



THE THREE QUESTIONS SERIES: Part 2 of 3

As a Bible Study teacher and frequent speaker, Rick is often asked a variety of questions about the focus of his ministry. There are three basic questions that seem to arise in many of these discussions. They are all inter-related, and they have come to form the foundational statements of **Zion's Roar Ministries**:

1. Why Study Bible Prophecy?
2. Why Care About Israel?
3. Why Believe in a Rapture?

Question #2: Why Care About Israel?

ANSWER: First, let's examine why some don't care for Israel, then we'll present the reasons YOU should.

There are two extremes upon the, "I-have-no-care-for-Israel" sliding scale. On one side, are those that are totally disinterested and apathetic towards Israel. On the other side, are those that are totally hostile and belligerent towards her. And, of course, there are a wide range of folks in between.

These two extreme attitudes are held by individuals found within two basic camps as well. The first camp, is made up of those that are clearly biblical unbelievers. But even more sadly, the second camp, is often made up of those that do claim to be believers in the very King of Israel; the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ (Yeshua Ha'Meshiach).

How can these things be? Well, let's look first at the biblical unbeliever. Clearly, a biblical unbeliever has no reason to honor the Word of G-d. If one is either unfamiliar with the Bible, or affords it no relevance, then it is also no surprise that its many passages regarding G-d's love and adoration for His Chosen People are unknown, discounted, or ignored. They will view Israel no differently than any other nation and will not be impressed by any arguments to the contrary. This explains the apathetic side of the scale.

Yet, on the other hand, if the Jewish people are truly G-d's beloved Chosen People (and they are), it also stands to reason that enemies of G-d (both natural and supernatural) wouldn't be just apathetic towards them, but would be downright hostile towards them. This blatant hostility would exude from "natural" enemies from amongst mankind, and also from the real "supernatural" enemies that influence mankind. This explains the extreme hostility side of the scale.

Therefore, we see both of the sliding scale extremes from biblical unbelievers; whether they be apathetic and detached secular humanists, or perhaps hostile and violent Islamic Jihadists. But, of course, all this is to be expected of unbelievers, and there are really no surprises here.

What is surprising, are those that claim to be believers, but that also tend toward apathy or hostility to Israel. Much of this negativity is the result of poor biblical literacy, deficient humanistic reasoning, erroneous doctrinal positions, and quite simply, the long-standing traditions of men within the historical "Church," under both Catholic and Protestant umbrellas.



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**THE LORD ALSO SHALL ROAR OUT OF ZION, AND UTTER HIS VOICE FROM JERUSALEM;
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It is no wonder that the Jewish people often fail to recognize their strong Christian advocates, as compared to their persistent foes, among so-called “Christian” believers the world over. A review of the historical persecutions inflicted by both the Catholic and Protestant traditions upon the Jewish people certainly recommends an abundance of caution on their part toward many so-called “Christians.”

Apathy towards Israel from a professing believer is often the product of limited biblical literacy and/or a misinformed consensus. Outright hostility, on the other hand, is a potential clue to a far more serious, insidious, and deeply-rooted problem. First, we shall address the common apathetic issue, then we shall address the much darker, and subversive, hostility issue.

In **Jeremiah 31:31-34**, the Prophet Jeremiah predicts that G-d will one day establish a “New Covenant” with His people, just as He had formerly established the Mosaic covenant found in Torah: *“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”* (underlined emphasis my own)

This incredible “New Covenant” was initiated by the Messiah, Jesus Christ (Yeshua Ha’Meshiach), but it is not yet fully consummated. This is a shocking statement for many Christians to accept. However, that is exactly what the **Jeremiah 31** passage states. There are TWO timeframes involved...

