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the Who Is Israel? series  
**the Gentile**

by haRold Smith  
a citizen of the Commonwealth  
(Ephesians 2:19)

*"Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called 'the uncircumcision' by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands - remember that you were at that time separated from haMashiach (the Messiah), alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise,*

*having no hope and without YaHoVeH in the world. But now in Yeshua haMashiach you who once were far off **have been brought near by the blood** of Yeshua haMashiach." Ephesians 2:11-14*

*"Truly YaHoVeH is good to Israel, to those who are of a **pure heart**." Psalm 73:1*



**"...not by observation - the Kingdom is within." Luke 17:20-21**

After the article **the Blood** (**click on highlighted words to view content**), several have written asking the same question - "Who is Israel today?" As that article stated and the passage from Ephesians above confirms, the purpose of the shedding of the pure blood of Yeshua was for the restoration of **echad** (Hebrew for "one") to **the Kingdom of YaHoVeH** as it was in the beginning with the **first Hebrew** Adam. Before answering that question specifically, however, we need to be sure our terminology is in alignment with the words and life of Yeshua Who is the benchmark by which *everything* is measured - including other scripture (**Revelation 19:10b**). In the article, **the Beatitudes**, we found that the words Yeshua spoke were not something "new", that is, unique just to His message; but, rather, *all* of His Words can be referenced back to the Words of YaHoVeH in the *Tanakh* (the OT, **John 14:24**). Since words mean things, if we simply look to what the words of scripture say and mean without overlaying any preconceived traditional theology upon them, those words make clear the question of who comprises the family of YaHoVeH, the Kingdom of Israel. As we see from Psalm 73:1 above, YaHoVeH considers Israel to be those who maintain a pure or cleansed heart before Him. **1Peter 1:22** tells us *HOW* our lives are cleansed and made pure - by *obedience to the Truth*. That Truth is found in the standard set by the Words of the Father of the family of the Kingdom Who *IS* Spirit (**John 4:24**, see **Who's Word Is It?**). When we remember that *all* of the books of the Book were written by Hebrews and were primarily addressing Hebrews; from a strictly Hebraic perspective, we find there are only *two* categories of people contained in scripture - Hebrews and *others*. These others are called Gentiles - those who worship gods other than the Holy One *of Israel*. The term "Gentile believer" is **oxymoronic** and does not exist in a Hebraic world view. When a Gentile or foreigner (someone from outside the family, from another nation) becomes adopted *into* YaHoVeH's Hebrew family of Israel by observance of **the standards** set by the Father, it has *always* been the case that he is to be treated no differently from those naturally born into the family (**Leviticus 19:34**). So, when a Gentile abandons the multiple gods of any society and "comes to faith" in YaHoVeH, the One True God *of Israel*, he is considered a *Hebrew* convert. This was the same Father the Hebrew Yeshua addressed in His Words and Life. This is the same Name that appears over 6500 times in the Hebrew scriptures but *not once* has the Name of YaHoVeH found its way into our modern English translations. Why is that? - because it has been *replaced* by the words "God" or "Lord". So, every time these words appear in scripture, our mind should be seeing His Name - **YaHoVeH**, or the shortened version, YaHoVeH (see **One Name** for more evidence). Just as we have previously seen **heaven** to be - the Israel spoken of in scripture is not a place on a map but **a state of being** of those within YaHoVeH's Kingdom who manifest His Nature.

In the light of exploring who Israel is, it is just as important to come to an understanding of who Israel is *not*. Most of the misunderstanding concerning YaHoVeH's family has come from the false teaching of Christian **replacement theology** concerning who constitutes "the church". This theology runs much deeper than a simple declaration of being for or against the physical nation of Israel but, in fact, permeates through most of Christian theological thought as the Hebrew Israel abandoned by YaHoVeH and handed to Gentiles - now as

