



**Dirk
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Israel

*How it
relates to the*

Kingdom of God

Bible translation:

Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations in this publication are taken from the King James Version.

Any emphasis in the Bible text is my own addition, obviously.

Preface

A few years ago, I was overcome with the urge to write an article about Israel. Having grown up in a Reformed Christian family, I have always been exposed to a positive attitude towards the State of Israel. I was 13 years old when the Six-Day War broke out in 1967, and I still remember it quite clearly. I was also particularly interested in the Holocaust and its consequences for Jews during the Second World War. From a young age, we had a radio play at home based on Leon Uris's novel Exodus. I later read almost all of Leon Uris's books, many of which dealt with the situation of the Jews during and around World War II.

In the various church settings I have been part of over the years, I have also encountered a predominantly positive attitude towards Jews and the State of Israel. I was convinced that the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 was the fulfillment of biblical prophecies.

The big question that has preoccupied me enormously in recent years is this: 'What does the Bible have to say about this?' The more I read, the more it nagged at me, and I began to question my positive attitude. Is it all true, and does it all correspond with the Bible? This prompted me to set aside my preconceptions and take a closer look at the Bible in relation to this topic specifically, asking myself whether the commonly used Scriptures might be subject to some kind of arbitrary interpretation rather than pure exegesis.

*¹⁹We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: ²⁰**knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.** ²¹For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they*

*were moved by the Holy Ghost.
(2 Peter 1:19-21)*

The result was an article about Israel in 2021, which I published on my website under the title "Israel and how it relates to the Kingdom of God". The article caused quite a stir in my personal circle almost immediately. Since then, I have continued to delve deeper into the subject and found that a number of issues remained unresolved. This prompted me to revise the article and publish it as a small book with the same title.

It took quite a few hours to write everything down. I adjusted the layout, rewrote parts of it and, with the help of my dear wife, went through the spelling and sentence structure once more. This way, not only did I know what I had written, but I also knew that someone else had read it to check that she understood the message.

Many thanks to my dear wife for her constant reading, commenting and correcting of my work. Above all, thanks to God. I am convinced that He helped me through His Spirit to get it all down on paper correctly.

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Introduction

There is currently a global movement emerging. Christians of various denominations suddenly seem to realise that the Bible does not consist solely of the New Testament. They are coming to understand that the gospel is not only to be found in Paul's epistles. Many people claim to have reached the conclusion that they must obey the Law of Moses. All over the world, people are discussing dreams in which the Holy Spirit supposedly reveals to them that the law applies not only to Jews, but also to followers of Jesus. These revelations often seem to be received entirely without the intervention of others. As a result, people are reconsidering their views on the Sabbath and other biblical holidays, often concluding that they would also be of great value to Christians.

However, this then provokes responses from others who argue that the law does not apply to Christians and that we are, in a sense, 'not under the law'. Reference is often made to Paul's teachings in his epistles to the Romans and the Galatians. On this basis, many Christians claim that Paul's message differs from that of Moses and also of Jesus in the Gospels. Paul is said to have received the gospel for the Gentiles — the so-called gospel of grace — while Jesus is said to have preached the gospel of the Kingdom to the Jews. A common argument is that the law is for Jews, not Gentiles. A common statement is: 'We are not Jews, are we?'

About nine years ago, things started to change for me when I came across teaching on these matters. Initially, I was naturally very cautious because of the warnings Paul gave in this regard, particularly in his Epistle to the Galatians.

Personally, I have had serious questions about many of the activities within the so-called liturgical year. I have had these questions for years. In particular, the origins of the festivities surrounding

Christmas have raised serious questions for me for years. We may have added a Christian veneer, but that does not change the fact that they stem from paganism. The birth of Jesus has absolutely nothing to do with 25 December, the day on which the sun-god was born in many different cultures. Although the sun-god is known by different names in different cultures, the date of 25 December is almost the same everywhere. The first person to be given the title of sun-god was Nimrod, who is known for his involvement in the construction of the Tower of Babel. Many see Nimrod as the first incarnation of the Antichrist. Of course, you are not going to celebrate the birth of Jesus on the day his counterpart was supposedly born.

My thinking has shifted quite a bit. For a considerable time, I have been adhering more and more to biblical festivals such as the Sabbath and the feasts described in Leviticus 23.

As a result of this process, the big question that gradually came to the forefront for me was:

Who is Israel, really? Are the Jewish people Israel, and is the state founded in the Middle East in 1948 the Israel of the Bible or a continuation of it?

What about the fulfillment of many biblical promises?

I intend to address these questions in this book. Once these questions have been answered, they will also provide a basis for further reflection on the Sabbath and the biblical feasts, as well as their relationship to Gentile Christians. First, I will consider the historical perspective:

1. The first Apostolic Church.
2. The Early Church in the Time of the Church Fathers.
3. The great councils of the fourth century.
4. The Reformation.
5. John Nelson Darby's dispensationalism in the mid-19th century.
6. The creation of the State of Israel in the mid-20th century.

Next, I will attempt to answer the question of who Israel is, as set out in the Bible.

The intention is not to provide a comprehensive overview, but rather to contribute to an ongoing discussion.