

Ephesians Series

Lesson #138

January 23, 2022

Dean Bible Ministries

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The Distinction Between Israel and the Church

Ephesians 4:11–16



EPHESIANS

THE WEALTH, WALK
& WARFARE
OF THE BELIEVER

Eph. 4:11, “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

Eph. 4:12, “for** the equipping of the saints **for** the work of ministry, **for** the edifying of the body of Christ,**

Eph. 4:13, “until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;”

Eph. 4:14, “that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

Eph. 4:15, “but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—

Eph. 4:16, “from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

Eph. 1:22, “And He (God the Father) put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,”

Eph. 1:20, “which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

Eph. 1:21, “far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

Eph. 1:22, “And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,

Eph. 1:23, “which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

- 1. Christ is seated at the right hand of God the Father.**
- 2. Christ is positionally over all of the angelic creatures and over the Church. In Col. 2:10 He is the “head” of all principality and power.**
- 3. Christ is the head of the Church, also stated in Eph. 4:15, 5:23; Col. 1:18.**
- 4. The Church is further defined as “His Body”, Rom. 7:4; 12:5; 1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 12:12–27; Eph. 4:4, 12, 16; 5:30; Col. 1:18, 24; 2:19, 29; 3:15; Heb. 13:3.**
- 5. Our passage has the purpose of informing us about these gifted leaders Christ gives to the Church.**

**What the Bible Teaches
About**

**The Church
(Ecclesiology)**



Review

1. The use of the term “church” in the New Testament:

- the universal (or invisible) Church which includes all Church Age believers alive or with the Lord.**
- The singular “church” in the Greek refers to a group of churches in a city, a region, or in several regions.**
- The singular church also refers to a local assembly of believers, a local expression of the body of Christ.**

When Did the Church Begin?

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Acts 5:11, “So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.”

When is the Sign of the Church?

1. The Baptism by the Holy Spirit, unique to the Church Age

It was future for John the Baptist, Matt. 3:11, and for Jesus just before He ascended.

Acts 1:5, “for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

When is the Sign of the Church?

2. The Holy Spirit Descended in Acts 2

Acts 2:2, “And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Acts 2:3, “Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

Acts 2:4, “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

Acts 8:14, “Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them,

Acts 8:15, “who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:16, “For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 8:17, “Then they [Peter and John] laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 11:15, “And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning.”

Acts 11:16, “Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, ‘John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ”

Do not confuse the Church with the Kingdom

- a. The universal rule of God over all of His creation**
- b. The theocratic rule of God over Israel**
- c. The future reign of Messiah from the throne of David in Jerusalem. This is an earthly, geo-political kingdom that is yet future. Its initial stage is 1,000 years, Rev. 20:1–8**

Do not confuse the Church with Israel

Eph. 3:2, “if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

Eph. 3:3, “how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,

Eph. 3:4, “by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),

Eph. 3:5, “which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

Eph. 3:6, “that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,”

Eph. 2:14, “For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

Eph. 2:15, “having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,”

Eph. 2:16, “and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

Eph. 2:17, “And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.

Eph. 2:18, “For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”

Conclusion:

Thus, the Church is not Israel, and Israel is not the Church!

Where did we get this idea that Israel is the Church of the Old Testament, and the Church is the spiritual Israel in the present age?

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1. The introduction of allegorical or spiritualized interpretation into Christianity by Origen of Alexandria (*ca* AD 185–254).

a. Alexandria, Egypt had been the home of a Jewish philosopher in the first century known as Philo of Alexandria. His dates were 20 BC – *ca* AD 50. He is important for us to know because of his influence on interpretation. Philo was responsible for developing the allegorical method of interpretation, which was dominant in Alexandria.

2. Origen was deeply influenced by Platonism and applied it to interpretation of the Bible.

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a. The literal meaning of Israel as the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was reinterpreted to mean the spiritual church of the Old Testament.

b. The literal meaning of Revelation 20, which uses the number 1,000 years to describe the future reign of Jesus on the earth, was explained away as just an idealized number, so that the whole idea of the kingdom was spiritualized and the distinction of the Church and the uniqueness of the Church was explained away.

