



One Nation Under God: The Israel of God

Galatians 6:16

**And as for all who walk by
this rule, peace and mercy
be upon them, and upon
the Israel of God.**



What is the Rule?

Who is the Israel of God?

The rule is: Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; the only thing that counts for anything is are you a new creation in Christ Jesus. Galatians 6:15

Who is the Israel of God in Galatians 6:16?



Turn to

Romans 11:25-26



Romans 11:25–26

- Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon **Israel**, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And in this way **all Israel will be saved**, as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”;



**Some believe Romans 11:26
presents a promise from God
that in the future a significantly
large portion of ethnic Israel
will believe the gospel of Jesus
Christ and be saved.**



But our question is:

**Who is the Israel of
God in vs. 16?**



**The way we interpret Galatians
6:16 has no impact on other
promises for ethnic Israel—those
Scriptures must be interpreted for
themselves.**



We have two options:

- 1. Abraham's biological offspring**
- 2. Abraham's spiritual offspring**



Is Paul bestowing a
blessing of peace and
mercy upon two
groups or one group?



Galatians 6:16

- And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.





Outline of Biblical Usage [?]

/ and, also, even, indeed, but

9000+

Strong's Definitions [?]

(Strong's Definitions Legend)

καί **kai**, kahee; apparently, a primary particle, having a copulative and sometimes also a cumulative force; and, also, even, so then, too, etc.; often used in connection (or composition) with other particles or small words:—and, also, both, but, even, for, if, or, so, that, then, therefore, when, yet.

The Greek provides no help for determining 'and' or 'even'

Copulative

connecting words or clauses linked in sense

Cumulative

increasing or increased in quantity, degree, or force by successive additions.

**Instead, we must look at
the 1) internal and 2)
external evidence to help us
determine the correct
interpretation.**

Biblical Facts relating to Israel (IMO)

- 1. God sovereignly chose, created and preserved the ethnic Nation of Israel.**
- 2. The Nation Israel rejected their Messiah.**
- 3. God is still saving Jews (ethnic Israel).**
- 4. The body of Christ is the fulfilment of the Abrahamic Covenant.**

**Is the Apostle who gave us Galatians 3:28
now upending everything he wrote in chapter
3 & 4 by bestowing the blessing of peace and
mercy to ethnic Israel?**

**Or is Paul slamming the final nail in a coffin of
death to circumcision does and mean
nothing?**



Galatians 3:28

- **There is neither Jew nor Greek,**
- **there is neither slave nor free,**
- **there is no male and female,**
- **for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**



Galatians 3:6–7

- just as Abraham “believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”? ⁷ Know then that it is **those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.**



Galatians 3:8–9

- And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” ⁹ So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.



**Notice how Paul links the
blessing of salvation in
Christ Jesus to the Gentiles
back to Abraham in v. 14.**



Galatians 3:14

- so that in Christ Jesus **the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles**, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.



Galatians 3:16

- Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, “And to offsprings,” referring to many, but referring to one, “**And to your offspring,” who is Christ.**



Galatians 3:29

- And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.



Look @

Galatians 4:21ff

²¹ Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law? ²² For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. ²³ But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise. ²⁴ Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. ²⁵ Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. ²⁶ But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. ²⁷ For it is written, “Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband.” ²⁸ Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. ²⁹ But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. ³⁰ But what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.” ³¹ So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

Two Mothers of Two Sons of Father Abraham

Slave Woman

[Ishmael]

Born of the Flesh

Covenant of Law

Mt Sinai

Hagar

Present Jerusalem

Born of the Flesh

Shall not Inherit

[Judaism]

Free Woman

Isaac

Born through Promise

New Covenant

[Golgotha (Gospel)]

[Sarah]

[Heavenly] Jerusalem

Born of the Spirit

[Is the Heir]

[Christianity]

If Paul is now promising peace or mercy to ethnic Israel in v. 16 then he has completely contradicted chapter 4 which draws a clear distinction between Christians and unbelieving Jews.



**Now let's look at
the immediate
verse before v. 16**



Galatians 6:15

- For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, **but a new creation.**

I don't think you can state unequivocally that neither being a Jew nor being Gentile counts for anything and then in the very next sentence bestow peace and mercy upon ethnic Israel of God.



External Evidence

Paul & Other Apostles



**God uses Paul, the Hebrew
of Hebrews, the apostle to
the Gentiles, to teach us
much about the composition
of the Israel of God.**



Romans 2:28–29

- For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. ²⁹ But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.



Paul is not introducing something completely NEW to Scripture. Moses said:

And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

Deuteronomy 30:6



Colossians 2:11

- In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,



What is the circumcision of Christ?

In contrast to the circumcision of Abraham is the circumcision of Christ. The circumcision of the heart performed by the Holy Spirit refers to the spiritual transformation that takes places when a person is born again.



