

Gentiles in the Faith – take heart! Part 1 of 2

WHO are the “children of God”, the real “Children of Abraham”?

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Summary:

Can a Gentile ever be part of the promises made to Abraham? Does YHVH favor Jews over Gentiles? Who is “a Jew inwardly” and spiritually? What do you have to do to be part of the promises to Abraham? Is Yahweh the God of the Jew only? Do we have to be grafted in to the nation of Israel to be part of the covenant – or are we grafted into something different? Are you automatically part of the covenant with Abraham if you were born a Jew? Can a Gentile, or Gentile nation, ever be called “My people” by Yahweh? Listen and study this topic for inspiring answers from Scripture to all these and more.

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Welcome to another session with Light on the Rock, as we get closer to the autumn feasts of YHVH. This is your brother Philip Shields, in the Messiah and our Father. I’m glad so many people from around the world are finding this website and using our 100+ timeless messages plus more and more blogs we’re writing. Yes, check out the blogs too.

What stirs in my heart right now, as we come to the Fall holydays soon, is to have a word of encouragement for the BILLIONS of people around the world who are GENTILES – in other words, anyone who is not part the nation of Israel or Judah. The Hebrew word for “Gentile” – usually from the Hebrew word “goyim” – is often translated “nations” and sometimes translated “heathen”. The singular is “goy” - - translated “nation”.

I caution you to understand that the Hebrew words “goy” or “goyim” are also sometimes used of Israel. For example: Ex. 19:6; Ezek 37:22; Gen. 35:11; 2 Sam. 7:23; Psalm 105:6 and many more. I’ve heard preachers say “goyim” refers to Gentiles. It simply means “nations” -- and we have to tell from context if it refers to Gentiles or Israel. Most of the time “Goyim” *does* refer to non-Israelites, which we will refer to as “Gentile”. So “Gentile” for our purpose is anyone not born as an Israelite or Jew. Remember there were – and I believe ARE – 12 tribes from the sons of Jacob, who was renamed Israel. Israel was Jacob – who had 12 sons.

Every month some people from about 45 nations come to this website. Some are Israelite, but most are Gentiles. We have people from Russia, China, Ukraine, Uganda, Kenya, Venezuela, France, Germany, Britain, Australia, Malaysia, Egypt, Israel, Ethiopia, Spain, Brazil, Colombia, India and so many other countries... welcome, welcome my brothers and sisters in the Messiah, to this website. I have a message today that is really for all of you, whether you are Jew or Gentile.

I was raised as a young boy among Gentiles in the Philippines. I believe I am a descendant of Joseph, and so I believe I am an Israelite. But if not, then I’m a Gentile. Either way, what is important now is whether I am a son of God or even a son of Abraham, which we’ll discuss today and next time. Of course many of our neighbors are Gentiles. A Gentile can be anyone of any color or race. The majority of the world is composed of Gentiles. I’ve come to love Gentiles very deeply. I also love Israel. Does Yahweh love Israel *and* Gentiles – or only Israel? Or only Gentiles?

There are many who teach that, to be really acceptable to Yahweh, Gentiles must basically become a Jew, or look like and sound like you're a Jew – so they learn Hebrew, dress like ancient Jews, and try to go live in Israel. Is that what the Bible is all about? Isn't that what Galatians 2 is all about? Others jump to the other ditch and claim the Almighty has rejected Israel, turned His back on them and is now working almost exclusively with Gentiles. And everyone has their favorite scriptures to support their views. I hope you will read a lot of scriptures with me today and find the real answer. And I hope you will spread the word about this website and this teaching today if you feel it is scriptural.

But first I have some comments and questions:

- What does your Maker think of you, you who are of “the nations”, the “*goyim*” in Hebrew?
- Are the promises in the Bible primarily or only for Jews or Israelites, and not for Gentiles also? Many think so. Let's see what Scripture actually says.
- **In part 2 we will take a fresh look at Romans 11 and the olive tree and grafting in.** Who and what is the Olive tree? Are Jews by birth already automatically a part of the Romans 11 olive tree? You might be in for a shock. So just be aware we'll cover that in part 2.
- Are Gentiles who come to faith in the Messiah – as some seem to think – really “**2nd class citizens**” of the **Kingdom of God**, and the 1st class citizens are Jews and Israelites?
- **In context, what is the “Israel of God” of Gal. 6:16?** Is it really the *physical* nation of Judah or Israel – or something different? We'll get more into this in part 2.
- Now get this: When can a Jew by birth *not* be a Jew *according to scripture*? When can a Gentile – say from China or Kenya – be “a Jew” in his/her Creator's eyes?
- Can you, as a Gentile, expect to be part of the covenant promises – or are those promises only for the “chosen people” of Judah and Israel?
- And those of you who are Jewish by birth: can you rest assured that you are in fact already, *automatically* a part of “the covenant people of Yahweh” – or is there this matter of faith and belief in your Messiah that has to come into the picture?
- And WHY are Gentiles scorned by some Orthodox Jews? Strict Jews to this day will not eat with a Gentile. It wasn't that way in the “old testament” but it became that way. WHY?

