

~Who is the "Israel" of God?~

Romans 9:6

Dallas Seminary dispensationalist Alan Patrick Boyd stated the following:

"The majority of the writers/writings in this period [A.D. 70-165] completely identify Israel with the Church." (Boyd, "Dispensational Premillennial Analysis," p. 47.)

To this, the majority of early Christian writers agree.

Boyd specifically cites Papias, 1 Clement, 2 Clement, Barnabas, Hermas, and the Didache, though a case could be made that no other early Christian was as emphatic on this point as Justin Martyr. His second century work, "*A Dialogue with Trypho, A Jew*" must be the finest treatment ever given this subject, all things considered. For more information on this topic, please refer to **excerpts from the writings of Justin Martyr- On the Identification of Israel (A.D.150)**

Romans 9 is a *theodicy* -- a vindication or defense of God. The word comes from a compound Greek root: Theos (God) and, dikos (just) The goal of a theodicy is to exonerate God from all blame. It is saying that what God is doing is absolutely just and righteous. The emphasis in this chapter is on the sovereignty of God. Romans 9 may be difficult for some of you to handle. For, in this chapter, the apostle brings before us some of the toughest questions ever faced by man as he contemplates the actions and workings of God.

Men have a problem with the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty. Many of the statements in this chapter are hard to accept because there are things said here about the sovereignty of God that fallen man resists. We must allow the Scriptures to be the final authority of all we believe and not our emotions or traditions.

Here is the problem that Romans 9 deals with; the whole Old Testament is filled with promises that God made to Israel. The nation was uniquely chosen by God to be blessed and to be a source of blessing to the whole world.

Deuteronomy 7:6-8 "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. 7 "The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; 8 "but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

It was to Israel that God revealed himself, it was Israel that received the Messianic promises. They were God's chosen people.

Amos 3:1-2 "Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying: 2 "You only have I known of all the families of the earth;"

The word "known" indicates an intimate relationship. God knows every single individual but he knew Israel in a special way. They had a very privileged position.

Romans 9:4-5 "who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; 5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen."

Now, with privilege comes responsibility. Look at the last part of the verse in Amos 3:2

"Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."

With great privilege comes great responsibility. Israel became proud and missed the true end of all they had; the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to atone for their sins.

In the first couple of verses of Romans 9 we saw Paul expressing his sorrow for his countrymen and his readiness to suffer for them. Paul was implying by this that they were no longer the people of God. Paul was saying that Israel was no longer blessed, but they were in fact now cursed. He says he wished he could take the curse for them.

If God's chosen people were now cursed, had God gone back on His promises? Has he rejected his Chosen people? Was Israel really cursed or was Paul just bitter because of all the beating he had received from them? Let's look at what Jesus had to say to the nation of Israel.

Matthew 21:18-19 "Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. 19 And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." Immediately the fig tree withered away".

I believe that the fig tree is used here as a figure for the nation Israel. Throughout Israel's history, God constantly hungered for his people to bring forth fruit. The gospel writers spoke of the physical hunger of Jesus Christ as symbolic of God's hunger for fruit from His people. Jesus pronounces a curse on Israel because of their failure to bear fruit and their ultimate rejection of Him. Many of Jesus' parables referred to Israel's rejection and thus their destruction.

Matthew 21:33-43 "Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower."

Who is the vineyard?

Isaiah 5:1-7 "Now let me sing to my Well-beloved A song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard On a very fruitful hill. 2 He dug it up and cleared out its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, And also made a winepress in it; So He expected it to bring forth good grapes, But it brought forth wild grapes. 3 "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. 4 What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, Did it bring forth wild grapes? 5 And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. 6 I will lay it waste; It shall not be pruned or dug, but there shall come up briars and thorns. I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain on it." 7 For the *vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel*, And

the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help."

Now, who is the vineyard? It is Israel. Israel is God's vineyard.

Now keep that in mind as we go back to Matthew 21.

And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 34 "Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit.

What is the fruit that God was looking for? I'll give you a hint, we just read it in Isaiah 5:7, Justice and righteousness. Folks, this hasn't changed, God is still looking for these in His people. This is a constant theme in Scripture;

Psalms 33:5 " He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD."

Psalms 103:6 "The LORD executes righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed".

Proverbs 21:3 "To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice."

What is justice? Justice has two major aspects. First, it is the standard by which penalties are assigned for breaking the obligations of the society. Second, justice is the standard by which the advantages of social life are handed out, including material goods, rights of participation, opportunities, and liberties. It is the standard for both punishment and benefits. The most prominent human agent of justice is the ruler. The king receives God's justice and is a channel for it.