First, *“the days come”* that He will make the covenant; which occurred in the first century time of Yeshua (Jesus Christ). Those “days” will continue until the full number of Gentile “strangers” willing to avail themselves of this “new covenant” have done so. For those that demand a “New Testament” explanation, note that Rabbi Sha’ul (the Apostle Paul) affirms this in **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.”*

Then, *“after those days”* (as per the Prophet Jeremiah), Israel shall come to the recognize Yeshua as the earthly incarnation of G-d Himself, and “all” Jews shall know Him. He then forgives their former iniquity and remembers their sins no more; just as He initially did for the Gentile “strangers.” Both Peter and Paul, as chosen apostles of this “New Covenant,” give plain recognition of this fact.

The Lord’s closest disciple, St. Peter himself, says so in **Acts 15:7-11**, with particular emphasis on v.11: *“But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we (Jews) shall be saved, even as they (Gentiles).”* And Rabbi Sha’ul (the Apostle Paul) echoes this thought as he completes the citation in the previous paragraph with **Romans 11:26-27**, *“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: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

This “New Covenant” spoken of by the Prophet Jeremiah is the basis for the “New Testament” found in the Christian Bible (as appended to the Mosaic “Old Testament” (Tanakh) that came before it). But take note, the Prophet Jeremiah makes clear from the first verse of the cited passage, that this New Covenant will be made with the “House of Israel” and the “House of Judah.” It belongs to the Jewish people, just as the Mosaic covenant did. Gentiles were NOT mentioned.

However, in the first Mosaic covenant, as found in “Old Testament” Torah, there were multiple provisions made for the Gentile “stranger” that wished to join himself to Israel and to partake of the covenanted benefits of G-d along WITH the Jewish people. The Gentile “stranger” never took these gracious benefits AWAY from Israel as his own, but joined in WITH Israel to enjoy them (**Exodus 12:48-49, et al**).

The Gentile “stranger” was not *compelled* to join this covenant, but it was made *available* to him. He was free to ignore it if he wished, although he still had to conform to the Law of the Land if he chose to live among the Jews. He could live with, or without, the benefits of a covenant relationship with their G-d, that was his choice, but it was THEIR covenant. Period.

Similarly, the “New Covenant” was also made available to the Gentile “stranger.” In fact, the Bible predicts in various places that it would draw more Gentiles than Jews when it first arrived (start with **Isaiah 11:10; 42:6; 60:3; Jeremiah 16:19; Malachi 1:11; et al.** and see the results in **Matthew 4:15-17; Matthew 12:15-21; Luke 2:22-32; John 7:35; Acts 9:15; 11:1,18; Acts 13:46-48; 14:27; 15:3-19; 22:21-23; Romans 3:29; 11:1; 15:11-12,27, et al.**). Of course, Gentiles have always far outnumbered Jews as a population.

But again, this “New Covenant” was not compelled and there were (and there will be), far more persons among both populations that reject it rather than accept it. Whether Jews or Gentiles, there are few that find it palatable after centuries of adherence to the former Mosaic covenant, or that find it in accordance with their own modern, secularized standards of human reasoning (**Matthew 7:14**). Then as now, people are resistant to change, even good change, and especially change that they fail to fully understand.

With the predicted influx of Gentile “strangers” into what is still really a Jewish New Covenant, they soon outnumbered the original Jewish contracted parties of this Amazing Grace. This bred much confusion. Whereas Jewish believers in the first century were coming to Yeshua with an understanding of the times and the prophecies of the Tanakh, Gentiles were arriving fresh from paganism. The Jewish believer could validate Yeshua’s ministry and purpose based on scripture, but the Gentiles were without the benefit of the committed oracles and life-long instruction in the ways of G-d.

Most of the Gentile “strangers” were/are thrilled with the covenant benefits of G-d’s grace, but were/are not well-versed in His works and ways. Unfortunately, then as now, majority members tend to wield more political influence, whether they are qualified to do so or not. So soon, the untrained Gentile masses were ruling within the congregations of the Jewish Messiah. This brings us to the dual extremes of historical (and modern) apathy and/or hostility toward the Children of Israel...from within the very “Church” itself.



