

Jewish Root Theology: An even simpler Biblical rebuttal

Introduction

I have written on the matter of Christians following Jewish ideas, culture, philosophy, religion and theology many times since it is a serious error and a common practice. Usually I just get labelled 'anti-Semitic' (which I deny¹) and the accusers don't even bother to interact with the arguments. This failure to debate and instead throw personal (ad hominem) accusations demonstrates the weakness of their position. To this day I have not had one of my arguments successfully overcome by a Jewish Root preacher.

In this simple, concise, paper I want to show why it is wrong in the most basic Biblical terms, without delving into long arguments. [For those who want such, see my book, *The Veil of Moses*.]

Israel was an example of election to demonstrate God's grace until the Messiah came

All the doctrines of grace are modelled in the Old Testament in history, teaching, prophecy, poetry and typology. This is to enable us to understand doctrine better. All Scripture is designed to help us know doctrine better and use it for godliness (2 Tim 3:16). Thus the blood offerings show us different aspects of the sacrifice of Christ and the Tabernacle reveals aspects of our fellowship with God.

In the same way the choosing of Israel, the fewest of peoples (Deut 7:7), is an aid to understanding the election of grace. The sins of Israel also show us the patience and eventual chastisement of God, which is very relevant to the Christian walk today. Israel is an example to us to avoid their mistakes (1 Cor 10:6), and this was God's chief intention.

Israel was formed as a nation after the Exodus at roughly the same time as the giving of the law. Biblical Israel is, in fact, totally identified with the law (1 Kg 8:9; 2 Chron 5:10). The covenant that secured Israel in God's plan is equated with the giving of the law. Paul says that Israel was privileged to have the oracles of God (the law; Rm 3:2).

So, if the law is abrogated then Israel too is finished in the form of a fleshly nation. If the covenant is changed, then Israel's place in God's plan is altered. Make no mistake, the place of Israel in God's plan is based upon the operation of the Mosaic Law and the Old Covenant (the two are intertwined; Ex 34:28; Deut 4:13; Heb 9:4).

Now we know that the law is fulfilled in Christ (Rm 10:4) and that the Old Covenant has passed away (Heb 8:13). Christians are dead to the external form of law found in the Mosaic Law (Rm 7:4) and are under a New Covenant in Christ (Heb 7:22, 9:15, 12:22-24). In fact Christians are no longer even natural men but are a new creation in Christ (2 Cor 5:17); a spiritual creature where the moral law of God is internalised in the new nature.

[God] also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. But if the ministry of death, written *and* engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses

¹ I have had Jewish friends; many of my favourite musicians and actors are Jewish and I even subscribed to the Prayer For Israel newsletter for over 20 years.

because of the glory of his countenance, which *glory* was passing away, how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious. For if the ministry of condemnation *had* glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. For if what is passing away *was* glorious, what remains *is* much more glorious. 2 Cor 3:6-11

The glory of the Old Covenant is thus superseded by the glory of the New (Heb 7:22). Christ, as the Son of the Lord, is greater than Moses, a mere servant (Heb 3:5-6). The temple is unnecessary since the body of Christ is the temple (Eph 2:20-22). A High Priest is unnecessary because Christ is the Great High Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb 7:17-22). An altar is unnecessary since Christ is the altar (Heb 9:24, 13:10). Blood sacrifices are unnecessary since Christ fulfilled them all in the offering of his body (Heb 9:12-14).

The purpose in God's election of Israel

In being an example to elect believers today, Israel was called to perform various functions and blessed with certain privileges. The privileges included:

- Being called God's son (Hos 11:1).
- Being God's servant to the nations (Isa 41:8-9).

These tasks were so that Israel would be:

- God's ambassador to the nations with the message of salvation (Isa 49:6).
- A light to the Gentiles so that they could know God (Isa 49:8).
- A covenant to the nations (Isa 49:8).

BUT Israel rebelled against God, committed spiritual adultery and failed in every mission.

This failure was predestined to show that only God himself could save; that only God could be entrusted with the mission to save. Thus God sent his only begotten Son to do what Israel could not do. When the Son came, as the replacement for Israel, the fleshly nation of Israel no longer had any purpose and so the kingdom was taken away (Matt 21:43). The covenant that established Israel was cancelled and a new Covenant established in the blood of Jesus (see later).

Just one example demonstrating that Jesus had superseded Israel in God's purposes is that Hosea 11:1 applies the sonship to Israel; but Matt 2:15 takes that same passage and applies it to Jesus. It clearly says that the prophet's words are applicable to Jesus and not Israel. This sort of change in prophetic interpretation is continually repeated in the NT. Thus Jesus is God's Son (Matt 3:17); Jesus is God's servant to the nations (Acts 3:13, 26, 4:27, 30).

