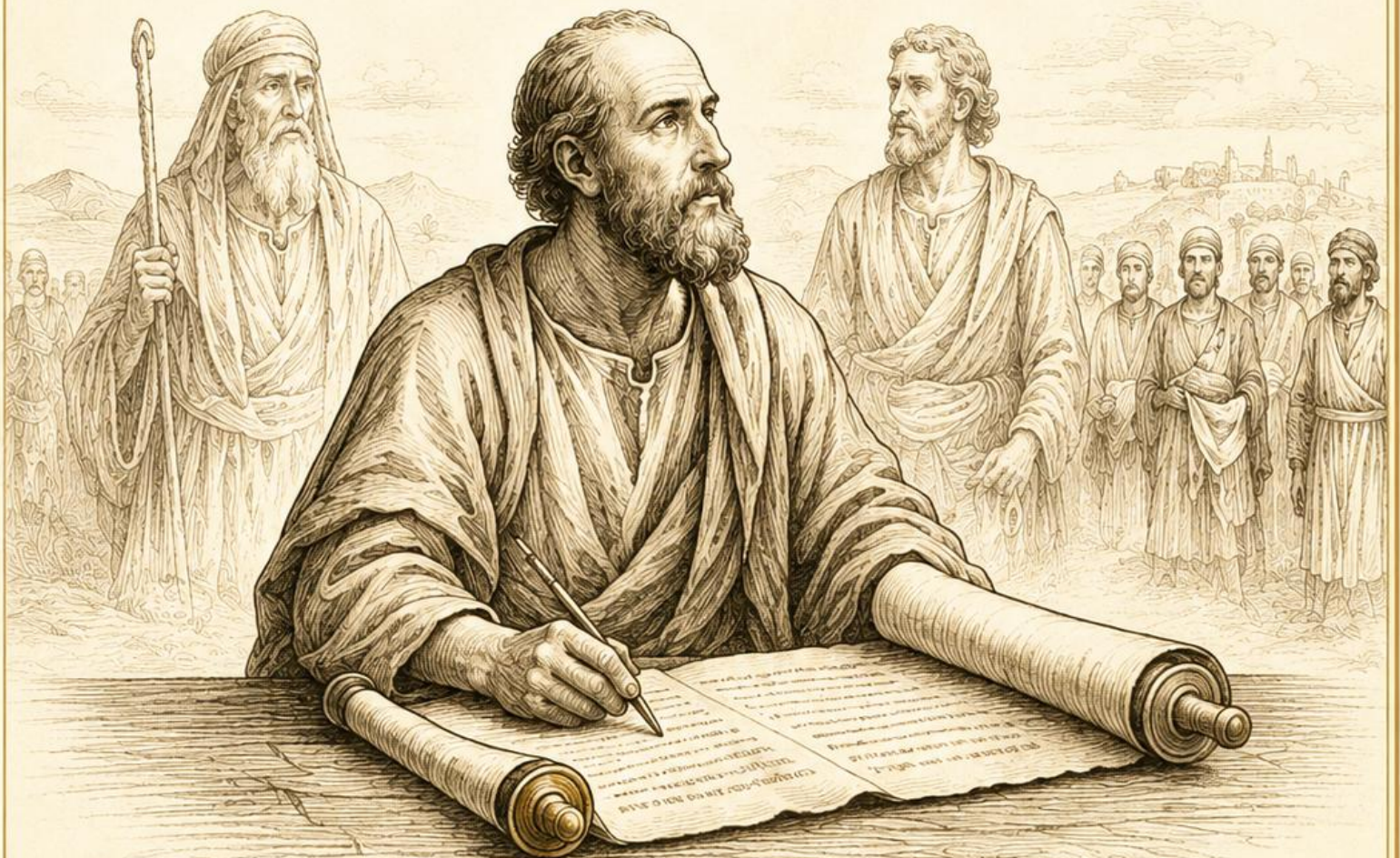


— REASON TOGETHER STUDY —

HEBREW, ISRAELITE OR JEW?

— *Philippians 3:4–9 KJV* —



— REASON TOGETHER CHURCH —

by Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

— ♦ —
www.ReasonTogether.Church

REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

REASON TOGETHER STUDY

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What is the difference between a Hebrew, an Israelite and a Jew?

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SERMON TRANSCRIPT

RTS-024

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

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ALOHA

Good morning, church family.

Aloha to those who are gathered with us here in the sanctuary.

Aloha to those who are joining us online from somewhere else on Oahu, somewhere across the islands or somewhere far beyond Hawaii.

Wherever you are today, we are grateful that you have chosen to open the Word of God with us.

If this is your first time with Reason Together Church, we want to offer you a very special Aloha Nui Loa.

You honor us by being here.

We mean that.

We are not interested in embarrassing you, putting you on the spot or making you stand while everyone else looks at you.

We simply want you to know that you are welcome here.

Our invitation is simple:

Bring your questions.

Open your Bible.

Let's Reason Together the Word of God.

If you are visiting with us today, there is a simple guest card available.

We ask only for your first name and your email address.

That gives us a way to thank you for being with us and lets you decide whether you would like to remain connected.

After the service, please join us in the Reason Together Cafe.

There will be locally grown coffee waiting for you in one of our Reason Together Church mugs.

The coffee is free.

The conversation is free.

And there are free refills on both.

Our Keiki Kids Center is also available during our services and events.

We want every member of the family to know that there is a place for them here.

Before we begin, let me make our usual brief statement about giving.

We do not pass a plate at Reason Together Church.

The gift box is available for members of this church family who have chosen to support the work God has called us to do.

If you are a guest, your presence is enough.

If you belong to another church, we encourage you to support your home church faithfully.

We are not asking you to redirect your giving to us.

We are simply grateful that you are here.

Let us pray.

Father, thank You for bringing us together today.

Thank You for preserving Your Word through generations so that we can open it, read it and reason together from it.

Give us wisdom as we study names and identities that stretch across thousands of years of Biblical history.

Protect us from pride.

Protect us from speculation.

Protect us from repeating something simply because it sounds interesting.

Teach us to recognize what Your Word clearly says.

Teach us to distinguish that from what may be possible but cannot be proven.

Help us speak about Israel and the Jewish people with humility, gratitude and love.

Most of all, lead every one of us to Jesus Christ.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

HEBREW, ISRAELITE OR JEW?

What is the difference between a Hebrew, an Israelite and a Jew?

Philippians 3:4-9 KJV

Today we are going to begin with a man who described himself in several different ways.