Psalm 72:1 "Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's Son. 2 He will judge Your people with righteousness, And Your poor with justice."

What about righteousness, what is it? We understand righteousness to mean "uprightness," in the sense of "adherence or conformity to an established norm." In biblical usage, righteousness is rooted in covenants and relationships. For biblical authors, righteousness is the fulfillment of the terms of a covenant between God and humanity or between humans in the full range of human relationships. The one who, in faith, gives himself to the doing of God's will is righteous.

Matt: 21:35 "And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. 36 "Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. 37 "Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 "But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' 39 "So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him."

Jesus is prophesying what the Jews will do to Him.

40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" 41 They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." 42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'? 43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.

Jesus tells them very clearly that because of their rejection of Him, the kingdom of God will be taken from them.

Let's look at another parable.

Matthew 22:1-10 "And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king, who arranged a marriage for his son and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come."

The king is God, the son is Christ, and those invited are the nation Israel.

4 "Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding." 5 "But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. 6 "And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. 7 "But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

What is verse seven speaking of? Yes, it very clearly is a prediction of the AD 70 judgment of the Jerusalem.

8 "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. 9 'Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' 10 "So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.

Israel lost its privilege, and all nations were invited to come to the wedding celebration of the Lamb. This destruction of the nation because of their rejection of Christ was prophesied from the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry.

Matthew 3:9-10 "and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. 10 "And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree, which does not bear good fruit, is cut down and thrown into the fire.

Luke 13:6-9 "He also spoke this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. 7 "Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' 8 "But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. 9 'And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.'"

Instead of bearing fruit during the final year, the nation exceeded all of its prior transgressions by crucifying the Messiah.

In light of all this, the question is; has God's plan changed? Is Israel's rejection, as a nation, a going back on His word? Has God broken His promises to Israel?

To Paul's listeners, there are two possible conclusions to be drawn; either the gospel that Paul is preaching is false or else, if it is true, the promises of God to Israel have failed. The Messiah and blessing to Israel

were inseparably connected. The Jews would say, "Either Jesus is not the true Messiah, he cursed and rejected God's people, or the Word of God has proven false." So God's justice and righteousness is being called into question.

This is very relevant to us today because if God broke His promise to Israel, what assurance do we have that He will keep his promise to us and give eternal life to all who believe in Him?

So in verse 6, Paul having finished his introduction, begins his theodicy. Paul is going to show his readers, first century Romans and us today, in these verses that Israel's rejection is not inconsistent with the promises of God. To say that the nation is accursed is not to say that God's promises have failed.

Romans 9:6 " But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel,"

The "word of God" means anything which God has spoken. Here, from the connection it should be understood in a more specific sense. It is the word of promise in the covenants alluded to in verse 4. It refers to the great promises God had made to Abraham, then to Isaac, then to Jacob; conferring blessing upon their seed, announcing Himself as God of Israel.

The phrase, "has taken no effect" is from the Greek word ekpipto, which means to fall out of, to fall down from, to fail, to be without effect. Paul uses this verb several times in Acts 27 in regard to his voyage. It is used of a sailing vessel getting off the course it was intended to have, and it was used of flowers fading.

We could put it this way, it's not as if the promises of God have gone off course.

God's promises have not gone off course or failed, they were misunderstood! WOW! Can you imagine someone misunderstanding God's promises? I'm sure you can think of a few promises that Jesus made that are misunderstood today. Many of His promises have been misunderstood by His people. Paul is going to show us that God is working, and has always worked according to the principle of sovereign election.

"For they are not all Israel who are of Israel"

What does that mean? God never promised unconditionally to each offspring of Abraham covenantal blessings. God never intended that all of the nation Israel would be redeemed. Within national Israel is "true Israel," or "spiritual Israel." The nation was chosen to be a vehicle of blessing to the world, but not all within the nation were chosen to salvation. The nation was elected to privilege, but only individuals are elected to salvation. Most Jews believed that all who are born of Jewish blood are saved by birth.

They felt secure because they were children of Abraham and therefore in the covenant of promise.

John 8:30-44 " As He spoke these words, many believed in Him. 31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." 33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, 'You will be made free'?"

