

## PART II – THE ROUTE EXPLAINED – CONT'D

### STOP #2 – SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES USED BY REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY

#### Key Concept of Replacement Theology

Four tasks of Israel – now completed

#### Christendom Teaches Through Art

Ecclesia

Synagoga

#### Understanding of World Events is Hindered

Israel and EU began within 5 days of each other

Covenant/Reformed Theology harmonizes well with Replacement Theology

Easier to accept Replacement Theology if one hold to Covenant/Reformed theology

Comparing Replacement Theology with Non-Replacement Theology

#### Foundational Scriptural Supposition

##### *Matthew 21* – Parable of Husbandman

The Story

The Context

Spiritual Leadership of Israel

Christ's Teaching

Key Verse – v. 43

The Leadership's Response

A Promise of God to Israel

Leviticus 26 promises scattering

Leviticus 26 promises protection

Leviticus 26 offers reconciliation and restoration

Conclusion - Until

##### *Galatians 6:16* – upon Israel of God

Those Involved

Why Jewish Believers?

Conclusion



## Stop #2 – Scriptural Passages that are used by Replacement Theology

An understanding of the Scriptures used to support Replacement Theology begins with a closer understanding of what Replacement Theology teaches:



Replacement Theology teaches that "...the Church has **permanently** replaced Israel as the instrument through which God works and that natural Israel does not have a future in the plan and purpose of God."<sup>1</sup>

### KEY CONCEPT OF REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY



The key concept of Replacement Theology is: with the coming of the Messiah to the earth and His subsequent rejection by Israel, God's plan for both the nation of Israel and the Jewish people was completed. At that point, God turned to the Church alone to carry out the remainder of His plan for world history.



Thus, God's tasks for Israel had been to:

1. Receive, record, and preserve the Scriptures for all mankind.
2. Set examples of how God deals with men and nations.
3. Prepare the way for the Messiah.
4. Provide the lineage of the Messiah.



Thus, **once** Jesus Christ was born, and the nation of Israel had completed these four tasks, **then** God permanently replaced Israel with the Church of the New Testament, or New Covenant.

Summing this up, a strong Replacement Theologian, Bruce Walke, states:

<sup>1</sup> "Can the Jews Be Destroyed?" Middle Town Bible Church online <http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/reformed/destroy.htm> , 12/21/2005.

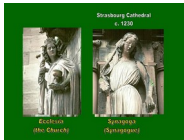
“The Jewish *nation* **no longer has a place as the special people of God**; that place has been taken by the Christian community which fulfils God’s purpose for Israel”<sup>2</sup>



In effect, God no longer needs or can use Israel, so He has **set them aside**.

### WHAT CHRISTENDOM TEACHES THROUGH ART

During the Middle Ages, the Roman Church made great use of icons and statues to assist people’s understanding of Replacement Theology. Placed in conspicuous locations, Christendom taught Replacement Theology through artworks depicting two women in its many Gothic cathedrals of Europe.



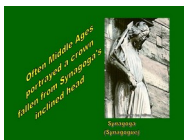
Approaching the famous Strasbourg Cathedral, we see two statues of these women, Ecclesia and Synagogue [Synogoga].



**[Click]** As we move closer, we begin to distinguish between them. Ecclesia symbolizes the church triumphant and Synagogue is the rejected and fallen, “Vanquished Israel.” Thus, the church is depicted as a proudly crowned, but modest maiden. While Synagogue is shown blindfolded, with a broken staff, and holding tablets of law.



The church, as the victor, wears the crown of the kingdom. The vanquished now is spiritually blinded.



No more the victor, her crown lies at her feet.



These pictures may best illustrate the meaning of Replacement Theology for another term or title is:

<sup>2</sup> Vlach 6, Waltke, 275.



“Supersessionism.” = Latin “...*super* (on or upon) and *sedere* (to sit), as when one person sits on the chair of another, displacing the later.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, God has seated the Church on the chair and has pushed Israel to the floor; as in musical chairs.

Two other terms that are used for to indicate the teaching of “Replacement Theology” are “displacement theology” and “punitive Supersessionism.” The latter title is employed because:

“God abrogates God’s covenant with Israel...on account of Israel’s rejection of Christ and the Gospel.’



Because the Jews reject God’s action in Christ, ‘God in turn angrily rejects and punishes the Jews.’”<sup>4</sup> Loraine Boettner apparently held this view.<sup>5</sup>

Once this view is adopted, Israel is seen to have no future and is of little interest to many of its adherents. Significant world events have little meaning, despite the fact that many of these events center or place blame on Israel.



