

# Israel, Current Events, and Eschatology (Part I)

**Introduction:** Many are looking today at the events going on with Israel and Gaza, trying to understand the connection to what we find in the Bible. Or they are asking the question, does this have anything to do with the Bible? As we introduce this subject, please look with me at this passage in **Revelation 12**.

**Read Revelation 12:1–6**



I believe we stand on solid ground, interpreting this woman as a symbolic representation of the nation of Israel. We understand that Satan is against God. He is against anything that has to do with God. God's plan is the target of His attack. We want to walk away from these two sessions to understand what God has to say about Israel. Let me begin by stating this overarching truth: Anything that has to do with Israel, has to do with God and His Word. I will validate that statement with Scripture as we go through this study. We will answer these two significant questions:

(1) Who is Israel?

(2) What is their significance to us as the church, God's Word, and His plan as recorded in the Word of God?

To begin this study, we ought to consider **first** the Scriptures. There are **three biblical terms** associated with who we call the nation of Israel today.

**They are:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The first and last occurrences of these terms:**

**Genesis 14:13** - Hebrew - **Revelation 16:16**

**Genesis 32:28** - Israel - **Revelation 21:12**

**II Kings 16:6** (s) - Jew - **Revelation 3:9**

## 'Hebrew' in the OT

The first occurrence of the term Hebrew is discovered in **Genesis 14:13** in reference to Abram. In other words, the very first term used in the Bible that describes this special people group is the term **Hebrew**. To discover where this term came from, we must go to the beginning of the Bible and walk through some of the genealogies that God has given to us. The book of Genesis begins with the account of creation; God purposely shows us two different groups of people. These two groups are contrasted right from the beginning with **Cain and Able**.

After the death of Able, God gave Adam and Eve another child named Seth. Seth's line becomes the prominent line that God contrasts with the line of Cain. As we continue in Genesis, the Bible tells us of a **great catastrophic worldwide flood**. **Noah** and his sons of the "godly" line are spared by God. After the flood, we have what scholars have termed the tables of nations (from the phrases 'in their nations' and 'after their nations'— see **Genesis 10:5,20,31,32**) following the family tree of Noah's sons (**Genesis 10**). That table of nations concerns Noah's three sons, **Shem, Ham, and Japheth**. We discover, looking at those lists, that **Eber** is a descendant in the line of **Shem**. **The term 'Hebrew' is derived from the name of Eber.**

As this line continues, the Bible shows us that **Abram** is the descendent of **Shem** of the “children of **Eber**.”

This gives us an understanding of **the term Semitic** or the recently often-used term ‘**anti-Semitism**.’ In **Luke 3:36**, **Shem** is spelled as **Sem**, which is a transliteration from the Greek. **Shem** is spelled **Sem** in LXX.

**Luke 3:36** “36 Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was **the son of Sem**, which was the son of Noe, which was the son of Lamech,”

In saying that, we would understand then that ‘**Semites**’, or we might say ‘**Shemites**’ are a much larger group of people than just the Israelites. **The line whom we are concerned with focuses on Eber. Eber** means ‘one who is from beyond,’ ‘from a foreign land.’ Perhaps this is why we find the early reference to ‘Abram the Hebrew’ --- from beyond. Most of the **Old Testament references** to the word ‘Hebrew’ come from Gentiles speaking about Hebrew people. **Genesis 39** gives us an example of this.

**Genesis 39:14** “14 That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath **brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us**; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice.”

Old Testament references for the term Hebrew(s):

**Genesis 14:13, 39:14, 17, 40:15, 41:12, 43:32**

**Exodus 1:15-16, 19, 2:6-7,11, 3:18, 5:3, 7:16, 9:1,13, 10:3, 21:2**

**Deuteronomy 15:12**

**I Samuel 4:6,9, 13:3,7,19, 14:11,21, 29:3**

**Jeremiah 34:9, 14**

## ‘Hebrew’ in the NT

In the NT, most of the references for the word ‘Hebrew’ speak of the language (Hebrew). This is perhaps why modern-day secular scholars tend to refer to Semites as purely language connections rather than referring to the biblical genealogical connection.

When the word is found in the singular (‘Hebrew’), it is referring to the language — with the exception of **Philippians 3:5**, where Paul states he is a ‘Hebrew of Hebrews.’

In the below list, you have **both the singular and plural references** in the New Testament: **Luke 23:38** (which also has the term **Jew** in the same verse.)

