

~ISRAEL OF GOD (263)

- This expression, found only once in Scripture, refers to Spiritual Israel rather than to racial descendants of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel.
- Later during that night he rose and took his two wives and his two maidservants and his eleven young sons and crossed over the ford of Jabbok. ([Genesis 32:22](#))
- So he took them and brought them over the torrent valley, and he brought over what he had. ([Genesis 32:23](#))
- Finally Jacob was left by himself. Then a man began to grapple with him until the dawn ascended. ([Genesis 32:24](#))
- When he got to see that he had not prevailed over him, then he touched the socket of his thigh joint, and the socket of Jacob's thigh joint got out of place during his grappling with him. ([Genesis 32:25](#))
- After that he said; Let me go, for the dawn has ascended. To this he said; I am not going to let you go until you first bless me. ([Genesis 32:26](#))
- So he said to him; What is your name? To which he said; Jacob. ([Genesis 32:27](#))
- Then he said; Your name will no longer be called Jacob but **Israel**, for you have contended with God and with men so that you at last prevailed. ([Genesis 32:28](#))
- The Bible speaks of **Israel** in a fleshly way.
- Look at that which is **Israel** in a fleshly way. Are not those who eat the sacrifices sharers with the altar? ([1 Corinthians 10:18](#))
- As well as Spiritual Israel made up of those for whom descent from Abraham is not a requirement.
- And do not presume to say to yourselves, As a father we have Abraham. For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to

Abraham from these stones. ([Matthew 3:9](#))

- The apostle Paul, when using the expression, **the Israel of God**, shows that it has nothing to do with whether one is a circumcised descendant of Abraham or not.
- For neither is circumcision anything nor is uncircumcision, but a new creation is something. ([Galatians 6:15](#))
- And all those who will walk orderly by this rule of conduct, upon them be peace and mercy, even upon the **Israel** of God. ([Galatians 6:16](#))
- The prophet Hosea foretold that God, in rejecting the nation of natural **Israel** in favor of this spiritual nation, which includes Gentiles, would say to those not my people; You are my people.
- And I shall certainly sow her like seed for me in the earth, and I will show mercy to her who was not shown mercy, and I will say to those not my people; You are my people. And they, for their part, will say; You are my God. ([Hosea 2:23](#))
- If, now, God, although having the will to demonstrate his wrath and to make his power known, tolerated with much long-suffering vessels of wrath made fit for destruction. ([Romans 9:22](#))
- In order, that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory. ([Romans 9:23](#))
- Namely, us, whom he called not only from among Jews but also from among nations, what of it? ([Romans 9:24](#))
- It is as he says also in Hosea; Those not my people I will call my people, and her who was not beloved, beloved. ([Romans 9:25](#))
- In due time the Kingdom of God was taken away from the nation of natural Jews and given to a spiritual nation bringing forth Kingdom fruitage.
- This is why I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and be given to a nation producing its fruits. ([Matthew 21:43](#))

- To be sure, natural Jews were included in Spiritual Israel. The apostles and others who received Holy Spirit at Pentecost in **33 C.E.** (about 120), those added on that day (about 3,000), and those that later increased the number to about 5,000 were all Jews and proselytes.
- So, when they had entered, they went up into the upper chamber, where they were staying, Peter as well as John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the zealous one, and Judas the son of James. (**Acts of Apostles 1:13**)
- With one accord all these were persisting in prayer, together with some women and Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brothers. (**Acts of Apostles 1:14**)
- Now during these days Peter rose up in the midst of the brothers and said, the crowd of persons was all together about one hundred and twenty. (**Acts of Apostles 1:15**)
- Therefore those who embraced his word heartily were baptized, and on that day about three thousand souls were added. (**Acts of Apostles 2:41**)
- However, many of those who had listened to the speech believed, and the number of the men became about five thousand. (**Acts of Apostles 4:4**)
- But even at that, they were, as Isaiah described them, a mere remnant, saved out of that cast-off nation.
- A mere remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the Mighty God. (**Isaiah 10:21**)
- For although your people, O **Israel**, would prove to be like the grains of sand of the sea, a mere remnant among them will return. An extermination decided upon will be flooding through in righteousness. (**Isaiah 10:22**)
- Moreover, Isaiah cries out concerning **Israel**; Although the number of the sons of Israel may be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved. (**Romans 9:27**)