“The acceptance or rejection of Supersessionism by an individual may also influence how he views the modern state of Israel and events in the Middle East.”<sup>6</sup>

The prime reason for this lack of interest is the biased perspective regarding God’s promises for a coming kingdom that result from Replacement Theology’s position on this subject. Since Replacement Theology typically does not believe in a future earthly kingdom of Christ, those who hold to it have little interest in such events.

### UNDERSTANDING OF WORLD EVENTS IS HINDERED

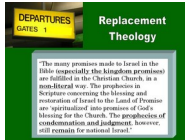
Unfortunately, the amillennial teaching regarding Christ’s kingdom prevents people from clearly understanding history as well as current events – the significance of Israel’s birth in 1948, for example. People who hold to this teaching distance themselves even further from a possible understanding of these things by claiming that any promises to Israel are to be viewed in a non-literal sense, that is, they are to be spiritualized. George Zeller notes:

<sup>3</sup> Vlach, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Vlach 8, quoting Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology*, 30.

<sup>5</sup> Vlach 8, citing Loraine Boettner, *The Millennium* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1957), 89-90..

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Ice. “What is Replacement Theology?” quoting Michael J. Vlach, “The Church as a Replacement of Israel: An Analysis of Supersessionism,” (PhD dissertation at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC, 2004), p. xv.



“The many promises made to Israel in the Bible (**especially the kingdom promises**) are fulfilled in the Christian Church, in a **non-literal** way. The prophecies in Scripture concerning the blessing and restoration of Israel to the Land of Promise are ‘spiritualized’ into promises of God’s blessing for the Church. The **prophecies of condemnation and judgment**, however, still **remain** for national Israel.”<sup>7</sup>

Reformed/covenant theology, along with their eschatological view of amillennialism harmonizes well with Replacement Theology:

Those who hold to amillennialism teach that there is no future earthly kingdom. “Rather the kingdom promises are being fulfilled (in a non-literal way) by the Church. The nation Israel

- **will not enjoy a future millennial kingdom,**
- nor will the Messiah rule over the world from an earthly Davidic throne in Jerusalem.

The kingdom of God is being enjoyed today in the hearts of believers in a spiritual way, but the nation of Israel has no future kingdom to look forward to.”<sup>8</sup>

Not all people who hold to a reformed/covenant theology also hold to Replacement Theology, but what we can observe is that **it is easier to accept Replacement Theology if one holds to reformed/covenant theology.**

## COMPARING REPLACEMENT AND NON-REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY

Replacement Theology	non-Replacement Theology
Spiritualized Allegorize	Prophecy Interpretation
Spiritual Now	Christ's Kingdom
Spiritual for Church	Future Promises to Israel
	Literal Natural Sense
	Earthly Future
	Physical & Spiritual for Israel

### Replacement Theology

- **[click]** Prophecy Interpretation is to be understood in a spiritualized or allegorical sense
- **[click]** Christ’s kingdom is spiritual, not material, and exists now
- **[click]** The future Biblical promises for Israel have been appropriated by Church, which has replaced ethnic Israel.

### Non-Replacement Theology

- **[click]** Prophecy Interpretation is taken in a literal or natural sense
- **[click]** Christ’s kingdom is in the future and will be a physical kingdom on the earth

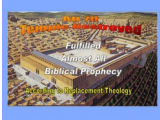
<sup>7</sup> “Can the Jews Be Destroyed?” Middle Town Bible Church online <http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/reformed/destroy.htm> , 12/21/2005.

<sup>8</sup> “Can the Jews Be Destroyed?” Middle Town Bible Church online <http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/reformed/destroy.htm> , 12/21/2005.

- **[click]** The future promises for Israel in the Bible are for national Israel and include both physical and spiritual aspects


As we begin to look at Replacement Theology from a Scriptural viewpoint, we must note that Replacement Theology filters most Scripture through a...

**FOUNDATIONAL SCRIPTURAL SUPPOSITION:**



The AD 70 destruction of the Temple in Israel fulfilled almost all Biblical prophecy.

They base this supposition upon the Lord Jesus Christ’s prediction in Matthew 21 verse 43:



*The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*

Matthew 21:43

Chrysostom was among the earliest Bible scholars who applied this teaching of permanent rejection to the entire nation of Israel. He based this upon his interpretation of the parable of Matthew 21:33-40 and through this passage taught that the Jews and their nation have been cast aside forever.

