

**ISRAEL**  
Jeremiah 51:5  
By Raymond White

Who owns the land of Israel? The Jews do. God gave them that land. God made this planet so he has the right to give it to who ever he wants.

*1 Chronicles 16:18 Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance.*

*Psalms 105:8 He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. :9 Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; :10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant; :11 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance:*

**[1] JEWISH DESTINY**

Why are there always Jews? Hitler couldn't kill them off, the Inquisition couldn't, the Romans, Babylonians, and Assyrians, each in their turn had their shot at eliminating the Jews. All other ancient peoples are gone, social extinction, their survivors morphing into different societies and cultures (e.g., Medes became today's Kurds). But the Jews are still here, *only* the Jews, and no one else. Why? Because God wants them here. But *why?*

*Psalms 108:8 Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver.*

It is the Jews who taught the world law and civility, and still do today. It is their divine destiny, they can't escape it any more than Jonah could escape his trip to Nineveh. And it is the reason that Jesus Christ is a Jew.

*Isaiah 11:11 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, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.*

The first time the Jews returned to Israel was at Persia's invitation. The second time was at the U.N.'s invitation in 1947. And they returned to Israel from all over the world including the "islands of the sea" which includes the western hemisphere, America.

*Isaiah 27:6 He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.*

Consider what the Jews have done for the world: (1) They gave us a legal system that promotes justice everywhere. (2) They gave us a real faith, a rational hope that there really is a God and an afterlife. And (3) they gave us our messiah. Though they don't

claim credit for that, they deserve it. The Jews, far more than any other people, have filled the face of the world with fruit. Give credit where credit's due.

***Isaiah 43:1** But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. :2 When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. :3 For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. :4 Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.*

This text makes it pretty clear that Israel enjoys God's special protection, even if God has to sacrifice other nations.

***Isaiah 49:14** But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. :15 Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.*

***Isaiah 49:23** ...they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.*

Some Christians believe that because Jews do not believe in Jesus that God has cut them off. This verse argues against that. Jews are still waiting for their messiah, and for that, God accepts them.

***Isaiah 50:1** Thus saith the LORD, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement? ...for your transgressions is your mother put away. :2 Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem?*

This verse is confusing, very back and forth. I think it may mean this: First, I won't divorce you, actually, your mother. Second, but you divorced me. Third, but you can't divorce me, I annul your divorce.

You were warned. When I called you to repentance, why did none of you "no man" respond? I can still save you.

***Isaiah 54:7** For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. :8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer. :9 For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee :10 For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.*

If God will damn the Jews, then he will again destroy the world by flood which he has sworn he will never do. That's definite. Maybe this is why God chose the Jews for the atonement, because they are the one people that God would forgive no matter what.

**Jeremiah 7:6** *If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt. :7 Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your father, for ever and ever.*

**Jeremiah 12:15** *And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I will return, and have compassion on them, and will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land.*

**Jeremiah 16:14** *Therefore, behold, the days come saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; :15 But, The LORD liveth, that brought the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.*

I think this is two different returns: from Babylon, and much later from the Roman conquest to modern Israel.

**Jeremiah 23:8** *But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.*

**Jeremiah 30:10** *Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid.*

Not only will they return, but they will be afraid of no one. Not even Iranian nukes.

**Jeremiah 31:8** *Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither.*

**Jeremiah 31:37** *If those ordinances [sun, moon, etc.] depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. :37 Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measure, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.*

The only way God will break his promise to Israel is if the sun and the moon vanish and if the universe can be measured. In other words, God's promise to Israel is rock solid.

**Jeremiah 46:27** *But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel: for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be in rest and at ease, and none shall make him afraid.*

None shall make him afraid? How about the Romans? In A.D. 70, General Titus and the 10<sup>th</sup> Roman Legion laid siege to and destroyed Jerusalem. That was certainly something to be afraid of.

**Jeremiah 50:5** *They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.*

God's covenant with Israel has indeed been perpetual. Not the Romans, nor the inquisitors, nor the Nazis could stamp it out. Maybe now, 2000 years later, the world will see just how perpetual God's covenant with Israel is.

