



## WHAT IS REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY?

**THE ESSENCE OF REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY** (also called super-successionism):

- The New Testament Church has replaced, or “superseded” Israel in God’s purposes.  
*The argument is based on passages such as Deuteronomy 28:15-21, 58-68, concluding that Israel is no longer under a covenant relationship with God. The case presented argues that God has said if Israel ever violated His covenant with them, He would break His commitment to them – removing them from all earlier covenants,(i.e.), His gift to them of “the land” or their chosen status with Him as a people.*<sup>1</sup>
- The Jewish people are now no longer a “chosen people.” They are no different from any other group.<sup>2</sup> They have no distinct role in God’s purposes, and “chosen” status would only come through repentance, the new birth, and becoming part of the New Testament Church.
- Since Pentecost in Acts 2, the term “Israel” now refers to the Church.
- The promises, covenants, and blessings ascribed to Israel in the Bible no longer apply to Israel, but now apply to the Church, which has replaced or superseded the Jewish people.

### **THE ROOTS OF REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY**<sup>3</sup>:

In the first century AD, the church was well connected to its Jewish roots. Before the first Jewish revolt in AD 66, Christianity was basically a sect of Judaism, as were the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes.

After the second Jewish revolt AD 133-135 was put down by the Roman emperor Hadrian, theological and political power moved from Jewish believers to centers of Gentile Christian leadership such as Alexandria, Rome, and Antioch. It is important to understand this change because it influenced the early church fathers as Christianity began to disconnect itself from its Jewish roots.

In AD 321, as Constantine declared Christianity the official religion of the empire, persecution of Christians ended, but it marked the beginnings of discrimination and persecution of the Jewish people.

By the middle of the third century, it was an accepted belief among most Christians that the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews were God’s method of showing the world that He was finished with them.<sup>4</sup>

Replacement Theology became the position of the church during the time of Augustine (AD 354-430) who popularized it in his book, *The City of God*.<sup>5</sup> (Note: Church is defined as the

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<sup>1</sup> *Israel, Prophecy and You*, pamphlet by Jack W. Hayford, @1999, Living Way Ministries.

<sup>2</sup> *The Error of Replacement Theology*, Clarence Wagner, Jr., Bridges for Peace, [www.bridgesforpeace.com](http://www.bridgesforpeace.com)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> *Your People Shall Be My People*, Don Finto, @ 2001, Regal Books

<sup>5</sup> *The Biblicist*, @ 2000, [www.biblicist.org](http://www.biblicist.org)

institutionalized or political “church,” as opposed to the Church universal comprised of followers of Jesus.)

### **THE TRUTH ABOUT REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY:**

- God’s unrelenting commitment and unshakable promises to the Jewish people has not changed! They are still His chosen people, distinct and unique from other peoples (1 Chron. 17:21-22; Ex. 4:22-23; Psalm 147:19-20; Deut. 7:6-7; Rom. 11).
- Although they may have broken covenant with Him, He will keep His covenant with them because it is an everlasting covenant (Gen. 17:7-8; Psalm 105:8; Jer. 31:35-37 NIV; Jer. 33:19-26 NLT; Is. 54:4-10; Mal. 3:6; Num. 23:19).
- While God’s promises, purposes, and blessings are available to the Church as “spiritual Israel,” that truth in no way precludes the truth that His promises, purposes, and blessings are for national Israel. He still has a pledge to national Israel and His chosen people, and He will fulfill it.

*Rom 11:1-2; 11-34*

*1) I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2) God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew.*

*11) I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. 12) Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!*

*13) For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, 14) if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them. 15) For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?*

*16) For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. 17) And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, 18) do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.*

*19) You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." 20) Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. 21) For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. 22) Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. 23) And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24) For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?*

*25) For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26) And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:*

*"The Deliverer will come out of Zion,  
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;*

*27) For this is My covenant with them,  
When I take away their sins."*

*28) Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. 29) For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. 30) For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, 31) even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. 32) For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.*

*33) Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!*