scripture say of the Jews?

But the real issue is what does scripture say about the claims of Christian Zionism? More specifically in this New Testament era of the New Covenant made in Christ's own blood, **is it still possible that anyone can possibly claim to be specially blessed of the Lord purely on the basis of their race and genetic makeup even though they outright reject the Lordship of Jesus Christ?**

That in actual fact is the claim of Christian Zionists today, that there are a special group of people on the earth today who purely on the basis of their race and regardless of their rejection of Jesus Christ have a special covenant relationship of blessing from God!

Here is the cardinal mistake that the evangelical preachers are making and that Paul warned the Church of in his day: *"...for they are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are of the seed of Abraham are they all children...they which are the children of the flesh these are not the children of God.."* (Rom.9:6-8).

Paul says there are two Israel's. He says that just because you are a Jew does not make you a partaker of Abraham's covenant. He emphasizes this again in Galatians 3:7-9:

*"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith the same are the children of Abraham...so then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."* Meaning those who are of Abraham's faith... not race are blessed! In Romans 2 Paul says, "he is not a Jew who is one outwardly (circumcision)...but he is a Jew who is one inwardly (circumcision of the heart)."

Christian Zionists deny these scriptures. They contend that the Jews in Israel today are blessed of God and are partakers of Abraham's blessing purely on the basis of their race. Furthermore if we bless these Israeli's then the Lord will bless us (that is part of Abraham's blessing, whoever blesses him the Lord will bless). Furthermore the land that the Lord promised Abraham has now been passed on to the Jews of today purely because they are the inheritors of Abraham's blessing through their racial connection. This is a gospel of race not of grace it denies the New Covenant made in Christ's own blood as the basis of God's favor to man. It is therefore another gospel and not the gospel of grace and faith!

Christian Zionists must face another problem of race.

The problem is this. Through thousands of years there have been so many other races of people who have converted into Judaism that the whole idea of a genetic race connection of the present day Jews to Abraham is ludicrous. Only about 42,000 racial Israelites returned to Judah from Babylon. The land was full of other races. For hundreds of years anybody who lived in Judea was called a Jew (a resident of Judea). John Hyrcanus in 125 BC forced the circumcision and conversion of the Edomites in southern Judea and they became "Jews". In about 740 AD the entire Kingdom of the Khazars in the Caucasus region converted to Judaism, took on Jewish names and developed the Yiddish form of Hebrew; they are the forebears of most of today's Ashkenazi Jews. To try to maintain that the modern Jews of today have some genetic link thousands of years later to Abraham and on the basis of this tenuous, questionable link, you want to base a whole theology of racial blessing?... a whole eschatology of the Kingdom on a myth? Paul warned Titus about "Jewish fables" (Titus 1:14) He told Timothy (1 Tim.1:4) the same thing warning him against "fables and endless genealogies". The Church is still infected by these Jewish fables about how your genealogy qualifies you to be a special heir to Abraham's covenant promises!

## Dual Covenant Theology

The teaching espoused by prophecy preachers today that the covenant relationship that the Lord had with the Jews which began with Abraham is still applicable today to his racial, genetic descendants...and therefore the Jews have the right to possess the land of Palestine and call it Israel. This is called Dual Covenant Theology. One covenant with the Jews based on race and the New Covenant with the Church based on faith. In fact they expect other aspects of this covenant to be fulfilled as well, including rebuilding the Temple, resumption of sacrifices, the nations to be blessed through Israel etc.

On the face of it this belief seems so spiritual, so biblical! Who can possibly be against this except anti-Semites? But let me take you further down the road of Dual Covenant Theology and see where it leads to and see if you don't agree with me...it is in actual fact heresy against the gospel of Jesus Christ and a replacement to the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom because it promises the blessings of Abraham on the basis of race and not faith in Christ.