Listen to the words of the Apostle Paul in Philippians chapter 3, beginning with verse 4.

"Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

"Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

"Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

"And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

This is the Word of God.

Paul just gave us a short spiritual resume.

He told us when he was circumcised.

He told us his national ancestry.

He told us his tribe.

He told us his religious tradition.

He told us about his zeal.

And tucked inside that resume are several of the words we are trying to understand today.

Paul said he was "of the stock of Israel."

He said he was "of the tribe of Benjamin."

He called himself "an Hebrew of the Hebrews."

In Romans 11:1 he said, "For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin."

In Acts 22:3 he said, "I am verily a man which am a Jew."

So which was Paul?

Was he a Hebrew?

Was he an Israelite?

Was he a Jew?

The Biblical answer is yes.

He was all three.

Those descriptions did not contradict one another.

They described different layers of the same man's history and identity.

You and I understand this more easily than we may realize.

One man might accurately be called a husband, a father, a pastor, a neighbor and an American.

Those are not five different men.

Each name tells you something different about the same person.

One name describes a marriage.

One describes a family relationship.

One describes a calling.

One describes where he lives in relation to someone else.

One describes citizenship.

If you ask which one he is, the answer depends partly upon what you are trying to learn about him.

The same principle helps us with three words that appear throughout our Bibles:

Hebrew.

Israelite.

Jew.

Sometimes those words overlap.

Sometimes one word tells us something that the others do not.

Sometimes the historical setting determines which word is used.

The problem is that most of us entered the Biblical story somewhere in the middle.

We met the Israelites in Egypt.

We met David as king of Israel.

Then we opened the New Testament and found Jesus among the Jews.

We may never have stopped to ask when the vocabulary changed or why.

So today we will not begin in the middle.

We will follow the words as they emerge in the Biblical story.

The first of our three words to appear in Scripture is Hebrew.

Genesis 14:13 says:

"And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew."

Notice who is called a Hebrew.

It is Abram.

This is before God changed Abram's name to Abraham.

This is before Isaac was born.

This is before Jacob was born.

This is before Jacob's name was changed to Israel.

This is before the twelve tribes existed.

This is before there was a kingdom named Israel.

This is long before there was a southern kingdom called Judah.

Therefore, Abram could be called a Hebrew, but he could not yet be called an Israelite.

Israel had not yet been born.

He could not yet be called a Jew.

Judah had not yet been born.

The word Hebrew reaches back to the earliest chapters of the covenant story.

But what does Hebrew mean?

This is where we need to be careful.

You may have heard that Hebrew means "one who crossed over."

There is a genuine reason people make that connection.

The Hebrew word is related to language involving crossing, passing over or coming from beyond.

Abram also crossed a great river when he left his former country and journeyed toward the land God promised.

Joshua 24:2 speaks of Abraham's family dwelling "on the other side of the flood in old time" and serving other gods.

The "flood" in that passage refers to the great river, the Euphrates.

God called Abram to leave what he knew.

Abram crossed from the other side of the river into the land of promise.

He also left a world of idolatry to follow the living God by faith.

That gives us a beautiful picture.

Abram crossed a geographical boundary.

His obedience also marked a spiritual turning point.

He left the familiar for the promise of God.

He trusted a destination he had not seen because he trusted the God who called him.

That will preach.

But something that will preach is not automatically the dictionary definition of a Biblical word.

We must not turn a possible word connection into a certainty Scripture never states. Some scholars connect the word Hebrew with crossing over or coming from beyond. Others connect it with Eber, an ancestor named in Abraham's family line. Those ideas may even be related, but Scripture does not pause in Genesis 14 and say, "Abram was called a Hebrew because he crossed the Euphrates" or "because he crossed from idolatry into faith."

We may use that crossing as an illustration. We should not present the illustration as though the Bible explicitly gave it as the definition. Reasoning together means we can appreciate a beautiful possibility without pretending that possibility is proven. What Scripture does show is that Hebrew became a recognized designation for the people associated with Abraham's covenant line. Joseph used the word while he was in Egypt. In Genesis 40:15, Joseph said, "For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews." Joseph knew who he was even when he was living far from home. The Egyptians used the word. Exodus chapter 1 refers to the Hebrew midwives. Later, the Philistines referred to Israel's people as Hebrews. The term was frequently used when these people were being distinguished from the nations around them. It carried the sound of ancient ancestry. It reached back toward Abraham. It identified a people who were not simply Egyptians, Canaanites or Philistines. But we should also avoid another easy oversimplification. We cannot simply say that every physical descendant of Abraham is called a Hebrew in the Bible. Abraham had descendants through Ishmael. Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau. Scripture does not ordinarily identify the Ishmaelites or Edomites by calling them Hebrews. The Biblical use of Hebrew becomes closely connected with the family line that leads through Isaac and Jacob into Israel.

That brings us to our second word.

Israelite.

To understand Israelite, we must meet Abraham's grandson Jacob.

Abraham fathered Isaac.

Isaac fathered Jacob.

Jacob's life was complicated.

He was a twin.

He grasped his brother's heel at birth.

He obtained the birthright.

He received the blessing.

He fled from home.

He worked for Laban.

He became the father of a large family.

Then, as Jacob prepared to face his brother Esau, he spent a night wrestling with a mysterious man.

Genesis 32:28 records the words spoken to Jacob:

"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

Jacob received a new name.

Israel.

The name did not erase everything that came before.

Scripture continued to use both Jacob and Israel in different places.

But Israel became the name carried by his descendants.

Jacob had twelve sons.

Those sons became the fathers of the tribes of Israel.

Reuben.

Simeon.

Levi.

Judah.

Dan.

Naphtali.

Gad.

Asher.

Issachar.

Zebulun.

Joseph.

Benjamin.

The tribal arrangements later accounted for Joseph through his sons Ephraim and Manasseh, while Levi was set apart for priestly service.

That is why a list of tribes may look slightly different depending upon the purpose of the passage.

But the foundation remains the family of Jacob, whose name became Israel.

An Israelite is connected specifically with Israel.

That immediately gives us an important distinction.

Ishmael was a physical descendant of Abraham.

He was not an Israelite because he did not descend from Jacob.

Esau was a physical descendant of Abraham and Isaac.

He was not an Israelite because he did not descend from Jacob.

The Edomites descended from Esau.

The Israelites descended from Jacob.

So "descendant of Abraham" and "Israelite" are not identical descriptions.

Israel began as a man.

Then Israel became a family.