WHY am I bringing this topic up?

Without being conscious of it, many of us come from Judah or the tribes of Israel have felt superior to Gentiles. If you're honest with yourself, I think you'll see that. So that's why I'm bringing this topic up.

- Some teachers and groups really emphasize how special the *nation* of Israel is; I mean ancient Judah; and they minimize Gentiles. Recently you could even get the impression from some teachers that the nation of Israel is even more important than Jesus Christ!

There certainly IS a lot said about Israel in the Bible. A LOT. They are a special people, but I hope to put this in context and in fresh light. ***Are only Jews special to God? Does God love***

one ethnic group of people more than all others? If so, then there's partiality and favoritism with God. Let's call a spade a spade.

- Did God so love ISRAEL that He sent His only begotten Son to die for their sins alone? Or does Scripture give us a broader picture? That God so loved the WORLD, ALL people, so much that He sent His son so that WHOSOEVER believes on Him would be saved? He died for Israelites AND Gentiles, ANYONE who would believe on Him.

My message today is absolutely not anti-Israel. How could it possibly be? I've been there twice. Jesus was a Jew. The earliest Christians were all Jews. But where should we focus? On the nation of Israel – or on its king? On the “seeds” of Abraham, or his “Seed”?

- There *will* be a kingdom established on earth ruled by the kingdom of God, headquartered in Jerusalem from which the coming Messiah will rule. There *will* be a resettling of the land of Israel by Jews and Israelites who will have been scattered into captivity prior to the return of Messiah. I agree with all that. But I think a huge part of our misunderstanding can be quickly corrected when we realize Scripture clearly speaks of the physical and the spiritual: there's *physical Israel* and there's *spiritual Israel*. Once we see what it says about both, Gentiles and Jews will all find their place in Father's plan of salvation.

Part of the confusion comes when we can't discern if a prophecy is about the nation of Israel – or about the called-out ones who are called “Jews inwardly”, or spiritual Jews as I call them. Another part of the confusion happens when we see scriptures that have a 2-part fulfillment. Some scriptures clearly are partially fulfilled by the Messiah's first coming, while the 2nd part of the scripture is still yet to be fulfilled.

- For another sermon, I just want to say that the two sticks of Ezek 37 that become one, represent the union between Judah and his northern brothers – the “lost” 10 tribes of Israel. I believe those 10 tribes could be modern day USA, UK, Canada and Australia – and more – and they will be united once again with Judah into one kingdom, a newly fully united “House of Israel”. Read Ezek. 37:15-24. I do not believe the 2 sticks represent Judaism and the Christian church. No way. That's for another sermon...

Let's get back to the topic of Jews and Gentiles – and the way Gentiles who repent and believe in Messiah are seen by God. And how about Jews who do not repent and accept Messiah? Are they part of the union with God whether they believe or not? Let's see.

We'll soon be worshiping during the Feast of Tabernacles – called *Sukkot* in Hebrew – I want to remind everyone, right from the get-go, that in ancient times, there were 70 bulls offered during Sukkot/Feast of Tabernacles. They represented the known **70 nations** of the world and it was to picture the time when ALL nations, all Gentiles, will also come and worship the King when He returns. Some few will need some nudging, but over time, eventually all the world will come worship the Messiah. The fact that the 70 bulls weren't all sacrificed on the first day of Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) but throughout the 7 day festival, could perhaps be depicting that it will take time to bring all the Gentiles around to seeing Yeshua – Jesus Christ -- as their King and Saviour too. But it will happen.

Zechariah 14:16-18

And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations (goyim – Gentiles) which came against Jerusalem *shall go up from year to year to worship the King, YHVH of*

hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 17 And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, YHVH of hosts, on them there will be no rain. 18 If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which YHVH strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Though some will need nudging, scripture is clear that MOST will eventually come around and *want* to come worship the King, the resurrected Jesus Christ:

Isaiah 2:2-4 (Apol.Study Bible)

In the last days, the mountain of YHVH's house will be established at the top of the mountains and will be raised above the hills. All nations will stream to it,
3 and many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of YHVH, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us about His ways so that we may walk in His paths." For instruction will go out of Zion and the word of YHVH from Jerusalem.
4 He will settle disputes among the nations and provide arbitration for many peoples. They will turn their swords into plows and their spears into pruning knives. Nations will not take up the sword against other nations, and they will never again train for war.

