

**The Israel of God: Who are they?**  
**Bible Study Notes**

***"And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd."***

**John 10:16**

Jesus is the true *Great Shepherd*; He knows His sheep and His sheep know Him, **John 10:14**. We are his people and the sheep of His pastures, **Psalms 100:3** and as there is only one Shepherd, there is also only one true fold.

As Jesus says, *"there will be one flock and one shepherd."* **John 10:16**. That is to say, there is one Church and one Head of that Church, the man Christ Jesus.

We hear a lot today about the Jews in the Middle East are God's true people and that God has a separate plan for the Jews and for the Church. We hear that the Church will be raptured away for seven (7) years and that Jerusalem will be rebuilt and the Jews will recommence the sacrificial system within the rebuilt temple.

Brethren, Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice for our sins, the curtain in the temple was torn from top to bottom at the crucifixion of Jesus. He caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and to this day, the nation of Israel has not had a sacrificial system or a temple for almost 2,000 years.

Why? Because it wasn't needed, the one true Lamb, was sacrificed for the sins of all; all who accept Him as Lord and Saviour.

The temple which God has on this earth is made up of His people, *'do you not know that your body is the temple of God'* as Paul admonishes us. There is no longer any need for a physical temple on this earth. So, this talk of a rebuilding of a temple in Jerusalem comes from a lack of studying the scriptures and understanding Bible prophecy.

***"And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom..."*** **Matt. 27:50,51**

***"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease..."*** **Dan. 9:27**

That therefore brings me to my main point and that is, God has only one flock, one people, one Church which comprises both the saints from the Old Testament Period and the saints from the New Testament Period. Persons such as Adam, Noah, Methuselah, and Job who were all non-Israelites, others like, Joseph, Judah, Aaron, Elisha, King David, who were all Israelites and those all over the world today who are all faithful servants of the Lord, both literal Israelite and non-Israelite.

All comprise God's true flock, His true Church. ***The Israel of God.***

Let us now go through a few Scriptures that we may identify and understand that God has only one people. Let us not be caught up with the lies of satan who would want us to think and believe otherwise.

### **A Woman in Bible prophecy:**

A woman in Bible prophecy represents a church, it can be God's faithful Church, or it can be an apostate church, one which has fallen away from the truth.

#### *Faithful Church:*

*"I have likened the daughter of Zion to a lovely and delicate woman."* **Jer. 6:2**

*"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.... This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church."* **Eph. 5:25,32**

*"For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."* **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinth. 11:2**

*"For I have heard a voice as of a woman in labour, the anguish as of her who brings forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion bewailing herself..."* **Jer.4:31**

*"Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God."* **Rev. 21:9**

#### *Apostate Church:*

*"Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury. And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities."* **Rev. 18:2-5**

*"And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication."* **Rev.17: 3,4**

*"Then the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans."* **Hosea 3:1**

In the above verses, we see the relationship between a woman and a church, a pure church and an apostate church.

Now that we have covered the above, we can now proceed to find out Who is the Israel of God.

In the days of Jesus, He came to preach the message of repentance that all may come to accept Him as Lord and Saviour for the kingdom of the Lord was at hand. He was the Messiah that was to come but many of the Israelites of that day did not receive Him. The Jews found themselves in a position where they confused the prophecies spoken of in the Old Testament about the coming of Jesus. There are many prophecies in the Old Testament which speak of Jesus coming the first time as a 'Lamb' and many which speak of Him coming as a 'Lion'. The Jews overlooked the prophecies of the Messiah coming the first time in favour of those which spoke of Him coming the second time in great glory and power, not knowing that He was to come meek and mild like a lamb led to the slaughter at His first coming. As a result, this led them to reject Him at His first advent (coming).

For example:

*"He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely, He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed." Isa. 53:3-5*

*"For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon will grow dark, and the stars will diminish their brightness. The LORD also will roar from Zion and utter His voice from Jerusalem. The heavens and earth will shake; But the LORD will be a shelter for His people and the strength of the children of Israel." Joel 3:14-16*

Notice that both prophecies point to Jesus' Coming, however one points to His first Coming while the other points to His second Coming.

Also notice that Joel tells us that at the Second Coming, the Lord will be a shelter for 'His people Israel', does that mean that God's people, Israel, refer to the literal country in the middle east? Of course not, as we will notice shortly.

As we have mentioned earlier, God will have one flock & one people. He does not and never has had two sets of people. After the Israelites rejected Jesus, the gospel was then to go out into the world by the Gentiles. The time for Israel as a nation was now over **Matt.23:37-39**. Their probation as it were was over. He was the chief capstone which the builders (Israel) rejected and as a result they were no longer to be used in the spreading of the good news.

*"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! **Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!" Matt. 23:37-39***

Jesus says that 'He is the way, the truth and the life' **John 14:6**, how can a nation reject Him and still be called a chosen people? It is not biblical.

When the Bible refers to Israel in prophecy it refers to God's people in general, hence why the Apostle Paul tells us that what was written in the past about literal Israel was written for our learning and example. **1<sup>st</sup> Corinth. 10:11**

## The Israel of God:

Seeing that Israel no longer represents the literal country, who does it represent?

Israel refers to all who have accepted Jesus as Lord and Saviour, from both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Those living before His first coming looked forward to the Saviour that was to come, by faith, represented by the sacrificial system in the tabernacle. They were to offer a sacrifice of an unblemished clean animal for the atonement of their sins, of which this animal represented Jesus.

Those living after His first coming look to a Saviour that came, also by faith. The Lamb that was sacrificed for the atonement of our sins.

