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Israel in Prophecy

by Daniel Pel

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Today, around the globe, millions are interested in Bible prophecy and have their eyes on Israel. Their attention is fixed on literal Israel and Jerusalem. This is all heated by the never-ending news of strife and unrest in the Middle East. Christians are speaking about a modern state of Israel, a rebuilt Jewish temple, and a Middle East Armageddon. These subjects are discussed in magazines, books, on TV, internet, and seminars. A large number of Christians see a connection between end time Bible prophecy and Israel. But here is the big question: Are all of these end-time prophecies in Scripture regarding Israel and the temple speaking of the literal nation of the Jews and a physical building, or is there a deeper spiritual application?

Mixed-up Prophecies!

When Jesus came the first time many misunderstood and misapplied the prophecies pointing to His kingdom. They mixed the prophecies of His first coming with those of his Second Coming. They eagerly waited for Jesus to set up a literal earthly kingdom of glory. The people misunderstood His identity and mission. The popular teachings of the day buried the words of Jesus concerning His mission. This all resulted in a great disappointment. Could the Christian church of today be in for a great disappointment as well? Could it be that many are misapplying the prophecies regarding Israel and end time events? What is real Israel today? To understand this subject, we have to take a step back and look at the big picture of God's plan for humanity.

The Name of Israel

“Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”
Gen 12:1-3

Abraham, who is known as the father of the Israelite nation, was in a special way called by God. Abraham finds grace in the eyes of God and is chosen to represent the true God to all the nations around him. He is called to leave his home and go where the Lord leads him. The promise was given that out of him would come a blessed nation. Abraham had a son named Isaac, but up to this point, the name Israel has not even appeared in the Bible. Isaac had two sons named Esau and Jacob. The Bible reveals the remarkable story of how the younger, Jacob, betrayed the older, Esau, and gained the birthright. Though God never condoned this act of deception, it is clear through the entire story that Jacob was to be the one through which the nation of Israel would come. Jacob had 12 sons and each son was the father of a tribe. Ancient Israel was divided into 12 tribes. This is why the Hebrews referred to their God as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So let's take a closer look at the figure Jacob, because the first time that the word Israel appears in the Bible it is connected with Jacob!

After Jacob deceived his brother and father and stole the birthright, he fled from home. For twenty years he lived with his uncle Laban. During these twenty years, Jacob marries the two daughters of Laban and works for him gaining cattle and possessions. On his return to the Promised Land, Jacob faces his brother Esau, who heads towards him with an army of 400 men! The night before they meet, Jacob is all alone in prayer. Suddenly he feels a hand on his shoulder and thinks it might be one of the soldiers of Esau. He wrestles with this individual, not knowing it is a heavenly being come to bring comfort! The wrestling continues all night and as the morning breaks, an amazing conversation occurs between the two.

“And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had. And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.” Gen 32:22-27

Jacob is asked what his name is. This time, he doesn't lie and claim to be someone he isn't. He had lied to his father earlier that he was Esau to gain the birthright. The question, “What is your name?” must have haunted him ever since. Now in all honesty, Jacob admits the truth. The name Jacob means “sup-planter” referring to a “deceiver.” As Jacob realises he has been wrestling with a heavenly being, he clings to the Angel and desires a blessing!

“And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” Gen 32:28

Jacob gets a new name! The name Israel means “to prevail with God.” It is a name denoting victory! It refers to an overcomer. The wrestling pictures the struggle, which leads to repentance and victory. This is the first place where the word Israel appears. The word Israel was first given to one man because of a spiritual victory. This is a very important point to keep in mind as we progress in this study.

The Nation of Israel

Israel (Jacob) dwelt with his 12 sons in the Land of Canaan for many years. The story of Genesis reveals how Joseph, as one of Israel’s sons, ends up in Egypt when sold into slavery by his brothers. But through God’s providence, Joseph becomes the second-in-command of all Egypt and saves his family when famine hits Canaan. Israel and all his sons dwell in Egypt for many years. But times get tough and a new Pharaoh ascends the throne, who doesn’t know Joseph. The descendants of the 12 sons of Israel multiply into 12 tribes and are forced into slavery while in Egypt. A cry of deliverance is heard and God raises up a man by the name of Moses. When Moses is called to deliver the people out of slavery and bondage, God refers to His people as Israel!

