

Teague Bible Church

Jimmy Petty
Pastor/Teacher
Teague, TX

Who Are The People Of God?

At the second coming Christ will do several things in regard to His people. It is an important point to establish for whom these promises are intended for.

1. What is the relationship between the people of God in the Old Testament and the people of God in the New Testament?

Matthew 21:33-46

(Spoken in the presence of the disciples, but directed toward the Pharisees and the chief priest)

Before attempting to see what this parable means, look at the Old Testament references. Jesus is building upon the story of the vineyard in Isaiah 5:1-7.

It was spoken to Judah about the time that the Northern kingdom of Israel was about to fall to Assyria (722 B.C.). Judah was in danger also and fell to the Babylonians in 522 B.C.

Isaiah 5:1-7

Vineyard=Israel

Stones taken out=former inhabitants of Canaan

*This is a prediction that Israel (Northern and Southern Israel) will be overrun by Assyria and later Babylon.

Jesus builds on this farther (He has just cleansed the temple and the Jewish Leadership ask, "By what authority do you do these things?" cf. V. 23,45)

Who is who in the parable? (Matt. 21:33-46)

- † Lord of the Vineyard=God
- † Operators of Vineyard=Pharisees, Jewish Leaders
- † Servants=Prophets
- † Son=Jesus
- † Vineyard=Israel

In Isaiah God lets the vineyard be overrun (i.e. the Captivity) In Matthew the vineyard is OK but the management is terrible.

What will the Owner of the Vineyard Do?

(It's amazing how naïve they were as they spoke against themselves) v.41 He will put it under new management.

Who will be the new management?

The apostles are the new management.

Matthew 19:27-28

Why 12 apostles? To correspond to the 12 tribes of Israel.

Some may object: Mt. 21:43 says that He gives it to a "nation".

In the book of 1st Peter 2:9 it calls believers in Christ, "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation."

Why would Peter refer to believers in Christ as a nation? Christians are not a political entity but a spiritual entity.

Reason: He is using terminology out of Exodus 19:5 which God used previously to apply exclusively to Israel.

This terminology now applies to New Testament believers in Christ.

Matthew 22:1-14 (also Luke) 14:16

He did not call off the wedding.

People who reject=Israel

City destroyed=Jerusalem in 70 A.D. by Titus and Roman legions.

Mistreated slaves=prophets

Man without garment=someone still unsuited (not clothed with the righteousness of Christ)

*Main Point: Jesus ministered to His own people first (John 1:11), the lost sheep of the house of Israel; told disciples to go to Jews first, they rejected Jesus (for the most part) so the gentiles are invited also.

In the early days of the church it was made up of Jews who had believed in Jesus. Believing Jews were the nucleus (apostles, 120 in upper room, etc.) but later gentiles also.

Romans 11

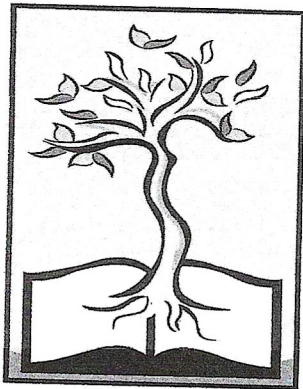
(Romans 9-11 is dealing with the problem of unbelief in Israel)

Paul's objectors: "Paul how is it possible that your gospel is the fulfillment of O.T. prophecies, if the nation of Israel, for the most part, has rejected it? They, of all people should know what the O.T. promises were and they should be able to evaluate whether your preaching contains the fulfillment of O.T. promises. Since they rejected it, doesn't that cast doubt on the truthfulness of what you are saying?"

Paul answers that there is a misunderstanding among the Jews.

Problem: Simply being a Jew is not sufficient to becoming heir to the promises of God.

Olive Tree



Good Olive Tree=Israel
Tree=Gentiles
(Hos. 14:6 Jer. 11:16)
Roots=patriarchs and the promises
Genesis 12, etc.

Wild Olive

Some of the branches on the good tree are broken off for unbelief in Jesus. V.17

Jews who rejected Jesus as the Messiah were broken off the tree (i.e. the promises made to the fathers.)

So God took wild olive branches and grafted them into the good tree. (I.e. Gentiles)

(Usually you take a good branch and put it on a poor tree to increase the yield. Paul knows that and says that this is "contrary to nature" but for the point of the illustration it works to show this continuity between O.T. and N.T. believers, Jew and Gentile)

**Being grafted into the tree does not insure salvation. If they (Gentiles) turn out to be unbelievers they will be broken off too.

