



# Israel Unveiled

## The Error of Replacement Theology Part 1

### Israel Unveiled Podcast – Episode 1: The Church’s Identity Crisis Regarding Israel

#### I. Introduction

- **Host:** Sandy Wezowicz, Israel Education Director for Aglow International.
- **Focus:** Addressing the church’s identity crisis concerning its relationship with Israel.
- **Context:** Sandy’s global experience teaching about Israel’s past, present, and the Christian response.

#### II. The Early Church’s Jewish Identity

- **Jewish Roots of Christianity:**
  - The early church was centered in Jerusalem, with Jewish believers maintaining their Jewish identity.
  - Jesus, the “taproot” of Christian faith, was born to Jewish parents and lived as an observant Jew.
  - Early Christians followed Jewish customs, including Sabbath worship, temple prayers, and feasts.
- **Scriptural Examples:**
  - Acts 3: Peter and John go to the temple to pray.
  - Matthew 15:24: Jesus was sent first to the house of Israel.
  - Romans 11:18: The root (Israel) supports the church.

#### III. The Church’s Gradual Separation from Its Jewish Roots

- **Shift Toward Gentile Leadership:**
  - The term \*Christian\* was first used in Antioch (42 A.D.) as a term of derision.
  - As Gentile believers grew in number, the church moved away from its Jewish foundation.
  - By the mid-2nd century, Gentile leadership dominated the church, shifting its cultural identity.

- **Key Events Driving Separation:**

- Bar Kokhba Revolt (132 A.D.):\*\*
- Jewish uprising against Rome, led by Simon Bar Kokhba, who claimed to be the Messiah.
- Messianic Jews refused to join, creating a rift with mainstream Judaism.

- **Destruction of Jerusalem (135 A.D.):**

- Roman Emperor Hadrian destroyed the city, exiled Jews, and renamed the region *Syria Palestina*.
- Jewish believers were exiled alongside non-believing Jews.
- This marked a significant break between the Jewish and Gentile branches of the church.

#### **IV. Theological Consequences**

- **Gentile “Gentilizing” of Jesus:**

- Jesus’ Jewish identity was gradually stripped away.
- The church became disconnected from its Hebraic foundation.

- **Impact on Christian Doctrine:**

- The church saw itself as replacing Israel, fostering anti-Semitic theology.
- Sandy emphasizes that the church is not a *usurper* of Israel but a *partaker* in God’s covenants.
- Romans 11: The church is grafted into the Jewish root, not replacing it.

#### **V. Key Principles and Takeaways**

- **Spiritual Connection to Israel**

- Salvation is from the Jews (John 4:22).
- The church is called to honor its Jewish heritage with humility and gratitude.

- **Call for Restoration:**

- Sandy calls for the church to reconnect with its Jewish roots.
- Recognizing Israel’s ongoing prophetic role is essential for a biblical worldview.

#### **VI. Preview of Next Episode**

- The next podcast will cover the formalization of Christianity in the Roman Empire and its further disconnect from Hebraic roots.