☛ **Jeremiah 51:5** *For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the LORD of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.*

For those of you who think that crucifying Jesus somehow nullified God's covenant with Israel, you are wrong. This verse is adamant: *though their land was filled with sin.* This verse speaks to both Israel and Judah, the two separate nations.

**Ezekiel 20:40** *For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land serve me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. :41 I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries where ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen.*

**Ezekiel 34:25** *And I will make with them a covenant of peace...:27 ...and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD...*

**Ezekiel 36:8** *But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. :9 For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown: :10 And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded: :24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you*

*into your own land. :35 This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden.*

While God is condemning all the surrounding nations, especially those that had a hand in Israel's downfall, God blesses Israel and promises their return.

***Amos 3:2** You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.*

***Micah 4:6** In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; **:7** And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation...**:10** ...thou shalt go even to Babylon; there shalt thou be delivered; there the LORD shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies. **:11** Now also many nations are gathered against thee... **:12** But they know not the thoughts of the LORD ...for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor.*

***Micah 7:15** According to the days of they coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvelous things. **:16** The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might...*

***Micah 7:20** Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.*

***Zephaniah 3:19** Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. **:20** At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD.*

***Zechariah 8:8** And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.*

***Zechariah 10:6** ...they shall be as though I had not cast them off...*

Zechariah and the other post-Diaspora prophets are particularly important because they are looking even further into the future, beyond even the Roman conquest and Israel's modern day return.

***Acts 1:6** ...Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? **:7** And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*

Good answer. Since the end of the world is linked to the destiny of Israel, we're always wondering, when? Jesus says here, don't worry about it.

*Acts 13:47 ...I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.*

*Romans 11:28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes.*

It is impossible for the Jews to be damned; they are elect. Why? Because if being enemies of God won't un-elect them, won't damn them, what else do you think could?

But maybe you think, "But I thought you have to have Christ to be saved." Who says the Jews don't have Christ? "But you have to believe in Christ to have Christ." That's not true. Small children don't believe in Christ because they're too young to believe in anything. But they have Christ's protection, they're saved and their childish ignorance has nothing to do with it. Christ saves whoever he wants. And God has made a covenant with the Jews that he must keep no matter what.

## [2] THE 10 LOST TRIBES

Are we really to expect the return of some large lost group of people from who knows where? And we really expect them to know who they are? Mormons joke about this whenever the subject comes up. "Maybe they're under the ice cap," is a common well-worn joke that used to make Mormons snicker, but now the joke is just old.

True, we are committed theologically to the notion of the "return of the 10 tribes" which seems ludicrous given the intermixing of all ancient cultures over the few thousand years.

I want to introduce the possibility — *just the possibility* (to deflect charges of false doctrine) — that maybe, just maybe, Israel (the 10 tribes) has already returned and are not so lost as we imagine, that the Jews presently in that land of Israel *are* all 12 tribes. Don't cry heresy yet. This is not an outrageous idea and it has biblical foundations.

*1 Chronicles 9:3 And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim, and Manasseh.*

*2 Chronicles 10:17 But as for the children of Israel that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. 11:16 And after them [the Levites that headed south to Judah] out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers.*

My point: Maybe the Jews did in fact represent the entire 12 tribes. From all the tribes, there came to Judah people who wanted be where the LORD was; that is, with the temple and its priests. So that when the Jews returned in 1947, so did all the twelve tribes.

Some more evidence to consider:

**2 Chronicles 13:19** *And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and took cities from him, Bethel with the towns thereof, and Jeshanah with the towns thereof, and Ephraim with the towns thereof.*

So Judah took over a whole bunch of towns that were Ephraim and those towns of Israel and their citizens became and remained property of Judah.

**2 Chronicles 15:9** *And he [king Asa] gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the LORD his God was with him.*

God fearing Israelites came from all the tribes to Judah because they wanted the true God. Thus we have a major migration from the God-rejecting Israel in the north to the Jehovah-worshipping Judea in the south. Thus the Jews, and today's Jews, are all the 12 twelve tribes of Israel.