**John 5:2, 19:13,17,20**

**Acts 6:1, 21:40, 22:2, 26:14**

**II Corinthians 11:22**

**Philippians 3:5**

**Revelation 9:11, 16:16**

## 'Israel' in the Bible

The most prominent reference in the Bible to this **special God-chosen people is the second term which is 'Israel.'** The terms Israel and Israelite are referenced more than any other term for this chosen people used in the Bible. (2576 matches - Israel)

### Comparatively:

Hebrew (26 times) Hebrews (22 times) = **48 times**

Jew (32 times) Jews (257 times) = **289 times**

Israel (2576 times) Israelite (4 times) = **2580 times**

The term 'Israel' has direct reference to **Jacob**, who was named by God 'Israel.' And because of this, just like the prophetic utterance of Noah concerning His sons and their line, **Israel's prophetic utterance is very important. (Genesis 48-49).** Israel is the nation of people that come from the line of **Abraham -> Isaac -> Jacob** (whom God renamed Israel. **Genesis 32:28**). As we will see, the name Israel and its occurrence in the Word of God **stresses the significance of this nation in God's plan** and in relation and separate from the church.

Israel, as defined by God's Word, means 'Prince with God- Prince of God.' It is a compound of two words 'power as a prince' (שׂרָה - sârâh) and 'God.' (אֱלֹ - el) "The term "Israel" ...As a title/name given to Jacob is commonly been used to designate the physical descendants of Jacob." The nation itself was divided into **12 tribes** whose heads were the twelve sons of Jacob/Israel.

When we come to the opening chapters of **Exodus**, this is the name in which the people are referenced. Significantly, **God calls them the children of Israel** in **Exodus 3:14** in connection with His eternal name, **I AM**.

**Exodus 3:14** "14 And God said unto Moses, **I AM THAT I AM:** and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto **the children of Israel**, I AM hath sent me unto you."

In **Exodus 4:22**, God tells Moses to call Israel **His son** in dealing with Pharaoh. This was to show the contrast between the 'Pharaohs' who were attributed to sons of deity (i.e. Son of Ra.) As Exodus progresses, there are a couple of references where the phrase 'children of' is dropped, and **Israel** becomes **the term to communicate the nation as a whole. (Exodus 4:22, 5:1,2,12:15,14:25, 30,31,15:22,17:11,18:1,8,9,25,19:2, 24:10, 32:4, 8,27,34:23,27)**

Why is there such importance placed on Israel? **Because God placed an importance on Israel.** Just the amount of references alone ought to convince us of this, however there are two very important covenants I would like to highlight.

### 1. The covenant God made with Abraham.

**Genesis 12:1-3** "1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that **I will** shew thee: 2 And **I will** make of thee a great nation, and **I will** bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt

be a blessing: 3 And **I will** bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

## Genesis 12:

“...a land that **I will** shew thee...” vs. 1

“...**I will** make of thee a great nation...”

“...**I will** bless thee...”

“...**I will** bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee...”

“...in thee shall families of the earth be blessed.”

This covenant with Abraham was confirmed to Abraham **over and over again**. Further, it was **confirmed or restated to His posterity over and over again**. Abraham was given the broad borders of the land. According to Genesis 15:18 - See Map



**Genesis 17:8** “8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

**Genesis 26:3**  
The LORD

speaking to Isaac “3 Sojourn in this land, and **I will be with thee, and will bless thee**; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father;” (Isaac)

**Genesis 26:24** “24 And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham’s sake.” (Isaac)

**Promises to Abraham were personal, national, and universal.** “Fundamental to the Abrahamic promises is the possession of a particular land.”

## 2. The covenant God made with David.

God made a covenant with David in **II Samuel 7**. It is restated in **I Chronicles 17:11-14** and **II Chronicles 6:16**. The Davidic covenant, like the **Abrahamic covenant, is unconditional.**



Key Notes of the Davidic Covenant are:

- The Abrahamic land covenant is repeated. (Israel will be planted and protected. **II Samuel 7:10**)
- An everlasting throne and kingdom. (**II Samuel 7:12-13,16**)

Charles Ryrie, in his respected *Basic Theology*, stated, “The chief characteristics of this kingdom in the conception of the Jewish people were that it would be (a) earthly, (b) national, (c) Messianic, (d) moral, and (e) future. This meant (a) on this earth, (b) specifically related to the nation of Israel, (d) with high, God-given standards, and (e) not yet in existence.”

As we progress through the Old Testament, **we are confronted with a divided (nation) kingdom.** Without going through each line of successive kings, there is a fracture that occurs in the Davidic kingdom after the reign of Solomon. When the **kingdom divided** under the **reign of Rehoboam (Solomon’s son), there is a shift in the usage of terms to accommodate the divided nation.** Because of this fracture, the northern kingdom is often referred to **as Israel and sometimes Ephraim.** Whereas **the southern kingdom is referred to as Judah.** (In spite of this, I want you to understand that God has not lost sight of His people ---even the supposed 10 lost tribes.)