something "spiritual" not requiring obedience to YaHoVeH's Words. This theology was originally designed as a deliberate act of creating a division between "ethnic" Hebrew and "non-ethnic" monotheistic (one God) believers in YaHoVeH in order to escape the horrific persecution heaped upon Hebrews and all who stood with them in the worship of the Holy One of Israel from the Roman Empire - who worshiped polytheism (meaning several gods). This persecution of Hebrews by Rome began in earnest with the destruction of the second temple in 70 CE and throughout the reign of the Roman Empire. Looking for a single religion that would coalesce the disparate factions within Rome, the Roman Emperor, Constantine, subsequently convened the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE to set forth the edicts of this "new" religion (the declaration of those disturbing edicts can be found in [Who Is The Word?](#)). A brief involvement with history will confirm that the theological aspects of this new religion were non-existent for well into the third century - 150 to 200 years after the Resurrection. Scripture confirms that at the time of the apostles and the writing of the epistles, those faithful to conform themselves to the Life exemplified by Yeshua as the promised Messiah of scripture were considered a heretical sect of Judaism - believers in YaHoVeH, the Holy One of Israel ([Acts 24:5](#), [Acts 24:14](#)). In order to justify the existence of Christianity as something apart from the Hebrew faith and as a condition of appeasement to the power of Rome, existing scripture had to undergo a fundamental re-interpretation to establish a separation from the Holy One of Israel and His Hebrew Family, conflicting with what had been in existence for thousands of years. The edicts of the Nicaean Council comprised the underpinnings of what became known as the Roman Catholic Church - the root from which all subsequent Christian sects and denominations can be traced. While adoption is not a new phenomenon among YaHoVeH's family - supplanting the family is. When a branch is grafted into a tree, it draws its sustenance from the life flowing out of the root of that tree - not the other way around. The branch does not bring life to the root ([Romans 11:16-18](#), [John 4:22](#)). To cut away the root from the rest of the branches condemns that tree to death. Yeshua said those who try to enter the Father's Kingdom by any other means are considered thieves and robbers.



*the beauty of YaHoVeH*

Those who propose the "one new man" of [Ephesians 2:11-14](#) to be a new species or an amalgam of the Gentile and Hebrews neglect the admonition of the verses preceding that statement. These verses call for a remembrance that those "who were once Gentiles... were without Messiah, aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without YaHoVeH in the world." Someone who is a Gentile is one without the Elohim (Hebrew for "God") of Israel. Now, however, because of the resurrection of Messiah, the opportunity is now open for those having been once separated from the Present Presence to be brought into the Commonwealth of Israel - not into something else newly created just for them. Gentiles are those turning away from beliefs regarding something other than belief in the Holy One of Israel to join themselves as a "new man" into YaHoVeH's family. The name of this one new man is Israel - all those who purify their hearts by adhering to the standards set within the family of YaHoVeH by the Father of that family.

***"For through Yeshua we BOTH have access by one Spirit to the Father of Israel. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the HOUSEHOLD OF YaHoVeH." [Ephesians 2:18-19](#)***

Christians are taught that "the church" was first formed at the Hebrew feast of *Shavu'ot* (renamed Pentecost) - contrary to what scripture tells us. The Greek word used for "church", ekklesia, means "those called out..." and most of Christianity stops right there with their definition - but that definition is not complete. The complete definition continues with "those called out of their homes to an assembly, an assembly of Israelites". The first time this Greek word is used in scripture is not in the book of Acts on Yom Shavu'ot (Day of Pentecost) as Christianity maintains, but appears first in the gospel of Matthew, specifically in the words of Yeshua in chapter [18:17](#). In this passage, Yeshua referred to those not hearing the ekklesia ("the church") are to be treated as a Gentile - someone other than a member of the Hebrew family of Israel. When Yeshua made this statement, there were no "Christians" around. He was speaking to Hebrews who understood the ekklesia to have existed long before Pentecost. In [Leviticus 8:4](#) when in the wilderness, whenever the Israelites gathered before the tabernacle, they were called the ha 'edah (translated as the English "congregation") meaning "a stated assemblage (specifically, a concourse, or generally, a family or crowd)" - from which the Greek word ekklesia

