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OCTOBER 16, 2023

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PART 1 OF 2

The Biblical Case for Defending Israel



Given what's happening in Israel, I think it is timely to provide this two-part series on Israel—from a Bible teacher's perspective. Can you immediately and cogently reason from Scripture why America should be committed to Israel? By way of introduction, I believe that in a reaping and sowing sense America has wonderfully prospered because our cultural foundation stems from all that Israel has historically provided us relative to pertinent scriptural truth. There is no doubt the biblical truths borrowed from historic Israel have provided the cultural moorings for historic America. One might summarily call this our philosophical union with Israel. If for no other reason, we owe Israel our loyalty relative to our debt of gratitude. But there are many more biblically-based reasons that I will proffer in this Bible study.

Read on, my friend.

Ralph Drollinger

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WEEKLY BIBLE STUDIES

- Governors:** Fridays 9am (EST), Zoom
- Former Cabinet Members / White House Senior Staff:** Fridays 9am (EST), Zoom
- Senate Members:** Tuesdays 8am, rotating offices, hot breakfast served
- House Members:** Thursdays 8am, AG Hearing Rm., Longworth 1302, hot breakfast served

The views expressed in each Bible Study are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of any individual Bible Study sponsor.



PUBLIC SERVANT QUOTE

Adam Schnelting

Missouri State Representative
District 104



“As a former pastor and current legislator, I can tell you that an often-overlooked ministry is the ministry to public officials. When many churches launch ministries of various kinds, they rarely think of politicians as individuals to whom the Word of God needs to be preached.

“The work that Matt is doing is exactly that. Matt has thought outside the box and beyond the conventional pulpit ministry to minister to those who are on the front lines of the culture war in America. I support Matt’s important work ministering to those of us who minister as public officials.”

Rep. Schnelting participates in the CapMin weekly Bible study to members of the Missouri Legislature that is led by Pastor Matt Goodsell.

I. INTRODUCTION

God’s Word contains a clear and absolute, timeless promise relative to the Abrahamic Covenant of Genesis 12:3, “*And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse.*” History vividly punctuates this truth. America is among nations that have shown longstanding support for Israel. President Harry Truman acknowledged the sovereign state of Israel within 11 minutes of the signing of the Israeli Declaration of Independence on May 14, 1948. Whether you are *blessed* for supporting Israel as has been our nation or *cursed* for attempting to demolish her like ancient Babylon, Hitler’s Germany, or the present-day Arab nations, one thing is certain: this people and country are extra special, set apart by God from all others. No other countries compare. This is because in the Old Covenant, God chose Israel to be His people as a light unto all the Gentile nations of the world (cf. Isaiah 60 and 62); they were a people set apart for His own possession (Exodus 19:5–6). Accordingly, the Jewish people hold a very special place in the heart of God.

Given ongoing attention to Israel and Gaza, I thought this would be a good time to provide a biblical primer as to why you and our nation should remain staunch allies of Israel. Again, can you immediately and cogently reason from Scripture why this should be?

There are at least three pragmatic reasons why our nation should support Israel.

II. PRAGMATIC REASONS FOR SUPPORTING ISRAEL

A. ISRAEL IS LEGITIMATE

In 1948 when Israel became a nation, 160 other countries acknowledged it as a non-racist democracy. In fact, Arabs hold public office in the Knesset and high positions in its military. It is a nation that believes people are made in the image of God and endowed with inalienable rights.

B. ISRAEL IS RELIABLE

In an increasingly tumultuous Middle East we need an ally to protect ourselves. America needs a reliable partner in this area of the world due to the nearly-enriched nuclear threat of Iran which has repeatedly declared its hatred for America.

C. ISRAEL IS SMART

Much scientific and technological advancement have been achieved by Israel. Financial management¹ and information processing make her a world leader. Now void of earlier socialistic economic tendencies, her free-market, roaring entrepreneurial spirit make her a world leader and an awesome trade partner. George Gilder’s book, *The Israel Test* documents the historically disproportionate contributions of the Jewish race to the betterment of mankind.² This book is a must-read and helps to explain why other nations are so jealous of her.