**The Northern Exile (722 B.C.)- Assyria - II Kings 17** - Reuben Ephraim, Simeon, Gad, Manasseh, Asher, Dan, Issachar, Zebulon, Naphtali.

**The Southern Exile (605 B.C., 587 B.C., 586 B.C.) - Babylon - II Kings 23-25, II Chronicles 36** - Judah, Benjamin, Levi.

**Ezra 1** - The scattered tribes are once again called Israel. As we think about the term Israel, it becomes apparent that when we get to the New Testament, the term Israel is still used (**75 times**), but **a third term** becomes more prevalent, which is the term ‘**Jew.**’ (Just as a side note, if you look in Matthew 2:20, you will discover that even though the nation is under occupation, God still recognizes the land as the land of Israel.)

## The Term ‘Jew’

**1/3** of all the references to the term Jew are found in the **O.T.**, and **2/3** are found in the **N.T.** (Which is unusual considering that the **O.T. is 2/3 of the Bible** and the **N.T. contains 1/3 of the Bible. So why is this?**

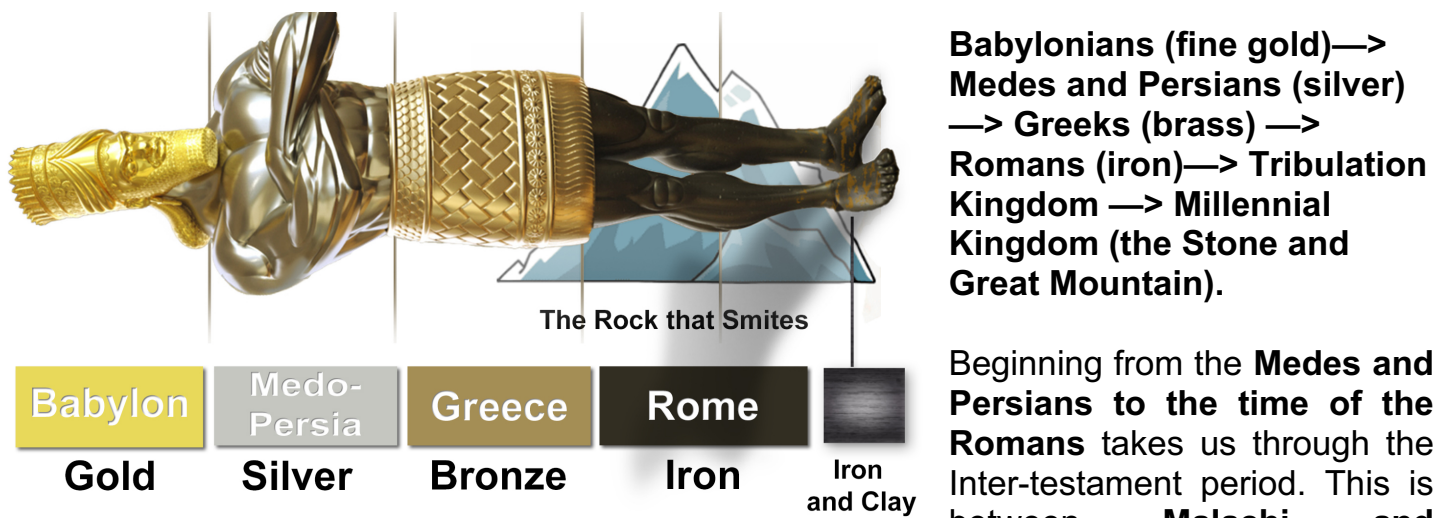
The term **Jew is derived from the word Judah** --- meaning ‘belonging to Judah or of Judah,’ the Southern Kingdom, but **would come to be synonymous** with the term Israel. (**Esther 2:5-6**) When we arrive in the New Testament, we see that the term “**Jew**” is used synonymously with the term **Israelite.**

1. God creates, Man falls, Man rebels. God **provides and promises.** (**Genesis 3:15,20-21**).
2. Man is destroyed save Noah and His family. God calls from the line of Shem Abram. (**Genesis 6-12**)
3. God promises Abram **a name, a land, and a people.** (**Genesis 12 and 15**)