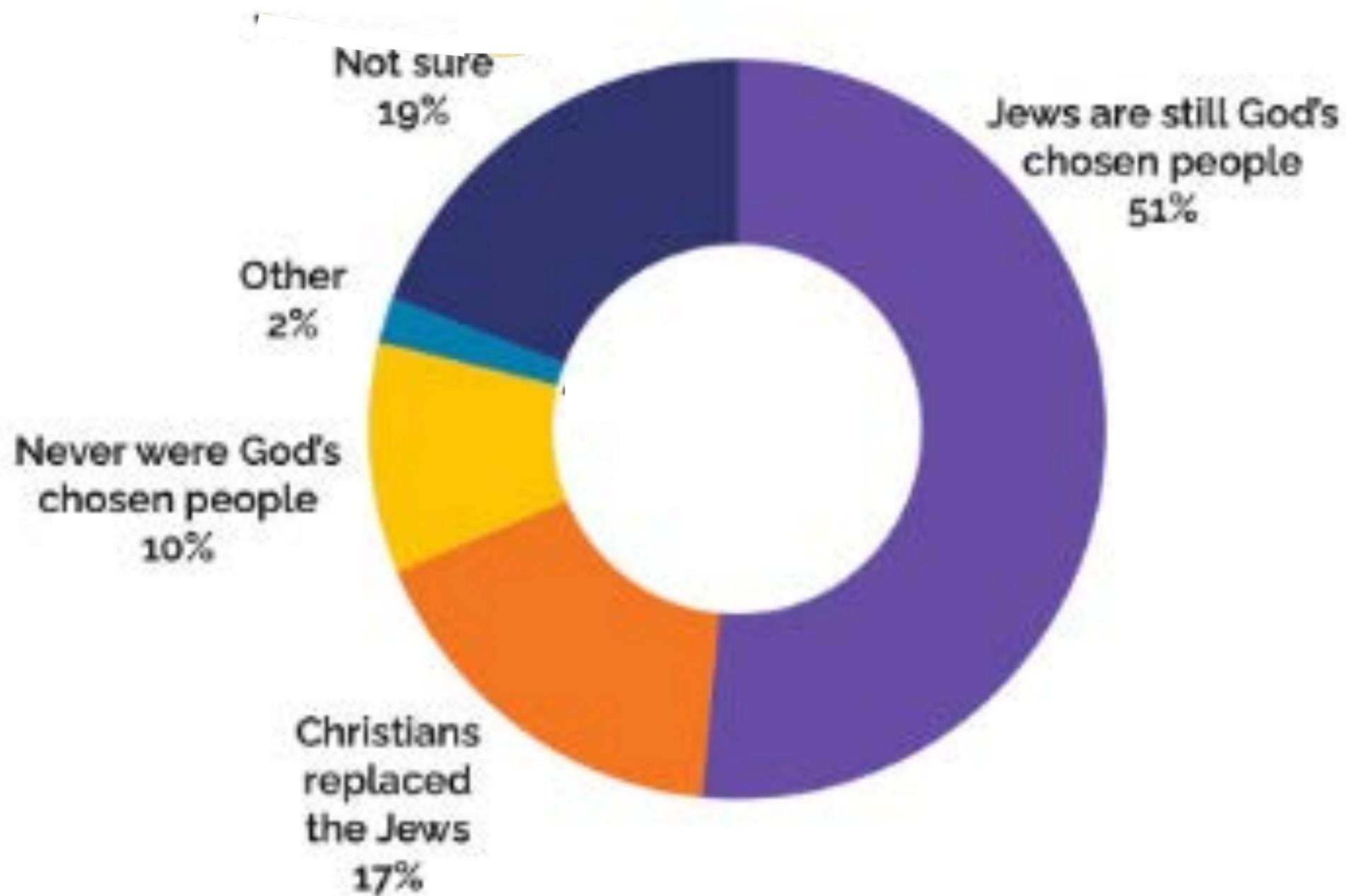
- 1. “Israel” and “Church” were allegorized or spiritualized so that Israel was the Church of the Old Testament and the Church became spiritual Israel.**
- 2. The 1,000 year number, which is used 6 times in Rev. 20, was spiritualized to mean simply an ideal period of time, not a literal 1,000 years.**
- 3. The future kingdom of Christ on the earth was spiritualized to be equivalent to the Church.**

- 4. This became known as *amillennialism*—no 1,000 years.**
- 5. Thus, the distinction between God's plan for the Church and God's plan for Israel was removed.**
- 6. The result did not necessitate Christian anti-Semitism, but it did lay the theological foundation and provided rationalization for anti-Semitism, which began to develop at this time.**

7. The ultimate fruit of this allegorical root was the policy of Nazi Germany to exterminate every Jew on planet earth.

This week, on Thursday, January 27, 2022 we observe International Holocaust Remembrance Day to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust, which includes not only the murder of approx. 6 million Jews, but also numerous Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses, political enemies of the Nazis, gypsies or Roma, and many others.