**2 Chronicles 17:2** *And he [Jehoshaphat] placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah...and in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had taken.*

So the cities that Judah had incorporated from the northern Israel, in the time of Jehoshaphat were still cities of Judah.

**2 Chronicles 30:1** *And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem to keep the Passover unto the LORD God of Israel. :5 ... from Beersheba even to Dan :10 ...even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them. :11 Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem. :18...Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun... 31:1 ...Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities. 31:6 And concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah...*

Hezekiah made an offer to Israel, come south and be safe from Assyrian. Most laughed it off, but many came. And then many returned. There was unrestrained traffic, an open border between these two nations. People flowed freely back and forth. There has to have been members of each tribe living within the territory of every other tribe, and their commingling ensured the survival of all of them. Here is proof:

**2 Chronicles 34:6** *And so did he [Josiah] in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their mattocks around about. :7 And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the graven images into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem. :9 And when they came to Hilkiyah the high priest, they delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and all*

*the remnant of Israel...:21 Go, enquire of the LORD for me [Josiah] and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah...:33 And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the LORD their God. 35:18 ...and all Judah and Israel.*

This is long after the Assyrian captivity so the 10 tribes are gone. Josiah exerted wide political control over the northern territory. There were still cities in Israel and they were controlled by Judah. But who were they inhabited by? Manasseh and Ephraim and all the remnant of Israel. They didn't all leave, there was a remnant, a large enough remnant to populate cities.

☛ ***Nehemiah 11:3** ...to wit, Israel. :20 And the residue of Israel...were in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance.*

When the Jews returned from the Diaspora they identify themselves as the “residue of Israel.” Why would they do that if they didn't accept that all the tribes were present in their midst?

None of the tribes were ever entirely gone, and those that remained identified with Judah. Therefore, they were later taken out of the land along with the Jews by Babylon, returned to the land 70 years later with the Jews by Persian command, taken out again by Rome, and returned 2000 years later in 1947 by the British. They are there today, all the tribes, with the Jews. We needn't wait for or expect the return of the 10 lost tribes from under the polar cap, they've already returned.

***Isaiah 10:5** O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. :6 I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.*

Assyria's conquest of Israel was not an accident of history, it was God's intent.

***Jeremiah 3:18** In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers.*

Israel has been long gone for about a hundred years. This is a huge prophecy, a big deal for God to deliver on. And the point that when Judah returns, so will Israel. There will not be two separate returns.

***Jeremiah 31:1** At that same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.*

When they return, they will *all* return. Not Judah first then Israel centuries later from some mythical place like Peter Pan's Never-Never-Land.

**Jeremiah 31:9** *They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. :20 *Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD.**

By some means or other, the ten tribes are part of this return. Ephraim will not be forgotten. Yes, Judah received the promise of Messiah, but Ephraim is God's firstborn and God won't forget his firstborn.

**Jeremiah 31:27** *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast.*

This is two promises to two nations. That doesn't mean they can't be the same nation, modern Israel, but they are distinct.

**Jeremiah 33:7** *And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first.*

God will rebuild this nation "as at the first." When Israel first entered their promised land, they weren't two nations, they were one nation of all the tribes.

**Jeremiah 33:13** *In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin... :14 *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. :16 *In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely...:17 *For thus saith the LORD; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel. :24...The two families which the LORD hath chosen...****

Why is Benjamin specifically mentioned here? Why not Ephraim etc.? Could it be that the return of the Jews really is the entire fulfillment? It seems to me that this text is saying (or is at least hinting) that the recovery of Judah and Jerusalem is the fulfillment of the promises to all of Israel.

**Jeremiah 48:47** *Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days... :49:37 *But it shall come to pass in the latter day, that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.**

If we are to take literally those verses that promise a return of the 10 tribes, should we not also take literally these verses that promise a return of Moab and Elam? So we might ask, just how literal does God mean this? And in what sense do they "return"?

**Jeremiah 50:2** *Declare ye...Babylon is taken...:4 In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God.*

This prophecy very clearly pegs the return of Israel and Judah to the fall of Babylon. How, then, are we to believe in some mystical far future return of the 10 tribes? Unless there is a second fall of Babylon. Babylon, then, is not only Judah's ancient nemesis, but also symbolic of Judah's later nemesis, Rome and all of its modern enemies today.