Then Israel became a people.

Then Israel became a covenant nation.

Exodus 1:7 says:

"And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them."

Those children of Israel were enslaved in Egypt.

God heard their cries.

God called Moses.

God confronted Pharaoh.

God brought His people through the sea.

God gave them His law.

God formed them as a nation.

God brought them toward the land He had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Israelite therefore speaks more specifically than Hebrew.

It connects a person with Jacob and with the nation formed from Jacob's descendants.

When David became king, he ruled Israel.

When Solomon sat on the throne, he ruled Israel.

For a time, the tribes existed together under one monarchy.

But after Solomon's death, the kingdom divided.

This division is one of the most important pieces of the puzzle because it explains how we move from Israel to Judah and eventually to the word Jew.

Solomon's son Rehoboam became king.

The people asked him to lighten the heavy burden Solomon had placed upon them.

Rehoboam rejected the counsel of the older men and listened to the younger men who had grown up with him.

He answered the people harshly.

The result was a divided kingdom.

The northern kingdom retained the name Israel.

Its capital eventually became Samaria.

The southern kingdom became known as Judah.

Jerusalem remained its capital.

Judah and Benjamin formed the heart of that southern kingdom.

Levites who served in connection with the temple were also closely associated with it.

Other faithful Israelites moved south or came to Jerusalem to worship.

From that point forward, the word Israel can require careful attention to context.

Sometimes Israel refers to Jacob himself.

Sometimes it refers to all twelve tribes.

Sometimes it refers to the entire covenant nation.

After the kingdom divided, Israel can also refer specifically to the northern kingdom in contrast with Judah in the south.

The word did not change because the Bible was being careless.

The historical situation had changed.

We do this in ordinary conversation too.

We may use the name of a place to mean the land, the government, the people or even a sports team.

Context tells us what is intended.

Biblical words also have contexts.

The northern kingdom repeatedly turned toward idolatry.

God sent prophets.

God warned the people.

God called them to repentance.

In 722 BC, Assyria conquered the northern kingdom and carried many of its people away.

Second Kings 17:6 says:

"In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria."

This scattering is the source of many discussions about the so-called lost tribes of Israel.

Some people speak as though ten tribes walked off the pages of history and every individual belonging to them instantly disappeared.

That is too simple.

The organized northern kingdom was destroyed.

Many people were deported and scattered.

Their tribal and national structures were severely disrupted.

But the Bible also shows people from northern tribes maintaining contact with Judah and Jerusalem.

Second Chronicles 30 records King Hezekiah inviting people from Israel and Judah to come to Jerusalem for Passover.

Verse 11 says:

"Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem."

Asher was a northern tribe.

Manasseh was a northern tribe.

Zebulun was a northern tribe.

Yet members of those tribes came to Jerusalem.

Some Israelites from the north had already migrated south.

Others responded to worship at Jerusalem.

Centuries later, the New Testament introduces a woman named Anna.

Luke 2:36 says she was "of the tribe of Aser," or Asher.

There she is in the New Testament.

She did not appear to be lost.

The northern kingdom was lost as an organized political entity.

The identity of many scattered people became difficult or impossible to trace.

That is not the same as saying God misplaced ten tribes and never knew where anyone went.

God has never lost anyone.

Now turn our attention to the southern kingdom.

Judah remained after the fall of the northern kingdom.

Jerusalem stood within Judah.

The temple stood in Jerusalem.

The royal line of David was associated with Judah.

But Judah also sinned.

Judah also ignored warnings.

Judah was eventually conquered by Babylon.

Jerusalem was destroyed.

The temple was burned.

Many people were carried into exile.

Yet the identity connected with Judah survived.

The Hebrew term that gives us the word Jew is connected with Judah and later with Judea.

At first, the designation naturally pointed toward someone associated with Judah.

Over time, particularly through and after the exile, Jew became the broader name for the covenant community associated with Judah.

This is where Mordecai becomes one of the most helpful men in the Bible for our question.

Esther 2:5 says:

"Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite."

Read that carefully.

Mordecai was called a Jew.

Mordecai was also called a Benjamite.

If Jew meant only "a physical descendant of the man Judah," that verse would appear to contradict itself.

But there is no contradiction.

Benjamin had been part of the southern kingdom centered in Judah.

After the exile, Jew had become a broader identity for the people of that covenant community.

Mordecai was from the tribe of Benjamin.

He was also a Jew.

The name had grown beyond one narrow tribal definition.

Esther gives us another important detail.

Esther 8:17 says:

"And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them."

Whatever questions we may have about all that was involved in their becoming Jews, the verse clearly shows that Jewish identity was not always being used as a simple statement of biological descent from Judah.

People could become identified with the Jewish people and their covenant community.

By the time we reach the New Testament, Jew is the ordinary designation we encounter again and again.

The woman at the well recognized Jesus as a Jew.

John 4:9 records her saying:

"How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?"

She recognized Him as Jewish.

The Gospel of Matthew begins by connecting Jesus with Abraham and David.

Jesus descended from Judah.

Jesus stood in the royal line of David.

When the wise men came to Jerusalem, they asked, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?"

During the trial of Jesus, Pilate asked Him whether He was the King of the Jews.

At the cross, the accusation was written above His head:

"THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

The title was intended as an accusation and perhaps as mockery.

But it declared more truth than the people who placed it there understood.

Jesus really is the promised King.

He came through Abraham.

He came through Isaac.

He came through Jacob, who was Israel.

He came through Judah.

He came through David's royal line.

The history of Hebrews, Israelites and Jews is not a collection of disconnected labels.

It is part of the road by which God brought the promised Messiah into the world.

Now we can return to Paul.

Paul called himself a Jew.

He was raised in Jewish life and instructed in the law.

Paul called himself an Israelite.

He descended from Jacob and could identify his tribe as Benjamin.

Paul called himself a Hebrew of the Hebrews.

He stood within the ancient people whose story reached back through Israel to Abraham.

Each description told the truth.

Each description answered a slightly different question.

Hebrew emphasized ancient origin and ancestry.

Israelite emphasized descent from Jacob and belonging to the covenant nation.

Benjamite identified Paul's tribe.

Jew identified Paul with the Jewish people and community of his time.

This is why we must be cautious about drawing three perfect circles and saying that every person must fit neatly inside them.

The words developed across history.

They can describe ancestry.

They can describe national belonging.

They can describe geography.

They can describe culture.

They can describe religious and covenant identification.

The context of the passage determines what a word emphasizes.