“And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me...”
Ex 4:22-23

Here the name Israel is expanded to include Jacobs’s descendants. The name Israel first applied to a victorious man, then to a nation. This is another very important point! Israel first points to a man who gained a spiritual victory, and then to a nation that came out of that man. But did the nation of Israel continue in the ways of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Were they worthy of the name Israel? Did they gain spiritual victories? At times they did and we have some amazing stories in the Old Testament displaying the power and purpose of God in raising up this nation to be a light for the nations around them. But sad to say, the history of ancient Israel as a nation is not a very bright one. God made a covenant with His people, but this covenant was broken time and time again. Prophets and preachers were sent to Israel, but most of the time they were ridiculed and even persecuted by their own people. When Jesus Himself came to His own people the Scriptures tell us that they received Him not (John 1:11). Jesus tells a remarkable parable in Matthew 21

where He describes the history of the Jewish nation.

“Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.” Matt 21:33-45

The vineyard represents Israel and the servants sent to the vineyard are the prophets sent to Israel over and over again. The parable tells us that they are beaten, stoned, and killed. Finally the owner’s son is sent. Jesus refers to Himself here! He indicates through the parable what the people were about to do to Him. Jesus makes it crystal clear that Israel cannot continue as it is. Either the nation was to bear fruit, being a light as was purposed from the very time God called Abraham, or else the kingdom and blessing of God, would be given to another people. An amazing prophecy in the book of Daniel reveals what happened to the nation of Israel. This is also one of the most remarkable prophecies pointing to the ministry and death of Jesus Christ. Let’s take a look.

The Seventy-Week Prophecy

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusa-

lem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks. . .” Daniel 9:24-25

While the prophet Daniel is in Babylon and his people are in captivity because of their sins, Daniel prays and pleads with God for deliverance. The angel Gabriel comes and pronounces a prophetic time period for the nation of Israel to repent from their sins and reconnect with their God. Remember that in Bible prophecy, each day represents a year.

“...I have appointed thee each day for a year.” Ezekiel 4:6

The entire prophecy was to extend for seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety literal years (70 weeks x 7 days in a week = 490 prophetic days = 490 years). But the focus of the prophecy was when the Messiah was to appear. There were to be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three literal years (7 weeks + 62 weeks = 69 weeks x 7 days in a week = 483 prophetic days = 483 years). The Messiah was to appear and be anointed to His mission (“Messiah” is a Hebrew word meaning “anointed one,” like “Christ” in the Greek) four hundred and eighty-three years from the beginning of this prophecy.

When did the prophetic clock begin ticking? “Know therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem.” (v. 25) A decree was to be given that would mark the beginning of this prophecy. It was a decree that was to both restore and build the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was at this time in ruins. Because of the disobedience of the Jewish people, their city and sanctuary had been destroyed and they were taken as captives to the heathen nation of Babylon. God longed for His people to love and follow Him, but they had despised His mercy. He had sent prophet after prophet, but they had rejected each one, and now their city was in ruins as a result of their disobedience. But that was to change. A decree was going to be given that would restore Jerusalem as a temporal city and rebuild it. (The giving of the decree and the time that it was to be given had already been prophesied by the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah. See Isaiah 44:28, Jeremiah 25:11-12, 29:10)

*“And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.”
Ezra 6:14*

“And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the

Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king. And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king.” Ezra 7:7-8

God made sure the decree starting the prophecy was recorded in His Holy Word (you can read the entire decree in Ezra 7:11-26). While there were actually three decrees given, only one met both the prerequisites of restoring Jerusalem to power and rebuilding it. The third and final decree by Artaxerxes, king of Persia, alone fulfilled the specifications of the prophecy of Daniel 9. This decree took effect in the fifth month of the seventh year of his reign. (Ezra 7:8) As recorded in history books, the first year of Artaxerxes was 464 BC, thus his seventh year would have been 457 BC. Artaxerxes' first year started in the spring and so the fifth month would have been in the fall of 457 BC.

In order, then, to discover the exact year that the Messiah was to appear, all one needs to do is add 483 years (the amount of time from the start of the prophecy to when the Messiah was to appear) to 457 BC. (Since 457 is BC, you treat it as a negative number and are actually subtracting it from 483.) This brings us down to AD 26. ($483 - 457 = 26$) There was one slight problem, though. Since the chronologists did not include a zero year (they went from 1 BC to AD 1), we must add one year to make the math calculations come out correctly. The actual date that terminates the sixty-nine weeks would then be the fall of AD 27. ($26 + 1 = 27$) AD 27 was the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar. (He began jointly reigning with his father, Augustus Caesar, in AD 12.) Did anything significant take place in AD 27, the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar?