**Ezekiel 37:21** *...Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land. :22 ... I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall no more be two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.*

“No more be two nations.” When has Israel and Judah *ever* been one nation? That is, since Rehoboam? The answer is, never and this is a failed prophecy. Unless they were already a joined nation at the Babelonian dispersion, and the Persian return, and the Roman dispersion and British the return, and still today.

**Ezekiel 47:21** *So shall ye divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel.*

So, in the last days, there will be 12 identifiable tribes, because the land will be divided accordingly.

**Amos 9:9** *For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. :14 And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them...:15 And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God.*

None of the tribes shall be lost. When they return, they shall all return.

**Romans 11:1** *...For I [Paul] also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*

**Philippians 3:5** *...of the tribe of Benjamin...*

Paul was Benjamin. So there is more to the Jews than just Judah. There is also at least Benjamin.

**Luke 2:36** *And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser...*

This dispels the idea that there were only Jews and Benjamites and Levites around. Here is one woman, and therefore certainly a family, from Asher. If there is a person of Asher, there must be families of Asher.

Eight hundred years after the ten tribes disappeared, Paul's family and Anna's family still know what tribe they are from. Do you know where you're family was eight hundred years ago? Probably not, but the Jews did.

Then, finally, just for Mormons, there is this —

*Alma 20:3... Nephi, who was the son of Lehi ... who was a descendant of Manasseh, who was the son of Joseph...*

Yet another non-Jewish Israelite family living in Jerusalem.

### [3] ISRAEL'S SALVATION

This is a sensitive subject that Christians raise: Are Jews un-saved (and therefore damned) because they do not believe in Jesus Christ? I could avoid some grief by just avoiding this subject, but that would be too easy. And we ought not to select our subjects, based on what we like or don't like, but because the scriptures cram them down our throats. The scriptures have the right to demand our attention and this subject is at the top of the list.

Having said that, I will now defend the Jews. No doubt they'll think I needn't bother, but I will anyway.

I claim that Jews are not damned and cannot be. These are the people of the book, the people of the promise. We gentiles have access to salvation *because* of the Jews. And some think that God would cut them off now? Impossible. The Bible was written, from first to last, from Moses to John, entirely by Jews without a single gentile author among them. So have some respect.

When I teach Old Testament, it inevitably happens that some feisty zealot will say something like: "The Bible says the Jews were bad, evil, no-good-nicks, who failed at every turn and God has cut them off." In my heart I want to blurt out to such fools with something like: "Shut-up, you nazi. I will not tolerate your anti-Semitism in my class." That's what I want to say. Instead, I calm myself down and use softer words. Still, I manage to make my point and they get my drift.

Let me say it this way: The Bible, far from condemning the Jews, exalts them. While they were discovering God and wrestling with him, your ancestors and mine were still doing horrible atrocities. That the human race has a conscience at all, has civility at all, we owe to the Jews who found the one true God, had their battles with him, and then introduced us to him. How dare we ungrateful Christians lay blame on the Jews who brought goodness into the world at great cost to themselves. They were the only people brave enough to document their own failures (we burn our own) so that the world could learn. And the book must be truly God's word because nobody would have written a book so critical of themselves unless God made them do it.

Yes, the Jews failed. But they were the *best* of humanity, God's chosen. So *the failure of the Jews is the failure of the whole human race*. And they bravely documented

it for our benefit. Had you been there, you would have done worse. So when you point your finger at the Jews in judgment, just notice (and I know it's an old cliché, but it's apt) that your other three fingers are pointing back at you.

Now, after that long introduction, here is my defense of the Jews.

*Psalms 25:3* Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed.

*Psalms 37:9* ...those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

The Jews are still waiting. Does that mean they missed out on salvation because they don't believe that Jesus is their Messiah? Not according to these verses. Yes, my interpretation is extreme, but that doesn't mean I'm wrong. I claim that Jesus saves those who wait for him. Well, the Jews are still waiting, aren't they? So are they damned? No. It just means that their clock is still ticking.