gleans its definition. In the text of [Hebrews 8:13](#), the Hebraic background of the word "new" (quoted directly from the passage in [Jeremiah 31:31](#)) cannot be taken in the sense of *essentially new* or *completely new* - **as from scratch**. To understand *kainos* (Greek for "new" meaning "fresh") in this verse is to understand that it is speaking of a new element that was *previously* out of sight is now *coming* into view - not something newly created. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words denotes *kainos* as "...of that which is unaccustomed or unused, not 'new' in time, recent, but 'new' as to form or quality, of different nature from what is contrasted as old." It is the revelation of what was always present but unperceived. Only by divorcing *kainen* from its Hebraic influence of the word actually used in Jeremiah 31, *chadash* (whose root meaning is to *re-new*, or *re-pair*), can someone conclude that this represents an entirely unprecedented creative act. What is "new" about the covenant is the *manner of delivery* of YaHoVeH's Words. They are now written and *renewed* on the hearts of men who will receive them, instead of on tablets of stone - ***BUT THEY ARE STILL THE SAME WORDS*** ([John 1:12](#), [Jeremiah 31:33](#)). As seen in the article, [What's New About It?](#), these Words are not altered or done away with as Yeshua reinforces in [Matthew 5:17-19](#), just a *better* way of having them delivered - by or through Spirit. The Greek word *pleroo* translated as "fulfill" in this passage means "to cause to abound, to furnish or supply liberally, to fill to the brim" - there is nothing in that definition that even remotely lends itself to something "done away with". When a cup is "filled to the brim" it means it is whole or complete so that nothing else can be added - it does *not* mean to throw the cup away, for then there would be no way to partake of what refreshment the cup holds. In [Matthew 26:28](#) and [Mark 14:24](#), the Greek word *kainos* in front of "testament" or "covenant" (depending on the translation) ***is not found in the original manuscripts*** - having been artificially inserted at a later date to reinforce a replacement theology embraced by the translators. The text should be read "this is My blood of *the covenant* which is poured out for the many..." - not a "new" covenant, but a promised restoration or fulfillment of **what came before**. In [Luke 22:20](#) where *kainos* is inserted, it is with the proper definition of "fresh" - not new from scratch. It is only with the understanding there is no "new" covenant (simply the same covenant that has been renewed or repaired - much in the same way a house or a car is given a restoration to make it *better*), can we see the consistency in the first usage of *ekklesia* by Yeshua in [Matthew 16:18](#) where Yeshua says He will *build* (Greek *oikodomeo*, meaning "to *restore* by building, to *re-build*, to *re-pair*") His church on the same rock of revelation by Spirit that *Keifer* (Peter) received in the prior verse. This is the gospel Yeshua spoke of in [Luke 4:43](#) as the purpose for His being sent (see what [the Gospel](#) is). He was sent as **the Kinsman Redeemer** to the house of Israel for the restoration of the Kingdom of YaHoVeH. So, then, what is to be done with the Gentiles?



***full to the brim***

***"For although they KNEW YaHoVeH, they did not honor him as YaHoVeH or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened." Romans 1:21***

In Christianity, the Hebrew apostle *Sha'ul* (Paul) is customarily acknowledged as "the missionary to the Gentiles" commissioned to take the "good news" to those outside the community of Israel - in spite of the scriptural record in the book of Acts telling us that everywhere he went he is first seen preaching *in synagogues* to other *Hebrews*. Nevertheless, his message was not exclusively for Hebrews - but for all those whom YaHoVeH is calling into His Kingdom *regardless of their ethnic background*. This verse in Paul's letter to the Romans is crucial for our understanding of his message because this verse describes the spiritual condition of those whose hearts are not open to the good news. What Paul says about the population of the first century is just as true today. But we need to notice how these people knew God. In Romans 1:21, Paul uses the Greek verb *ginosko*, that describes knowledge as a result of factual investigation, intelligent comprehension, including understanding, recognition, perception and informed opinion. In other words, knowing God in this manner means knowing that there is a God, that I am not God and that He is responsible in some manner for what is. This is the same idea we find in [Psalm 19](#) where YaHoVeH is revealed as the Designer and Creator. The mere fact that I did not bring about the world of my experience was enough in the first century to convince me that there must be a god or gods. That I have some obligation to the divine is taken for granted. In fact, even in the Roman Empire it was a capital offense to be an atheist. Paul's use of *ginosko* does not imply any sort of personal relationship with this God. It merely implies that I am aware of my own finitude and the power of the divine. Today, this is the equivalent of what most people mean when they say, "I believe in God." They believe that there is a god but his or her involvement in the daily affairs of life is for all intents and purposes non-existent. These people are the exact opposite of the insight that unless God is of supreme importance He is of no importance. What we must notice is that Paul does not suggest, in fact he denies, that these people have any real concern for God. They merely conclude that there is a god from the evidence of their lives.

***"So the young men who were spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all she had; they also brought out all her relatives and placed them OUTSIDE the camp of Israel. Joshua 6:23***