The corollary of this is that those included in the body of Christ - the elect, the church - are also included in Christ's mission. Because they are united in Christ they are also sons of God and tasked to take the Gospel to the nations on behalf of Christ. It is the church that is given authority by Christ to disciple the nations, not fleshly Israel (Matt 28:18-19).

Israel is no longer God's people, God's nation

The whole expression of God's purpose was changed at the cross and the whole focus placed upon Christ. He is the centrality of our worship and attention (Col 1:18). This means that there can be no focus upon what is now past – i.e. upon Israel. The Old Covenant is gone and all the fleshly trappings that went with it, including a fleshly nation. The New Covenant is spiritual and not earthly. Thus the people of God are not Jews but the elect; the nation of God's people is not Israel but the elect.

You *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. 1 Pt 2:9-10

If the church is the chosen generation, then it cannot also be Israel. If the church is a royal priesthood, then there are no priests and princes in Israel. If the church is God's special people, then Israel is not. If the church is the holy nation, then Israel is not.

Israel rejected and killed their own Messiah

So what does Peter say about Israel in this context? He says,

Therefore, to you who believe, *He is* precious; but to those who are disobedient, 'the stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone,' and 'a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence.' They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. 1 Pt 2:7-8

He clearly states that Israel rejected Christ, who became the chief cornerstone of a new building, the church. Israel stumbled through its disobedience; in fact Israel was predestined to this disobedience ('appointed', *tithemi* can mean 'establish' or 'ordain'). In this Peter repeats what all the apostles taught about Israel, that it rejected Christ, that it murdered the Messiah and that it has been condemned as a result.

The Judaeans, who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men. 1 Thess 2:14-15

Note the simple statement, 'The Judaeans (i.e. Jews) ... do not please God'. How can this be changed into, 'The Jews please God and are his only chosen people'?

How can, 'The Judaeans, who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets,' be changed to, 'The Jews did not kill Jesus'?

Do we need more texts; how about a quote from Stephen, the godly martyr.

Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers. Acts 7:52

Stephen says, unequivocally, that it was the Jews who killed Jesus, not the Romans. How about a quote from Peter:

Let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified. Acts 4:10

Speaking to the Jewish rulers, the representatives of the Jewish nation, he says that they killed the Lord. But it isn't good enough to say that it was the ruler's fault and no blame can be applied to the whole people. It was the whole crowd that bayed for Jesus' blood, not just the Scribes and Pharisees. Therefore Peter, speaking to ordinary Jews says,

Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know -- Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death. Acts 2:22-23

So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: "Men of Israel ... But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. Acts 3:12, 14-15

All Jews are responsible for the blood of Jesus because the crowd made an oath, 'All the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children"' (Matt 27:25).

Chief claims of Jewish Root teaching are that Jesus was not killed by Jews and that God did not reject them as his people. The claims of Jewish Root teachers are lies. They disobey God's clear words.

Israel lost the kingdom

Quoting Moses and Isaiah Paul says,

But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says: 'I will provoke you to jealousy by *those who are* not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation.' But Isaiah is very bold and says: 'I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me.' But to Israel he says: 'All day long I have stretched out My hands To a disobedient and contrary people.'

Rm 10:19-21

Israel is a disobedient and contrary people. They are not God's people any longer. God's people are a nation that did not seek God but has now found him. The Lord Jesus put it very clearly when he said that,

I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. Matt 21:43

This is unequivocal. The kingdom has been taken away from Israel, from Jews, and given to those who bear the fruit of the Spirit; those in the New Covenant; the elect from all nations; the church (comprising Jews and Gentiles).

What about the promises to Israel in the OT?

This is the chief cause of the problem with those who favour Israel. Dispensational theology gave rise to the literal interpretation of the OT even when it was absurd. Thus one Dispensational Study Bible teaches that God has physical arms and legs etc. when Scripture says,

- 'He is not a man, as I am.' Job 9:32
- 'God is not a man.' Num 23:19
- 'God is Spirit.' Jn 4:24

This literal interpretation leads people to continue to apply the promises to Israel in the OT to this present time, when the NT changes these promises as a result of the cross. The NT, and especially apostolic teaching (the final words of Christ), must interpret the OT in the light of the New Covenant.

It is a chief principle of Biblical interpretation that Scripture must interpret itself. Thus we must see how the apostles interpret these OT promises. What they do is to apply them to the church. This is only to be expected since we have seen that the kingdom has been taken from Israel, that Israel rejected Christ and that Israel is no longer the people of God. There are so many examples of this that I can only give a few here.