More important than these excellent pragmatic reasons as to why America should support Israel is the biblical



one. What follows is the exegetical case; three major biblical chapters when studied together exclaim why every legislator, government leader, citizen, and human being should befriend Israel.³ Those three chapters are Genesis 12, Romans 11, and Revelation 7. You need to have these passages at your fingertips and have intellectual dexterity when it comes to this pertinent issue.

III. GENESIS 12

In Genesis 12:1–2 God makes a covenant with Abram who is the patriarch of the nation Israel. But before examining that in some detail, it is important to understand the whole of Genesis. There are two main divisions in the book, each possessing four sub-points. The first portion (chapters 1–11) relates to beginnings: the Creation, The Fall, the Flood and Dispersion. The second portion (chapters 12–50) pertains to the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. In this study, we are picking the book up at the start of the second portion where God chooses a man from whom He will generate a family, a tribe and then a whole nation: again, the nation of Israel, a distinctive nation as described by God Himself in Exodus 19:5–6 and Deuteronomy 7:6–8:

“Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”

For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

“The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the Lord loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the Lord brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.”

In addition, there are three unilateral promises that God makes with Abram: a *land*, a seed, and a *blessing* as evidenced from this passage (Genesis 12:1–2).

Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing”

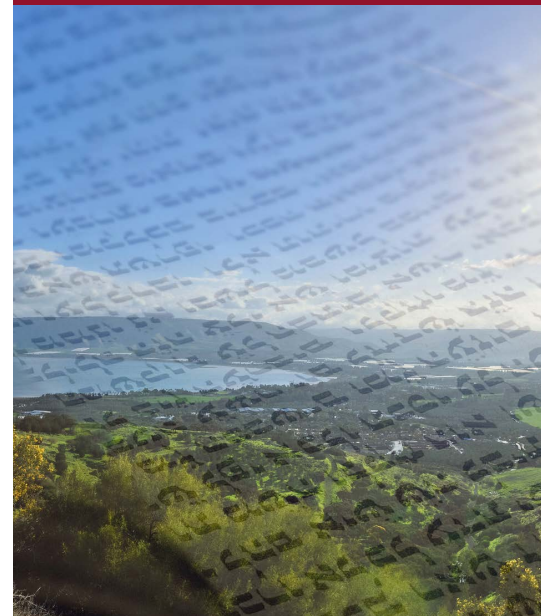
The aforementioned passages of Scripture are where the case for being pro-Israel begins. Noteworthy here is that God’s promise in Genesis 12 includes a *land* which is elsewhere referred to as the *land* of Canaan (cf. Genesis 17:8)⁴ Again, the promise of the *land* is critical to the study that follows because in Genesis 12:3, previously cited in the introduction, God states the consequences of not being an ally of His people Israel, in their *land*:

VERSE OF THE WEEK

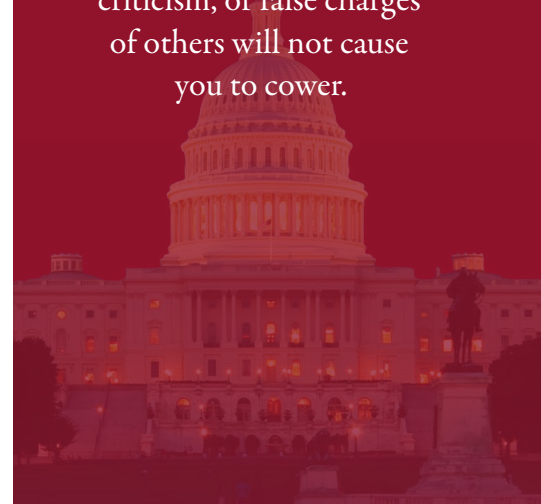


Genesis 12:3

“And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”



Seek God’s favor, not man’s, and the opinions, criticism, or false charges of others will not cause you to cower.





John Witherspoon



“Christ Jesus—the promise of old made unto the fathers, the hope of Israel [Acts 28:20], the light of the world [John 8:12], and the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth [Romans 10:4]—is the only Savior of sinners, in opposition to all false religions and every uninstituted rite; as He Himself says (John 14:6): ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.’”

