

Israel

By Matthew Day

(Jeremiah 31:31 KJV) Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

Have you ever noticed that the Bible says that the New Covenant is for **Judah and Israel**? If we go to Revelation, you will notice that Israel is the centerpiece here too.

(Rev 21:12 KJV) And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

Romans says that the covenants and promises belong to Israel.

(Rom 9:4 LITV) who are Israelites, whose *are* the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the Lawgiving, and the service, and the promises;

What about the church? The Greek word translated as church is ekklesia. It's Hebrew equivalent is qahal. Qahal appears in the Old Testament 123 times. Compare that to the 118 times ekklesia appears in the New Testament. Here are a few of the verses with the word qahal (in bold). For a full list, use the link below:

<http://cf.blb.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H6951&t=KJV>

(Leviticus 16:17 KJV) And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy *place*, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the **congregation (qahal)** of Israel.

(Numbers 15:15 KJV) One ordinance *shall be both* for you of the **congregation (qahal)**, and also for the stranger that sojourneth *with you*, an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye *are*, so shall the stranger be before the LORD.

The concept of church existed a long time before the book of Acts. It usually referred to Israel.

So, if Israel has the covenants and if Israel is the church, where does that leave us Gentiles?

(Romans 11:17 KJV) And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

Romans says that we are grafted in to the olive tree. Read Romans 11. Paul refers the Jews as natural branches and the Gentiles as wild branches. This seems to suggest that the tree is Israel.

Most of you will probably agree that we are the spiritual seed of Abraham through faith in Jesus Christ. That spiritual seed was carried from Abraham to Isaac to Israel. We are the spiritual seed of Israel the same way that we are the spiritual seed of Abraham. We are grafted into Israel the same way we are grafted into Abraham.

Isaiah 56:3-8 KJV Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say,

Behold, I *am* a dry tree. (4) For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose *the things* that please me, and take hold of my covenant; (5) Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. (6) Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; (7) Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices *shall be* accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. (8) The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather *others* to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.

This passage states the point I am trying to get across. Let NOT the stranger (Gentile) that has joined himself to the LORD say 'He will make me separate from His people.' Why? Because God provided a way for Gentiles to be grafted into His people. And the name of His people is Israel.

Ezekiel 47:22-23 KJV And it shall come to pass, *that* ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, and to the strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you: and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. (23) And it shall come to pass, *that* in what tribe the stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give *him* his inheritance, saith the Lord GOD.

This is a prophecy that has not yet been fulfilled. It says that the stranger will be able to join Israel. Not only that, but they are to be treated as if they were full blood Israelites. This concept is echoed by Torah and by Paul.

Exodus 12:49 KJV One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.

Romans 10:12 KJV For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

One of the best examples of someone being grafted in is found in the book of Ruth.

Ruth 1:16 KJV And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: **thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:**
(emphasis added)

It is as simple as that. Through faith, we are counted among the true children of Israel.

Now I am going to shift gears a little bit. After Solomon died, Israel was split into two kingdoms: The Northern kingdom also called Israel or Ephraim, and the Southern Kingdom called Judah. The people who live in the Land right now are from Judah (Judah is where the name Jew came from). Ephraim was scattered among the nations and has yet to return. The descendants of Ephraim are scattered across the globe and they don't know who they are.

Ezekiel 37:15-28 prophecies the reunion of Ephraim and Judah. In order for this to take place, Ephraim must come out of exile.

Matthew 15:24 KJV But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of

Israel.

One of the reasons Jesus came to the earth was to bring back the lost sheep of Israel. Through Yeshua's work, salvation was offered as a free gift by grace through faith not only to the Jews but also to the Gentiles. Ephraim is among the Gentiles. Through Jesus, Ephraim is brought back into the Covenant that God made with Israel. It would only be a matter of time before Ephraim would realize who they were.

It is my belief that when Ephraim returns to God and to the Land, we will return with them whether we are physically descendants or not. Because to be grafted into Israel means to participate in their story.

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