*Being a branch means being associated with the people of God

The ultimate test of salvation is the fruit that is produced.

Check John 15 as a parallel to this-Judas associated with Christ but not a believer. (Passage comes immediately after Judas has betrayed Christ)

Also check Wedding feast-man with a wrong garment, he was there but not real believer. Matt. 22:1-14

Check Wheat and Tares parable Matt. 13 similar but not true believer.

The picture is between real believers vs. professing believers.

The olive tree is Israel=believing Jews stay on; Gentiles who believe are grafted into Israel. Gentiles become a part of Israel. Believing Jew (Paul, Peter, other believing Jews) stay on the tree!

Ephesians 2:11-12 (Paul is speaking to Gentile Christians about their former condition.)

Cut off from Israel, not citizens with the "saints" i.e. believing Israel.

On the outside looking in.

Christ work on the cross has made two separate groups into one!!!

Eph. 2:13, 19-20 Saints=Jewish Saints

GENTILES ARE BROUGHT INTO THE COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL made available to every promise of God that was ever made to Israel the nation.

Ephesians 3:3 (Mysterion) A Mystery - a truth one time hidden but now revealed.

"In other ages" - (before time of new covenant) this mystery had not been made know before.

Objection: "I can take you to passage after passage that shows that God has promised things to Israel! That's right, but Paul says that is not the final story. There is progressive revelation here. This one time mystery is now revealed.

V. 6- Israel is not an end in themselves, but a channel to accomplish God's purpose for all men who would believe.

WHAT WAS ONCE RESERVED FOR ISRAEL (and proselytes to Judaism) is now thrown open to all who would believe in Christ, they become heirs of the O.T. promises of God.

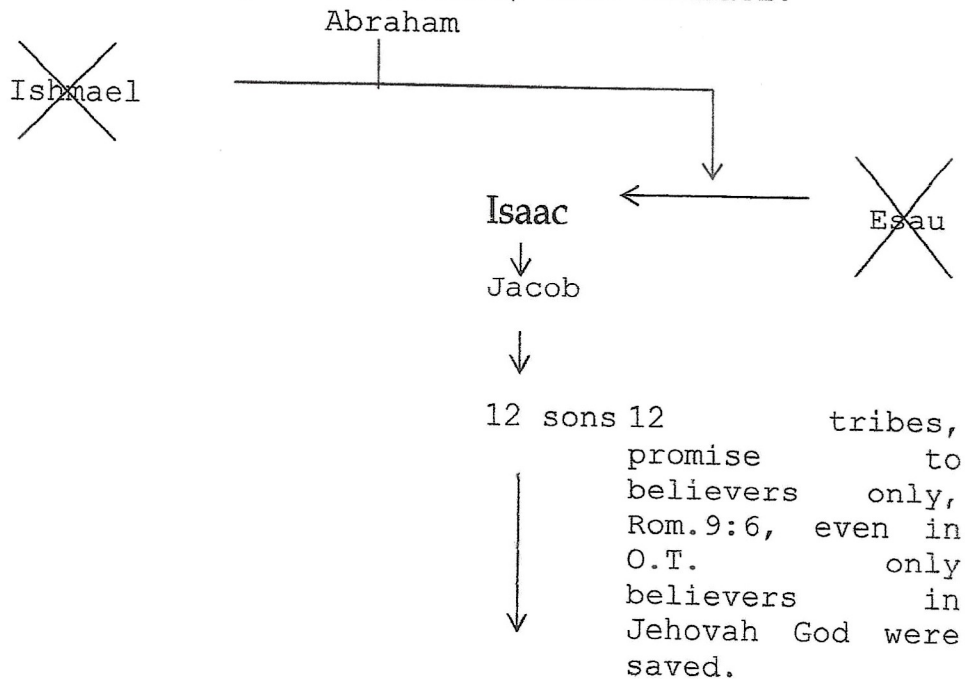
Some say that Gentiles just inherit the promises of salvation, but not the physical promises. Paul nowhere makes that distinction!

Galatians 3:13-14 (The Judizers are troubling the church by saying that faith in Christ is not enough, they must also observe the rites, laws, rituals of national Israel. National Jews were trying to proselyte them.)

**Christ became a curse so that the Abrahamic blessings might come on the Gentiles.

Galatians 3:16 (Promise to Abraham 'Gen. 12' and his "seed" (singular'))

This promise not to all physical descendants, Abraham misunderstood at first, i.e. Eliezar, i.e. Ishmael.



Christ Still farther
distinctions
narrow down to
just one person,
Christ, the
"seed".

What God
ultimately meant
by your "seed".