— John Witherspoon, signer of the Declaration of Independence, ratifier of the U.S. Constitution, member of the Continental Congress, president of Princeton.

John Witherspoon, *The Works of John Witherspoon* (Edinburgh: J. Ogle, 1815), Vol. V, p. 255, Sermon 15, “The Absolute Necessity of Salvation Through Christ,” January 2, 1758.

“And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

At first glance, the passage above seems quite straightforward except for this: do the promises God made to Israel “evaporate” forever due to her later rejection of the Messiah, Jesus Christ? There are many Evangelicals today who would answer in the affirmative. They reason that, due to Israel’s rejection of Jesus, God has *replaced* her with the Church. This is called Replacement Theology (RT), and it comes in many versions. RT reasons that the covenants made to Abraham and ensuing to Old Testament (OT) Israel are null and void and spiritually accrue to the Church in the New Covenant of the New Testament (NT) and are now fulfilled more so in a spiritual sense of understanding than a physical one.

The problem with this view, as we shall see in this study and the one that follows next week, is that there are many passages throughout the Bible that indicate God is not *forever* finished with Israel. Notice for starters the following passages in Genesis that use words in an unlimited sense: words like “*descendants*,” “*forever*,” and “*everlasting*” in describing the nature of the *land* promise. Note more carefully Genesis 12:7 in this regard:

The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.” So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.

There is no qualifier or limitation relative to the understanding of God’s

meaning of “*descendants*” in the above passage. The same holds true in 13:15. Notice the word “*forever*”:

“For all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever.”

In 17:7, direct your eyes to “*everlasting covenant*”:

“I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.”

Israel’s right to hold onto the *land* due to God’s *everlasting* covenant with her is called an *everlasting possession* in 17:8:

“I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

Summarily, there is no limitation or qualification to God’s unending promises relative to the *land* God will give His people, Israel. No passage of Scripture anywhere in the Bible states something to the effect of, “all bets are off forever if My people reject My coming Messiah ... because if you do I will ‘spiritualize’ these promises thereafter and give them to the Church.” What I am hinting at is this:

The case for supporting Israel today turns on the immutability of the Abrahamic Covenant.



Said the opposite way, if the Abrahamic promises are now nullified, then one is correct to reason that there is no biblical basis for America to support Israel. If Israel's rejection of Jesus voids the Abrahamic Covenant of Genesis 12, then it stands to reason that Israel has no future in God's economy. If God is done with Israel, then why shouldn't others be also? The truth is God has not replaced Israel **forever** with the Church, and He has a huge future plan ahead for the Jews, even if for now they are on the "side-track" as God grafts in the Gentiles during the age in which we live, the Church Age of biblical history. His promises to Israel are not nullified as will be seen in the following redundantly plentiful NT passages.⁵

IV. ROMANS 11

This is a tremendously informative passage in light of the subject matter. In the context of his epistle to the Gentile Church at Rome, Paul inserts what is commonly referred to as the parenthetical chapters of 9 through 11 in his long letter.⁶ These three chapters reveal God's big plan for Israel—a plan that validates the veracity of the words God chose to use through His mouthpiece, Moses, as He penned the book of Genesis: specifically, the words "**forever**" and "**everlasting**". All of Romans 9–11 needs to be read as a whole to capture the total impact, but having stated that, I have copied some of the pertinent portions to underscore the point of this portion of our Bible study: God has a bright future for Israel! Note Romans 11:1, 2, and 11:

I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For

I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be!