The Hebrew word translated as the English "outside" in this verse is **chuwts**. That's what you do with Gentiles. You rescue them, but you keep them away, outside the camp. After all, Gentiles are not really like you. You are part of the household of Israel - they are not. You are a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob - they are not. You have Torah - they do not. So you can save them from extinction (and fulfill the obligation of **chesed**), but you don't dare let them in! **Chuwts** is the issue at the heart of the argument found in **Acts 15**. Rahab all over again. What do you do with the Gentiles? And Joshua provides the answer that **Sha'ul** (the Hebrew apostle Paul) repeats. Joshua brings Rahab into the midst. The verse (v. 25) says, "she has lived in Israel to this day." But we need the Hebrew to see what is really happening - **vateshev bekerev Israel ad hayon**. The key word here is **kerev**, translated as the English "in" but really meaning "into the inner parts" or "in the midst," the internal social structure of the community. In other words, Joshua ensures that Rahab and all her family is fully incorporated into the fabric of the Hebrew community. She is not left as an outsider. Why is this important? Because Rahab is not a convert! She is a Gentile from a city that was to be completely destroyed because it was pagan. She is a prostitute, selling sexual favors. She lives in a place of pagan gods. She never confesses her allegiance to Torah. But God is doing something in Rahab's life, and Joshua has the spiritual awareness to see that. Rahab knows the name of YaHoVeH. Rahab understands and employs **chesed**. Rahab declares that YaHoVeH has given the land to Israel. How Rahab knows all this is never mentioned but the fact that she does know is enough for us to realize that somehow, some way, Rahab has a relationship with YaHoVeH. And that is enough. She is welcomed in. *The central question of the apostolic letters is the question of Rahab*. YaHoVeH is doing something with Gentiles. Peter was forced to acknowledge this at the house of Cornelius. Paul saw it everywhere he went. But what do you do with Gentiles? Do you insist that they become Hebrews (through the steps of the proselyte) before you welcome them into full fellowship? **That's just what the Pharisees claimed**. "Yes, let them in, but only after they have converted" - meaning to **become circumcised**. Paul says "No! YaHoVeH is calling them. Who are we to require more than that?" Rahab stands in the background. "If YaHoVeH is bringing them in, we must open the doors and offer full fellowship. Yes, they can learn our way of life after that, but we cannot put requirements on them that YaHoVeH does not." Rahab is watching. Paul's argument is Joshua's action - **bekerev** - into the midst. It doesn't matter if the person doesn't fit my expectations. It only matters that YaHoVeH has issued an invitation. Rahab is the answer to the Gentile question. And, by the way, now it is even more significant that the verb used to describe Rahab "in the midst" is an imperfect, a continuing action. Rahab is still in the midst because YaHoVeH is still sending out invitations. You and I are Rahab's children. So was the Messiah. The job of every community of the Way, is to develop the awareness of recognizing when YaHoVeH is working in the life of someone outside - and bring them in!

In **Matthew 5:34** Yeshua reinforces that heaven is YaHoVeH's throne, His residency, the place where Spirit dwells (quoting directly from **Isaiah 66:1**). The Kingdom of YaHoVeH tells us whose it is and the Kingdom of heaven tells us where it is - but there is only one Kingdom referred to in scripture that belongs to Spirit (**Matthew 6:10**). There was an epochal event that occurred on *Yom Shav'uot* (Day of Pentecost) that had not happened since the separation took place in *gan edan* (the Eden garden). For it was on that day, as a result of the Resurrection of the Kinsman Redeemer that the promise of the restoration of the Kingdom was fulfilled. On that day, the Kingdom of YaHoVeH's residency, His throne, moved from the "heavenlies" once again into the hearts of men who would receive His Words - and "heaven" moved with Him (**Jeremiah 31:33, John 1:12**).



**not abandoned**

Yeshua said in Luke 17:20-21 above that the Kingdom of YaHoVeH is "within" - not "over yonder". The throne of YaHoVeH today resides in a tabernacle not made of stone, but in the hearts of men who have allowed His Words to cleanse and **purify their hearts** - His Kingdom is within and among His saints (**Revelation 21:3, Hebrews 9:11**). We began this discourse by asking "who is Israel?" This is a valid question since YaHoVeH proclaims His Husbandry to the physical people of Israel in **Jeremiah 31:32** and that He will never abandon or cast them away in **31:35-37**. Christianity, however, has proclaimed itself as the de-facto, "spiritual" Israel, replacing the Israel YaHoVeH supposedly gave up on - which, as we have

seen, is not the position laid out in scripture. If He were able to dissolve His Promises to His Family of Israel, what does that say about where you and I stand with Him on His Promises today? There was a second epochal event that occurred in 1947 with the re-emergence of the physical nation of Israel - beginning the fulfilling of the covenant promise made to the Hebrew patriarch, Abraham, concerning His People and the Land - still in the process of being made complete.

**"...all Israel will be saved... With respect to the Good News they have been separated for your sake. But with respect to being chosen they are loved for the Patriarchs' sake, for YaHoVeH's free gifts and His calling are irrevocable."**  
**Romans 11:25-29**

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**???Questions???**

Please feel free to email me at [harold@hethathasanear.com](mailto:harold@hethathasanear.com). While not claiming to have all the answers, it would be an honor to partake with you of what Spirit is uncovering.

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