Well does that mean that the only ones to be blessed are Abraham and Christ?

The final revelation on this is that all who are in Christ are Abraham's seed; therefore all who believe get the promises of Abraham.

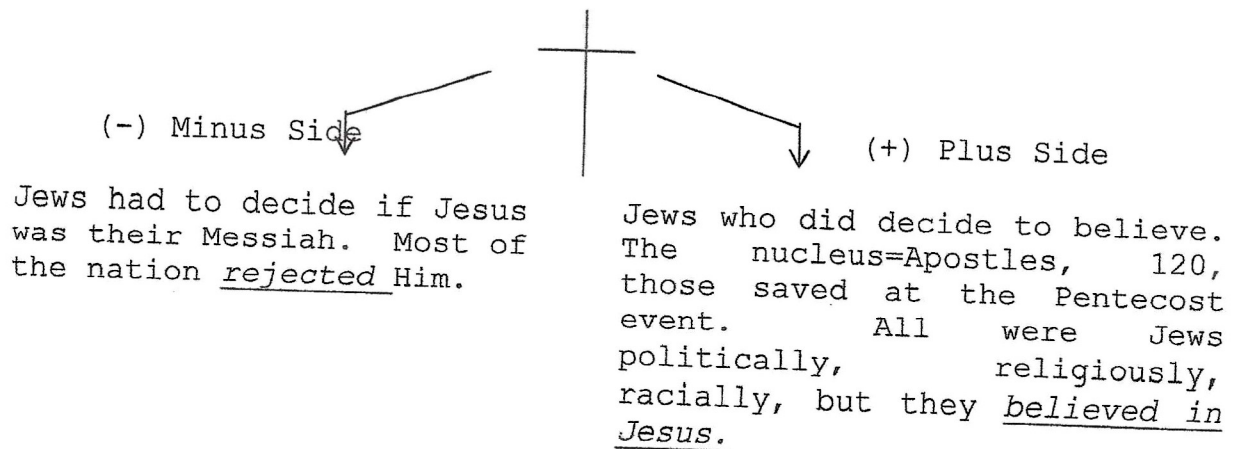
Some say, "You are confusing the physical seed of Abraham with the spiritual seed of Abraham."

The Bible nowhere makes that distinction. Only a system of theology called Dispensationalism does so.

***Remember that Paul in Gal. 3:16 is referring to Gen. 13:15 the direct promise of the land!!! (Some versions say "descendants" but the literal word is "seed" thus the point of Paul's argument.)

Point: There is continuity between O.T. believers and N.T. believers.

Promises Made to Abraham and His Descendants



Question: Do the promises God made to Abraham go to the plus side or the minus side?
It can't go both ways.

Dispensationalism: Says to the minus side—Believing Israelite (accept Jesus as Messiah and Savior) get cut off from the promise to the nation Israel and become part of the church with a whole new set of promises (called church promises). The original promises made to Abraham (land, blessing, Davidic king) remain with unbelieving Israel. They could not be fulfilled at the time of Christ because of unbelief. It is postponed until 2nd coming of Christ when many Israelites will be saved, then these physical promises will be fulfilled in the millennium. (I.e. 1000 years)

Dispensationalism claims to be the "literal" method of interpretation but they move away from that when it pleases their case.

The O.T. promises about the land (Gen. 15:18, 12:7, 17:7-8) use the Hebrew word "forever". 1000 years is not forever. Older dispensationalist were more consistent (even though Biblically wrong) and said that Israel would be in literal Palestine forever.

They say that Ezekiel 40-48 will be fulfilled in the millennium, but these passages talk about animal sacrifices for sin taking place, which goes directly against N.T. teaching! (Hebrew 9:11-12, 10:1-10, 8:6-13)

NO INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY MUST CONTRADICT EXPLICIT N.T. TEACHING

Modern Dispensationalist has changed their views and say that the land promises will be fulfilled in the mill. (Which is not forever) but then these Jews will join us in the New Jerusalem. (Rev. 21)

Dispensationalists believe that the church and Israel are totally separate. (Moody Press, Dallas Theological Seminary, Ryrie, Scholfield Reference Bible, Hal Lindsey, David Hocking, Zola Levitt, all promote this view)

The ultimate fulfillment of the land promises are fulfilled in the New Jerusalem. Hebrews 11:8-16/ Rev. 21 all the saints in one place v. 12-14

Hebrews 11:39-40 complete in the New Jerusalem.

** The correct view is called the "Historic view" this is the view held by the entire Christian church until the 19th century. The promises come through the true Israelites, the Jews who believe in Jesus as Messiah, and then later Gentiles are added also. Unbelieving Israel got cut off, but if they believe they can be grafted into the promises of God.