You see, in the mind of rabbinical Judaism, the destruction of the Temple by the Roman Empire in 70 A.D. and the subsequent scattering of Israel, was their greatest tragedy in modern history. I would argue it was also a great tragedy for Gentile Christians. Why? Because it left the Gentile “strangers” to fend for themselves in relation to their newfound faith. Without the benefit of Jewish scriptural and cultural context (and especially when done absent the guidance of the Holy Spirit), certain (but foreseen) errors crept into their interpretations of the biblical texts. The Gentile “strangers” (some innocently, some maliciously), began to bring their own understandings to the biblical text, and even to the instruction provided to them by the Jewish Apostles themselves.

While rightfully accepting that the “New Covenant” was a better covenant, built upon better promises of salvation due to its reliance on G-d’s completed works, rather than our own (**Hebrews 6:8**), the Gentile “strangers” began to discount any reference to the former Mosaic covenant. It was often rejected out of hand, despite the fact that the Mosaic covenant was spoken from the very mouth of G-d Himself at Mount Sinai, engraved with his hand, and preserved for generations to come, for a distinct purpose. The Gentile “strangers” thus ignored Rabbi Sha’ul’s (the Apostle Paul) admonition in **Romans 15:4**, *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”*

In other words, the study of the “Old Testament” (Tanakh) became, and unfortunately remains, no longer *“en vogue”* for most of today’s Gentile Christian believers throughout the world. Because of this, many Gentile Christians are largely ignorant of G-d’s special relationship with the Jewish people, and the many, as of yet, unfulfilled promises remaining to them. This discouraging level of biblical illiteracy is at the root of the “apathetic toward Israel” problem evidenced by many mainstream “Christian” believers today.

But this also brings us to the “hostility toward Israel” problem. Something far more sinister. Quite frankly, that hostility is best described as an “influence ops” conducted by the enemy... who has used pride to infiltrate the “Church” from within, just as we were warned in scripture.

By severing the link between the Jewish people and G-d through discarding the Tanakh, it became easy for these new believers to focus on a Gentile-centric worldview. Despite specific warnings, as foreseen by Rabbi Sha’ul (the Apostle Paul), the dominant majority of Gentile “strangers” began to exalt themselves over the numeric minority ...their own Jewish brethren. They felt quite justified in doing so, seeing that the Sanhedrin, the Jewish leadership of Israel, had not only failed to officially acknowledge Jesus (Yeshua) as the Messiah, but had persecuted Him to the point of His prophesied (and necessary) crucifixion. Feeling superior, the Gentile “stranger” soon fell prey to the inner workings of the most ancient evil of all: Pride.

It is no coincidence that Rabbi Sha’ul (the Apostle Paul) recorded his warning in the Book of Romans. For it was from within the Roman Catholic tradition that the doctrine of Secessionism sprang. The deceptively misleading idea that the “Church,” dominated by Gentile “strangers,” had supplanted and replaced Jewish Israel in the overall plan of G-d was also later taken up by the former Catholic priest, Martin Luther, in the Protestant Reformation. Therefore, the poisonous doctrine of Secessionism continues to this day in many mainstream denominational churches. It is more commonly known as, “Replacement Theology.”



ZION'S ROAR

MINISTRIES

Joel 3:16



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And so, many Gentile “strangers” began to expound upon the concept of “blood guilt” upon the head of the Jews, ignoring their own Gentile role in the crucifixion. They created the concept of “Deicide” and the ominous anti-Semitic libel of “Christ-killers” that led to centuries of self-justified persecution and abuse of the Jewish people by both Catholic and Protestant groups, as if G-d had been unable to defend Himself. Nevertheless, Christ Himself said in **John 10:17-18**, *“Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”*

No, my friend, the Jews didn’t kill Christ. Nor did the Gentiles, for that matter. He clearly laid His own life down, voluntarily paying the infinite price for mankind’s finite sins. What is being overlooked, is that His own death was prophesied from the beginning. Mankind had no part in it. G-d alone predestinated it: *“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,”* **1 Peter 1:18-20**.