Isa 45:25 says that, 'In the LORD all the descendants of Israel shall be justified, and shall glory.' Taken literally, all Jews will be justified in the Lord. Indeed, many adopt this line and teach that, one day, all Jews will be saved. Paul teaches otherwise in Romans 11 explaining that only elect Jews will be saved just as elect Gentiles will be saved. This verse cannot be taken literally since millions of Jews have died and were not saved. All the descendants of Israel were not justified at all. To this day very few Jews are being justified; most die in their sins. This verse can only be interpreted as 'all the elect will be justified in Christ', the true descendants of God's people. Paul explains that only those with faith in Christ are justified (Rm 5:1; Gal 2:16); indeed that it is a definition of being a Christian. This verse can only apply to Christians, whether Jew or Gentile.

Zech 12-14 is applied by Jewish Root teachers to a future Jewish state. But this is in contradiction to Jn 19:37 which quotes Zech 12:10 as being fulfilled at the cross. Rev 1:7

repeats this in connection with the Second Coming of Christ. Matt 26:31 quotes Zech 13:7 as being fulfilled at the cross.

Dispensationalists state that Ps 132:13-16 refers to physical Jerusalem by taking the passage literally. Yet the NT states that: God is working (Jn 5:17), that he dwells in his people (1 Cor 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16), that the church is his temple (1 Cor 3:16; Eph 2:21) and that he does not dwell in a place made with hands (Heb 8:1-2, 9:11, 24).

There are many titles and attributes of Israel that the apostles applied to the Church:

- Beloved of God: Ex 15:13; Deut 33:3; Ezra 3:11; cf. Rm 9:25; Eph 5:1; Col 3:12; 1 Jn 3:1.
- Children of God: Ex 4:22; Deut 14:1; Isa 1:2,4; cf. Jn 1:12, 11:52; Rm 8:14, 16; 2 Cor 6:18; Gal 3:26.
- The Field of God: Jer 12:10; cf. 1 Cor 3:9.
- The Flock of God: Ps 78:52, 80:1; Isa 40:11; cf. Jn 10:14, 16; Heb 13:20; 1 Pt 2:25, 5:2-3.
- The House of God: Num 12:7; cf. 1 Tim 3:15; Heb 13:2, 5, 6, 10:21; 1 Pt 4:17.
- The Kingdom of God: Ex 19:6; 1 Chron 17:14, 28:5; cf. Rm 14:17; 1 Cor 4:20; Col 1:13, 4:11; Rev 1:6.
- The people of God: Ex 6:7; Deut 27:9; 2 Sam 7:23; cf. Rm 9:25; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 4:12, 5:3; 2 Thess 1:10.
- Priests of God: Ex 19:6; cf. 1 Pt 2:5, 9; Rev 1:6, 5:10.
- The Vineyard of God: Isa 5:3-7; Jer 12:10; cf. Lk 20:16.
- The Bride of God: Isa 54:5-6; Jer 2:2; Ezek 16:32; cf. 2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:31-32.
- The Children of Abraham: 2 Chron 20:7; Ps 105:6; Isa 41:8; cf. Rm 4:11, 16; Gal 3:7, 29, 4:23, 28, 31.
- The Chosen people: Deut 7:7, 10:15; Isa 43:20-21; cf. Col 3:12; 1 Pt 2:9.

There are also many references to Israel applied to Christians:

- Lev 26:11,12; Ezek 37:27 cf. 2 Cor 6:16.
- Deut 30:12-14; cf. Rm 10:6-8.
- Deut 31:6; cf. Heb 13:5.
- Deut 32:36; Ps 135:14; cf. Heb 10:30.
- Ps 22:22; cf. Heb 2:12.

These examples could be multiplied.

What is the upshot of all this?

The chief point is that the church must concentrate upon Christ; he is to be pre-eminent (Col 1:18). Any focusing of attention on to a fleshly nation is a sin because it takes the attention away from Christ. What is worse it does this by teaching lies and twisting God's word to do it.

The centre of God's operation is not Israel, it is Christ and always has been. From the very first the decree was focused in Christ and thus the promise to Abraham was about Christ and not Israel. The Seed who would inherit the covenantal blessing promise to Abraham is not Israel, not Jews as a race, but Christ. Paul makes this very clear:

What purpose then *does* the law *serve*? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made. Gal 3:19

The law (and Israel) was a temporary feature until the Seed of the Abrahamic promise should come, and that is Christ.

Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as of many, but as of one, 'And to your Seed,' who is Christ. Gal 3:16

The reason why the church is now the people of God is because the church is the body of Christ; all the elect believers who are united in Christ by the baptism of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:13). Thus the church is also the Seed (in Christ):

If you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal 3:29

Therefore, we must understand Israel spiritually, as the apostles interpret it. Thus the church is the spiritual Jerusalem from above

Jerusalem which now is, ... is in bondage with her children -- but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. Gal 4:25-26

The spiritual promises about Jerusalem now apply to the church, not Israel. They are no longer material promises but spiritual ones. As the writer to the Hebrews explains it:

For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard *it* begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. ... But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel. Heb 12:18-24

Therefore, Paul, talking about the real meaning of a Jew as being 'praise' to God² says, For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, nor *is* circumcision that which *is* outward in the flesh; but *he is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God. Rm 2:28-29

Thus he claims that Christians are the circumcision (a term referring to Israel), For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus. Phil 3:3

Until Christ came and brought about the New Covenant in the Spirit, God's people were in bondage to elementary things. Israel was elementary and temporary.

