

# God's Everlasting Covenant

## Replacement Theology and *The Arab Christian Revisionist Narrative*

Shalom,

We want to share some thoughts with you about a topic which can easily create confusion on the part of believers.

The topic is **Arab Christians**.

By this we are not attempting to promote prejudice. It is about having a better understanding of this important matter, and promoting *true* reconciliation.

*[Please note, this is not about the effort of some Muslims to convince believers that Messiah is a prophet of Islam. That is an entirely different issue]*

Suffice to say there is a tremendous amount of material one could include on this topic. Our goal is to try and simplify the matter as much as possible in order to understand the basic issues of concern.

### **Embracing Replacement Theology**

From time to time we are informed about an Arab who has "come to faith." It's always wonderful to see someone give their heart to Messiah. When it comes to Arabs, we believe some additional discernment may be necessary. Why?

In general, the majority of Christianity embraces "replacement theology." This is the belief that the Jews have been 'replaced' by the "Church" as the covenantal promise holders. Another term often used to identify replacement theology is "*spiritual Israel*." Yet virtually all Arab Christians embrace replacement theology. Why?

Not to embrace it means they would have to recognize Israel's biblically prophetic role, which means they would have to be standing with Israel as Christian Zionists do. Given the cultural/political problems which exist between Jews and Arabs, such a stance would present a huge challenge for Arabs, possibly even life threatening. This is especially true for those living in Israel.

Moreover, the vast majority of Arab Christians in Israel feel closer to the viewpoint of Hamas, Fatah, the PLO and other anti-Israel groups when it comes to the conflict. That is they believe Israel is an occupying force and needs to relinquish control over what they view as *their* land. Virtually the same percentage of Arab Christians who live outside Israel have similar views. Ironically, Hamas and other Arab Muslim groups are the major perpetrators of brutality against Arab Christians, yet much of the media would have you believe Israel is the cause.

In light of the above, it's a good idea to exercise discernment when hearing of an Arab coming to faith. One should consider asking what their views are on certain issues before proclaiming hallelujah!

For example here are three key issues-

- 1. Are the Jews still the covenantal promise holders of God's plan?**
- 2. Does the covenant God has made with Israel and the Jews include the Land?**
- 3. Does he/she understand Gentiles are grafted into Israel, not the other way around?**

Question #1 scriptural reference, Sha'ul [Paul] says:

**Romans 11:1-2**

*"Did God reject his people? Heaven forbid! I myself am a son of Israel, from the seed of Avraham, of the tribe of Binyamin [Benjamin]. God has not rejected his people, whom he chose in advance."*

Question #2 scriptural references are numerous. Two examples are:

**Genesis 15:18**

*On that day Adonai made a covenant with Avram saying "I have given this land to your descendants- from the vadi of Egypt to the great river Euphrates."*

**Genesis 17:8**

*"I will give to you and your descendants all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."*

Question #3 scriptural reference:

**Romans 11:16-18**

*"If the root is holy, so are the branches. But if some of the branches were broken off, and you – a wild olive – were grafted in among them and have become equal sharers in the rich root of the olive tree, then don't boast as if you were better than the branches! However, if you do boast, remember that you are not supporting the root, the root is supporting you."*

The answer to each of the questions should be **"yes."** Some will try and convince you Arabs have just as much historical right to the land as the Jews. Scripture is quite clear on this, as shown in #2 above. Standing firm on these points is important. God's word does not change to suit man's agenda. The way that non-Jews inherit the promises made to Israel, including the Land, is through being grafted into Israel *through* the Jewish Messiah.

## **Four Distinct Revisionist Scenarios**

### **Scenario #1:**

Some Arab believers may say they love Israel, or love the Jewish people; or they may indicate they are promoting "reconciliation, peace and justice" between Arabs and Jews. On the surface this sounds nice. However, promoting such 'noble' goals is rooted in human reward [such as the oft promoted "two-state solution"] which means dividing up God's land. **Joel 3:2 says** *"I will enter into judgment there for my people, my heritage Israel, whom they scattered among the nations; then they divided my land."* Here God tells us three things-

1. He affirms the Jewish people and the land of Israel are *"my people"* and *"my heritage."*
2. It is on their behalf He will hold the nations accountable.
3. They [the nations] will be accountable for *"dividing my land."*

### **Scenario #2:**

You may also hear an Arab believer say they love Israel and the Jewish people because Jesus compels them to forgive their *enemy*. On its face this is a true and conciliatory statement. However, the sad truth is such a person by their own words still defines Israel and the Jews as their "enemy." This view represents a critical distinction and is incompatible with biblical truth as shown in the aforementioned scriptural quotations above. **[Questions #1, #2, #3]**