This passage is repeated in **Micah 4:1-3** and even parts of Isaiah 11, where it speaks of the Root of Jesse and the lion dwelling with the lamb – then it says in **Isaiah 11:10**, about the Root of Jesse referring to Yeshua, or Jesus – ***"For the Gentiles shall seek Him."***

So that's going to be the end game. The whole world will come on pilgrimages to Jerusalem – probably at Feast times, to come worship in person, to rejoice with Israel.

We're also told that in the end game – not just Israel alone will be "God's people" – but all nations who finally repent and worship the one true King will also be called His people. Here's one foretaste:

Isaiah 19:19-25

19 In that day there will be an altar to Yahweh in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to Yahweh at its border. 20 And it will be for a sign and for a witness to Yahweh of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to Yahweh because of the oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Mighty One, and He will deliver them.

21 Then Yahweh will be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know Yahweh in that day, and will make sacrifice and offering; yes, they will make a vow to Yahweh and perform it. 22 **And Yahweh will strike Egypt, He will strike and heal it; they will return to Yahweh, and He will be entreated by them and heal them.**

23 In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians.

24 In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria — a blessing in the midst of the land, 25 whom Yahweh of hosts shall bless, saying, ***"Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance."***

Did you catch that? "Blessed is EGYPT MY people...". Some think only Israel makes up "the people of God". And "ASSYRIA the work of my hands" – all that right from Yahweh's lips.

BACK TO THE BEGINNING

To understand how we got somewhere we have to understand where we started from.

In the beginning ELOHIM – Gen 1:1. After speaking into existence the creation of all life forms -- as they were formed by the WORD of God -- the One God being who became Yeshua (Jesus Christ) the Messiah then formed mankind from the dust of the ground, personally. He did not speak humanity into existence. Why? Because of all the creation, only humankind was made in the image of God. When Yahweh breathed into the nostrils of the first man, He was breathing in something of God Himself, something divine, into mankind. *But because we all came from Adam, that breath of life from YHVH was breathed into all mankind everywhere; into all of us. God's breath went into every boy and girl, every man and woman – no matter what country, what color, what ethnic group.*

So **Job 12:10** says about God, “In whose hand is the life of every living thing and the BREATH of **ALL mankind**.”

We are ALL of the earth, earthy, from dirt – whether Jew, Israelite or gentile. BUT, we are also the only one of our Maker's creation in whom, and to whom, He personally blew His breath of life into.

But my point here this time is this: **Adam was not an Israelite or Jew.** Jacob (Israel) and Judah would not be born for more than 2,000 or 2200 years yet, approximately!

My point is that all humanity – every man, woman and child regardless of nationality, race, or ethnicity – every single one is made in the image of God. NO exception. NO one missed out being in God's image. No one. There is no sub-race of humanity. Neither is there any super race of humans. We are all made in the image of our Creator, BY our Creator.

When we really understand this, we will regard all humans very differently. We each carry within us the image and likeness of the Creator whether we are Ukrainian, French, Mexican, north or south Korean, Indian – or American. We belong to one another if we are in the body of Christ.

Later on, promises and a covenant were made with Abraham and his Seed. Abraham was a Hebrew – one who crossed over – but no one can say Abraham was a Jew or Israelite, because Israel was his grandson, and Judah one of his 12 great-grandsons! Are you following me? So the promises were made to Abraham long before Israel was even conceived! The promises were made to Abraham's “Seed” – singular, not “seeds” as Paul explains in Galatians. This is critical.

In a few moments, we'll talk even more about Abraham, so hang in there with me. But again – we all come from Adam, we ALL were created by Elohim, through Adam and Eve, and we ALL carry the image of God within us, we ALL carry the breath of God blown into Adam's nostrils.

Our Father is GOD OVER ALL PEOPLE

So this is why YHVH is called “the God, or Lord, *of ALL the earth*”. *The one true living God, YHVH, is not just God of the Jews.* I will cite you some scriptures, and please be sure to turn in your bibles and read them. It's true that YHVH is called “**the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob**” and so I've actually heard people say that Yahweh is the Jews' God, or Israel's God – and implying He's not the God of believing Gentiles!

But when someone, anyone calls on Almighty God in heaven, repents of his/her sins, and says he wants the true living God to be his God, we become like Ruth, the Gentile, the Moabitess, who said, “Your God shall be my God” (Ruth 1:16-17) —and YHVH heard that and became HER God too. It

reminds me of the verse in Song of Songs that says “I am my beloved’s, and my Beloved is mine.” Of course Ruth did also embrace the nation of Israel when she said, “and your people, my people”. But through that union of Jew and Gentile came YESHUA, the Messiah.