Jesus Appears Exactly on Time

“Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.” Luke 3:1-3

“Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.” Luke 3:21-22

In the fall of AD 27, the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar, Jesus was baptized, and at His baptism God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit proclaiming, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” After Jesus’ baptism and anointing, Jesus went through Judea proclaiming the time had been fulfilled. What time could have been fulfilled? It could only have been the time pointing to when the Messiah was to be anointed in Daniel 9. Jesus was anointed to His mission as the Messiah at exactly the time foretold five hundred years previous!

The Messiah is Cut Off

“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.” Daniel 9:26

“He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.” Isaiah 53:8

“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, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” Daniel 9:27

“Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure... By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” Hebrews 10: 5-6, 10

This fascinating prophecy does not end with Jesus’ anointing as the Messiah. It portrays the last thing that the Jewish people wanted—a suffering Messiah. The Jews had misinterpreted the prophecies until they believed that the Messiah was going to be a conquering king who was to break the Roman yoke and exalt the Israelite nation on high. They wanted to be set free from the Roman power, but they did not want to be set free from sin in their hearts. They interpreted the prophecies to fit into their hopes and desires rather than allowing the Bible to interpret itself. The priests applied the prophecies of Jesus’ Second Coming to His first coming and thereby led most of the Jewish people to reject their King.

The prophecy predicted that the Messiah was to be “cut off”—“cut off from the land of the living.” The Messiah was to die for the sins of His people. It

does not just tell us that He was to die, but it tells exactly when He was to die. We read “in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.” (v. 27) Jesus brought an end to sacrifice by sacrificing His life for us. No longer do we need to offer physical sacrifices to God, for Jesus brought an end to that Old Testament practice by His death. It was in the middle of the week. This was the last, or seventieth week, of the prophecy. Half of one week would be three and a half, so it was three and a half years (3 ½ prophetic days = 3 ½ years) after Jesus began His mission that He was to die a sacrificial death for all mankind. Through the Gospels, we can trace three and a half years of ministry culminating at Jesus death on the Passover day of AD 31, exactly three and a half years after the fall of AD 27.

Not only was Jesus anointed exactly 483 years (69 prophetic weeks) after the decree was given to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, but He was also crucified exactly three and a half years after beginning His ministry, once again fulfilling the prophecy. When studying this prophecy, there can be no doubt in our minds that Jesus is the only One Who could possibly be the Messiah predicted in the Old Testament. He came at exactly the time foretold. He died at exactly the time predicted. We indeed have a sure word of prophecy and can be certain that Jesus is our Savior and Redeemer! But sad to say, the nation of Israel did not see in Jesus the Messiah. The parable of the vineyard in Matthew 21 came to pass as Jesus predicted.

The Seventy-Week Prophecy Ends

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.” Daniel 9:24

Remember that the seventy-week prophecy, which is 490 years, would begin with the command to restore Jerusalem in 457 BC. This means the prophecy ends in AD 34, three and a half years after the death of Jesus. After the death of Jesus, the Jews still had three and a half years to discover their true condition and turn from their sins. The hand of mercy was reached out to the very people that cried, “Crucify Him, crucify Him!” During this time, the Spirit-filled disciples preached in Jerusalem, resulting in the conversion of many. But the leaders of the nation were bent on destroying this new movement. In AD 34, Stephen, a Spirit-filled deacon of the apostolic church, was taken to appear before the leaders of Israel. In Acts 7, Stephen appeals to the religious leaders of Israel by tracing the history of the nation and pointing to the guidance of God throughout their history. Finally Stephen reiterates what Jesus already portrayed in the parable of the vineyard. He points to the

fact that they were responsible for the death of the prophets and even the very Messiah! This was too much for the leaders of Israel and they ending up stoning Stephen (Acts 7:51-60), making him the first Christian martyr. Stephen's death marks the end of the seventy- week prophecy. Israel was no longer the special chosen nation of God. From this very time the gospel went to the Gentiles. Shortly after, Jerusalem and its temple were destroyed in AD 70 by the Roman army. Remember that in the time of the prophet Daniel the command was given to restore Jerusalem and the temple. God allowed this to happen with the condition that the Jews would turn to Him. Again His protective hand was removed from this nation after the seventy weeks ended since the Jews had not repented and turned from their sins. Now the Gospel goes to the Gentiles with power. But there is an important question. Who is the spiritual head of this new nation of believers? Remember that ancient Israel came out of Jacob. Jacob received the name Israel. Who is the new Israel?

