

One comment that can often be heard among people is “the Jews are God’s chosen people” and by that they mean that in addition to Christians, and separate from being a Christian, that God still has a plan for the Jews as his special people today and as a nation. That belief has affected the doctrines of most denominations and their attitudes toward Jews and the nation of Israel.

The impact of that belief has also entered into the political realm as decisions have been and are being made by politicians believing that “the Jews are God’s chose people” and that for biblical reasons they must exist as a nation. The question is not does United States has a right to have an international relationship with a nation called Israel, but should that relationship exist because it is thought that that nation of Israel or Jews are God’s chosen people today.

An example is the organization; “Conservative New Jersey Common Sense for the Garden State...and Beyond”. I agree with what they stand for regarding government, spending, taxes, economics, military, fire arms, foreign policy, border security, immigration, religion, and such, but I do not support their reasoning from a biblical standpoint that there should be relations between the United States and Israel on the basis that the Jews are God’s chosen people.

The article on their website is entitled “Election 2012: Supporting Israel and the Jewish People” and based upon biblical passages (*Genesis 12:2-3*, *Romans 11:5*). ([conservativenewjersey.com/election-2012-supporting-israel-and-the-jewish-people](http://conservativenewjersey.com/election-2012-supporting-israel-and-the-jewish-people)) Bible believing people, but misunderstand and misusing the Scripture.

Does the Bible teach that the nation of Israel and the Jews (in general) are God’s chosen people today? The Bible reveals that answer as we ask: “Who were and are the Jews, what was and is God’s plan for the Jews and who is God’s true Israel today?”

### **WHO WERE AND ARE THE JEWS? The Term or Word “Jew”**

The word “Jew” comes from the Hebrew (*ieudem*), through the Greek (*Joudaios*), Middle Latin (*Judaeus*), Old French (*juieu*), Old English (*Jew*) and to Middle English (*Jew*) as we say it today. W. E. Vine says; “The name ‘Jew’ is primarily ‘tribal’ (from Judah). It is first found in *2 Kings 16:6* (KJV, ASV) as distinct from Israel, of the Northern Kingdom. After the captivity it was chiefly used to distinguish the race from Gentiles” (*An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* p. 275). The original Hebrew and Greek words are sometimes translated into English as “Judean.”

In the first century a Jew was someone from any one of the tribes. For example Paul said that he was a “*Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia*” (*Acts 22:3*) and yet he was “*of the tribe of Benjamin*” (*Philippians 3:5*). Pilate understood that

the Jews were composed of all tribes or a distinct race when he asked Jesus, “*Art thou the King of the Jews?*” (*Matthew 27:11*).

### **The Terms or Words “Hebrew” and “Israel”**

The first time that the word “Hebrew” is used in the Bible (KJV, ASV) is in *Genesis 14:13* where Abram is called “*the Hebrew*”. The word means “to pass over” or “the other side” such as when Abram crossed from the other side of the Euphrates (*Genesis 12:1-5*, *14:13*, *Joshua 24:2-3*) and/or descendants of Eber (*Genesis 10:25*, *11:17*). The word “Hebrew” came to be applied specifically to the tribes that descended from Jacob / Israel and used interchangeably with the term “Jew.” The word “Israel” took the same route from being applied to a specific person to the descendants of Israel .

Who are the Jews today? Lisa Katz in an article “Who is a Jew?” writes: “The ‘Who is a Jew’ issue has become one of the most controversial issues in Jewish life today” and “As of today, Judaism is divided on the issue of “Who is a Jew?” via descent” ([judaism.about.com/od/whoisajew/a/whoisjewdescent.htm](http://judaism.about.com/od/whoisajew/a/whoisjewdescent.htm)). Those who claim to be Jews are not in agreement on who is a Jew.

