

The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, Forever

Sunday 1st March 2026: Romans 11:1-36

Introduction

The Letter to the Galatians has taught us much about the Gospel of Jesus Christ and what is available by faith in Him. It has required us to reflect upon the Law of Moses and the history of God's dealings with His people and the world. But it can raise questions about 'Israel' and the relationship of the Church to 'Israel'. We will explore a few issues around this in today's service, whilst recognising there is diversity of opinion, and that no single sermon can cover all the questions we might have. A fuller paper will be available after the service.

Some Key Terms (drawn from Palmer Robertson, 'Israel of God')

Israel may refer to a place (the Land) or a person (who was first called Jacob in the Old Testament). But, in addition, the term may refer to a community of people viewed from a variety of perspectives:

- All ethnic descendants of Abraham, together with converting Gentiles, could be called Israel.
- The few within this broad people group who have faith might also be called Israel, distinct from the rest of the nation (Rom. 11:5).
- From a new covenant perspective, "the Israel of God" could be the body of Jews and Gentiles who believe in Jesus (Gal. 6:16).
- In contemporary conversation, the Jewish state is called Israel.

For Personal Reflection

Where on this spectrum would you place yourself, in answer to the question: the State of Israel came about by...?



Questions to Consider

1. Has the Church replaced Israel as God's people?
2. Has God rejected ethnic Israel as a people and nation?
3. How should we respond to the State of Israel in light of Scripture?