In the first covenant, the promises were to a physical nation of 12 tribes at Mt Sinai. But before that covenant was the Abrahamic covenant of Genesis 15. To be a part of the promises to Abraham you had to bless this nation of Israel and accept them as your people and their God as your God in faith. MANY notable Gentiles did: Rahab the Jerochoite, Ruth the Moabitess, Uriah the Hittite, the Rechabites, the Gibeonites and so many others.

Remember all twelve of the sons of Israel married Gentiles. Joseph married Asenath, the daughter of an Egyptian priest. The other brothers had to by necessity also marry Gentiles. So even all Israelites born to those 12 brothers have Gentile blood in them! Did you realize that?

But the point I’m getting at in this section is this: The one true God is God of all the earth, not just Israel. He’s not just the God of the Jews.

When Yahweh had told Moses to move away from Korah and his rebels in Numbers 16, Moses prayed and addressed YHVH as “*the God of the spirits of ALL flesh...*” (**Numbers 16:22**). **When Yahweh put the spirit of man into a person, when someone, when ANYONE dies, his/her spirit goes back to YHVH who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7).** He is ultimately the supreme God of all humanity, though most of the world presently is under the sway of the interloper Satan, the present god of this age. But that doesn’t mean that YHVH is God only of the Jews. *For that matter, many Jews don’t even pray or seek God’s face anyway and VERY few have believed in the Jew Jesus!*

Hebrews 12:9 calls God the “Father of ALL spirits...”.

Joshua 3:13 – as Israel was crossing the Jordan river, Joshua said something about “the Lord/Master YHVH *of all the earth*”. (Joshua 3:13).

He isn’t just Lord of Israel, but “Lord of ALL the earth” – read **Zech. 6:5; 4:14; Isaiah 54:5**.

Finally Paul NAILS this argument down in several places, but especially in Romans 3:29.

Romans 3:29

“Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, 30 since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.”

Right now the “god of this age” is Satan (2 Cor. 4:4), but the time is coming when “the kingdoms of this world have become of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever” (Rev. 11:15). Ultimately the “God of all the earth” and of all peoples, is Yahweh, our Creator. *He is NOT just God of the Jews only – but all who accept and love and obey Him.*

ABRAHAM AND THE PROMISES MADE TO HIM

What is the gospel – the good news -- we all believe in? *Ultimately the good news is that we can ALL repent and be forgiven of our sins and brought into relationship with our heavenly Father.* The good news includes that if we turn around, repent, and believe in the promises given to Abraham and to all of us since then – and accept the Son of God as our Savior – that we can be part of the promises given to Abraham.

Let me summarize, giving the high overview first, then we'll read the scriptures and get down into the nitty-gritty. So here's the high overview:

There's no doubt that Yahweh entered into covenant with Abraham and His Seed, singular. I am absolutely convinced that, because of what is said in Romans and Galatians – and bear with me as we review the verses – that YHVH entered into covenant *even with Abraham that was based on faith* in the living God, faith in the coming sacrifice of Yeshua, FAITH that God would impute God's righteousness to Abraham, and therefore Abraham HIMSELF was part of what's called "the BETTER covenant" that is the covenant by FAITH. Scripture will actually SAY SO, as you'll see. This better covenant is a covenant that, when entered in by FAITH, opens God's promises to all people, to ALL nations through faith in Jesus Christ (Yeshua the Messiah).

There WAS also a covenant made with **physical Israel** at Mt. Sinai over 400 years later. But THAT covenant could not annul the one done with Abraham prior, by faith. This is where the confusion arises.

If you misunderstand what I've just said, you'll be like so many Jews and so many "Hebrew roots" people who miss the better covenant. They MISS the fact that in this better covenant, ALL the promises are through Abraham's Seed – meaning Yeshua. Yeshua (Jesus) is who we focus on, HE is what we love more than anything, and HE is Saviour of the WORLD for all who believe in Him. HE is our focus. *As I'll prove, our focus and the love of our hearts should NOT be on the physical nation of Israel more than on the Messiah!!!* NO way. It should be HIM, IN Him—even while we love Israel and all peoples.

There are prophecies that pertain to physical Israelites and Physical Jews. They will come back to their land after their King saves them from nations they will have been scattered into. Many of them are in the "western" countries today. They were a chosen people and once again they will be among the FIRST nations to return to God, and to lead the way for the rest of the nations of the world in the coming Kingdom of Christ, which shall rule the whole earth.

The confusion arises because people read the dozens of verses that talk about Israel and Judah in the latter days, and don't read the end of the book – the teachings of Peter and Paul especially – that explain that salvation is now open to all who become a part of Israel, SPIRITUAL Israel, by faith.