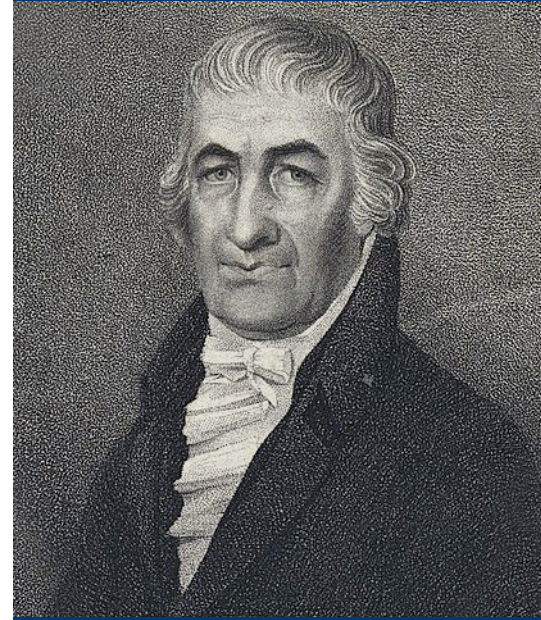
In God's big plan, He has temporarily *sidetracked* His chosen people. He did this right after they did not recognize (to say it politely) their Messiah (cf. Matthew 27:51). This passage makes it clear that being *sidetracked* or having badly *stumbled* is to be distinguished from having been *rejected* or *fallen* in the sense of finality.

During this period God is grafting in the Gentiles (cf. Ephesians 2:12–13). Notice this same idea as it is expressed in Romans 11:11–12:

But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!

God will greatly **ble**ss Israel *in the future*—when He **fulfills** His Abrahamic Covenant promises to her! That is the plain meaning of these texts! One must either ignore the plain meaning of what Paul is writing here under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in Romans 11:9–11 or cavalierly change hermeneutical principles from a grammatical-historical-normative exegetical approach to the text, to one of an allegorical, figurative, or symbolic hermeneutical understanding of this text in order to rationalize what is being interpreted by Replacement proponents.

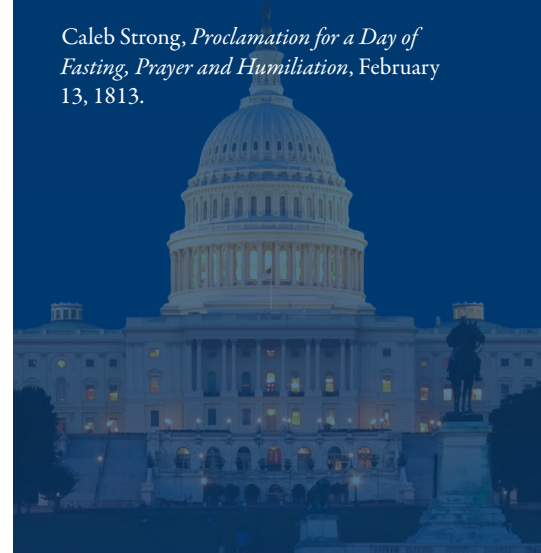
Caleb Strong



“He called on the State of Massachusetts to pray that ... all nations may know and be obedient to that grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ.”

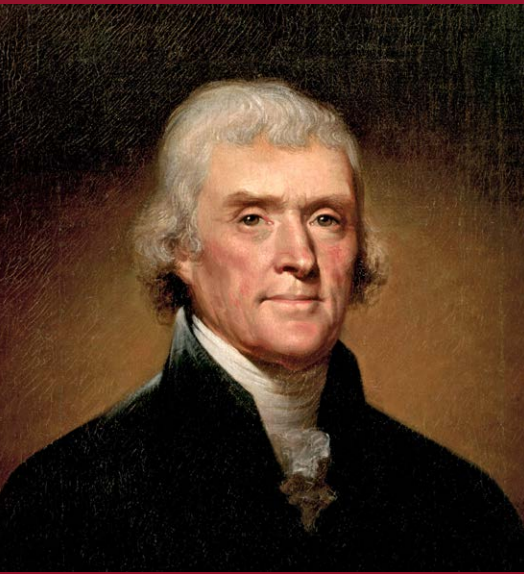
— Caleb Strong, delegate at the Constitutional Convention to frame the U.S. Constitution, ratifier of the Constitution, U.S. senator, governor of Massachusetts.

Caleb Strong, *Proclamation for a Day of Fasting, Prayer and Humiliation*, February 13, 1813.





John Quincy Adams



“The hope of a Christian is inseparable from his faith. Whoever believes in the divine inspiration of the holy Scriptures, must hope that the religion of Jesus shall prevail throughout the earth. Never since the foundation of the world have the prospects of mankind been more encouraging to that hope than they appear to be at the present time. And may the associated distribution of the Bible proceed and prosper, till the Lord shall have made ‘bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God’ [Isaiah 52:10].”