So let us summarize what we have found.

Hebrew is the earliest of the three names.

It is first applied to Abram and later becomes closely associated with the ancient people who developed into Israel.

Israelite comes from Jacob, whose name God changed to Israel.

It identifies the people of Jacob's family and the covenant nation formed from his descendants.

Jew develops from Judah and Judea.

It becomes the broad designation for the postexilic covenant community and the Jewish people we meet in the New Testament.

The same person could be described by all three.

Paul was.

But knowing the definitions is not the end of our study.

We must ask why any of this matters for someone sitting in church in Hawaii today.

First, it matters because God chose to reveal Himself in real history.

The Bible is not a collection of inspirational sayings that floated down from heaven without a setting.

God worked through people.

God worked through families.

God worked through nations.

God made promises.

God preserved those promises across generations.

The names help us follow that history.

When we understand them, the Bible becomes clearer.

We understand why Abraham can be called a Hebrew before Israel existed.

We understand why Jacob's descendants are Israelites.

We understand why the divided kingdom is described as Israel and Judah.

We understand how a Benjamite such as Mordecai can be called a Jew.

We understand why Jesus is called the King of the Jews.

We understand why Paul can claim all three identities without contradiction.

Second, this matters because careful definitions protect us from speculation.

There have been many movements built around claims of secret ancestry.

People have attempted to identify modern nations, races and communities as one or more of Israel's lost tribes.

Sometimes these claims promise a special status with God.

Sometimes they are used to take that status away from someone else.

Sometimes they are mixed with racial superiority, antisemitism or contempt.

We do not need secret genealogies to know how to approach God.

The gospel does not tell Gentiles to search until they discover that they were Israelites all along.

The gospel tells sinners to come to Jesus Christ.

Third, this matters because Gentile believers must understand how we have been included.

Most of us do not trace our physical ancestry to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

We are Gentiles.

That is not an insult.

It is a Biblical description of the nations outside Israel.

Ephesians 2 reminds Gentile believers of where we once stood.

Paul writes that we were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

That is a difficult description.

But the next words are wonderful.

Ephesians 2:13 says:

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

We were far off.

Christ brought us near.

Not our ancestry.

Not a DNA result.

Not a newly adopted ethnic label.

The blood of Christ brought us near.

Galatians 3:26 says:

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

Then verse 29 says:

"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Gentile believers share in the blessing promised through Abraham.

We are part of the family of faith.

We are heirs according to promise.

But sharing in the spiritual blessing promised through Abraham does not require us to pretend we have changed our ethnicity.

A Gentile does not need to become an ethnic Jew in order to belong to Christ.

A Jewish person does not need to become a Gentile in order to belong to Christ.

Salvation does not erase every earthly distinction.

It establishes that none of those distinctions can give one sinner a superior path to God.

Jew and Gentile are reconciled to God through the same Savior.

This brings us to Romans 11.

Paul uses the picture of an olive tree.

Some natural branches were broken off because of unbelief.

Gentile believers are pictured as branches from a wild olive tree grafted in among them.

Romans 11:17 says that the grafted branches "partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree."

Then Paul gives a warning.

Verse 18 says:

"Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee."

The Gentile believer has no reason to swagger.

We did not invent Abraham.

We did not create the covenants.

We did not produce the prophets.

We did not give the world the Scriptures.

We did not bring the Messiah into the world through our ancestry.

We were wild branches.

By grace, we were grafted in.

Grace should make us grateful.

Grace should never make us arrogant.

Romans 11 also prevents us from carelessly claiming that God has simply rejected Israel and replaced Israel with Gentiles.

Paul begins the chapter by asking:

"Hath God cast away his people?"

His answer is immediate:

"God forbid."

Paul points to himself as evidence.

"For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin."

God's faithfulness to His promises matters.

If God treats His ancient promises as disposable, why should any of us feel secure in the promises we have received?

We do not honor the gospel by making God unfaithful to Israel.

We honor the gospel by recognizing that the same faithful God who kept His word across centuries has opened salvation to the nations through Israel's Messiah.

There is another danger on the other side.

In our desire to honor Israel's place in the Biblical story, we must not teach that physical ancestry automatically saves anyone.

The Bible does not teach salvation by genealogy.

John the Baptist warned people not to say within themselves that they had Abraham as their father.

Jesus confronted people who relied upon religious ancestry while rejecting the truth standing before them.

Paul loved his own people deeply.

In Romans 9, he expressed great heaviness and continual sorrow for them.

Why would Paul sorrow if physical descent automatically guaranteed salvation?

Ancestry is historically important.

Ancestry does not remove the need for faith.

Religious heritage is meaningful.

Religious heritage cannot cleanse sin.

A label may tell us where our family came from.

A label cannot reconcile us to God.

And now we return once more to Philippians 3.

Paul listed every reason he might have trusted his religious resume.

He had been circumcised on the eighth day.

He was of the stock of Israel.

He was from Benjamin.

He was a Hebrew of the Hebrews.

He was a Pharisee.

He was zealous.

He could look at his ancestry, education, discipline and reputation and say, "If anyone has grounds for confidence in the flesh, I do."

Then Paul did something astonishing.

He put the entire resume on one side of the scale.

He put Jesus Christ on the other side.

The scale did not move slowly.

There was no close comparison.

Paul said:

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ."

He did not say his history was false.

He did not deny being Jewish.

He did not pretend he was no longer an Israelite.

He did not erase Benjamin from his ancestry.

He changed what he trusted.

That is the heart of this study.

There is a difference between knowing your heritage and trusting your heritage.

There is a difference between appreciating your history and asking your history to save you.

Paul knew exactly who he was.

He also knew that none of it could give him the righteousness he needed before God.

He said he wanted to "be found in him."

Not found in Abraham.

Not found in Israel.

Not found in Benjamin.

Not found in the Pharisees.

Found in Christ.

Paul did not want his own righteousness.

He wanted "the righteousness which is of God by faith."

That is the destination toward which every one of these Biblical names must lead us.

Hebrew takes us to Abraham.

Israelite takes us to Jacob and the covenant nation.

Jew takes us through Judah, exile and the preserved people from whom the Messiah came.

And the Messiah takes us to the cross.

Jesus was born King of the Jews.

Jesus fulfilled the promises given through Abraham.

Jesus came through the nation of Israel.

Jesus descended from Judah and David.

Jesus lived without sin.

Jesus went to the cross.

Jesus bore our sin.

Jesus was buried.

Jesus rose again.