The chief proponent of Dual Covenant theology in America is John Hagee the pastor of a Houston mega-church and the national leader of CUFI (Christians United for Israel). John Hagee (you may have heard on TBN or read one of his many books) actually puts into words what the only logical conclusion you can come to the moment you believe there are two covenants in operation right now; one covenant with the Jews based on their race and another covenant with the gentiles based on faith in Christ.

Here is a direct quote of John Hagee on You Tube promoting his new book. "In Defense of Israel":  
 "In Defense of Israel will shape Christian Theology...it will also prove that Jesus did not come to earth to be the Messiah...since Jesus refused by word and deed to claim to be the Messiah, how can the Jews be blamed for

rejecting what was never offered." There is more...

"There are right now Jewish people on this earth who have a powerful and special relationship with God ...let us put an end to the Christian chatter that all Jews are lost and can't be in the will of God until they convert to Christianity" ("Should Christian Support Israel", Hagee, p.124,125,127)

In an article in the Houston Chronicle of April 30, 1988 (Hagee has been teaching this heresy for a long time!) he is quoted as saying:

"I'm not trying to convert the Jewish people to the Christian faith. In fact trying to convert Jews is a waste of time...The Jewish person who has his roots in Judaism is not going to convert to Christianity. They have a faith structure. Everyone else whether Buddhist or Baha'I needs to believe in Jesus, but not Jews. Jews already have a covenant with God which has never been replaced by Christianity."

There is lots more where this came from, but you get the idea of where Dual Covenant theology leads you. But how did an evangelical preacher like Hagee get to such a clearly unscriptural teaching? Actually quiet easily and logically from the following statement from his website:

*"Our Commitment to Israel*

*We believe in the promises of Genesis 12:3 regarding the Jewish people and the nation of Israel. We believe that this is an eternal covenant between God and the seed of Abraham to which God is faithful."*

It seems an uplifting and scriptural statement does it not? Until you ask the question: "Yes, but with which seed of Abraham does God have an eternal covenant with? The spiritual seed or the genetic seed?"

But Hagee is actually correct in making the further conclusion about the other aspects of that covenant, including salvation. If it is an eternal covenant to the racial descendants of Abraham (the Jews of today) and therefore still in operation, then not only can they claim the land of Palestine back, but the promises of salvation blessings under that covenant are also still in effect! **Therefore today's Jews can have a relationship with God apart from faith in Jesus Christ just as John Hagee claims.** Can you see where Dual Covenant Theology ends up?

But regardless of what Hagee and the Christian Zionists say this is what the Bible says:

*"And if you be Christ's then are you Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise" (Gal.3:29)*

Can scripture be any clearer? Your race does not qualify you to be an heir and inheritor of Abraham's covenant promises and that includes "the promised land". Only faith qualifies you to be his seed...and that means faith in Jesus Christ! So let's make this very clear:

**If you believe that the Jews of today have inherited the land of Palestine because they are heirs of Abraham by race and do not need to be heirs of Abraham through faith in Christ, then you are preaching another gospel and you need to get back to sound Biblical evangelical principles...don't judge by sight, judge by what the Word of God says!**

Let's get back to a sound scriptural position that reflects the gospel, prophecy and historical facts:

- The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 was not a fulfillment of Ez.36:24 as that promised return already happened in 143 BC with the re-establishment of the independent state of Judea and the monarchy in 103 BC as prophesied by Ez. 4:1-6.
- The covenant promises to Abraham are only applicable to his true heirs, those of faith. (Gal.3:29)
- The Jewish return to Palestine in 1948 was not a regathering by the Lord as it did not fulfill the requirements of Deut. 30:1-3 that it be accompanied with repentance and a return to the Lord. The return of 143 BC was accompanied with repentance and a return to the Lord.
- Christian Zionism of today is a racist theology based on blessings to people on the basis of their genetics and is totally incompatible with the entire gospel as preached by the apostles.
- In actual fact the Jewish people of today have no real genetic link in any case to Abraham or Jacob because of the many proselytes from other races who became Jews through the centuries. This is especially true of Ashkenazi Jews.