— John Quincy Adams, sixth President of the United States, diplomat, Secretary of State, U.S. senator, U.S. representative, “Old Man Eloquent,” “Hell-Hound of Abolition.”

William H. Seward, *Life and Public Services of John Quincy Adams* (New York: C.M. Saxton, Barker & Co., 1860), 249.

Paul continues in his reasoning to the Gentiles at Rome, now obviously using metaphoric language. The language now being used, obviously intended to be metaphoric language, makes the point of this study: Paul is calling the Gentiles a wild olive [branch] that is being grafted into the root. Note in this regard:

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree ... (Romans 11:17).

This is a great word picture. Speaking further about the hardened hearts of Israel, a people having previously *rejected* Jesus, there remains much hope. Note Romans 11:23–24:

And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

To paraphrase Dr. Charles Ryrie, who was a leading professor at Dallas Theological Seminary (a theologian with a consistent hermeneutic, see endnote 7), Israel has been sidetracked while God gathers in the Gentiles. In the end times, however, God will bring Israel back on track joining up with the now much larger heavenly-bound train. During this period of biblical history, however, the time in which we live, Israel's heart is, for the most part, hardened toward their Messiah.

States Paul in Romans 11:25–29 in this regard:

For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery ... that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

Yes, presently Israel is a Gospel-rejecter, but *for the sake of the fathers* (the great OT saints, like Abraham), God will honor Israel at a future time when they too will come to Christ *en masse* (fr. “all together”). God is immutable in His attributes, one being His veracity; He is incapable of lying and is therefore ever-mindful of His *irrevocable* promises! Immutable means He is incapable of change.⁷

At a future time God will change Israel's hearts toward Jesus; this is evident in the clear and powerful passage of Ezekiel 36:24–26. Notice that verse 24 has already been fulfilled in this OT prophesy:

“For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”



Stemming from this passage there should be no doubt: God is not finished with Israel! Prior to examining the fulfillment of these promises in the prophetic book of Revelation, it is important to emphasize that Replacement Theology cannot overcome the aforementioned theological construct without changing its hermeneutical approach to these many straightforward passages.⁸ RT is herein discounted by Romans 11 and Ezekiel 36; in these passages God Himself declares He will be faithful to His own unilateral covenant of Genesis 12!

Therefore, it stands to reason that His “if-then” Covenant of Genesis 12:3 also remains immutable and intact today. That is to say this: the promise of *blessing* or else *cursing* those who *bless* or else *curse* Israel applies for individuals, terrorist groups and nations, today. This biblical fact more than insinuates and informs—it screams loudly—as to why American foreign policy should be extremely positive toward Israel! Such policies *bless* America. Plain stupid is an executive branch or Congress that doesn’t get this!

V. REVELATION 7

This passage of Scripture reveals that there will be 144,000 Jewish evangelists who will herald the Second Coming of Messiah throughout the world. I dare say these Jewish evangelists heralding the Second Coming of Messiah will make us Gentile evangelists of the past look pale in comparison! What a massively-huge turn-around will occur in Israel between now and then! At this point in time, the hard-

ened hearts descriptive of Israel in Romans 11 and Ezekiel 36 are obviously absent. Revelation 7:4 states:

And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel.

Numerous other passages speak of the rebirth of Israel and her inheritance of Jerusalem in conjunction with the Second Coming of the Messiah. These important passages include Zechariah 12:10; Psalm 132:13–14; 2 Chronicles 12:13b; 33:4 & 7b; 1 Chronicles 23:25; 1 Kings 11:36b; and 2Kings 21:7b. The plain meaning of these texts indicates that Israel will not only re-inherit the *land*, again, a prophetic event that has already been fulfilled, but that her heart will subsequently be changed, and the coming Messiah will *bless* the whole earth as He reigns in perfect majesty from Jerusalem as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

A flurry of people will put their faith in the Messiah during these end times (cf. Matthew 24:14).

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; ... (Revelation 7:9).

Salvation is the main theme due to the effectiveness of the 144,000 worldwide Jewish evangelists:

And they cry out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, “Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen” (Revelation 7:10–12).