Again, it is no coincidence that this scriptural counter-argument to the anti-Semitic fantasy of a Jewish blood-libel is recorded in the First Epistle of Peter. Whether Roman Catholics are correct or not, Peter is considered by them to be their first Pope. Yet, Roman Catholicism was the very one that first originated the concept of the Jewish blood-libel as a doctrinal basis for Secessionism, i.e. “Replacement Theology.”

But, will they hear St. Peter? Do they respect the infallible authority they are required to ascribe to their alleged, “First Pope?” Can G-d speak any clearer to His people than to use their own purported founding authority to correct them in this misguided notion? No, my friend. G-d is not done with the Jewish people, as many in “Replacement Theology” circles would have you believe.

Let’s take a look at Rabbi Sha’ul’s (the Apostle Paul) prescient warning beginning in **Romans 11:1**, *“I say then, Hath G-d cast away his people? G-d forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. G-d hath not cast away his people which he foreknew...”* This verse echoes the Prophet Samuel in **1 Samuel 12:22**, *“For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name’s sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.”*

Moreover, Rabbi Sha’ul (Apostle Paul) continues in **v.11**, *“I say then, Have they (Jewish Israel) stumbled that they should fall? G-d forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.”* And in **v.18**, *“Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.”* And finally, **Romans 11:25-27**, *“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. 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: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.”*



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You see, my friend? Israel is still very much beloved by the Most High G-d. They are the Apple of His Eye (**Deuteronomy 32:10; Zechariah 2:8**). There is yet a precious, promised, destiny for her and the Jewish people. And if G-d cares for her so, and is yet in covenant with her, how then should we feel about her? Apathetic? Hostile? G-d forbid. Is not our living Savior a Jew himself? For it is evident that our Lord sprang from the Tribe of Judah (**Hebrews 7:14**). Since Gentiles have been made partakers of Israel's spiritual blessings, they should at the very least, minister to her in her natural needs (**Romans 15:27**).

It is my belief that doctrinal Secessionism, i.e. "Replacement Theology" and its prideful hostility towards Israel serves to forward the set stage of end-time events. Satan has infiltrated the Church in this way to forward the persecution of the Children of Israel to prevent them from accepting the New Covenant and acknowledging Yeshua (Jesus Christ). Satan hopes to prevent the official acknowledgement of Yeshua by the Jewish people. Why? Because, when acknowledged, they will invoke the clause of His return to fulfill his contractual obligations to save all of Israel, from both their enemies and their sins, which leads to the binding of Satan and his evil forces.

Yeshua Himself warned of this predicted infiltration of the Church by Satan in the Kingdom parables of **Matthew 13**. Here, the "Tares," "Leaven," and "Fowls of the Air" are all symbols, emblematic of unclean, sinful, evil, and/or wickedness intermingled with the holy. In other words, un-regenerated men mixing with the redeemed and giving spiritual reign to the supernatural enemies of G-d and His people. These warnings of subversions were repeatedly echoed by the disciples/apostles as well. These machinations by the enemy are part of the basis for the "Rapture" of the true believers within the Church, which we will address in the next part of this series.

Therefore, I'll leave you with this final thought as to why YOU should care for Israel.

It is well-known that the "Fig Tree" is a symbolic representation of Israel in the patterns of Bible prophecy. This prophetic symbolism of the Fig Tree as Israel speaks volumes in **Proverbs 27:18**, "*Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.*"

Are you helping to keep the Fig Tree (Israel) while you wait for the Master to return? Will you be honored by Him for your diligence in caring for her? If not, perhaps you now know why one should care about the well-being of Israel, both spiritually and materially. Truly, it is of the utmost importance...to G-d Himself.

Selah.