When we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law. Gal 4:3-4

To keep centring on Israel after the flesh is to stay in this bondage.

But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how *is it that* you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? You observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid for you, lest I have laboured for you in vain. Gal 4:9-11

For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar. Gal 4:24

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. Gal 5:1-2

Christ is freedom; following Jewish law, doctrine, feasts, rituals and practice is bondage.

The teaching of Jewish Root preachers is bondage; they are false brethren.

False brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage). Gal 2:4

² Judah means 'praise'.

Thus Paul says of his Jewish heritage,

For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith. Phil 3:3-9

Thus he warns believers to avoid Jewish Root teachers,

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! Phil 3:2

[Mutilation being a sarcastic reference to Jewish teachers; cf. Gal 5:12, wishing that Judaisers would castrate themselves.]

The real modern Judaism

Finally, we must explode the myth that the modern Jewish religion is the counterpart of faithful Old Testament obedience to the Torah (Five Books of Moses). Deceived Christians thus get involved with Zionism in the guise of Messianic Christianity, support Israeli politics (even when it commits atrocities), criticise Palestinians and Arabs, support rabbinic statements, and adopt Jewish culture.

The truth is that modern Judaism is nothing like that of either the time of Jesus or the time of Moses. In fact, modern Judaism is quite fragmented, being the product of very many types. However, the most common form, rabbinic Judaism, is not the product of Moses but the Pharisees; the traditional enemies of Jesus.

The Jewish Encyclopaedia³ conforms that the chief authoritative source for modern Jews is the Babylonian Talmud. This was developed by rabbis (mostly the descendants of the Pharisees) after the destruction of the temple in 70AD. It was necessary since God had sovereignly destroyed the ability of Jews to practise Mosaic Judaism. They had no temple, no altar, no ark, and no official formal priesthood. Note this: God destroyed the ability of Mosaic Judaism to function as an act of judgment, prophesied by Jesus (Matt 24:15-16; Mk 13:14; Lk 19:43-44, 21:20). So a new Judaism was developed centred on the synagogue and rabbinic authority. This is emphatically anti-Christian. Indeed, the Babylonian Talmud repeatedly blasphemes Christ in the foulest ways. No other religion blasphemes Christ as much as this document.

A further irony is that most modern Jews are not actually blood relatives of Abraham at all but come from large influxes of proselytes in history (chiefly Ashkenazis⁴). 90% of modern Jews are not Semites, but are of Turko/Mongolian blood - descendants of Japheth. In the Israeli Arab conflict, there are Arabs genuinely descended from Abraham through Ishmael

³ *The Jewish Encyclopaedia*, Vol 12, p26.

⁴ The Ashkenazim, which means Khazar Jews. The Jewish Encyclopaedia explains that these Jews were Chazars (or Khazars), a people of Turkish origin genetically related to Hun, Uigur and Magyar tribes. The Chazar kingdom was established in Russia before the foundation of the Russian monarchy by the Varangians in 855 AD. This warring tribe converted to Judaism at the end of the 8th century and adopted Jewish forms of life: synagogues, schools, Hebrew letters etc. Eventually the Chazars were conquered by the Russians and the Chazar royal family fled to Spain, but the majority of the people stayed in Russia. Most of modern Jewry is from this stock. [The Jewish Encyclopaedia, Vol. IV, article on Chazars, pp1-5.]

contending with Jews who have no relationship to Abraham at all, but claim that Israel is theirs.

Another irony is that the Star of David, often worn by messianic Christians, is a historic occult sign supposed to have magic powers. It is not sanctioned by the Talmud but derives from mystical Kabbalah, being first used as an official Jewish symbol by the Jewish community in Prague.

Christians that support any fleshly nation which commits atrocities is a great sin, and will be accountable to God on the Day of Judgment. Israel is particularly guilty of this being in contravention of UN resolutions more than any other country (over 80 times). Christians who think that they are following God by unthinkingly supporting Israel when it commits atrocities are to be most pitied. They have been utterly deluded by the enemy of their souls.

Conclusion

We could pursue further arguments but we are seeking brevity in this paper. There have been more than enough points made in this paper to demonstrate that the modern form of Judaising, Jewish Root theology, is a serious heresy that will severely damage those who imbibe it.

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