Yes, there is also a SPIRITUAL Israel, now composed of all who believe from any country in the world. Spiritual is always better than physical. The promises are better. For example, Physical Israel was given certain boundaries of their land. But spiritual Israel –the called out elect, those set-apart as holy, are to inherit the UNIVERSE; the meek inherit the EARTH; we are co-heirs with CHRIST who has inherited ALL things. So which is better?

Also do not confuse "spiritual Israel" – the Israel of God – with ANY denomination. YAH will not be boxed in! Spiritual Israel is a group of believers who simply are being led by God's spirit and not by any man or woman. They belong to Christ, not to any organization or denomination or church.

But neither does this mean I agree with Replacement Theology; that God now loves Gentiles more than Israel. NO. YHVH loves all people.

- Jewish orthodoxy would teach that only Jews are the chosen people; only Jews could inherit the Abrahamic promises. Jews were proud of saying "We have Abraham as our father" (John 8:33; Luke 3:8) and they relished the idea of being the "Chosen people", "The people of

God”, and other similar titles. We shall see how, in the new covenant, these descriptors are now used of the elect – whether Jew or Gentile.

- Then when Gentiles began to be called, many called it the “the church age” and felt God had thrown the Jews out and now preferred the Gentiles.

I do believe we *still* have to become “a JEW inwardly” or Israelite, but now that Door is open to you Brazilians, to my brothers and sisters in Kenya, and in Chile, to my Filipino family in Christ, to you Mexicans and Chinese – ANY of you, from any country, who believe in Yeshua the Messiah.

YOU now can be a child of Abraham – not by birth physically, but by your new begettal, your new creation SPIRITUALLY, by faith, in CHRIST Jesus. Hallelujah!!! Even Jews by birth, who want to be part of SPIRITUAL ISRAEL, must come in by the one same door the Gentiles used: through Yeshua, by faith. He’s the Door. When they do, Jews can now join in and be grafted back in to what was their own tree, the Romans 11 tree (Rom. 11:23-24) and be a part of that in the same way as you – by repenting, obeying, accepting Jesus as their Savior, King, Redeemer and the DOOR to eternal life.

As far as this SPIRITUAL ISRAEL goes, they have to come into it the same way a Russian does – by FAITH. Israel was given the Torah. *Israel gave us many of the prophets and the Savior. But now today even they have to enter in to this Romans 11 tree by faith, just as everyone else.*

One more thing: ALL our spiritual forefathers and mothers in the faith – Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Rachel and Leah, and Noah and Mrs. Noah for example – all no doubt in my mind at all, had God’s Holy Spirit and were part of this covenant by faith with God -- long before Jacob and his children were even ever BORN!

SO – I’ve said a lot – now let’s prove it with scripture.

Genesis 12:1-3

Now Yahweh had said to Abram:

"Get out of your country, From your family and from your father's house,
To a land that I will show you.

2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you

And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you;

And in you ALL the families of the earth shall be blessed."

In Abraham’s day, and David’s day – Gentiles who lived with Israel, especially if they accepted the God of Israel like Ruth did, were respected. They weren’t considered “dogs”. Boaz married a Gentile named Ruth, but she had converted to the religion of Israel. Moses respected his Midianite father-in-law Jethro and even bowed to him (Ex. 18:7). David had bodyguards who were Gentiles. Remember Uriah the Hittite? Yahweh hated the false religion and idols of Gentiles – and He kicked the Canaanites out of the Promised Land for their evils. But He was fair; He kicked out the Israelites and Jews as well when they became even worse than the Canaanites.

Perhaps because of the way Jews were treated in captivity, they came to despise Gentiles. So by Jesus’ day, Jews were not allowed to eat with Gentiles or go into their homes, lest they be defiled. Well, Yeshua came to live in “Galilee of the Gentiles” (Isaiah 9:1). If Gentiles were so despicable, how and why would the Son of God come live among them? *Because He is THEIR Savior too!*

He gave parables that lauded Samaritans (a mixed breed race of people whom the Jews despised) – remember the “Good Samaritan”? He healed the Centurion’s servant and commended his faith.

It was easy for Jews to look down on Gentiles. In the beginning the early church after Christ’s resurrection was composed of all Jews. The idea that holy YHVH would ever give His Holy Spirit to a Gentile -- was crazy to them. But it started to happen. Let’s see how Jesus treated Gentiles.

Jesus’ Example

Where was Yeshua raised? Where was His home base? He was raised in Nazareth – in Galilee of the Gentiles and then moved to Capernaum, still in Galilee by the Sea. So was Father in heaven sending a signal that this Messiah was not only the Jews’ messiah, but the Anointed One, the Redeemer for ALL people, for all the earth!?