Jesus is the New Israel!

“And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” Luke 4:16-21

The Scripture that Jesus read was taken from the book of Isaiah. After He read the passage, which was always believed to be a prophecy pointing to Israel as a nation, He applies the prophecy to Himself! The people listening were shocked. All those in the synagogue were startled when Christ made the application to Himself. Jesus said: Today this Scripture is fulfilled! That very Scripture was fulfilled in Jesus, the new Israel. But not only was this Scripture fulfilled in the life of Christ —there are many prophecies that initially pointed to the nation of Israel, which Christ fulfilled in His life on earth. Especially in the Gospel of Matthew, we find numerous references to prophetic fulfillments in the life of Christ.

“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, behold, a virgin

shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” Matt 1:21-23

*“And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be **fulfilled** which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.” Matt 2:13-15*

*“And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be **fulfilled** which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.” Matt 2:23*

*“And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: That it might be **fulfilled** which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, the land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.” Matt 4:14-16*

*“When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be **fulfilled** which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” Matt 8:16-17*

*“All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be **fulfilled** which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.” Matt 13:34-35*

*“And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me... All this was done, that it might be **fulfilled** which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.” Matt 21:1-5*

Matthew shows that not only Messianic prophecies, but also seemingly random events foretold in the Old Testament are fulfilled by Jesus in the New Testament. The New Testament writers recognized that Jesus was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies—not the nation of Israel. In fact, all the

promises given to Israel center in Christ!

“For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” 2 Cor 1:20

The promises are YES in Him, not YES in Israel. Though it was God’s desire to fulfill His promises in ancient Israel, this did not happen due to the rejection of His Son. Instead, all promises fulfilled in Christ Jesus. If you start going over the Old Testament and say that the prophetic events still have to happen in Israel, you are actually interpreting the Bible as if Jesus was not the One He promised to be! In essence, many are making the same mistake as the Jews in the days of Jesus. They failed to see the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies in Jesus Christ. This happened because they had different expectations regarding the coming Messiah. Today many Christians, though they acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, have different expectations regarding modern Israel. The promises and prophecies that many Jews and Christians are waiting for have already been fulfilled in Christ!

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” John 5:39

The misinterpretation of Bible prophecy has caused millions to take their eyes off Jesus and place them on frail humanity. The never-ending strife in the Middle East has sparked a new interpretation of prophecies regarding Israel in Scripture. But we cannot interpret Bible prophecy based on the next headlines in the news. A sound and sensible interpretation takes the above words of Jesus seriously. The Scriptures center in Christ and there is no doubt that He presents Himself as the new Israel.

The Prophecies of Israel Apply to the Followers of Jesus!

Where Israel failed Jesus was victorious. Remember that in the Old Testament, the name Israel first applied to one man, Jacob, to represent his spiritual victory over sin. Even so, in the New Testament, Jesus Christ is the Israel who is victorious over all sin! Literal Israel failed to fulfill their calling and so God looks for a new nation coming out of a new man.

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” Gal 3:16

“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are

all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal 3:26-29

We become part of Jesus and therefore part of spiritual Israel by faith! The promises of literal Israel are now the promises of spiritual Israel. When you come to Jesus, you partake of all His promises. By faith you are incorporated in spiritual Israel. God is not concerned about chromosomes and genes—He is concerned about faith and obedience. When baptized, you accept the death and resurrection of Christ and become true Israel! All New Testament writers understood this. Notice how Peter addressed the Gentiles who now had faith in Jesus as their Saviour.

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." 1 Peter 2:9-10

The Bible truths about Israel give us a new focus. The whole focus is Jesus who is the overcomer! By coming to Him, we become part of spiritual Israel and, through His help, gain victory over sin like Jacob did.

"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Rom 2:28-29

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Rev 3:12-13

This is a promise to the movement of God and it is a promise to you. May you be an overcomer through the power of Jesus—your Israel!