The road through Biblical history does not end with our ability to define three words.

It ends with a risen Savior inviting sinners from every nation to come to Him.

So let me ask you four questions today.

First, are you willing to let Scripture define its own words?

There are many impressive voices online.

There are short videos that can make a complicated claim sound certain in sixty seconds.

There are speakers who can make a possible connection feel like a secret truth no one else has discovered.

Something may be interesting without being established.

Something may be a useful illustration without being the definition of a word.

We do not have to be afraid of possibilities.

We simply need to label them honestly.

Where Scripture is clear, we should speak clearly.

Where history provides strong evidence, we should explain it.

Where scholars disagree, we should admit it.

Where we are making an application, we should call it an application.

That is part of reasoning together.

Second, are you placing confidence in a religious resume?

Perhaps you cannot name a tribe.

Perhaps your family tree does not reach back to anyone famous.

But you may have your own list.

I was raised in church.

My grandparents were Christians.

I was baptized.

I attended Sunday school.

I know the songs.

I own several Bibles.

I serve.

I give.

I try to live a decent life.

Those things may be good.

None of them can substitute for knowing Christ.

God has no grandchildren.

Your parents' faith cannot be inherited like the family furniture.

Your church membership cannot die for your sins.

Your baptism cannot rise from the dead on your behalf.

Your good works cannot erase your guilt.

Like Paul, you must be found in Christ.

Third, has grace made you humble?

Gentile believers are not invited to look down upon the Jewish people.

We are not invited to boast against the natural branches.

We are not invited to use Christian history as an excuse for contempt.

We were far off.

Christ brought us near.

We were strangers to the covenants of promise.
Christ brought us into the household of God.
Everything we have received has come by grace.
The proper response is gratitude.
Fourth, where is your final identity resting?
Earthly identities matter.
Families matter.
Cultures matter.
History matters.
The Bible does not require us to pretend that all distinctions have vanished.
But none of those identities can carry the weight of your soul.
Only Jesus can do that.
You may know exactly where you came from.
Do you know who has saved you?
You may have a carefully researched family tree.
Is your name written in heaven?
You may carry a respected title.
Are you found in Christ?
Today we have asked:
Hebrew, Israelite or Jew?
We have learned that a person may be described by more than one of those words.
Abram was called a Hebrew.
Jacob received the name Israel.
Judah gave its name to the Jewish people.
Paul could truthfully call himself a Jew, an Israelite and a Hebrew.
But Paul's final testimony was not, "Look at the names I can claim."
His testimony was, "That I may win Christ, and be found in him."
Our heritage may explain where we came from.
Only Jesus determines where we are going.
If you have never placed your faith in Jesus Christ, you can come to Him today.
That invitation is for the person sitting in this sanctuary.

It is also for the person watching from a living room, a hospital room, a hotel room or a phone somewhere far away.

You do not have to be inside this building for Jesus to hear you.

You do not have to wait until a pastor is standing beside you.

You do not have to discover the correct ancestry.

You do not have to adopt a religious label.

You need to recognize that you are a sinner.

All of us have sinned.

Our sin separates us from a holy God.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died on the cross for our sins.

He was buried.

He rose again.

He offers forgiveness and eternal life as a gift of grace.

Romans 10:9 says:

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Romans 10:13 says:

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Admit your sin.

Believe that Jesus died, was buried and rose again.

Repent.

Turn from trusting yourself and place your faith in Christ alone.

You can speak to Him in your own words.

There is no magical sentence.

There is no formula that saves you.

Jesus saves you.

If you need help expressing what is in your heart, you might pray something like this:

Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner.

I know that I cannot save myself.

I believe that You died for my sins, that You were buried and that You rose again.

I turn from trusting myself.

I place my faith in You alone.

Forgive me.

Save me.

Give me the new life that only You can give.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Those words are not a ritual.

They are simply one way to express genuine repentance and faith.

If you have trusted Christ today and you are here with us, please speak with me after the service.

We want to pray with you, encourage you and help connect you with other believers.

If you are joining us remotely, please contact us through www.ReasonTogether.Church.

We would be honored to hear from you and help you take your next steps with Christ.

Let us pray.

Father, thank You for meeting us in Your Word.

Thank You for the history You preserved from Abraham through Israel and Judah to the coming of Jesus Christ.

Thank You that Your promises did not fail.

Thank You that through Jesus, those who were far off may be brought near.

Forgive us when we have spoken with confidence about things Your Word did not clearly say.

Forgive us when we have trusted heritage, religion or good works instead of Christ.

Forgive us when grace has made us proud instead of grateful.

Give us love for the Jewish people.

Give us humility as Gentile believers.

Give us confidence in Your faithfulness.

Help us value every good thing You have given us without asking any of those things to do what only Jesus can do.

May we be found in Christ.

May we know Him.

May we proclaim Him.

May we welcome others to Him.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

Thank you for reasoning together with us through the Word of God.

Please join us in the Reason Together Cafe after the service.

And to everyone who is visiting with us for the first time, Aloha Nui Loa.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Aloha.

REASON TOGETHER STUDIES

PASTOR'S
COMMENTARY

HEBREW, ISRAELITE OR JEW?

What is the difference between a Hebrew, an Israelite and a Jew?

Philippians 3:4-9 KJV

“Of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews.”

Philippians 3:5

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

Pastor & Teacher

www.ReasonTogether.Church

Commentary in Brief

CENTRAL CONCLUSION Hebrew, Israelite and Jew are related Biblical identities that developed at different points in one continuing history. Hebrew reaches back to Abram. Israelite comes from Jacob, whom God renamed Israel. Jew grew from Judah and Judea into the broader name of the Jewish covenant community. Paul could truthfully claim all three, but he trusted none of them to make him righteous before God.

The question sounds simple until we begin reading the passages. Some teachers use the three words as though they are perfect synonyms. Others arrange them in rigid boxes and insist that every Hebrew must fit one ancestry rule, every Israelite another and every Jew a third. Scripture gives us something more natural. Names grow within history. They carry family memory, covenant relationship, geography, political change, exile, return and community life.

Abram is called ‘the Hebrew’ before Jacob is born. Jacob later receives the name Israel, and his descendants become Israelites. Centuries later the divided kingdom leaves Judah as the surviving public center of the covenant people, and Jew becomes a broad communal designation. Mordecai is called both a Jew and a Benjamite. Paul calls himself a Jew, an Israelite, a Benjamite and a Hebrew. His example prevents us from making the terms either identical or mutually exclusive.