### **All Israel Shall be Saved**

This will then obviously lead to the question that Paul raises and answers in the 11th chapter of Romans:

**“Has God cast away his people?”** (Rom.11:1)

To which he immediately declares emphatically, No! and his first proof is that he himself is a Jew and has been saved. And then he goes into a lengthy explanation of the tree of Israel and the root and branches being cut off and others grafted on and then he concludes with this incredible statement in verse 26: **“...and so all Israel shall be saved”**. Not only has God not cast away His people but in actual fact all of Israel will be saved!

It is here where the Christian Zionists miss the entire point of Romans 11. They start with verse 1 to say, “See God has not cast Israel away and He still has a plan for the Jews!” That is right, the Lord has a plan for the Jews but that plan is for them to be grafted back into the tree, not have a separate tree! That plan has this indisputable result...”and so all Israel shall be saved”. But in the theology of Christian Zionists they teach Jews = Israel. So if all Israel is to be saved they are looking for some event in the supposed Great Tribulation which will cause all the Jews to be saved. But what about the Jews of the last 2000 years? Surely according to this interpretation they must also be saved if “all Israel is to be saved”? (John Hagee probably believes they are saved) Can you see that this just does not work at all. Paul is not teaching all Jews will be saved, that's the false doctrine of Universalism.

To understand that phrase you need to read the phrase immediately before it and it will all become clear what Paul means “...and so all Israel shall be saved”. I am going to drop the verse division and just write it in one sentence as it was meant to be read; **“...until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in and so all Israel shall be saved.”** Rom.11:25-26).

Can you see what Paul is saying; Only when the Gentiles come to salvation can you say that all of Israel has been saved! Why is that? Because throughout his epistle to both the Galatians and Romans he has been explaining that there is and only has been one Israel through all the ages: the people of faith! This tree called Israel is rooted in Abraham but only those who like Abraham had faith in the Lord are part of this tree called Israel. Branches are cut off if they do not produce fruit; Ishmael was cut off, Esau was cut off, even though they were genetic children of Abraham, but that counts for nothing. But what about the Jews? Paul says no, they have not been thrown away, and he uses himself as an example. The gospel went first to the Jews like him and those who believed like he did were saved and grafted back into the true tree of Israel. That is God's plan for the Jews and all nations.

You see Paul also knew of the other promises of the covenant to Jacob when he was renamed Israel: “And God said unto him...a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee.” (Gen:35:11) God's plan was never intended for just one nation. Israel was to be a “company of nations”. That is what Paul meant that when the Gentiles also come into the covenant relationship then indeed all Israel will be saved and not just the Jews. We are to go forth and disciple the nations and graft them into this tree called the Israel of God that they also become heirs of Abraham's covenant blessings.

### **The Promised Land is not in Palestine**

The promised land is no longer a small dry dusty piece of land in the Middle East and neither was it to be Israel's intended final place. The prophet Nathan told David after he had established the kingdom of Israel, “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...” (2 Sam. 7:10) meaning that they were not yet in the final promised land, they were still to move. The earth is the Lord's and He has given us dominion over all the works of His hands. This is our promised land inheritance as the Israel of God. Bring in the nations into the Kingdom and possess the earth...it belongs to us!

### **Strategic Dead End**

The evangelical church has lost the gospel of the Kingdom and replaced it with a gospel of race. To them the Jews will bring in the Kingdom, not the Church. They are looking to a nation in Palestine for end time miracles instead of discipling the nations. They are looking for a rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem instead of building the true Temple of the Lord, His Church. They are looking for a physical Jesus to sit in Jerusalem ruling the nations instead of manifesting the power and presence of Christ in the world today because He is in fact now ruling over all principalities and powers in both the heavenlies and on earth.

This is the legacy of Christian Zionism...we have given back to Esau the birthright inheritance so he can establish Zion through war, money and power politics. It's a strategic dead end for the Church diverting us from our calling to disciple the nations and bringing in the Kingdom through faith and the power of His Spirit.