There are plenty of verses that say you have to have Jesus, but none that say you have to find Jesus *before dying or else*. God's promises to the Jews are iron-clad and cannot be broken, and we Christians should remember that the Jews are God's chosen, and we are going into heaven on *their* coattails, not the other way around.

Another point: When Jesus spoke of Lazarus and the rich man, he said that the rich man was in hell and Lazarus was in the bosom of Abraham. If nobody is saved without Jesus, then all B.C. people are damned. But Lazarus wasn't damned, he was in the bosom of Abraham. For that matter, Abraham wasn't damned — his "bosom" was the definition of salvation.

But, you may say, Abraham and Lazarus were saved because they looked forward to Jesus. Right you are. And so do the Jews to this day. So, what's the problem? Why do so many Christians still believe that Jews are damned? That's impossible! God chose *them*, and that has nothing to do with whether or not they choose him. Jews are saved by God's unbreakable covenant with Abraham whether anyone likes it or not.

*Isaiah 12:1* And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou was angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

When the Jews finally love Jesus, he will love them, *all* of them, all generations past.

*Isaiah 30:18* ...blessed are all they that wait for him.

This promise does not expire because Jesus came and they missed it, and they are still waiting. There is no statute of limitations.

*Isaiah 43:1* But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

This sounds pretty secure to me. From God's words here, I can't imagine that it would be possible for God to cast off or disinherit the Jews. Those Christians who believe

that the Jews are damned because they do not believe Jesus is their Messiah, need to explain how that could possibly be true in light of this verse.

*Isaiah 44:21 ...O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. :22 I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.*

The Jews *can't* be damned. Their salvation is locked.

*Isaiah 45:17 But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.*

Everlasting is a pretty long time. There's room for a lot of mistakes, and a lot of repentance, and a lot of forgiveness.

- *Jeremiah 50:20 In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.*

It's difficult to decide where this verse ought to be placed, it says so much. We can look for Jewish faults and failures, but in the end when God judges them, no faults or failures will be found.

*Lamentations 3:25 The LORD is good unto them that wait for him...*

And who has waited longer for God than the Jews? No one. They're waiting still. So God will be good to them for their very long patience.

#### [4] ISRAEL AND CHRISTIANITY

But then, what are we to make of New Testament's assertion that true Israel is only those who accept Christ, and all others are not really Israel? First of all, does the New Testament even say such a thing? This question, "Who Is Israel," must be an important one because it comes up over and over throughout the Bible. For instance —

*John 8:39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.*

In other words, like father, like son. Who is and is not a child of Abraham is not just a matter of biological descent, there are other things that determine a person's place in a family. For instance, a child can be adopted into a family and can be disinherited out of a family.

So, who is Israel? The simple answer is, whoever receives the blessings of Abraham. And the most important of God's promises to Abraham is this: **Genesis 15:6**

he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. So Abraham's heirs are those who believe God and who God therefore pronounces righteous.

Paul, who was always anxious to get the gentiles in on the promises, explained it this way:

**Romans 9:6** *For they are not all Israel which are of Israel. :7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. :8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. :9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. :10 And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac.*

Here is the point Paul is making: Abraham had two sons. Ishmael was first but Isaac got the blessing. Isaac had two sons. Esau was first but Jacob got the blessing. And if we follow Paul's reasoning, we would continue with Jacob who had a bunch of sons. Reuben was the first but Joseph got the blessing. And Joseph had two sons. Manasseh was first but Ephraim got the blessing.

Paul's point is that it is less important who is born with a birthright and more important who ends up with it.

What makes us (me) nervous about Paul's assertion is the idea that Jews might be rejected of God because they have rejected Jesus as their Messiah. If that is what Paul is saying, then he is seriously at odds with all those Old Testament promises that God has made that he *cannot* reject Israel for his covenant's sake, not for *any* reason. And, in today's thinking, such thinking certainly smacks of anti-Semitism which has let do so much persecution of Jews, and that really makes us (me, and hopefully you) nervous.

But doesn't Paul's assertion have merit, that Israel is not really Israel?

