

9.

Who is Israel? What is  
Israel? Where is Israel?



In his article, 'The Place of Israel,' John Stott suggests: "to understand 'Who, What and Where is Israel' is an object lesson in biblical hermeneutics \* [interpretations, ed.]:

1. 'Israel' is the younger son of Isaac and Rebecca, whose name at first is Jacob, a devious scoundrel, but then is renamed 'Israel' ("*he who strives with God*") after his struggle [atonement and reconciliation ed.] with God (Genesis 32: 22–28).
2. 'Israel' is the chosen, covenant people of God in Old Testament days; they were "the twelve tribes" descended from the twelve sons of Jacob; because of ancestry, they were commonly known as the 'children of Israel,' *descendants of Jacob*.
3. 'Israel' is the Messianic community [Christians, ed.], the people of Jesus, true descendants of Abraham because they share Abraham's faith (Galatians 3: 29). These include Gentiles who believe in Jesus but exclude Jews who do not.
4. 'Israel' today for most people refers to the Modern State of Israel [a supra-national state for Jews-only ... it is not yet a nation. There is no such thing as an 'Israeli nationality,' ed.]."\*
5. And let me add a fifth 'Israel'. Israel is Palestine and Palestine is Israel. Israelis cannot love Israel enough unless they also love Palestine, all of Palestine and I'm not referring to merely the granules of sand sculpturing the land; and, the same is true on the other side. Palestinians cannot love Palestine enough unless they recognize the divine inspired Prophetic Ideals inherent to Israel, notwithstanding the present influence of Pagan idolatry in Israel. And, all the sand in Israel and all the sand in Palestine are ONE. So, permit others to call the Land by the name of their conscience. What's in a name if it's the same?

'Holland' and 'The Netherlands' are one and the same; two different names, same country.

The region was known as Judea which the Romans changed to Palestinae in 132 CE. Israeli historian, Schlomo Sand says: "The term 'Israel' in its Christian or Jewish rabbinic version, differs from its modern meaning." For millennia, the 'Land of Israel' had been spiritually viewed, by religious Jews in general, and by some movements in Christianity almost as synonymous to the Christian 'Spiritual Kingdom of God'. It was not until the beginning of the 20th century that the Spiritual Land of Israel was reinvented and moulded as a geo-national term.

Love Israel-Palestine! We're brothers and sisters.  
'Christian Zionism ... Enraptured Around a Golden Calf', sold in 30+ countries, challenges Evangelicals to follow Jesus and to walk His way, His truth, His Life (John 14: 6).

Sincerely,

[Building the Bridge Foundation, The Hague](#)

A Way to Getting to know the OTHER and One ANOTHER

Abraham A. van Kempen

\*John Stott, 'The Place of Israel,' Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding, 1, <http://emeu.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/John-Stott-The-Place-of-Israel.pdf>

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