Sin has a way of blinding a person to his true state. They said they have never been in bondage. If you understand Israel's history you understand what a joke that is. They were presently in bondage to Rome and prior to that it was Greece, prior to that it was Media Persia, and prior to that it was Babylon, and prior to that it was Egypt. They had been in bondage to the Gentiles most of their existence. The very promise that God made to Abraham included that his seed would go into bondage and be afflicted for a time.

Genesis 15:13-14 " Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions."

Notice what they said, "we are Abraham's descendants" -- they were referring to physical descent. They were trusting in their race to save them. There are folks today doing this.

34 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. 35 "And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. 36 "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

Jesus is saying that only he can give them true freedom. It is a spiritual birth not a physical birth that saves (John 3:3).

37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. 38 "I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father." 39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.

They were physical descendants of Abraham, but Abraham was not their father spiritually and that is what mattered.

40 "But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. 41 "You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father; God." 42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. 43 "Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. 44 "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

Satan held them in bondage through the law. They were the physical seed of Abraham but not the true seed of Abraham.

Matthew 3:7-9 " But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, 9 "and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones."

He is telling them not to count on their physical descent. The true Israel is the Israel of faith, not birth. Throughout the history of the nation there have always been faithless Jews.

Romans 11:3-5 "LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"? 4 But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." 5 Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace."

Most of Israel was faithless, only a remnant was redeemed. Those of faith made up the remnant.

John 1:47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"

Jesus is saying that Nathanael is a true Israelite, not simply an outward one.

Israel is not a term like *Ammon, Moab, Greece, or Rome*. Israel cannot be defined in terms of physical descent, or understood simply on the human side; it is created not by blood or soil but by the promise of God. Romans 9:6 clearly teaches us that there are two Israel's. *There is ethnic, physical, national Israel and there is true, spiritual Israel, God's chosen people.*

Galatians 3:6-9 "just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham." Who are Abraham's true children? Those of faith not physical descent. So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham. The blessing comes from faith not physical descent.

Galatians 3:16 " Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ."

Notice who the promise is to; it is to Abraham and his seed, singular, of Abraham who is Christ. We only get in on the blessing by our relationship with Christ.

Galatians 3:29 "And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

We inherit all the promises made to Abraham through Christ. Everything we are and have is by virtue of our union with Christ, which only comes by faith. Listen carefully, the Abrahamic Covenant was a promise made to Abraham and to Jesus Christ, the seed of Abraham, that he would be made great, the father of many nations, and that in him would all the nations of the earth be blessed. This promise was fulfilled physically in Abraham, and spiritually and ultimately in Christ.

What Paul preached does not speak against the promises of God. Israel is God's people by faith, and all who believe in Christ receive the promises that God made to Israel. The Church, those of us who have trusted Christ, are the Israel of God. Believers and only believers are "true Jews."

Galatians 6:15-16 " For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. 16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God".

To understand that God keeps His covenant and promises, you MUST understand that not all Israel is really Israel and not all Jews are true Jews.

Romans 2:28-29 "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God."

Jew is used here in the technical sense of God's chosen people. And circumcision was a technical designation for the physical Israelites. Physical Jews were synonymously called "the circumcision." But in Philippians, Paul calls Gentile believers the True circumcision.

Philippians 3:3 "For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,"

We = believers, Jews and Gentiles who have trusted in Christ.

The issue is FAITH, not birth. Believers are the true Israel, the true Jews, the true circumcision. Believers are the chosen of God and heirs of the promises. Ethnic Jews don't count, it is a matter of faith not ancestry. The promises were made to the believing remnant, not the whole nation.

Zionism -- is a political movement built on the belief that the national Jews deserve, *by right*, the land of Palestine as their own. Do they? Modern unbelieving Jews have absolutely no theological, and therefore no historical and legal right to the land of Palestine. Modern day Judaism is a cult, they are covenant breakers, Christ rejecters, and are under the curse of God. Christian Zionism, which much of the Church today holds to, is blasphemy. It is a heresy. Christians have no theological stake whatsoever in the modern state of Israel. Israel is an anti-God, anti-Christ nation.

1 John 2:22-23 "Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. 23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also."

Judaism denies the Son and is a cult, and unless the Jews turn to Jesus Christ they remain under the curse of God.

Revelation 2:9 "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan."

Revelation 3:9 "Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie; indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you."

Who would say they are Jews but National Israel? They are Abraham's physical descendants, but spiritually they are the children of the devil. A true Jew, a true Israelite is one who has trusted in Jesus Christ and been circumcised in heart.