This history matters, but it cannot save. Paul’s ancestry was real. His covenant privileges were real. His religious discipline was real. Yet in Philippians 3 he counted every advantage lost compared with knowing Christ and being found in Him. The commentary therefore aims at more than accurate vocabulary. It asks whether we are trusting a label, a family, a church background or Jesus Christ.

CONTROLLING STATEMENT The labels tell the story of a people. Paul shows how the labels overlap. Philippians 3 tells us where saving confidence must finally rest: not in the flesh, but in Christ.

1. Why Do These Three Words Get Confused?

They Belong to the Same Continuing Story

Hebrew, Israelite and Jew are frequently used for the same people, so the confusion is understandable. The mistake comes when we assume that words used of the same people must carry exactly the same emphasis. A person may be described by family origin, citizenship, region and religious community without those descriptions becoming interchangeable dictionary definitions.

The Biblical names arise in sequence. Hebrew appears in the patriarchal story. Israelite becomes possible only after Jacob is named Israel. Jew belongs to a later stage connected with Judah, the divided kingdom, exile and the surviving covenant community. The sequence gives each word a center of gravity even when the identities overlap.

Paul is the best guide because he does not treat the descriptions as rivals. He does not say, ‘I used to be a Hebrew, then became an Israelite and later became a Jew.’ He can speak from all three identities. The words preserve layers of one history rather than three separate peoples.

READING KEY Ask what relationship the word emphasizes in its passage: ancient family identity, descent from Jacob-Israel or membership in the later Jewish community.

2. Abram Is Called the Hebrew

The Earliest Designation Comes Before the Nation

Genesis 14:13 introduces ‘Abram the Hebrew.’ At that point there is no nation called Israel, no tribe of Judah and no kingdom of Judea. This makes Hebrew the earliest of the three designations in the Biblical story. It reaches into the ancestral world from which the covenant people will grow.

The word also appears when Abraham's descendants are distinguished from surrounding peoples. Joseph speaks in Genesis 40:15 of being taken from 'the land of the Hebrews.' Exodus 1:15 speaks of 'the Hebrew midwives.' Pharaoh's Egypt recognized a people whose family story, customs and social position marked them as distinct.

We should not stretch that observation into a universal genealogy rule. Abraham fathered several lines, including Ishmael and the sons born through Keturah. Esau also descended from Abraham through Isaac. Scripture does not regularly identify every Abrahamic branch as Hebrew simply because Abraham was called a Hebrew. Biblical usage concentrates the term in the people whose story leads through Isaac and Jacob.

3. Does Hebrew Mean 'One Who Crossed Over'?

A Memorable Picture Is Not the Same as a Settled Definition

The phrase 'one who crossed over' is popular because Abram crossed from his former land into the place to which God called him. The image is spiritually useful. Faith obeys God's call, leaves what must be left and walks toward what God promises. Abram's life certainly displays that movement.

The linguistic question is less certain. Hebrew has been connected with Eber in Abraham's ancestry, with language describing the region beyond or across and with an outsider's designation for Abram's people. These proposals overlap in sound and idea, but the Biblical text does not pause in Genesis 14 to give a formal etymology.

Good preaching can use the crossing as an illustration while saying honestly what the illustration is. Weak preaching turns a possible word connection into a definition, then builds a new identity system upon it. The sermon does not need that certainty. Abram's obedience is already clear from the narrative, and the identity question can be answered without forcing the word's origin.

ACCURACY NOTE It is responsible to say that Abram crossed over at God's call and that the image may help us remember his faith. It is not responsible to insist that every Christian becomes a Hebrew because every Christian has spiritually 'crossed over.'

4. Jacob Becomes Israel

Israelite Begins With a God-Given Name

Genesis 32:28 records the moment when God said to Jacob, 'Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel.' From that man came the sons whose families became the tribes of Israel. Israelite therefore has a more specific genealogical and covenant center than the broad claim 'descended from Abraham.'

This distinction matters because Abraham is the father of more than one people. Ishmael is Abraham's son, but he is not a son of Jacob-Israel. Esau is Isaac's son and Jacob's brother, but his descendants are Edomites, not Israelites. The covenant line that produces Israel passes through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Israelite belongs to Jacob-Israel's descendants.

Israel also becomes the name of the covenant nation. The word can therefore carry both family and national meaning. Romans 9:4 speaks of Paul's kinsmen 'according to the flesh' and says, 'Who are Israelites,' then names the adoption, glory, covenants, law, service and promises. The privileges are not imaginary. God truly acted through Israel in history.

5. Israel Is Both a Man and a People

Context Tells Us Which Sense Is in View

When Scripture says Israel, it may refer to Jacob himself, his descendants, the whole covenant nation, the northern kingdom after the political division or the people considered within God's redemptive purposes. Readers create confusion when they take one use and force it upon every other passage.

The same flexibility appears in ordinary language. A family name can identify one person, that person's descendants and institutions later associated with the family. Scripture is not careless when it uses Israel in these related senses. The surrounding passage tells us which relationship is prominent.

This is especially important in Romans 9 through 11. Paul can speak about Israelites according to the flesh, the faithful remnant, Gentiles being grafted in and God's continuing faithfulness to His promises. We should follow his distinctions rather than reduce three chapters to one slogan.

6. How Did Judah Become So Important?

The Divided Kingdom Changed the Public Vocabulary

After Solomon, the united kingdom divided. The northern kingdom was commonly called Israel. The southern kingdom was called Judah and included Jerusalem, the temple, the Davidic throne and people from Judah, Benjamin and other Israelites who attached themselves to its worship and life.

Assyria later conquered the northern kingdom and deported many of its inhabitants. Babylon later conquered Judah, destroyed Jerusalem and carried many into exile. When the covenant community continued through exile and return, Judah and Judea became increasingly central public identifiers. From that historical setting came the designation Jew.

The word's connection to Judah is real, but its later use cannot be limited to a biological statement about the tribe of Judah. Political history, worship, exile and community membership all helped shape the broader designation.

7. Mordecai Is a Jew and a Benjamite

Esther Prevents an Overly Narrow Definition

Esther 2:5 describes Mordecai as 'a certain Jew' and then identifies him as 'a Benjamite.' The verse is unusually helpful because both descriptions stand together. If Jew always meant only a biological descendant of Judah, the wording would be contradictory. It is not contradictory because Jew had become the broader communal identity.

