

1 Replacement Theology (Supersessionism)

Topical Studies

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2 Replacement Theology (Supersessionism)

1. Definition:

Replacement theology (also known as supersessionism and fulfillment theology) essentially teaches that the church has replaced Israel in God's plan. Adherents of replacement theology believe the Jews are no longer God's chosen people, and God does not have specific future plans for the nation of Israel.

2. Among the different views of the relationship between the church and Israel are:

- The church has replaced Israel (replacement theology)
- The church is an expansion of Israel (Covenant Theology)
- The church is completely different and distinct from Israel (Dispensationalism)

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3. Replacement theology teaches that the church is the replacement for Israel and that the many promises made to Israel in the Bible are fulfilled in the Christian church, not in Israel. The prophecies in Scripture concerning the blessing and restoration of Israel to the Promised Land are spiritualized or allegorized into promises of God's blessing for the church.

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4. Contrast Replacement Theology to Dispensationalism:

Our apostle Paul makes it clear that today there are three distinct entities:

1. Jews
2. Gentiles
3. Church

1 Corinthians 10:32 "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:"

- A person is in one of these groups. If he is unsaved today, he is either an unsaved Jew or an unsaved Gentile. If he is saved today, he is part of the church – which is His Body:

Colossians 1:18 "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence."

Colossians 1:24 "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:"

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5. The view that Israel and the church are different is clearly taught in the New Testament. The Church Age, or Age of Grace began with the Apostle Paul (Acts 9) and will continue until it is taken to heaven at the rapture (Eph. 1:9, 1 Th. 4:13-17)

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6. The church has no relationship to the curses and blessings for Israel. The covenants, promises, and warnings of the Mosaic Covenant were valid only for Israel. Israel has been temporarily set aside in God's program during these past 2,000 years of dispersion. Romans 11:1-11.

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7. Contrary to replacement theology, dispensationalism teaches that, after the rapture (1 Th. 4:13-18), God will restore Israel as the primary focus of His plan. The church will return with Christ and will reign with Him for a literal thousand years (Rev. 20:1-5)

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament support the premillennial/dispensational understanding of God's plan for Israel. The strongest support for premillennialism is found in the clear teaching of Rev. 20:1-7, where it says six times that Christ's kingdom will last 1,000 years.

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8. After the tribulation the Lord will return and establish His kingdom with the nation of Israel, Christ will reign over the whole earth, and Israel will be the leader of the nations.

Romans 11:25 "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."

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Conclusion

- To replace Israel with the church is contrary to the clear teaching of the Bible. Jews, Gentiles and the church are the three distinct entities recognized by the word of God.

1 Corinthians 10:32 "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:"

- To teach otherwise by spiritualizing and taking what belongs to Israel and applying to the church is to wrongly divide the Word of Truth.

2 Timothy 2:15 "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."