

**EXAMINING CONTESTED REFORMED THEOLOGY BELIEFS**  
**Part I: Examining Reformed Theology's View Of The Hebrew People**  
**(Ephesians 2:11-22 with Romans 11:1, 25-32)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. This past week, I received an e-mail reporting a number in the "Reformed Theology" camp have expressed irritation at our nation's support for the State of Israel or for the causes of Hebrews as a whole.
- B. At Nepaug Church, we have said we are "friends of Israel," so we need to evaluate Reformed Theology's view of the Hebrew people in light of Scripture to be **sure** how **God** wants us to view and relate to them:

**II. Examining Reformed Theology's View Of The Hebrew People, Eph. 2:11-22; Rom. 11:1, 25-32.**

- A. "Reformed Theology" is a Protestant system of belief framed predominantly by John Calvin that contains a strong view of God's predestination of history, Augustus H. Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 45-46.
- B. Regarding the Hebrew people, **some** in the "Reformed Theology" camp have held the Old Testament believers in Israel and in the New Testament Church belong to the same **body** so that **only** the **Church** is **now** God's **heir** of latter day promises. Thus, the **Hebrews** are thought **not** to inherit these promises:
  - 1. The Alexandrian school of Christian theology in the third century A. D. tried to mingle Platonic views with Christianity, John F. Walvoord, The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation, p. 12.
  - 2. As a **result**, they interpreted Scripture in a **nonliteral** way, viewing Scripture as a great **allegory**. In this way, the initial Christian belief in a **literal millennium** following Christ's return was lost, Ibid.
  - 3. Later, Augustine influenced the Church to view **noneschatological** Scriptures (Scriptures that do not predict future events) **literally** while **still** viewing **eschatological** (prophetic) ones **nonliterally**, Ibid.
  - 4. This treatment of eschatological Scripture passages was used first by the Roman Catholic Church and then later by Reformed Theologians who followed Augustine's treatment of Scripture, Ibid., p. 12-13.
  - 5. Well, viewing eschatology **allegorically** and thus denying a **literal millennium** has produced **amillennialism**, a system of belief asserting Old Testament **Israel** and the New Testament **Church** became **one** body so that references to **Israel** in **prophecy yet to be fulfilled** are understood to apply **figuratively** to the **Church**, cf. J. D. Pentecost, Things To Come, p. 86; Ibid., John F. Walvoord, p. 13.
  - 6. This has led **some** to view the **Hebrews** as **no longer** God's **chosen** people as illustrated in the words of Pieters who wrote, "Jews today have no claim on the promise to Abraham because (a) they are not the spiritual seed; (b) they could not prove that they are the physical seed anyway." (John Walvoord, "Millennial Series," Bib. Sac., 108:415-17, Oct. 1951 as cited in Pentecost, Op. cit., p. 87)
- C. In time, **some amillennialists** in the **Reformed** camp came to oppose supporting Israel or causes of the Hebrew people since such "special treatment" is seen as unjust favoritism! This has led to anti-Semitism.
- D. Well, in viewing Scripture, we discover we must **counter both anti-Semitism** and the **errant hermeneutics** (method of interpretation) of **historical** "Reformed Theology" as applied to **eschatology**:
  - 1. Scripture **itself** reveals even **eschatological** Scriptures must be **consistently** interpreted **literally**:
    - a. When Jesus spoke of the Daniel 9:27 prophecy of the antichrist's **future** desecration of the **Temple** in the **Tribulation** in Matthew 24:15, he urged those in **Judaea** to **flee** into the **mountains**, a typically **actual** action by **Hebrews**, Matt. 24:16. As Matthew 24:21-22 reveals this activity was to **save life**, and we hold Jesus was **loving**, He gave a **prophetic warning** to be taken **LITERALLY!**
    - b. The Old Testament prophecies about Christ's **first** coming were **all literally fulfilled**, giving us cause to interpret prophecies about future events using the **normal** method of interpretation!
  - 2. As such, Paul predicted God has **not** cast away His **literal** Hebrew people from His program, Romans 11:1; indeed, **after** the Luke 21:24 "times of the Gentiles," God will **again** fulfill His **Old Testament** promises of blessing to the **literal** nation of Israel, Rom. 11:25-32 with Acts 15:15-17; Amos 9:11-12.

**Lesson: Historical Reformed Theology has errantly interpreted eschatological Scriptures nonliterally, leading some of its followers to equate Israel with the Church and see the physical Hebrew as having no future divine Covenant fulfillments. As such, it has opened the door to advance anti-Semitism.**

**Application: We use the "normal" method to interpret prophecy, and so view Israel as distinct from the Church and having a great future of divine covenant fulfillments. Thus, we honor the Hebrew people.**