**LET US LOOK AT MATTHEW 21:43 AND SEE IF THIS IS THE TEACHING OF IT:**



**THE STORY – PARABLE OF WICKED HUSBANDMAN**

The parable is about a wicked husbandman who first killed the servants of a vineyard’s owner and finally his son.



**THE CONTEXT – VERSES 1-11**

The day after the Triumphal Entry, Jesus returned to the Temple where He was teaching the people (v. 23). The chief priests and elders of the people asked Him “*by what authority doest thou these things?*”



**THE SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP OF ISRAEL – VERSES 23-27**

By Biblical law, there could only be one chief priest, thus, the plural word “priests” of verse 23, indirectly reveals a sad historical record of Jesus’ day – to become chief priest, one could purchase the office from the Roman politicians. As a result, instead of there being a single chief priest, holding

the office for his entire life with the next in the biblical line becoming chief priest upon his death, historical record tells us that one family had purchased the office of chief priest for two individuals.

The result was spiritual corruption of the line of the high priest and the rightful line, the Zadokian line, was displaced. Therefore, the current chief priests were holding their office illegally, **having obtained their authority falsely**.

The elders of the nation had **gone along with this and did not object**. Apparently, authority to act and do, with respect to spiritual things, did not belong to them either. Obviously they feared man more than God, as we note that they also feared the people (v. 26). Rather than pursue the authority issue with Jesus further, they kept silent (v. 27).

In response, the Lord told two parables, one about two sons and their father and the other about a wicked husbandman.



**CHRIST CONTRASTS TWO SONS – VERSES 28-32**

The Lord offered His hearers two choices by asking them to decide which one truly obeyed his father.

Was it the one who at first refused to do his father’s work but later repented and did it or the one who claimed to be willing to do his father’s work, but failed to do it.

This parable was clearly an indictment upon the chief priests and the elders.

The second parable, verses 33-40, is about a householder, his husbandmen, and his son. Here the husbandmen or leaders of the vineyard first persecuted the servants of the owner and then killed his son.

The Lord asked, v. 40, what will the owner do about this? Their answer is that the wicked men should be destroyed (v. 41). Who were the wicked men? The husbandmen! They were the ones entrusted with leading the work in the vineyard.

Now we turn to the key verse:



**THE KEY VERSE:**

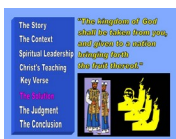
*The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*

Matthew 21:43

Replacement Theology interprets this verse to mean that the nation of Israel and the Jewish people will have the kingdom taken from them and given to the Church; thus, the Church replaces Israel permanently.

Taken alone, this verse might suggest that Israel has been permanently set aside with no hope for restoration. However, the emphasis of the entire episode is upon **the leadership** who did not do the father’s task. Therefore, their responsibility will be given to other leadership.

History shows that this is exactly what happened. The Church of true believers has been given the responsibility to go to the fields that are white unto harvest. In the fourth chapter of John, the Lord gave these instructions to His disciples within a day or two of Pentecost. Through the incident at the well in Samaria, the Lord had demonstrated, by offering salvation to a Gentile woman, that his disciples were to reach out with the gospel to both the Jewish remnant as well as the Gentiles. They were to become the initial leadership of the Church Age. These Jewish disciples were to lead as the first to go into the entire world with the Gospel.



**THE LEADERSHIP’S RESPONSE:**

Who were listening to this?

- The Chief Priests – v. 23
- The Elders – v. 23
- The Pharisees – v. 45
- The people in the temple (v. 23) – those feared by the chief priests and elders

Who alone applied this teaching of Jesus to themselves? (v. 45)

*“They [the leaders] perceived that he spake of them (v. 45).*

Note, it does not say “that he spake of the nation or of the people around them” but rather the leaders themselves.

For further proof, look at verse 46. Could the people lay hands on any one, did they have the authority?

The people took Jesus for a prophet; they had not rejected Him at this point. Furthermore, they were ready to make Him their king (Mt. 21:8-11). Notice, they performed all of the appropriate responses required for the Feast of Tabernacles, which taught that the Messiah would come into His kingdom on that feast and ascend to the throne of David in Jerusalem – they waved palm branches and cast garments before Him while crying Hosanna.



**A PROMISE OF GOD TO ISRAEL**

Yes, judgment did come in AD 70. Israel lost its Temple and its illegitimate leadership of that day. By AD 73, God had destroyed the nation and scattered the people, according to His covenant with them in Leviticus 26:



*But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; 27 And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; 28 Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. 33 And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.*

Leviticus 26:14, 26-27, 33.