Esther 8:17 says that many of the people of the land 'became Jews.' The verse has generated questions about conversion, identification and public allegiance. Whatever every social detail meant in that Persian setting, it again shows that the word functions as more than a tribal DNA label.

Mordecai is not pretending to be from Judah. His Benjaminite ancestry and Jewish identity coexist. The same pattern will appear in Paul. These two witnesses are enough to correct the statement that every Jew must be biologically descended from Judah alone.

BIBLICAL CONCLUSION Jew grew from Judah's history into the broader name of the Jewish people and covenant community. Its origin is Judah-related, but its Biblical use includes Benjamites such as Mordecai and Paul.

8. Were the Northern Tribes Completely Lost?

A Kingdom Can Fall Without Its People Vanishing From God

The northern kingdom suffered conquest, deportation and political destruction. That judgment was severe. Second Kings 17 describes Assyria's capture of Samaria and the removal of Israelites from their land. We should not minimize the scattering or the mixing that followed.

We should also not turn political destruction into total biological disappearance. Second Chronicles 30 records Hezekiah sending invitations throughout Israel so people could come to Jerusalem for Passover. Some mocked, but people from Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun humbled themselves and came. The chapter pictures surviving northerners responding to worship in Jerusalem.

Luke 2:36 identifies Anna the prophetess as being ‘of the tribe of Aser.’ The New Testament still preserves a northern tribal identity. Paul also speaks in Acts 26:7 of ‘our twelve tribes’ serving God. The organized northern kingdom was lost. The people were scattered and absorbed in complex ways. They were never lost to God’s knowledge.

This caution matters because ‘lost tribes’ theories often become vehicles for speculation. Groups may claim that one modern nation, race or family secretly represents a particular tribe. Such claims require evidence Scripture does not provide. The church gains nothing by replacing Biblical humility with genealogical imagination.

9. Paul Brings All Three Names Together

One Person Can Be a Hebrew, an Israelite and a Jew

Acts 22:3 records Paul saying, ‘I am verily a man which am a Jew.’ Romans 11:1 says, ‘For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.’ Philippians 3:5 calls him ‘an Hebrew of the Hebrews.’ These are not three stages he moved through and abandoned. They are three truthful descriptions of one man.

Jew identifies Paul within the Jewish people and religious world of his day. Israelite locates him within the people descended from Jacob-Israel. Benjamin identifies his tribe. Hebrew reaches toward his ancestral and cultural heritage, and ‘Hebrew of the Hebrews’ likely emphasizes the strength and integrity of that heritage.

Paul gives us the safest summary. The terms overlap because they belong to the same developing people. They differ because each term arose from a different historical relationship. Any chart that cannot make room for Paul is too rigid for the Bible.

THE SHORTEST ANSWER Abram was called a Hebrew. Jacob’s descendants were Israelites. Judah’s surviving community came to be called Jewish. Paul inherited the whole history and could truthfully claim all three.

10. Paul’s Heritage Was Real but Not Saving

Philippians 3 Does Not Deny the Past; It Reorders Its Value

Paul does not speak as a man without credentials. He was circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, from Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a Pharisee and zealous according to the religious standards he once pursued. His argument carries weight because the résumé is genuine.

Then Paul makes the great reversal: ‘But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.’ He does not say that God’s historical work through Israel was false. He says that even the best inherited and achieved advantages cannot provide the righteousness a sinner needs before God.

The issue is confidence. A person may value family history without trusting it for salvation. A church member may appreciate baptism, attendance, service and Biblical knowledge without presenting those things as a substitute for Christ. Paul’s vocabulary becomes pastoral diagnosis. Where do we place our confidence when we stand before God?

11. Are Gentile Believers Now Jews?

Saving Inclusion Does Not Rewrite Biological Ancestry

Galatians 3 teaches that those who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. It says that those who belong to Christ are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise. Ephesians 2 says that Gentiles who were once far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ and become fellow citizens with the saints and members of God’s household.

These are not weak or symbolic forms of inclusion. Gentile believers truly share in salvation, truly belong to God's household and truly inherit the promise through Christ. Yet the passages do not say that their biological ancestry changes. They do not need to become ethnically Jewish in order to be fully accepted by God.

The Gospel creates one new humanity in Christ without pretending that every historical distinction has never existed. Unity is not sameness of ancestry. Equality before God is not the erasure of Israel's story. Christ brings people near who were far off, and He does so by His blood rather than by assigning them a new genealogy.

12. What Does It Mean to Be Grafted In?

Romans 11 Gives Gentiles a Place and a Warning

Paul uses the image of an olive tree. Some natural branches were broken off because of unbelief, and believing Gentiles, pictured as wild branches, were grafted in. The Gentile does not support the root. The root supports the Gentile. Grace brings the outsider into blessing, but grace never gives permission to boast.

Paul says plainly, 'Boast not against the branches.' He also asks whether God has cast away His people and answers, 'God forbid.' Any Christian interpretation that produces contempt for Jewish people has missed the moral force of Romans 11. The chapter is designed to humble Gentile believers and magnify God's mercy.

The image also guards against two opposite errors. Gentiles are not kept permanently outside God's household, and Israel is not treated as though God's promises were meaningless. The church stands only by faith. The appropriate response is gratitude, reverence and prayer.

PASTORAL WARNING Being grafted in is a reason to worship, not a license to boast. Grace should make the church humble toward the people whose covenants, Scriptures and Messiah it has received.

13. What About the 'Jew Inwardly'?

Romans 2 Addresses the Heart, Not the Erasure of a People

Romans 2:28-29 says that outward identity alone does not satisfy God and that true circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit. Paul is exposing hypocrisy and insisting that covenant signs without obedient faith cannot justify anyone. God sees the inward person.

The passage should not be used as a shortcut to declare that every Christian is ethnically Jewish or that historical Jewish identity no longer matters. Paul himself continues to call people Jews and Israelites after writing about the inward heart. Romans 11 depends upon a meaningful distinction between natural and grafted branches.

The inward application is searching. A religious label can be accurate while the heart remains far from God. Church membership, denominational heritage and family faith can become modern versions of confidence in the flesh. God calls for the inward reality that only His grace can produce.

14. Does the Church Replace Israel?

A Slogan Cannot Carry the Weight of Romans 9 Through 11

Christians use the phrase replacement theology in several different ways. Sometimes it describes the claim that the church receives every promise while ethnic Israel has no continuing place in God's purposes. Sometimes the phrase is used so broadly that any recognition of Gentile inclusion is accused of replacing Israel. The terminology can obscure more than it clarifies.