- Other scriptures elaborate on this matter. With the breaking off of some natural branches of the figurative olive tree, there was a grafting in of wild non-**Israelite** ones, so that there was no racial or class distinction among those that are really Abraham's seed, heirs with reference to a promise.
- However, if some of the branches were broken off but you, although being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became a sharer of the olives root of fatness. (**Romans 11:17**)
- Do not be exulting over the branches. If, though, you are exulting over them, it is not you that bear the root, but the root bears you. (**Romans 11:18**)
- You will say then; Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in. (**Romans 11:19**)
- All right! For their lack of faith they were broken off, but you are standing by faith. Quit having lofty ideas, but be in fear. (**Romans 11:20**)
- For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. (**Romans 11:21**)
- See, therefore, God's kindness and severity. Toward those who fell there is severity, but toward you there is God's kindness, provided you remain in his kindness, otherwise, you also will be lopped off. (**Romans 11:22**)
- They also, if they do not remain in their lack of faith, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. (**Romans 11:23**)
- For if you were cut out of the olive tree that is wild by nature and were grafted contrary to nature into the garden olive tree, how much rather will these who are natural be grafted into their own olive tree! (**Romans 11:24**)
- There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor freeman, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one person in union with Christ Jesus. (**Galatians 3:28**)
- Moreover, if you belong to Christ, you are really Abraham's seed, heirs with reference to a promise. (**Galatians 3:29**)

- Not all who spring from **Israel** are really Israel. For he is not a Jew who is one on the outside, nor is circumcision that which is on the outside upon the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one on the inside, and his circumcision is that of the heart by spirit.
- However, it is not as though the word of God had failed. For not all who spring from **Israel** are really Israel. (**Romans 9:6**)
- For he is not a Jew who is one on the outside, nor is circumcision that which is on the outside upon the flesh. (**Romans 2:28**)
- But he is a Jew who is one on the inside, and his circumcision is that of the heart by spirit, and not by a written code. The praise of that one comes, not from men, but from God. (**Romans 2:29**)
- Natural **Israel** failed to produce the required number, so God, turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name.
- Symeon has related thoroughly how God for the first time turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name. (**Acts of Apostles 15:14**)
- Concerning whom it was said; You were once not a people, but are now God's people.
- For you were once not a people, but are now God's people; You were those who had not been shown mercy, but are now those who have been shown mercy. (**1 Peter 2:10**)
- The apostle Peter quoted what had been said to natural **Israel** and applied it to this Spiritual Israel of God, saying it is in reality, a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for special possession.
- And now if you will strictly obey my voice and will indeed keep my covenant, then you will certainly become my special property out of all **other** peoples, because the whole earth belongs to me. (**Exodus 19:5**)
- And you yourselves will become to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you are to say to the sons of **Israel**. (**Exodus 19:6**)

- But you are, a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for special possession, that you should declare abroad the excellencies, of the one that called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (**1 Peter 2:9**)

- The 12 tribes mentioned in (**Revelation Chapter 7**) must refer to this Spiritual Israel for several valid reasons. The listing does not match that of natural Israel at (**Numbers Chapter 1**)

- Also Jerusalem's temple and priesthood and all the tribal records of natural Israel were permanently destroyed, lost forever, long before John had his vision in **96 C.E.**

- But more important, John received his vision upon a background of the aforementioned developments from and after Pentecost **33 C.E.** In the light of such events, John's vision of those standing on the heavenly Mount Zion with the Lamb, whom natural Israel had rejected, revealed the number of this Spiritual Israel of God to be 144,000, bought from among mankind.

- And I heard the number of those who were sealed, a hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the sons of **Israel**: (**Revelation 7:4**)

- And I saw, and, look! The Lamb standing upon the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. (**Revelation 14:1**)

- These are the ones that did not defile themselves with women, in fact, they are virgins. These are the ones that keep following the Lamb no matter where he goes. These were bought from among mankind as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. (**Revelation 14:4**)