The apostle Paul tells us clearly, ***"And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise"*** **Gal.3:29**

The literal nation of Israel yes were descendants of Abraham, but Paul tells us that all who are in Christ are Abraham's descendants and as a result we are heirs according to the promise.

Again, he says, ***"For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God."*** **Rom. 2:28-29**

Notice, one is not a Jew or Israelite by any outward means, one is an Israelite because they are circumcised in the heart. Putting off the old way of life and thinking and adopting a new way of thinking and living, which is in Christ Jesus. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Notice what Paul further goes on to say, ***"...even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe."*** **Rom. 3:22**

The righteousness of God is given to ALL who believe in Christ, whether literal Jew or Gentile.

***"But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but "In Isaac your seed shall be called." That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed."*** **Rom. 9:6-8**

Not all who claim to be from Israel, the literal country, are actual Israelites just because they are Abraham's seed. This is clear. Those who are Abraham's descendants are those who are in Christ, those who accept Him as Lord and Saviour, it is these who are children of the promise.

So, according to Paul, one can be a literal Israelite from the land of Israel but not be a true Israelite.

Also, read **Romans 11:17-26** and see what Paul goes onto to further say about God's true Israel. He finishes in **verse 25-26** by saying this, ***"For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so, all Israel will be saved."***

The literal nation of Israel has experienced a partial blindness for their rejection of Christ, until the full number of Gentiles (Biblical term for non-Israelites) has come in. He finishes with this very important part, 'and so, all Israel will be saved', that is, true Israel will be saved when the full number of Gentiles have been grafted into the true vine, Jesus. So, we see here that the Israel of God will comprise of both literal Jews and Gentiles.

There is no separate plan for Jews and non-Jews. Jesus has one fold, that is His Church.

***"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit." Eph. 2:19-22***

We see that God's fold or household, is built upon the foundation of the prophets and the apostles with everything being brought together by Jesus, who is *the chief cornerstone*. We are all spiritual stones from which the kingdom of God is built and made up.

There is no separate temple for Jews and Gentiles for God *"is no respecter of persons."*

God has one bride, which is His Church, all those faithful believers throughout all the ages.

***"Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." Rev. 21:9-10***

***"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.... This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Eph. 5:25,32***

Notice that God's Church is called *"The Holy Jerusalem"*, this is His bride. This is where all of us who have remained faithful and accepted Jesus as our Lord and Saviour will dwell, both Jew and Gentile. At that time, we will all be *"the Israel of God."*

This was the City in which Abraham and the other patriarchs looked forward to in their day. The City whose builder and maker was God, that is, the Heavenly City.

***"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Heb. 11:8-10***

Says Jesus in relation to this Holy Jerusalem, ***"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know." John 14:2-4***

The Bible tells us that this Holy Jerusalem will be comprised of elements from both the Church and the Tribes of Israel. There will be no separation, all of God's people will dwell in this city, therefore, the teaching that the Church will be raptured, and the Jews will rebuild a temple here on earth before Jesus returns is a lie from the devil Himself. Jesus will return to take us all, his faithful followers, to be with Him in Heaven when He destroys this earth and all the wicked in it and we shall dwell there with Him until after the 1000 years are completed, where He shall create the new earth and the Holy Jerusalem shall then descend upon the earth. Then the *'meek shall inherit the earth'* **Psalms 37:11** and we shall reign upon the new earth as priests with the Lord forever.



*"Also, she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.... Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" **Rev. 21:12,14***

*"...And they shall call you **The City of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.**" **Isa. 60:14***

### **Conclusion:**

I hope that this study has helped you to a better understanding of Bible truth and that you were blessed by it. Many Christians do not study their Bibles as they should and therefore, do not know the truth. They repeat what their pastors and these false teachers tell them without testing the spirits as God has admonished them to and thus are duped into believing the lies of the devil. The Bible tells us in **Rev. 12:17** and **Rev. 19:10**, that God's faithful followers living in these last days will understand Bible prophecy and will keep all His Commandments. If we do not understand who Israel refers to in Bible prophecy, then we will not be able to discern the many prophetic events that are happening all around us first mentioned in the Bible. Many today believe that because they were in the Church for a long time that they will be saved, and they don't need to study their Bibles, but that spirit of pride comes only from the devil himself. We are never too old to learn anything, do not be fooled into believing otherwise, stop reading the Bible just on the surface and dig deep into the scriptures and let the Holy Spirit guide and teach us. Let the Bible interpret itself and let us not try to put our own interpretation on the Word of God, for only the Holy Spirit can give us understanding to discern the Scriptures.

In closing, the Bible is clear, Jesus is the Good Shepherd, and He has one Church. He does not have a different plan for Jews and Gentiles. Let us search the Scriptures for the truth and serve God according to His Word. There will be no rapture of any Church before the Great time of trouble for when Jesus appears, He appears with His reward already with Him, both the righteous and the wicked shall receive what is due them and this world will be destroyed by fervent heat, **Rev. 22:12, 2<sup>nd</sup> Pet. 3:10** but all of this shall take place after the great tribulation and the seven last plagues.

God has other sheep out there in many churches where present truth is not being preached, where the leaders and members drink of the wine of Babylon **Rev. 17:2** and He is calling them out of those fallen apostate Churches into Present truth, so that they can be saved from the coming wrath which will be poured out upon the wicked, **Rev. 18:1-4**. Now is the opportune time, *'today if you hear His voice, harden not your hearts'*, seek out the truth from the Word of God and *'come out of Babylon.'*

*"But you, Israel, are My servant,  
Jacob whom I have chosen,  
The descendants of Abraham My friend.  
You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth,  
And called from its farthest regions,  
And said to you,  
'You are My servant,  
I have chosen you and have not cast you away."  
**Isa. 41:8***