Matthew 4:12-16

12 Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying [Isaiah 9:1-2]

15 "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,

By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, **Galilee of the Gentiles:**

16 The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light,

And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death, Light has dawned."

During His parables, Yeshua often commended the faith of the Gentiles:

- He commended the faith of the Gentile centurion and said He had never seen such faith (Matthew 8:5-13).
- He reminded Jews that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, but he went to a gentile widow at Zarepath; and many lepers, but Elisha went to Naaman the Syrian (Luke 4:23-27).
- He cast out the demon from the the Syro-Phoenician woman’s child (Matthew 7:24-30).
- Yeshua healed a Samaritan leper who was the only one of ten who could find it in his heart to come back and say “thank you” (**Luke 17:15-17**).
- His famous story about the “Good Samaritan” flew in the face of what His hearers wanted to hear (Luke 10:30-37).

It is true that initially Christ had commanded His disciples NOT to go to the Samaritans and Gentiles – but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel (**Matthew 10:5-6**). Later He changes this. Yeshua Himself in fact spends two days revealing who He was in Samaria (**John 4:39-43**), and **16**). They always started with Jews and Israelites and then everyone else.

Do you remember when Yeshua cast out the money changers from the temple? He was angry. He said this was to be a house of prayer for ALL nations (**Mark 11:15-17**). Gentiles weren’t allowed to go past a certain point on the temple mount. There was a wall warning them they would die if they did go past that point. This was “the middle wall of partition” keeping Gentiles out of the complete worship of YHVH. They weren’t allowed to offer sacrifices to Yahweh. This infuriated the Son of Yahweh. When He said it was to be a House of Prayer for ALL nations, He was quoting Isaiah 56:3-9. Let’s read it.

Isaiah 56:3-9

3 Do not let *the son of the foreigner who has joined himself to Yahweh* speak, saying, "Yahweh has utterly separated me from His people....

6 **"Also the sons of the foreigner who join themselves to Yahweh, to serve Him, And to love the name of Yahweh, to be His servants — Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant —**

7 Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in **My house of prayer**. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar;
For My house shall be called a house of prayer for ALL nations."

Are you Gentile? REJOICE! There's so much more!

After the Resurrection

After He is resurrected, Yeshua's commission for His Jewish disciples was to teach, make disciples *of ALL nations* (**Matthew 28:18-19**). After His resurrection Yeshua repeats it:

Acts 1:8

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be *witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*"

First, **Philip preached Christ to the Samaritans** (**Acts 8:4-8, 25**) who later received the Holy Spirit when Peter and John laid hands on them. Samaritans' ancestors included some Israelites who had intermarried with foreigners sent into the land by the Assyrians. Jews despised these "hybrids" as impure, tainted -- a mongrel race.

Then **Peter** had his bombshell experience with the Roman Gentile Cornelius and his family in Acts 10. You should read the whole chapter if you're not familiar with the story. YHVH poured out His Spirit even before baptism to impress on Peter that these Gentiles were also being saved.

Please understand this was a major bombshell to the Jews! Even to Peter! He had that dramatic vision of being told to eat the unclean animals, and then realized God was telling him to "call NO MAN common or unclean" (**Acts 10:28-29**). NO ONE was common, NO ONE in Christ was unclean. And we're ALL unclean when we're outside the body of Christ. SPIRITUALLY speaking – hear me – yes, even unrepentant Jews and Israelites are unclean before YHVH if they don't repent and accept the Messiah whom Father sent us. This is what Peter learned.

Let's read the account, and then how he later describes it at the Jerusalem conference.

Acts 10:34-48

34 Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that **God shows no partiality.**
35 But in EVERY nation WHOEVER fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him. (Read that again!)

36 The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through **Jesus Christ — He is Lord of ALL —** 37 that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. 39 And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree.

40 Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, 41 not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He

arose from the dead. 42 And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead. 43 To Him all the prophets witness that, **through His name, WHOEVER believes in Him will receive remission of sins.**"

44 While Peter was still speaking these words, **the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.** 45 And those of the circumcision [the Jews among Peter's group] who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, **because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.** 46 **For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.**

Then Peter answered, 47 "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Then Paul was being sent to Gentiles and he certainly realized YHVH was calling thousands of Gentiles. Finally there is such controversy about all these former pagans, or Gentiles – whether they were converts or not – that the ekklesia had to get together and come to one mind on this topic.

So in Acts 15 we read of the big argument about this. Take time to read it again, slowly, word for word. I'll just hit the hi-lites for now.

Acts 15:1-11

And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." 2 Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.

3 So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren. 4 And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them. 5 *But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses."*

6 Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.