At this point we will see that not only does that assertion make us (me) nervous, it also makes Paul nervous, and so he back-peddles.

**Romans 11:11** *I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid.*

Stop right there. Paul is asking the very question that is drawing our attention. Can the Jews, by rejecting Christ as Messiah, fall out of God's love, out of God's election? And Paul's answer is: God forbid, which means, no, never, impossible, cannot happen. In other words, Paul is affirming the Old Testament promises to Israel.

**Romans 11:11** *... but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. :12 Now if the fall of them be riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness? :13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.*

To paraphrase: God has let the Jews stumble and fall *temporarily* so that their salvation can go to the whole world. And when the Jews finally do get it, that Jesus is their Messiah, the world will be even more blessed for it. And, by the way, I'm only

talking this way to you because I am an apostle to the Gentiles. If I were an apostle to the Jews, I might not be saying this at all.

Let's continue.

***Romans 11:16*** For if the firstfruits be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

In other words, all Israel, even stumbled Israel is really Israel and they are holy.

***Romans 11:25*** ... blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles is come in. **:26** And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion, the Deliverer, and he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. **:27** For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. **:28** As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the Father's sakes. [i.e.: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob]

There you have it folks. The Jews cannot be rejected, not even for their rejection of Christ. They are elect and even though they may be your enemies and even enemies of God, for the sake of the covenant God made with their fathers, they are saved.

But there's still more.

***Romans 11:29*** For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. **:30** For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief, **:31** Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may receive mercy. **:32** For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy on all.

In other words, God made promises to Israel and he is not going to change his mind because he sealed to promise with an oath. You used to not believe yet God blessed you. Well, now Israel does not believe yet God still blesses them. So everyone is guilty of unbelief, and God has mercy on all. Isn't it wonderful. So, Christians, don't get so uppity with the Jews.

Find that all complicated? Then one final verse.

***Romans 11:33*** O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgment and his ways past finding out!

In other words, Paul doesn't understand it either.

So, does that mean that Israel, already saved, is of no more use to God? That he's through with them? Actually, no. God is not through with Israel, they have more to do.

## [5] WHEN ISRAEL REPENTS

Even though Israel rejected the messiah, Israel still has the privileged place as God's chosen and God's protected (***Zechariah 2:8*** ...he that toucheth you toucheth the

apple of his eye). But God expects Israel to repent and come to Christ just like anyone else. Why? There are four reasons.

### **1. Israel must repent to receive forgiveness**

*Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.*

Israel understood forgiveness. In fact, they were seeking it. That's what the whole sacrificial system was all about. So beseeching God for forgiveness was nothing new.

*Isaiah 43:25 I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*

### **2. Israel must repent to bring the kingdom and the king**

*Acts 3:19 When [should actually be translated "so that"] the times of refreshing shall come :20 And he shall send Jesus Christ :21 Whom the heavens must receive until the times spoke by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*

Israel wants the kingdom, the world needs the kingdom, but the kingdom will not come until Israel accepts her king. In other words, Israel, the world is waiting on you.

### **3. Israel must repent to avoid judgment**

*Acts 3:23 ...every soul which will not hear that prophet [the Messiah] shall be cut off from among the people.*

Still, even in judgment, God was longsuffering. Forty years passed before Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70 by general Titus and his 10<sup>th</sup> Roman Legion. God is never anxious to judge, but eventually, he must.

### **4. Israel must repent to receive their blessings**

*Acts 3:25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed :26 Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away everyone of you from his iniquity.*

God loves Israel. That much is clear. He did it all for them. The blessings are still there, just waiting for Israel to claim them.

## **[6] ISRAEL'S ENEMIES**

*Psalms 83:4 They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.*

What Israel's enemies want, then and now, is Israel's extinction.

**Jeremiah 50:7** *All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers. :20 ...the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none...I will pardon them.... :14 Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD.*

Those who murder Jews point to Jewish sins for justification. But they are not justified because the Jews are pardoned. It is the Jew killers who will themselves be condemned by God. Anti-Semites who think God hates Jews, it is they who God hates. Here is a prophecy that is very scary.