### **Scenario #3:**

Another often heard statement is "we are all children of Abraham." This is a revisionist attempt to promote equal status among Arabs and Jews regarding God's covenantal promises. **Genesis 17:20-21** says "*But as for Yishma'el [Ishmael], ....I have blessed him. I will make him fruitful and give him many descendants....and I will make him a great nation. But I will establish my covenant with Yitz'chak [Isaac].*" Thus the true seed of Avraham is through Yitz'chak. This is confirmed in **Romans 9:7**- "*What is to be called your 'seed' will be in Yitz'chak*"

### **Scenario #4:**

Some say Jesus is a Palestinian. This suggests at least two things- [1]He is not a Jew, [2]He is an Arab. Both statements are false. Scripture tells us Messiah is from the Tribe of Judah and from the seed of David in several places [[Isaiah 9:6-7](#), [Jeremiah 23:5-6](#), [Matthew 21:9](#), [Revelation 22:16](#)]. His name is [Yeshua](#) ben Yosef [Yeshua, son of Joseph]. He was born "King of the Jews," [[Matthew 2:2](#)]. His ministry was to His own people- the Jews. All His disciples were Jews. When crucified the sign above Him said "This is Yeshua, King of the Jews." [[Matthew 27:37](#)].

Scripture tells us Messiah is the same yesterday, today and forever,[[Hebrews 13:8](#)]. Thus we can safely conclude Messiah was born, lived, taught, died, was resurrected and shall return as a Jew. He was not, is not, and never shall be an Arab or "Palestinian."

## **Promoting Revisionism**

The Arab world has long been attempting to rewrite history denying biblical truths in order to 'legitimize' their false claims against Israel and the Jewish people. While replacement theology has been promoted by the "Church" as a whole for nearly eighteen centuries, there are some more recent terms which have come out of the Arab world specifically designed to target the Jewish people and Christians who stand with Israel.

Two such terms are "**Christian Palestinianism**" and "**Palestinian Liberation Theology.**"

If you wish to view material on these issues here are two links- [Link #1](#) [Link #2](#)

To view additional examples of how the Arab world has been attempting to rewrite history click [here](#)

## **What About "Palestine?"**

You may also hear the name "Palestine" used quite a bit. In light of this an understanding of its name, origin and biblical status seems appropriate. "Palestine," is the name given to Judea by the Roman Emperor Hadrian after the unsuccessful Jewish revolt in 135 A.D. He specifically chose the name "*Palestine*" as an affront to the Jews because the Philistine's were the ancient enemies of Israel. "Palestine" is a Latinized version of "Philistine," from the word "Philistia," which appears a handful of times in the Hebrew scriptures [OT] and references enemies of Israel in each instance. There is no mention of "Palestine" or "Philistia" in the Apostolic writings [NT]. By contrast the name Israel appears over 2,600 times in the entire Bible. The effort to promote the name "Palestine" is one more attempt at revisionist history designed to delegitimize Israel's rightful biblical status and replace it with an Arab narrative.

## **The Importance of Discernment**

We recognize the issue of Arab Christians may be somewhat confusing and possibly difficult, especially if you have a relationship with an Arab believer. The ones who understand and embrace these biblical truths are quite rare. Praise God for their faith and conviction! One example is [Walid Shoebat](#). In other cases many of them may be lovely people with sincere hearts, yet they may

simply be confused on these key issues. If such is the case you may have an opportunity to enlighten them by pointing out what Scripture says. If after seeing what the Word of God says they embrace these biblical truths, praise God!. You have won your brother to the truth.

Unfortunately this is not often the response. You may instead encounter Arab Christians who will argue strongly against these biblical truths and attempt to convince you to alter your view to fit their narrative. As we have shown Scripture is clear on these issues, so a believer should not obey man if it means disobeying God. Pray that God will reveal the truth to them.

Many well intentioned individuals and church bodies who stand with Israel have embraced Arab believers without properly understanding how important it is to determine their views on the issues included in this writing. If you are attending a fellowship that includes Arab believers, or is encouraging views which are incompatible with scripture, as referenced herein, we encourage you to *prayerfully* consider discussing this with the appropriate individuals, which may include leadership. We hope the information included herein will provide some clarity and lead to true reconciliation. Please let us know if you have any questions, as we understand this can be a delicate issue.

*In closing, we wish to restate the intent of this writing is to encourage discernment on this important issue, absent of any hint of prejudice, which has no standing among true believers.*