But there are a couple of things to remember!

1. Leviticus 26 continues God's promise to them:

*And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: 42 Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. 43 The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes. 44 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God.*

vv. 41-44

2. Never forget that for the first 100 years of the Church Age, it was Jewish leadership and teachers that helped the early church.

3. Yes, the destruction of AD 70 was directed to a particular people

*Verily I say unto you, **This generation** shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.*

Luke 21:32

In light of Leviticus 26 and other passages, such as Jeremiah 33, it appears that this verse speaks of **one event with three consequences**:

**FIRST** judgment was meted out to the generation that allowed their leadership to bring about the crucifixion of the Messiah – this is proper accountability;

**SECOND, God chastened** Israel as a nation and continues to do so to this day, **BECAUSE** they “walk contrary to Him, “for according to their agreement with Him, He is to chasten them when they do it. But don't miss verse 44:

*And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God*

**THIRD**, God promises reconciliation and restoration when Israel as a nation repents and returns to Him – just like the son who would not do his father's task, but later repented, verse 29:

*And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.*

Leviticus 26:41, 42



### THE CONCLUSION - UNTIL

Thus, this passage does not speak of the **permanent** destruction and **abandonment by God** of the Jewish people, but rather a proper destruction of their false leadership and the proper chastisement of the people for following such leaders – for how long? According to Paul:

*For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the death?... For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceit; that blindness **in part** is happened to Israel, **until** the fullness of the Gentiles be come in..*

Romans 11:15, 25

Never forget, the words “in part” and “until.” Were God not to hear the nation of Israel’s repentance in the latter days (“when the fullness of the Gentiles be come in”), He would be a liar!

As I surveyed the writings of key Replacement Theologians I find that, while there is disagreement between RT followers over the proper application of many passages, there is one passage that they all agree upon.



Therefore, it is their basic proof text:

### GALATIANS 6:16

*And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.* AV

#### Translations compared:

“even to the Israel of God” NIV ---- “even” is possible, but not the most straightforward rendering of kai.

“they are the new people of God.” (NLT) ---- eliminates the conjunctive or continuative function and makes it explanative of the “them” i.e., an appositional usage of Kai.



This basic proof text of Replacement Theology, agreed by all who knowingly practice it, spiritualizes the blessing to “the Israel of God” to mean a blessing to the Church. This is typical of their interpretation of other references in the New Testament that are intended for Israel.

Interestingly, R. C. Sproul writing in the Spring of 1999, in Table Talk, a Reformed publication of Ligonier Ministries, asked:



“We believe the church is essentially Israel. We believe that the answer to, ‘what about the Jews?’ is, ‘Here we are.’”

It is a good thing Hitler didn’t hear him say that...



**WHAT DID PAUL REALLY MEAN BY “THE ISRAEL OF GOD?” LET’S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THIS KEY VERSE!**



**LET’S LOOK IN-DEPTH AT THIS PASSAGE.**



The Galatians’ problem was that Gentile followers were being told to become full Jewish proselytes in addition to trusting in Christ for salvation. Throughout this book we see a problem as the early church struggled to understand the extent of the change from Judaism to Christianity. This was probably Paul’s earliest letter.

Peter struggled with this issue in Chapter 2. He began the letter by warning the Galatians about a different gospel being presented to them in Chapter 1. Chapter 3 explains the relationship between “law” and “grace.” In Chapter 4, Paul relates an allegory that he specifically identifies as being just that. It is the only allegory in the Bible that is labelled as being an allegory. Notice, he did not leave it up to the readers to come up with the meaning of the allegory, for he gave its meaning in the Scripture. In Chapter 5, he stresses that we are to live by Faith in Christ alone and that truth that Christ is in us is revealed through the visible “fruit” of the Spirit. Chapter six applies all of this as Paul sums up the solution for the Galatians. For those who understand his teaching he offers them a blessing in Galatians 6 verses 14 and 15. This blessing is to all “who walk according to the rule.”

**14**But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. **15**For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.



**16**And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.



The key to understanding this passage is found by determining who are the ones being blessed? If we know that, we can decide what is meant by the term, the “Israel of God.”

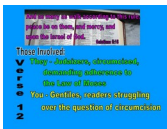
Looking over Galatians 6, we find there are several people involved in this discussion.