7 And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.

8 *So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, 9 and made NO distinction* between us* and them, purifying their hearts by faith.* 10 Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ WE shall be saved in the same manner as they." [i.e., by FAITH – v. 9]

James went on to say this is what Amos was talking about – that the time was coming when Gentiles would also be included in the promises. If you were a Gentile, you no longer had to press your face against the glass, looking in to a place of promises you wished you could have too. You no longer had to become or be borne a Jew to inherit the Promises.

So later, when Paul was writing to the Roman church, which was mostly Gentile though they had some Jews among them, says this:

Romans 1:16

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to **salvation for EVERYONE** who believes, *for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

I'm not going to be able to finish this topic in this one sermon. I'll continue in a part 2. We'll talk much more about Romans 11, Ephesians 2, Romans 9 and a couple chapters in Galatian next time.

Remember, God is God of all the earth. Yeshua is Saviour of all people who repent and accept Him. Everyone. God sent His son to die for the sins of all the world, not just Israel (John 3:16). YHVH wants all to be saved and no one to perish (2 Pet. 3:9).

We know promises were made to Abraham. But when was the covenant made with Abraham – while he was circumcised? You can read it in Genesis 15. He had just defeated the kings who had taken Lot into captivity (Gen 14), and then in Genesis 15 God promises an heir to childless Abraham. Genesis 15:6 simply says “Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness”. He was still uncircumcised. The Gentiles are referred to as “the uncircumcision” or “the uncircumcised”. We don't read of Abraham's circumcision until Gen. 17! Paul uses this to show He is the father of the Gentiles as well.

And remember, Judah – Abraham's great grandson – was nowhere around yet of course.

Romans 4:7-13

"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered;

8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin."

9 **Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also?** For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness.

10 How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? **Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.**

11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had *while still uncircumcised*, that he might be the ***father of ALL those who BELIEVE, though they are uncircumcised (Gentile)***, that righteousness might be imputed *to them also*,

12 ***and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the FAITH which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised.***

So the promises were made to Abraham while his flesh was still uncircumcised – but he believed; His heart was therefore was already circumcised. This is key to this whole topic. His circumcision of the heart had to come first. Let's continue now in Romans 2:28-29.

Romans 2:28-29

For he is NOT a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 ***but HE IS A JEW WHO IS ONE INWARDLY***; and ***circumcision is that of the HEART, in the Spirit***, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

Let me say it again: *You're not a SPIRITUAL Jew just because you were born of Judah.* You have to have a circumcised **heart, be of faith**. If you are a man or woman of faith in Jesus Christ, in our Messiah Yeshua, and have a “circumcised heart” – you have bared your soul to God – you are a “Jew inwardly, in the Spirit” – a spiritual Jew. Jews who do NOT believe in Yeshua may be physical Jews but not what Paul calls “a Jew inwardly” – of the heart, of the spirit.

Given a choice, I'd much, much rather be a Jew "inwardly" – of the spirit. And anyone, of any color, any race, can be "a Jew inwardly". But in this new understanding, faith was central! Paul takes this many steps further. Notice:

Galatians 3:7-9

7 Therefore know that ONLY those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

My brothers and sisters: let that sink in before continuing on. ONLY if you are of faith, ONLY if you accept the Messiah, ONLY if you believe in God's promises and live your life by faith, are you a spiritual descendant of Abraham the way Paul is explaining it. Let me read V 7 again: "ONLY those of faith are sons of Abraham." Gentiles who believe are children of Abraham and of GOD.

In other words, even someone who is Israelite *by birth physically* is NOT a son of Abraham *SPIRITUALLY* at least, according to this, unless and until he/she comes to FAITH, like Abraham did, the Father of the faithful. Are you Jewish? Listen! You also can be a TRUE child of God, and of Abraham – but only by faith. Let's continue.

Galatians 3:7-9

7 Therefore know that ONLY those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles *by faith*, preached the *gospel to Abraham* beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations (*goyim* in Gen 12, gentiles) shall be blessed." 9 **So then those who are of faith are blessed WITH believing Abraham.**

Did you catch that? GOD WANTS TO justify Gentiles too. God wants to save Gentiles too. God died for and loves Gentiles too. V. 9 again---Those *who are of FAITH are part of Abraham*. Those who are NOT of faith are NOT sons of Abraham, and are not blessed with believing Abraham, in other words. This gospel preached to Abraham is about our salvation which allows anyone to enter the kingdom of God and be a part of Abraham, by faith.

Our Focus must rest on our Messiah

I hear so much emphasis on the nation of Israel, on loving the nation Israel, on being a part of the nation of Israel – and brethren, we must wake up. *It's the wrong focus. Our focus should be Yeshua the Messiah, Jesus the Christ. HE is our focus. HE is our goal.* HE is what we want to be a part of. HE is the new man that is bringing into one new body – HIS body – all believers, from all countries, who are filled by His Spirit and who are led by His Spirit and His mind. He is what and who we identify with in the beginning, the middle and the end. Period.