*Read Rom. 11 where Paul says "there is a remnant even within Israel and I am part of that remnant". How could he say that if he had been totally cut off?

* How could we read Eph. 2 where Gentiles are now part of the commonwealth of Israel, the mystery of Eph. 3, without knowing that Paul, Andrew, Peter, etc., are fulfilled Israelites? They are not cut off from any promises; they are what Israel was intended to be all along.

Point: The church is the believing remnant of Israel, the seed of Abraham. "Forever" still means forever and the promises take on their full meaning by the revelation of the N.T.

If Dispensationalism is true then in the end times God is working two plans for two groups of people. Therefore Dispensationalists have two of everything.

- † A two-stage second coming (An anytime rapture, then 7 years tribulation then the second coming)
- † Two resurrections (One for the church, one for Israel)
- † Two judgments.

** If as I believe you see the people of God as being a single continuity between O.T. and N.T. believers (Jew or Gentile) then there is only one people of God.

Sometimes we are accused of allegory: "When I read the O.T. that God will bless Israel, I take that literally, that Israel means Israel, you are trying to make Israel mean the Church."

Answer: No, I don't make Israel mean the Church. When God spoke to Israel He meant Israel! It is not that Israel means the Church but that the believing remnant of Israel became the Church, not that something stands for something else (allegory) but that one is the lineal descendant of the other.

The "Church" (as known by that name) did not come into existence until 30 A.D. at Pentecost. The question is not when it came into existence but the point is that its nucleus was made up originally of believing Israelites!!! Jeremiah 31 predicted a "New Covenant". Jesus announced this new covenant in the upper room the night before the crucifixion. Luke 22:20

The New Covenant is Christianity!!!

Some say, "but Jer. 31 is promised to Israel! So this could not be Christianity."

Of course it was made to Israel. There was not a Gentile one among the disciples, nor in the upper room. God promised it to Israel and it was fulfilled to Israelites but later Gentiles were admitted to!!! Eph.3

THE NEW TESTAMENT IS GOD'S FINAL REVELATION; YOU MUST INTERPRET O.T. IN THE FULLER LIGHT OF THE N.T.

Dispensationalism was never heard of until it became public through a man named John Nelson Darby. He made six trips from England to America between 1859 and 1874. Dispensational teaching had connected itself to a strong battle for the Bible against theological liberalism in the 19th century. All of these men holding this view are Bible-believing Christians. My library is full of their works and commentaries, but upon this subject of eschatology they use an interpretation principle that they would dare not use in other portions of Scripture. They have an emotional attachment to this error because of its mixture with so much good that was done in defending the faith and renewing our interest in the events of the second coming. Thank God for these men, but truth is still truth. You must search the scripture for yourself, see what other men of God would say on such matters and never break fellowship with a person who really knows Christ and serves Him even if you don't have total agreement on every verse of Scripture.

The exclusive terms for Israel used of the Church.

Supplementary

Galatians 6:15-16 "For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and (or, even) upon the Israel of God."

The Greek "kai" here can mean "even" or "and", most agree that it is "even" here meaning the entire church made up of Jews and Gentiles. In view of the "seed of Abraham" passage "even" would be the better translation here.

Circumcision=Israel Acts 10:45, 11:2-3, Rom. 3:30, 4:9, 15:8-9

Gentiles Philipians 3:1-3

Dispersion= Israel - Deut. 28:25, 30:4, Jer. 41:17, John 7:35

Gentiles - James 1:1, I Pet. 1:1 both these books written to mixed congregation of believers, believing Jews and Gentiles.

Royal Priesthood, Holy Nation, Chosen Generation:

Israel - Isaiah 43:20

Gentiles - Royal priesthood (Rev. 1:6), holy nation, chose generation 1 Peter 2:9-11

Eph. 2:11-12 compare to I Peter 2:10 the Gentiles

I Cor. 10:18 literally "Look at the nation Israel according to the flesh." It is implied that there is an Israel "after the Spirit"=the Church. National Israel compared to: believing remnant of Israel and Gentile believers = the Church.

Rev. 19:7 compare Is. 62:4-5, Eph. 5: 25-29 BRIDE OF CHRIST

Ck. Acts 15 - Mt. 2:15 - Mat. 8:17, Acts 8:30-35 (ck. Is. 53: -Rom. 9 as compared to Hosea. These passages are interpreted by New Testament writers in the light of the events of Christ interpret these passages. O.T. prophecies and their N.T. fulfillment.