**Zechariah 14:2** *For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle...:3 Then shall the LORD go forth and fight against those nations...*

Why is the prophecy particularly scary? Because if it is literal then "all nations" means that your nation and my nation will be on the wrong side of this final battle, and I don't think I want to be in that unsafe place fighting a losing battle against God. Do you?

#### [7] ISOLATION OR INTERACTION

The ancient Jews were not isolationists. It is true that they forbade marriage with non-Jews.

**Nehemiah 10:30** *And that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, not take their daughters for our sons.*

At the time of Ezra, the Jews frowned upon intermarriage. However that did not prevent Jews from marrying converts. Jews were free to marry people who converted to Judaism. Here are some famous examples.

**Matthew 1:5** *And Salmon begat Boaz of Rachab...  
Matthew 1:5 ...And Boaz begat Obed of Ruth.*

**Genesis 41:45** *...and he [Pharaoh] gave him [Joseph] to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On.*

**Numbers 12:1** *... the Ehtiopian woman whom he [Moses] had married...*

Rachab was a convert, a survivor of Jericho, and she married a good Jewish man. And Ruth was a convert from Moab, and she married a good Jewish man. And Joseph married an Egyptian woman, and Moses married a black African woman. So what? Yes,

Jews frown on marrying outside their faith, but so do all religions. Social and religious cohesion does not make a people isolationists. Converts drifted in and were welcome.

*Esther 8:17* And many of the people of the land became Jews.

And then there's Esther who married the king of Persia. Here's a question: Did Esther raise her children to be Jewish or Persian princes — or both?

In the musical "Fiddler on the Roof", a Sabbath song says, "May you be like Ruth and like Esther." That's a sweet blessing. But it does overlook the details that Ruth married *into* the faith and Esther married *out of* the faith.

Also, in business, Jews dealt with everyone.

*Nehemiah 10:31* And if the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it on them on the sabbath, on the holy day.

That Jews would not do business with their neighbors on the sabbath proves that on any other day, they *did* do business with their gentile neighbors.

I'm just pointing out that Jews are not and never were isolationists. Their society, like everyone else's, was porous. And that's a good thing because any culture that isolates itself completely will die from intellectual (and actual) in-breeding.

God made a promise to Abraham. Well, several, but these in particular:

*Genesis 18:18* ... all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.

*Genesis 22:17* ... I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven ...

Just how did God intend to do that, to make Abraham's posterity be a blessing to all the nations of the earth? Simple. Yes, there are the Jews and God's promises to them. But beyond that, with the way that people and races and cultures and nations interbreed, after 3000 years of "cross-pollination" — ("multiply and replenish the earth" is the one commandment that humans are quite happy to obey) — I'd wager that everyone on this planet, all seven billion and counting, are descendants of Abraham. A simple pedigree chart, real or contrived, spanning 150 generations (3000 ÷ 20) easily shows that everybody's DNA quickly ends up everywhere.

And the point? Here's the point: Since we are all descendents of Abraham, then we are all heirs to his blessings, particularly God's promise of Christ and his salvation. If we can ever get everyone to think like that, then maybe we can finally achieve that age old dream: peace. Shalom.

## [8] WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Why should Christians care about a Jewish nation called Israel? Because of the Christian expectation that Christ will return. The prophecies about this all important Christian event are:

*Malachi 3:2 Who may abide the day of his coming? :3 He shall purify the sons of Levi .. that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.*

*Matthew 24:14 ... and then shall the end come. :15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet ...*

*Daniel 9:27 ... he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate 12:11 And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be [1290] days.*

So, for Christ to return, there has to be a Jewish temple.

### **[9] ORSON HYDE**

For Mormons, the Jewish return became literal when Orson Hyde went to Israel in 1841 to dedicate the land. Here is his prayer:

*Now, O Lord! Thy servant has been obedient to the heavenly vision ... and ... has safely arrived in this place to dedicate and consecrate this land unto Thee, for the gathering together of Judah's scattered remnants, according to the predictions of the holy prophets – for the building up of Jerusalem again ... and for the rearing a Temple in honor of Thy name.*

The Jews, responding to a gathering call, began their return.