Even the nation of Israel is going to have to identify with Him, by FAITH, as we've been reading, to be part of the Israel of God in this new covenant.

My brothers and sisters, please hear me, hear God's word: Any of you whose main focus has been on the nation of Israel, hear me: that is the wrong focus. Our spotlight should be on Messiah, not on the nation of Israel.

I love Israel. But I also love Gentiles. God loves Israel. But He also loves Gentiles. And in Him, in Christ, as we'll explore more next time, He is bringing into one, into HIM, all peoples into one new body – HIS body. *It's not the nation of Israel, it's the body of Christ.*

Let this sink in! **Who are the "people OF GOD" or "Children of God" today?** And again, who are "Israel" in the New covenant – physical Jews and Israel, or someone else?

Romans 9:6-8

6 But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. ***For they are NOT all Israel who are of Israel (repeat),*** 7 *nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham;* but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called."

8 **That is, those who are the children of the flesh [i.e. Israel, Judah], these are NOT the children of God; but *the children of the promise* are counted as the seed.**

Let's read verse 8 again!

I'll have to end with this. But hasn't some of this been a bombshell to some of you? It certainly was in the early church. "Those who are Israelite or Jew by birth (of the flesh), are NOT [automatically] the children of God. No, those who are part of the promises **by faith** are the ones considered the children of God."

He's saying, "*Hey, guys, it doesn't MATTER as much anymore if you were born a Gentile or a Jew. What matters now is not whether you're a Jew or Gentile; what matters is that you accepted Yeshua as your Saviour and bow your knees to Him and accept Him, become a part of Him, and live a set-apart life with Him living in you now, by faith*".

Galatians 3:26-29

26 For you are ALL sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.* 29 ***And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*** (READ IT 2-3X).

There's a lot yet to cover. So let me end this part 1 of 2 sermons on this topic with this:

Gentiles, rather than focusing on becoming a citizen or resident of the *physical* nation of Israel, focus on your *real* citizenship -- which is heavenly Jerusalem.

Philippians 3:20 says "for our citizenship is in HEAVEN...."

THAT'S the city of the Bride, Heavenly Jerusalem. That's our city whose maker and builder is God. WOW! WOW!

So I hope this first part has given you Gentiles some tremendous hope and encouragement, and we're just getting started! We'll bring up many more verses in Part 2. Be sure to hear it. We'll talk about in Part 2:

- More about the faith of Abraham and how he was part of the SPIRITUAL BODY long before Judah was even born.
- How Abraham was seeking a homeland – NOT ON earth, but a real city whose builder and maker was God. (Hebrews 11)
- The new covenant to be made with the house of Judah and Israel – Jer 31 – then only the house of Israel is mentioned later. Why.
- The Olive Tree of Romans 11 and the grafting in that takes place.
- The new Creation, the New MAN that brings us into one body whether Jew or Gentile
- Are Gentiles included in any of the covenants? Absolutely! And we'll show you in clear scriptures. I keep hearing people say there's no covenant for Gentiles. Just wait for part 2.
- More scriptures explaining what happens when Gentiles are called

- How about all the scriptures about Israel coming back to the land, and Mt Zion being exalted, and Israel exalted? We'll review those too – and see there ARE scriptures for physical Judah and physical Israel, but let's not confuse those with the promises to those who are children of ABRAHAM by faith, whether they are Jew or Gentile. Their promises are SO much greater!
- Confirming that Gentiles are NOT 2nd class citizens of the Body of Christ.

So we've laid a foundation, and there's much more to come.

If you're Jewish, spread the word about this message. If you're Gentile, tell others to hear this and part 2 as well. Hear it together—Jews and Gentiles together, as one. We are part of one body in Messiah. We all came from one man Adam, and are becoming a part of the new man Yeshua. Rejoice together. You Gentiles are also children of God, 100%, if you believe in Jesus Christ and have turned your life over to His direction and care, as you let His Spirit lead you.

I'd love to hear from you. May Yahweh bless each of you, smile on you, may His face shine because of the JOY He feels in YOU, His children, coming to accept His Son and our King as our and your Saviour – whether you are from Israel or from Bolivia. Welcome to the family of God, you Kenyans, Ugandans, Brazilians, Chinese, you Russians, Germans, welcome. Welcome my countrymen – Americans, Brits, Aussies, Canadians. Come as one into the Body of Messiah.

OK – we're coming to the Fall Feasts really soon, so I hope you have learned about these wonderful days. Email me – and I'll help you understand it if you are unclear.

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Until next time with part 2, this is Philip Shields, your brother and servant in Yeshua, sharing our Bible study with you.

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