The reason why the rejection of the Jews involved no failure on the part of the divine promise, is because the promise was never addressed merely to the natural descendants of Abraham. The promise was always to the spiritual descendants of Abraham, the Church. The Church is not a temporary interruption in God's prophetic program for Israel. The Church is the prophetic fulfillment of that program because the Church is true Israel. Covenant, not race, has always been the defining mark of the true Israel of God.

"They are not all Israel, which are of Israel" -- the purpose of this distinction is to show that the covenantal promise of God did not have respect to Israel after the flesh but to true Israel, believers in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the unbelief and rejection of ethnic Israel, as a whole, in no way interfered with the fulfillment of God's covenant purpose and promise. The word of God, therefore, has not been violated.

Will God keep His promises to Israel? You better believe he will, but they are to spiritual, not physical, Israel. Look at this blessed promise and tell me who it refers to?

Zechariah 2:6-13 "Up, up! Flee from the land of the north," says the LORD; "for I have spread you

abroad like the four winds of heaven," says the LORD. 7 "Up, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon." 8 For thus says the LORD of hosts: "He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye. 9 "For surely I will shake My hand against them, and they shall become spoil for their servants. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me. 10 "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," says the LORD. 11 "Many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. 12 "And the LORD will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem. 13 "Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!"

This is often applied to the physical nation of Israel and used to say that we had better be good to the Nation Israel. This is speaking of spiritual Israel, the church. To touch us is to stick your finger in God's eye. I believe that Matthew is its NT equivalent. God cares for His people.

Matthew 18:6 "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

God is faithful, He is Just, He is righteous. If He makes us a promise, it is sure, we can count on His Word. But we must make sure we understand the Word and not misinterpret it.

God's Word hasn't failed and it never will. There is great comfort in the immutable word of God. Cling to His promises, trust Him, He is faithful.

Deuteronomy 7:9 "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;"

Revelation 19:11 "Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war."

God is vindicated, He keeps His Word. What great comfort we have in the many immutable promises He has made us. May we rest in His blessed promises to us. He is faithful.

By David B. Curtis (dbcurtis@erols.com)

Below is a sentiment with which I fully agree. The tragedy in the Middle East is fueled, in large part, by a misunderstanding of Biblical Eschatology. Futurism and Zionism are fomenting the problem. (bob)

"The best way for Israel to stop terrorist attacks in its territory is by first ceasing its occupation of Arab land in the West Bank and Gaza. However, Israel will not pull back to its pre-1967 borders so long as many Israelis and most evangelical Christians in America continue to believe that present day Jews have a biblical right to all of Arab territory in Palestine. For this reason a biblical examination of the issue is necessary. As an evangelical Christian, of Indian origin, I wish to set the biblical issue in proper perspective. Although the modern state of Israel now has every right to exist as any other nation this does not mean that Zionism (the belief that Jews have a biblical right to all of Palestine) is correct. And it is Zionism that is primarily fueling the building and expansion of Jewish settlements on Arab land. From a purely biblical perspective Zionism has enormous problems. The fact is that almost none of the Jews in modern Israel today are descendants of the original Jews of Palestine thousands of years ago. Most of the

Jews in Israel today are descendants of Europeans who had converted to Judaism in the Middle Ages (known as Khazar Jews). The last time that God had promised in Scripture to bring the Jews back to their ancestral homeland was already fulfilled centuries ago when He brought them back from their Babylonian captivity. Thus, the Jews in present day modern Israel are not a fulfillment of that ancient promise.

Furthermore, God's promises concerning the land to the Jews in the Old Testament were conditional - only so long as they obeyed Him were those promises concerning the land binding. Most evangelical Christians today are looking forward to the seven year tribulation period of Israel which would require for the Jews to be in the land. But this period had already occurred in history during 63 A.D. to 70 A.D. (seven years) when the Roman army besieged and destroyed Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple. It was this destruction that Jesus said would mark the end of the age (the Jewish Age, that is).

Evangelical Christians who are dispensationalists are still seeking for an Israel that the New Testament says is the spiritual body of Christ made up of both Jew and Gentile believers in Jesus Christ and who together inherit the same promises. The modern state of Israel, now that it has been established, has every right to exist and almost all Palestinians now will agree to Israel's right to exist. What they do not agree with is Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and Israel's continued building of settlements there. Most Palestinians will stop supporting terrorism if Israel simply gets out of their "lawn" (the West Bank and Gaza) and that is the best way for Israel to stop the terrorism and preserve its security and peace

- not to mention the security and peace of others."

Sincerely, Babu G. Ranganathan