God's Chosen People



Percentages may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Summary

- 1. God's plan for Israel includes the future fulfillment of the prediction from Dan. 9:24–27 where God revealed to the prophet Daniel**

Dan. 9:25, “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.”

Summary

2. The Messiah will be cut off, i.e., killed, not for Himself, this shows that He will be killed for others.

Isa. 53:4, “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

Isa. 53:5, “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”

Summary

2. The Messiah will be cut off, i.e., killed, not for Himself, this shows that He will be killed for others.

Isa. 53:6, “All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

Summary

2. The Messiah will be cut off, i.e., killed, not for Himself, this shows that He will be killed for others.

Isa. 53:10, “Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.

Isa. 53:11, “He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities.”

Summary

3. This pause has lasted now almost 2,000 years since Jesus, the Lamb of God, was crucified and died for our sins on the Cross. At the end of the pause there will be the last 7 years.

Dan. 9:27, “Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.”

Daniel's Seventy "Weeks" Seventy Periods of Sevens

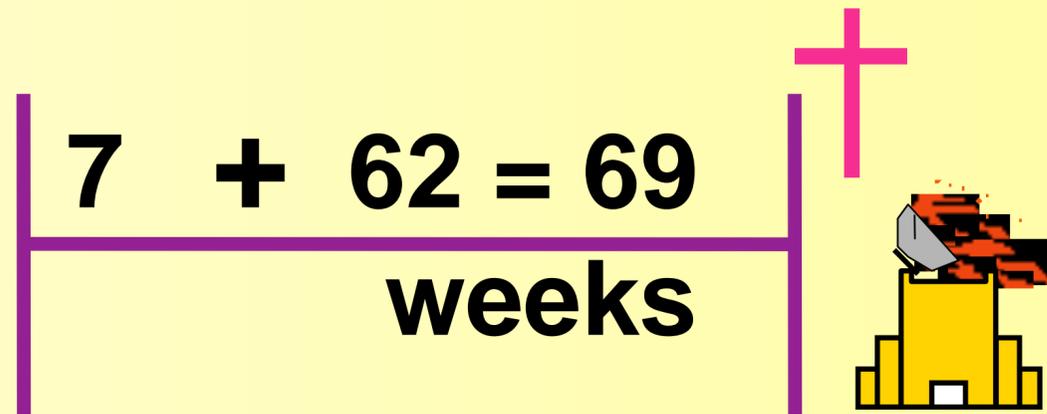
Dan. 9:24–27

**The Decree
to Restore**

**Messiah
the Prince**

**The Coming
Prince**

**Messiah
Returns**



**March 5,
444 B.C.
Artaxerxes'
Decree
Neh. 2:1–3**

**March 30,
A.D. 33
Triumphal
Entry
Luke 19:28–40**

**70th Week
Unfulfilled**

ISRAEL

ISRAEL

4. Our take away from this is four-fold:

a. We, the Church, are not Israel. We, the Church, have a separate purpose and destiny than the saved Jews of other dispensations. We (the Church composed of Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus as the Jewish Messiah who died for our sins) will rule in the kingdom with Christ.

b. The Kingdom is established only after dominion is taken away from the Antichrist. The first Beast of Rev. 12, and the little horn of Daniel 7 has his dominion removed from him.

Dan. 7:12, “As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

Dan. 7:13, “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.”

Dan. 7:14, “Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.”

Dan. 7:26, “But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever.

Dan. 7:27, “Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.”

c. Thus We must understand who we are as Church Age believers in distinction from Israel.

We are not in the Kingdom now. We are the Church, the Body of Christ, and Christ is the Head of the Church and He gives gifts to the Church to edify and mature believers in this dispensation.

d. Therefore, when we ask what kind of church ought we to look for, we must seek a church that:

- 1. recognizes the distinct mission for the church.**
- 2. has a pastor-teacher who understands his mission is to train, prepare, and equip believers so they can mature spiritually and serve the Lord according to their gifts in the local church.**
- 3. understands the clear gospel that rejects works, or ritual, or human effort as the basis for salvation.**