**THOSE INVOLVED:**

**By going to Verse 12 we find two groups -**



**They** – Judaizers, circumcised, demanding adherence to Law of Moses. They claimed to be Christian believers, but were walking in the flesh and sowing to the flesh (6:6; cf. 5:16), rather than walking by the Spirit. Their reason, they wanted to “win the good opinion of their neighbors” – literal meaning of word, v. 12. Paul charges them with hypocrisy, v. 13. They sought to escape persecution, v. 13.<sup>9</sup>



**You** – Gentiles, readers struggling over the question of whether they had to be circumcised before receiving salvation.

**We next go to verse 14:**



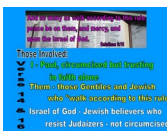
**Verse 14**

**I** – Paul, circumcised, but trusting in faith alone through the shed blood of Jesus Christ upon the Cross (vv. 14, 15). Not, unlike the Judaizers, Paul was willing to be persecuted for the Cross of Christ, v. 14.



**Verse 16**

**Them** – those Gentiles and Jewish who “walk according to this rule (vv. 14, 15)” - have followed Paul’s belief that it is by faith alone and not circumcision.



**Israel of God:** Jewish believers, who have resisted the pressure of the Judaizers and walk according to the rule, i.e., following the Holy Spirit rather than the Law of Moses. See the common OT phrase “peace upon Israel” (Ps. 125:5 and 128:6).<sup>10</sup>

**WHY JEWISH BELIEVERS ?**

<sup>9</sup> Homer A. Kent, Jr. *The Freedom of God’s Sons – Studies in Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), 180.  
<sup>10</sup> Homer A. Kent, Jr., 183.

(weaker to stronger)

**1.** Kai – grammatical - to make kai **explicative or appositional we must accept a secondary or lesser use of kai. But we should avoid the rarer grammatical usages when the common ones make good sense**

the “common sense of *kai* as continuative, or conjunctive is followed

**2.** Paul’s usage - **ethnic Israel, a sense that the term Israel has in every other of its more than sixty-five uses in the New Testament and in its fifteen uses by Paul,**

**3.** What more fitting thing could Paul write, it is said, in a work so strongly attacking Jewish professing believers, the Judaizers, than to make it most plain that he was not attacking the true believing Jews? Judaizers are anathematized, but the remnant according to the election of grace are “the Israel of God.” . . .

**4.** Perhaps this expression, “the Israel of God,” is to be contrasted with his expression in 1 Corinthians 10:18, “Israel after the flesh” (KJV), as the true, believing Israel versus the unbelieving element, just as in Romans 9:6 the apostle distinguishes two Israels, one elect and believing, the other unbelieving, but both ethnic Israelites (cf. vv. 7-13)

**5.** Pauline ethnic sense. And further, the apostle achieves a very striking climactic conclusion. Drawing near the end of his “battle-epistle” with its harsh and forceful attack on the Judaists and its omission of the customary words of thanksgiving, Paul tempers his language with a special blessing for those faithful believing Israelites who, understanding the grace of God and its exclusion of any human works as the ground of redemption, had not succumbed to the subtle blandishments of the deceptive Judaizers.

**6.** . . . there is no historical evidence that the term *Israel* was identified with the church before A.D. 160. Furthermore, at that date there was no characterization of the church as “the Israel of God.” In other words, for more than a century after Paul there was no evidence of this identification being applied to the church

**7.** And theologically the view is sound in its maintenance of the two elements within the one people of God, Gentiles and ethnic Jews. Romans 11 spells out the details of the relationship between the two entities from Abraham’s day to the present age and on to the fulfillment in the future of the great unconditional covenantal promises made to the patriarchs

#### CONCLUSION:



The Church is never called, and is not, a “spiritual Israel” or a “new Israel.”



The term “Israel” is used either of the nation or of the people as a whole, or **of the believing remnant within**. It is never used of the Church in general or of Gentile believers in particular.

**At Stop #1** – we have considered the historical basis of Replacement Theology and have found that it was based upon anti-Semitism and political accommodation with Roman society

– thus it is a compromise position motivated by the desire to be more comfortable in the world.

**At Stop #2** - we have examined the foundational belief that God has permanently replaced the nation of Israel with the Church. We have examined two of the most widely used verses to support this. Both key passages can be interpreted to support:

- Replacement Theology if taken in a spiritual or allegorical sense
- Non-replacement theology if taken in their literal historical grammatical sense.

We must now go to **Stop #3** and see which view is best supported by a doctrine taught throughout the Bible – The throne of David.