

# THE LORD'S CHURCH AND ISRAEL

By Leon King

**T**he Lord Jesus Christ established his church during his personal ministry on earth. Of those disciples called unto himself, he chose twelve to be Apostles. These were the first officers of his church.

The Lord's church began with a total Israelite membership - the Church at Jerusalem. According to the scripture, there was not one gentile member of the church at Jerusalem. This was the beginning of the New Covenant which God promised to make with Israel. His promise is recorded in Jeremiah 31. Let's read it:

**Jeremiah 31:31-34** *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.*

The fact that our Holy Bible consists of an Old Testament (Covenant) and a New Testament (Covenant) ought to be enough to cause an inquiring mind to understand that there are two distinct covenants.

The very first verse of the first book of the New Testament begins an explanation of the new covenant which is completed with Revelation 22:21. Make no mistake about it, God made the covenant with Israel - because the covenants pertained to Israel.

**Romans 9:4** *Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;*

Therefore, the first beneficiaries of the New Covenant were Israelites. The covenant was ratified when Jesus Christ, the mediator of the New Covenant shed His blood on the cross for the sins of His people whose names were recorded in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world.

The gospel of the kingdom and the New Covenant are inseparably connected. We read in Hebrews of this new covenant promised in Jeremiah which is now made with Israel and those Jews who had believed in Jesus Christ.

**Hebrews 8:7-13** *For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when 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 when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws*

*into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*

**Hebrews 10:15-17** *Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

The Hebrew letter was written to show these believing Hebrews the superiority of Jesus Christ over Moses, over angels - indeed over all. For he was the mediator of a better covenant with better sacrifices, with a better hope, and better promises. Our Lord has made the first covenant old and it was to vanish away. The law could not and did not profit because it was weak in the flesh. Sinful man could not keep the law of God which was and is good and holy.

**Romans 8:3** *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:*

**Romans 3:9-20** *What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat*

*is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. **Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.***

Praise God for the mediator of the New Covenant (the everlasting covenant) who became sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

As gentiles and those afar off, we were without Christ, being aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and were without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus we who were sometimes far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us! Praise God, both Jew and Gentile are in the same body - the church. Gentile believers are grafted into the new covenant made with Israel as explained in Romans 11. GENTILES ARE NOT ISRAELITES. It was the purpose of God that gentiles should be brought into the same body as the Jews and that purpose was revealed in the New Covenant.

**Ephesians 3:1-6** *For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: **How that by revelation he made***

**known unto me the mystery;** (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; **That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:**

National Israel and the church remain distinct. In the Thousand Years Reign on this earth, Israel shall be the chief nation on earth. The nation – all of them living shall be gathered to that land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants where the rebels shall be purged out and the nation brought into the bond of the covenant. The context of this passage shows clearly that none of this took place when that small remnant of Israel returned to the land from the Babylonian exile.

**Ezekiel 20:33-42** *As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you: And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD. **And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me:** I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD. As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord GOD; Go ye, serve ye*

*every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me: but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols. For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers.*

During this time, the Lord Jesus Christ has already returned with his saints and is King over all the earth.

**Zechariah 14:1-4** *Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.*

**Zechariah 14:9** *And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.*

His saints, which were faithful New Testament church members, and have part in the first resurrection, shall reign with him on the earth.

**Revelation 1:5-6** *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, **And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father;** to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* (Let us remember that the book of Revelation was written by John the Apostle and was sent to the seven churches in Asia.)

**Revelation 5:9-10** *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: **for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.***

**Revelation 20:1-6** *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the*

*thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. **Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.***