4. Israel comes out of Egypt, a nation - a great people. If you read the account of Exodus 1, you will find that they multiplied exceedingly.
5. Israel wanders and enters the promised land a Theocracy. (God is their King. See the book of Joshua.)
6. Israel fails to destroy all the inhabitants. (This leads to their demise with idolatry. See the end of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel).
7. Israel rejects God's rule and seeks a Monarchy (I Samuel 8:6-7) like the nations around them. (See I Samuel - I Kings).
8. Israel has 3 kings (Saul-David-Solomon), and then the nation fractures into two separate kingdoms. (See I Kings 11). - God sends prophets.
9. The Northern Kingdom goes into captivity (722 BC). (See II Kings 17).
10. The Southern Kingdom goes into captivity. (605-586 BC) (See II Kings 23-25). From this point forward, Israel is under occupation.
11. Daniel receives the "kingdom's vision" (Dan.2) and the "70 weeks vision" (Dan.9) while Israel is in captivity.
12. Israel returns from captivity to rebuild the temple. (See Ezra, specifically Ezra 1:5 names Judah, Benjamin, and the Levites. Ezra 2 gives their genealogies.)
13. Israel rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem. (See Nehemiah.)

Having covered that snapshot quickly, we are going to look briefly at these two prophetic visions that are recorded for us in the book of Daniel because they center around the nation of Israel--- as is put in Daniel 9 dealing with "thy people and upon thy holy city."

Daniel's 1st vision (Daniel 2) describes a succession of world kingdoms:



Matthew, a period of 400 years. When we arrive in the New Testament, we see all three terms used and the term Jew(s) being used the most. (Hebrew 15, Israel 75 times, Jew 197 times).

During the time of Christ, we see **God's people, the nation of Israel, and the 1st Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ**. Much detail is given in the Gospel records to the genealogies associated with the Lord Jesus Christ. They are found in **Matthew 1 and Luke 3**. You will remember that above the cross of Calvary is written The King of the Jews.

**Matthew 27:37** *"37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS."*

This lines up with what we see in the prophecy given to Daniel concerning the nation of Israel some --- 500 years prior, not only with the succession of kingdoms but also with **Daniel's second vision**.

### **Daniels - 2nd Vision - The 70 Weeks Vision**

Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup>-week **prophecy** gives us direction concerning the New Testament history of the Jews and also points us toward the modern miracle of the regathering of God's people.

**Daniel 9:24** *"24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."*

**Daniel 9:25** *"25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."*

**7 + 62 weeks = 69 weeks**

**Daniel 9:26** *"26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."*

The main points of the prophecy are this:

1. Daniel's 70 weeks are years. (490 total)
2. The first section spans from **the time to rebuild till the Messiah is cut off**. (483 years).
3. The **remaining 7 years** are suspended for the "church age." (We will look at **Romans chapters 9-11** here in a moment.)
4. The **remaining 7 years** are the 70th week which begins with a peace covenant. (**Verse 27**)
5. Then, in the midst of the week (3.5 years), the Antichrist will break the covenant and declare Himself God. (See **Matthew 24:15-21**)

Having handled **all three** of the terms **Hebrew, Israel, and Jew**, we now must speak about **God's Pause for Israel**. We are living today in a period often referred to as a **parenthetical period** [an in-between time]. From the time of Daniel's first vision --- to the present is called **the times of the Gentiles**. (**Luke 21:24**) and will continue until **the fulness of the Gentiles comes in**. (**Romans 11:25**). During this period, we have what some refer to as **the church age** because of God's work in this world through **His church**.

## God's Pause For Israel

**Romans Chapters 9, 10, and 11** all deal with Israel's **past** failures (9), their **present** calamity (10), and their **future** salvation (11). The church age is the **in-between time** where the Lord is dealing with the world through His church.

**But what about Israel?** This is the subject matter of Paul's statements in **Romans 9-11**.

**Romans 11:1** *"I say then, **Hath God cast away his people?** [who are His people referred to here? Israel.] God forbid. For **I also am an Israelite**, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin."*

**Romans 11:25–29** *"25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, **until** the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. **26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. 28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.**"*

**Romans 11:29** *"29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."*

Israel is blinded **in part until** the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. Clearly, from this passage, it will be noted that this is **for a period of time**. The **purpose of this instruction** is so we would not be ignorant.

In this peculiar time, the church is God's instrument of witness in this world. However, as we will see tonight. The Lord's will is being accomplished with the regathering of Israel and the international recognition of the statehood of the nation of Israel.

We have witnessed in our generation things that must take place in preparation for the fulfillment of God's plan as outlined in Daniel, Zechariah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Zephaniah, and Revelation.

**We have covered a lot of territory.** I pray just from our Biblical foundation, we would understand the importance of Israel.