The question remains, who is a Jew today? Jewish Rabbi David Markel Hall writes, “Official records; The lineage of all the families of the tribes of Israel were kept at the temple. When the temple was destroyed, there was no more record of inheritance...it is easy to see how important these records were.” (*The Temple of G-d* © 1997 Rabbi David Markel Hall <http://tzion.org/articles/temple.html>)

This fact is important because there is not one person claiming to be a Jew today can prove that they are a Jew because all records from the Temple were destroyed in A.D. 70. Jesus had prophesied the complete destruction of the Temple (*Matthew 24:1-2*) which included the complete destruction of genealogical records. Many Jews that were not killed were dispersed into various parts of the world.

Wayne Jackson writes; In his book, *The Archaeology of the Jerusalem Area* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), Harold Mare, former president of the Near East Archaeological Society, notes: “We do not have **any** remains of the Herodian temple itself because of the devastating Roman destruction in A.D. 70” (141). ([www.christiancourier.com/articles/1302-jesus-prophecy-and-the-destruction-of-the-temple](http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/1302-jesus-prophecy-and-the-destruction-of-the-temple))

Anyone considering him or herself to be a Jew today may or may not be a physical descendent of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but that fact cannot be known by the genealogical records. It is most certain that he or she has been mixed with other races throughout the centuries. Who is a Jew today can be summed up by this statement: “Judaism is not a race because Jews do not share one common ancestry. For instance, Ashkenazi Jews and Sephardic Jews are both “Jewish.”

However, whereas Ashkenazi Jews often hail from Europe, Sephardic Jews often hail from the Middle East. People of many different races have become Jewish over the centuries.” ([judaism.about.com/od/judaismbasics/a/beingjewish.htm](http://judaism.about.com/od/judaismbasics/a/beingjewish.htm))

### **WHAT WAS AND IS GOD’S PLAN FOR THE JEWS? God’s Plan for the Jews Regarding His Promise to Abram**

God told Abram that he would go to as God said, “*a land that I will shew thee*” (*Genesis 12:1*) and promised “*I will make thee a great nation*” (*Genesis 12:2*) and “*In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed*” (*Genesis 12:3*). Paul explains the meaning of this promise to Abram when he wrote, “*And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed*” (*Galatians 3:8*). This final part of the promise concerned salvation for all people and not just for the physical descendants of Abraham.

Did God keep his promise concerning the land and being a great nation and were those promises intended to be perpetual, that is even until 2011? All one has to do is read the rest of the books of *Genesis* and *Exodus* to see that the descendants of Abraham eventually numbered into the millions and became a great nation. (*Exodus 12:37*) “*And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot who were men.*” (*Numbers 1:45-46*) “*From twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Israel; even they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty.*” This number does not include women, children or the Levites. The Israelites were told: (*Deuteronomy 10:22*) “*Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of the heaven for multitude.*” God completed his promise.

What about the land? Joshua led the children of Israel across the Jordan River and into the promised land of Canaan and we find these that the Bible specifically says that the children of Israel were given the land and that all of the promises of God concerning them were fulfilled. (*Joshua 21:43-45*, *23:14*). God kept his promise, but were these promises about number and land intended to be perpetual? (*Deuteronomy 5:31-33*, *30:17-20*). Their existence as a people and their possession of the land was always dependent upon their faithfulness or their obedience unto the will of God and always “*till the seed should come*” (*Galatians 3:19*).

### **God’s Plan for the Jews Regarding the Law of Moses**

The Law of Moses was given directly and exclusively to the Jews and after they were already a nation of people and some 430 after God had made his initial promises to Abraham

(Galatians 3:17, Exodus 20:1-2). Just like the other promises of God to the Jews regarding nation and land were never meant to be permanent so it was with the Law of Moses. Paul in writing to the Galatians demonstrated that the Law of Moses was intended to be temporary until the coming of Christ (Galatians 3:16,19).