Titus 3:5

- he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the **washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,**



Romans 9:6–7

- But it is not as though the word of God has failed. **For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel,⁷ and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring,** but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.”



**Not all who descended from Israel
belong to Israel.**

**Not all are children of Abraham because
they are his offspring.**

**Clearly Paul is pointing to distinction
between Israel and ethnic Israel.**



**Jesus says the same
thing in**

**Revelation
2:28-29 & 3:9**



Revelation 2:9

- “ ‘I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those **who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.**



Revelation 3:9

- Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you.



1 Corinthians 10:18 (AV)

- Behold Israel after the flesh:
are not they which eat of the sacrifices
partakers of the altar?

Why does Paul need to
specify Israel after the flesh?



Is there one people
of God or two?

Church & Israel

**Romans
11:17
answers
our
question**





Romans 11:17

- But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree,



Here is another version of Romans 11:17

In the Garden of Eden there was a tree of life.

Christ died for our sins on a tree.

Paul says the people of God are a single olive tree with branches broken off and grafted in.

Revelation closes with a tree of life in the holy city—the new Jerusalem.

The NT is NOT God starting over.

The OT foretold of this New Covenant with the house of Israel that now includes all who have faith in the Messiah (anointed one).

Jeremiah 31:31-32; Ezekiel 36:25–28

Jeremiah 31:31–32

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD.

Ezekiel 36:25–28

²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. ²⁸ You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.



Luke 22:20

- And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “**This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.**”



The Lord's Supper is the celebration of the New Covenant that God established with Israel—but what Israel?

Remember Jesus spoke the words, “this cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood” during the annual Passover celebration with 12 other Jews.

Read Acts 2 and you realize Peter's audience is ethnic Israel. The early church is nearly exclusively converted ethnic Jews.

The early church is so Jewish that Peter has to be persuaded by God that Gentiles can be part of this New Covenant. (Acts 10)



What did all these Jews have in common concerning Jesus?

The NT is NOT God starting over.

Instead it is God establishing a New Covenant with the house of Israel that now includes all who have faith in the Messiah.

But the reality is there was always ethnic Israel and true Israel from the beginning.



Romans 9:6

- But it is not as though the word of God has failed. **For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel,**

No one was saved in the OT because of their physical birth. Being a Jew was never enough.

It wasn't enough in the OT or NT and isn't today and never will be.

Abraham believed God...



Romans 9:27

- **And Isaiah** cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the [biological] sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them [biological] will be saved,



True Israel consists of all who lived their lives by faith in God and His Promises as revealed to them while ethnic Israel consisted of sons of Israel and sojourners some of whom like Ruth the Moabite were also part of true Israel.

SO
WHAT?



Galatians 6:16

- And as for all who walk by this rule,
peace and mercy be upon them,
and upon the Israel of God.



#1 The 'Israel of God' description connects the church of Jesus Christ back to an entire Old Testament of people and promises. It ties Christianity all the way back to Genesis 3:15.

Romans 9:4



Romans 9:4

- They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises.

You should not have an issue with Paul calling the church of Christ the Israel of God when the Head of the Church—Jesus Christ is the Lion of the tribe of Judah and the root of David.



#2 The 'Israel of God' description reminds today's disciple of Christ that he or she is part of something much, much larger and greater than a local congregation where race or ethnicity doesn't matter.



1 Peter 2:9

- But you are a **chosen race**, a royal priesthood, **a holy nation**, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.



Before Christ the death of Christ inaugurated the New Covenant the chosen race was ethnic Jews but now the chosen race has nothing to do with ethnicity.

The chosen race are the people of God who have been saved by grace through faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

If Peter calls the flock of God (1 Peter 5.2) a chosen race and a holy nation no one should have any issue with the Paul calling all true believers the Israel of God.



#3 The 'Israel of God' description reminds all true believers in Jesus Christ that they have a greater earthly allegiance to and HOPE in another Nation.



Philippians 3:20

- But our citizenship is in heaven,
and from it we await a Savior, the
Lord Jesus Christ,

Compare to Galatians 4.6



Galatians 4:26

- But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.

My Duel Citizenship

United States of America	Israel of God
Washington D.C.	Jerusalem Above
Born of the Flesh	New Birth; New Creation
President & Politicians	The Father, Son & Holy Spirit
Constitution	The Word of God
Democratic-Republic	Theocratic Kingdom
Countless Laws & Statutes	Two Commandments
Confined by Boundaries	Universal in Size & Scope
Temporary	Eternal
Inherit Nothing	Joint Heir w/ Christ Jesus

- Church
- Body of Christ
- Bride of Christ (Lamb)
- Flock of God
- God's Field
- Letter of Christ
- Household of Faith
- Chosen Race
- Holy Nation
- Israel of God

**Are you part
of 'It'?**

**Are you a
new creation
in Christ
Jesus?**