



God's Unbroken Promise to Israel

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The lost tribes of Israel were never lost to God. Who are the Israelites, how were they scattered, what is the New Covenant for Israel—and could you be an Israelite?

Throughout the Bible, a continuous thread runs from Genesis to Revelation: God's unwavering covenant commitment to His people, Israel. Across every age, His promises to the Israelites remain firm. Understanding who the Israelites are, why they were scattered, and the promises for them to be gathered again is important in understanding God's plan for His people. This reveals God's masterplan for both Israel and the Gentile nations—and invites you to consider whether you are called to be part of this promise.

Who are the Israelites? Origins and Calling

To understand the Israelites, we must look to their origin. God called Abraham out of his homeland and established an everlasting covenant with him, which He later reconfirmed with his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob. God changed Jacob's name to Israel, and Jacob's twelve sons became the patriarchs and leaders of the twelve tribes.

'And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.'

— Genesis 17:7 (KJV)

God did not select Israel because they were larger or more powerful than other nations, but because He chose them to be a set-apart people. Through Moses, God brought Israel out of bondage in Egypt and established a solemn covenant with them at Mount Sinai.

'Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.'

— Exodus 19:5–6 (KJV)

Under this Sinai covenant, righteousness was linked to keeping God's laws. Israel was appointed to be a light to the surrounding nations, demonstrating God's holy standards, His order, and His character to the rest of the world.

What Happened to the Israelites? Divided and Scattered

Israel's history includes periods of faithfulness, but also long seasons of rebellion and idolatry. Following the reign of King Solomon, the united nation split into two distinct kingdoms:

- **The Northern Kingdom (Israel):** Comprising ten tribes.
- **The Southern Kingdom (Judah):** Comprising the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and later joined by the Levites who served at God's Temple (2 Chronicles 11:13–14).

Due to persistent disobedience to God's commandments, the northern ten tribes were conquered by the kingdom of Assyria around 722 BC and forcibly scattered across foreign lands. Over centuries, these scattered Israelites lost their identity and their connection to their heritage. They became known throughout history as the 'lost tribes of Israel'.

Yet, while they became lost to history and forgotten by men, they were never lost to God. The Lord foretold this very dispersion through His prophets, promising that although His people would be sifted among the heathen, He would keep track of every one.

'For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.'

— Amos 9:9 (KJV)

The Southern Kingdom of Judah was later exiled to Babylon but retained its distinct identity as the Jewish people (Judah). Meanwhile, the ten northern tribes remained scattered throughout the world, eventually intermingling with various cultures and nations.

Jesus and the Two Commissions: Israel and the Gentiles

When Jesus Christ came into the world, His earthly ministry held a specific focus. He stated clearly that His primary mission during His time on earth was directed toward His brethren, the Israelites:

'But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'

— Matthew 15:24 (KJV)

Before His death, Jesus commissioned His twelve disciples to search out these lost sheep and invite them back into a covenant relationship with God (Matthew 10:5–6; James 1:1).

However, Scripture reveals that God's masterplan includes two great commissions—one relating to Israel and one relating to the Gentiles (the nations). When Simeon held the infant Jesus in the temple, he spoke prophetically of this dual purpose:

'A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.'

— Luke 2:32 (KJV)

Through the Apostle Paul, the Gospel of grace was brought directly to the Gentile world. Gentiles, who were previously *'aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise'* (Ephesians 2:12), were brought near through the blood of Christ.

Through faith in Jesus, both Israelites and Gentiles receive forgiveness of sins and the salvation of the soul—a gift described in Scripture as our 'common salvation':

'Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you...'

— Jude 1:3 (KJV)

The opening of salvation to the Gentile world did not replace or cancel God's specific, enduring promises to Israel. As Paul wrote in Romans 11:1, 'Hath God cast away his people? God forbid.' Paul explains that a partial blindness has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in (Romans 11:25)—yet God's covenant promises with His people remain unbreakable.

God's Plan for the Gathering of Israel

The Old and New Testaments repeatedly affirm that in the latter days, God will gather the scattered remnant of Israel from every corner of the earth.

'He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.'

— Jeremiah 31:10 (KJV)

'And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.'

— Isaiah 11:12 (KJV)

This regathering is not merely a geographical return; it is a personal restoration under the New Covenant. Under the Old Covenant at Sinai, the law was written on tables of stone. Under the New Covenant, mediated by Jesus Christ, God promises to put His spirit within His people and write His laws directly in their hearts and minds, enabling them to walk in His ways.

'Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah... I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.'

— Jeremiah 31:31, 33 and Hebrews 8:8, 10 (KJV)

Israel's Priesthood and the New Kingdom

In the New Testament, John records that Jesus came not only for the Jewish nation in Judea, but 'that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad' (John 11:52).

In the coming Kingdom, there is a special place of service for Israel and their families. While a great multitude from every nation worships God (Revelation 7:9–10, 11:2), the 144,000 Israelites and their families (mentioned by tribe) serve in the inner court before His throne.





To hold this place in the new kingdom, the remnant of Israel must know Jesus as their Messiah. As John records in Revelation 14:1–4, this sealed group stands on Mount Sion with the Lamb, having accepted Him as their Redeemer:

'And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand... These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.'
— Revelation 14:1, 4 (KJV)

As promised in Exodus 19:6 and confirmed in Revelation 1:6 and 5:10, they are called to serve God in the role of priests during the reign of Christ.

Discovering Your Calling

Understanding God's plan for Israel isn't just about ancient history; it reveals how He is fulfilling His promises in our own day and age.

- **Had you ever considered that the 'lost tribes' of Israel were never truly lost to God**, and that He has kept track of their families throughout the world even today?
 - **If God promised to write His New Covenant directly on the hearts of Israel (Jeremiah 31:33)**, could this explain why you feel drawn to the connection between the law and the gospel?
 - **How might your understanding of your own identity and purpose change** if you realised that your interest in the message for Israel isn't accidental, but part of an end-time awakening and regathering?
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