Paul goes on to explain that the Law came to completion or an end at the time of Christ (Galatians 3:24-27). It is impossible for one to be under or subject to the Law of Moses today because it has not existed as a Law since the first century (Ephesians 2:14-15, Colossians 2:14, Matthew 5:17). God's intention and plan was that Jesus, the Messiah, would bring to completion the purpose, working and existence of the Law of Moses so that a better covenant with all nations could be established (Hebrews 7: 22, 8:6-7,13-15,10:1, Romans 10:4).

### God's Plan for the Jews Regarding Jesus

God's plan was that through the seed of Abraham that the Messiah, Jesus, the Savior would come into this world and be a blessing or Savior to all people (Genesis 12:3, Galatians 3:8). The Jews were part of this plan in that they were descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and that Jesus would descend from Abraham through them (Matthew 1:1-17, Luke 3:23-38, Galatians 3:16). God's desire was that the Jews should accept Jesus for who he was and enjoy the blessings of salvation in Christ (Romans 1:16). The gospel was the power of God unto salvation unto the Jew first in many respects. The Jews had always had the opportunity to know the truth regarding Jesus through the prophets of the Old Testament (Matthew 23:37, Acts 51-53), but they continually rejected them.

The Jews were given first opportunity to hear the gospel through the preaching of John and Jesus (Matthew 3:1-2, 11, 4:23). The only plan that God had was the gospel (Romans 1:16), but the Jews as a whole rejected it. Paul wrote of his great sadness concerning Israel's reject of Jesus and their only hope of salvation (Romans 9:2-5, 10:1-4, 17-21). The Jews, the nation of Israel, the physical descendants of Abraham were lost because they rejected Christ and continue in that condition until today if they have not obeyed the gospel (Romans 6:17, 2 Thessalonians 1:8). God's plan for the Jews was and is that they should obey the gospel.

### WHO IS GOD'S TRUE ISRAEL TODAY? The Children of Abraham

One might think that the children of Abraham are the physical descendants of Abraham through Isaac, Jacob and the sons of Jacob, but Paul writes of a far deeper spiritual family (Galatians 3:6-7). What is this faith and the results of this faith? (Galatians 3:23-29). The faith is the gospel and one who obeys the gospel of Christ a child of Abraham or Abraham's seed. The sons of Abraham no not the physical descendants,

such as those who call themselves Jews today, but the sons of Abraham who share in the blessings promised to Abraham are Christians of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-16).

Paul had much to say about this in the book of Romans also (Romans 2:28-29). Again the point being that the children of Abraham are those who have obeyed the gospel from the heart. The children of promise are the true children of Abraham, the true Israel today (Romans 9:6-8).

### The Church of Christ is God's Chosen People

(1 Peter 2:9-10) – Peter makes a definite contrast between the fleshly Israel that rejected Jesus and the church, the new spiritual Israel, “chosen generation, holy nation”, that had become the people of God through obedience to the gospel (1 Peter 1:2). God's chosen people today are his church. Because this fact was and is true Paul asked the question; “Hath God cast away his people” (Romans 11:1)? Have the Jews been cast aside from being the people of God in the sense that they once were? Paul answers that question; “God forbid. For I also am and Israelite, of the seed of Abraham... (Romans 11:1). “God has not cast away his people which he foreknew...” (Romans 11:2). Paul and many other Jews had become Christians and were a part of the chosen (Ephesians 1:3-4).

The Jews as a specific people or nation are not God's chosen people, but anyone who might be a physical descendent of Abraham can be of the chosen by believing in Jesus and obeying the gospel and as Paul writes “and so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob” (Romans 11:26). All Israel, the Israel of old and the Israel of new (the church) will be saved by following the Deliverer (Jesus).

### Conclusion

Are the Jews God's chosen people today? Their purpose as a nation ceased to exist when Jesus came into this world and completed his work. They were destroyed as a nation and people at the death and resurrection of Jesus (Matthew 27:50-51), the preaching of the gospel (Galatians 3:27-29) and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. The true Israel of God today is the Lord's church.

This tract is condensed from a lesson presented at the  
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“They Shall Be Turned  
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# “The Jews Are God’s Chosen People Today”

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