What a glorious scene! What follows is the 1000-year Jewish-cultured Millennial Kingdom where Jesus will reign over all the earth from Jerusalem—wherein in the Abrahamic Covenant will be literally and ultimately fulfilled!

VI. CONCLUSION

Since God is not through with Israel, and since God has a huge future plan for Israel, it stands to reason—based on the healthy fear all should possess relative to Genesis 12:3—that all individuals and all nations should be sure to stand on the side of Israel. Amen!

Next week we will continue this fascinating study on Israel and go a step further into an even deeper biblical understanding of this subject.



Making Disciples
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Capitol Ministries provides Bible studies, evangelism, and discipleship to political leaders. Founded in 1996, Capitol Ministries has started ongoing ministries in more than forty U.S. state Capitols and dozens of foreign federal Capitols.

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- Romans 11:12a speaks specifically to this.
- George Gilder, *The Israel Test* (Minneapolis: Richard Vigilante Books, 2009).
- Obviously this statement should not be taken too far so as to mean a blanket endorsement of everything the nation might engage in or do that is ethically or morally unsubstantiated.
- Later in Israel’s history, Joshua will lead Israel into the Promised **Land**. In Joshua 3:16 Scripture records that they crossed the Jordan River at a location east of Jericho, which means they crossed just north of the Dead Sea. I mention all that to make a simple point: if Israel were to now revert to her territory prior to the Six Day War she would in essence be forfeiting this area originally promised to them by God as an “*everlasting* possession” (cf. Genesis 17:8).
- There will be two unique people of God relative to future things, both Israel and the Church. The latter does not eclipse the former, as many NT and OT passages evidence, nor will the former enter the Kingdom of God apart from salvation in Christ per John 14:6 and Acts 4:12. In a real sense the spiritual *blessings* of the Abrahamic Covenant accrue to the Church for a time (until God grafts Israel back in) due to the present apostasy of Israel, having executed the Messiah.
- Paul’s first-century letter to the Gentile Church of Rome pertains to God’s sweeping program for Gentile followers of Christ. It is his *summum bonum* (lat. “supreme good”), his *magnum opus* (lat. “greatest work”) pertaining to God’s plan for salvation. He therefore begins his thesis by painting the world in sin (1:1–3:21); in chapters 3:21–5, he presents God’s plan of salvation from sin. In chapters 5–8 he progresses into how the believer ought to live in this world, a discussion he continues in chapters 12–16 after the herein-mentioned parenthetical discussion of God’s plan for Israel. In the contextual thesis of the whole it makes perfect sense that Paul (himself a Jew) would include an overview of God’s *summum bonum* and *magnum opus* for the Jews too! This insight into the greater context of the passages under study adds much weight as to the authorial intent for their inclusion lending much weight to a literal understanding of their meaning. One should therefore not take liberty to “spiritualize” the parenthetical chapters, as if Paul’s language were now suddenly and conversely symbolic, figurative, allegorical, or poetic – and then suddenly change back to a literal understanding in chapters 12–16! To support such is to support a cavalier hermeneutic. Context does not permit such interpretive license.
- It is important to underscore the truths of John 14:6 and Acts 4:12 as it relates to Israel. No one will enter the Kingdom of God apart from faith in Christ. In the End Times a person will not go to heaven just because they are Jewish; it is not as if there is a second pathway to heaven that circumvents the way of the Cross (cf. Luke 3:8–9).
- Replacement Theologians often change their hermeneutic when dealing with prophetic passages so as to avoid the plain meaning, the authorial intent, or literality of passages like these so as to fit a predetermined theological disposition. That is to say they do not consistently apply a grammatical, historical, normative interpretive approach to such passages (like they do the remainder of Scripture wherein they reason—for instance, their convictions relative to their salvation). I believe that to change one’s interpretive rules relative to Bible passages is incongruent; such is to engage in cavalier or hopscotch hermeneutics. It stands to reason that if theologians maintain a consistent grammatical-historical-literal hermeneutic throughout their interpretation of the whole of the Bible, including prophetic passages, that they cannot substantiate a belief in Replacement Theology.

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