RTS-024 does not attempt to settle every prophetic system. It preserves the guardrails Paul gives. Gentile believers truly share Abraham's blessing through Christ. God has not cast away His people. Unbelief matters. Faith matters. Gentiles must not boast. God's gifts and calling are not treated casually.

Those statements leave room for Christians to study difficult prophetic questions without treating one another as enemies. They do not leave room for antisemitism, racial superiority or confidence that our theological system has made humility unnecessary.

15. Why Ancestry Cannot Save

A Perfect Religious Résumé Still Needs Christ

Ancestry can explain where we came from. It can connect us to stories, obligations and communities. In Israel's case, it also belongs to the real history through which God gave covenants, Scripture and the Messiah. None of that means a sinner is justified by birth.

John the Baptist warned people not to say within themselves that they had Abraham as their father. Jesus confronted people who claimed Abraham while resisting Abraham's faith. Paul distinguished natural descent from the children of promise and then warned Gentiles that they also stand only by faith.

The same principle reaches every congregation. No one is saved because a grandparent prayed, a parent served, a family attended church or a pastor knows the person's name. No one is saved by being Baptist, Catholic, Pentecostal, nondenominational or anything else. Labels can describe our history. Only Christ can reconcile us to God.

16. The Danger of Modern Identity Claims

Biblical Names Must Not Become Tools of Superiority

Modern people sometimes use Hebrew, Israelite and Jew in disputes about race, nationality, land, DNA or spiritual rank. Some claims may involve serious historical questions. Others are built on selective verses, imagined genealogies or contempt for another people. RTS-024 does not ask the church to solve those arguments in one sermon.

The Gospel forbids us to use Biblical identity as a weapon of superiority. Jewish identity must not be demeaned. Gentile believers must not boast. No modern racial group should seize an ancient name merely to claim greater access to God. Salvation brings every sinner to the same cross.

A careful church can honor Israel's history, oppose antisemitism, welcome honest historical study and still refuse unsupported claims. Humility is not weakness. It is the proper response when Scripture gives us enough light to reach a sound conclusion but not enough to satisfy every speculation.

17. Hebrew, Israelite or Jew?

The Direct Answer Returns Us to Paul

A Hebrew belongs to the earliest ancestral designation seen in Abram and later used of the people developing through his covenant line. An Israelite is a descendant of Jacob-Israel and a member of the people formed from his sons. A Jew belongs to the later Jewish identity that arose from Judah and Judea and came to include the broader surviving covenant community.

The three terms are related, and their uses overlap. They are not identical. They are not three disconnected peoples. Paul is the clearest example: a Jew, an Israelite from Benjamin and a Hebrew of the Hebrews.

Paul then refuses to end with the labels. He counts gain as loss for Christ. He wants to win Christ and 'be found in him,' possessing not his own righteousness but the righteousness that comes through faith. The vocabulary question has served its purpose when it leads us to that confession.

FINAL ANSWER Hebrew describes the earliest ancestral layer, Israelite connects the people to Jacob-Israel and Jew names the later Jewish community shaped through Judah's surviving history. Paul could be all three. Salvation, however, is found only in Christ.

Questions for Personal Reflection

- Do I trust a Christian family history more than I trust Jesus Christ?
- Have I confused familiarity with the Bible for saving faith in the One the Bible reveals?
- Does my theology produce gratitude toward Israel's history or pride and contempt?
- Can I distinguish what Scripture establishes from what a teacher merely suggests?
- Have I used labels to rank people whom God calls me to love?
- When I think about standing before God, what appears first in my mind: my résumé or Christ's righteousness?
- Have I personally repented of sin and placed my faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

A Personal Invitation to Salvation

Paul had the ancestry, education, discipline and reputation that many people spend a lifetime trying to obtain. He still needed Christ. So do we.

You do not need to become Jewish, discover a hidden tribe or repair your family history before coming to Jesus. You do not need to be inside a church building or standing beside a pastor. Christ is accessible to you now.

Admit that you have sinned against God. Believe that Jesus Christ died for your sins, was buried and rose again. Repent by turning from sin and from every false confidence, and place your faith in Christ alone.

Romans 10:9 says, 'That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' Romans 10:13 promises, 'For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

Speak to God in your own words. No formula saves. Jesus saves. Ask Him for mercy and trust what He accomplished for you.

If you are with us in person, please speak with the pastor after the service so we can pray with you and help connect you with other believers. If you are joining us remotely, visit www.ReasonTogether.Church and use the contact page. We would be honored to hear from you and help you take your next step.

A Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for acting in real history through Abraham, Israel and the Jewish people, and for sending Your Son into the world according to Your promises. Protect us from ignorance, contempt and pride. Teach us to read Your Word carefully and to speak about people with humility and love.

Thank You that salvation does not depend upon discovering the right ancestry or earning the right religious résumé. Thank You that Jesus Christ died for sinners and rose again. Help us count every confidence in the flesh as loss compared with knowing Him.

May Jewish and Gentile believers alike boast only in Your mercy. May those who are far off be brought near by the blood of Christ. May every person reading these words desire above all else to be found in Him.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Selected Sources

Primary Scripture

The Holy Bible, King James Version: Genesis 14:13; 32:28; 40:15; Exodus 1:15-16; 2 Kings 17; 2 Chronicles 30; Esther 2:5; 8:17; Luke 2:36; Acts 22:3; 26:7; Romans 2:28-29; 9:1-8; 11:1-29; Galatians 3:6-9, 26-29; Ephesians 2:11-22; Philippians 3:4-9.

Interpretive Cautions

This commentary distinguishes direct Biblical statements from historical inference, possible etymology and sermon illustration. It does not teach 'one who crossed over' as the only proven meaning of Hebrew. It does not describe every Abrahamic descendant as Hebrew, every Jew as biologically from Judah or every northern tribe as completely vanished. It does not turn Gentile inclusion in Christ into a claim of ethnic Jewish identity.

Pastoral Note

This commentary accompanies the approved Reason Together Study Hebrew, Israelite or Jew? It does not replace the sermon transcript or the internal Study Vault. Its purpose is to provide a readable public explanation of the principal Biblical reasoning, interpretive cautions and pastoral applications that support the study.

Until We Reason Together Again

Thank you for being with us today.

If you are joining us in person, please visit the Reason Together Café for free coffee and conversation. There are always free refills on conversations.

If this is your first time worshipping with us, we are especially honored by your presence. Aloha Nui Loa.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Aloha.