

The WildBranch Ministry

...*thou bearest not the root, but the root
thee. Romans 11:18*

Frequently Asked Questions

Ephesians 2 - The Middle Wall of Partition - Part 2

Ephesians 2:8-10

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of 'Elohiym - not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Messiah Yahshua unto good works, which 'Elohiym hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Ephesians 2:8-9 are probably memorized second only to Yochanan 3:16. As a former rabid Mormon basher, I am very familiar with these two verses as well. It soon became obvious to me that verse 10 was left out of this trilogy of truth. I believe and tenaciously teach that man can only be delivered by the mercy and grace of the Creator, and there are no works that man can do to attain salvation. However, there is a natural process to this lofty goal which involves producing what 'Elohiym has formed within us. Which brings me to a vital point of all this that I might as well touch on now. One of the essential features of this lesson that I wish to highlight concerns prophecy. We are told that "... *the testimony of Yahshua is the spirit of prophecy*" in Hitgalut 19:10. I believe that verse is more profound than is commonly taught. It fits perfectly with the first part of Yeshayahu 46:10 *"Declaring from the beginning, the end ..."*

The questions that I would like to propose before we continue in this chapter are simply this: Did YHVH know in advance that He would go to the Gentiles to call out a people for His name? Did He know WHO they were in advance? Did He declare in His word WHO these people were? Are the faithful people of YHVH in the end declared from the beginning? I believe that the answer to all these questions is YES! I believe that the Gentiles, referred to as strangers and aliens, are known by YHVH and foreknown by YHVH, and are not just chosen willy nilly and helter skelter.

Alright, now that I have that off my chest, let's get back to the text. We are told that we who WERE disobedient and children of wrath, are now His workmanship created in the Messiah unto good works. The word 'workmanship' is *poiema* in the Greek. The word *poiema* comes from a Hebrew expression used several times in the Tenakh. The word in Hebrew is *po'al yaday*, or 'the work of my hands'. Here are a few examples from Tenakh:

Yesha'yahu 45:11

"Thus saith YHVH, the Holy One of Israel, and his maker: Ask me of things to come concerning my SONS; and concerning the WORK OF MY HANDS, command ye me."

Yesha'yahu 29:22-23

"Therefore, thus saith YHVH, who redeemed Avraham, concerning the house of Ya'aqov (Israel): Ya'aqov shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now grow pale. But when he seeth his CHILDREN, the WORK OF MINE HANDS, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Ya'aqov, and shall fear the God of Israel.

Yesha'yahu 60:21

"Thy people also shall all be righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the WORK OF MY HANDS; that I may be glorified."

The use of the word 'workmanship' in Ephesians is not randomly chosen, but rather known and foretold long ago. YHVH knew exactly who was the work of his hands and who was ordained from the beginning unto good works. This is why Sha'ul begins the salutation of this letter by saying, "... According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world ..." YHVH foreknew of a people who would disobey Him, and as a result, would be scattered throughout the nations. They would mix with the nations physically and spiritually. They would no longer be called 'my people' and YHVH would no longer have mercy on them. Their brother Y^ehudah (Judah) would also disobey, but would maintain his tribal identity. YHVH foreknew that these two peoples would be reunited, made fellow citizens, and would once again be a household of 'Elohiym.

Ephesians 2:11-13

"Wherefore, remember that ye, being in times past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands - that at that time ye were without Messiah, being ALIENS from the commonwealth of Israel, and STRANGERS from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without 'ELOhiym in the world."

All my life I have heard variations on the popular expression that there are two kinds of people in the world. According to scripture however, there ARE only two kinds of people in the world. From HIS point of view there are 'my people', and the Gentiles or the nations, which basically boils down to the fact that one is either His people or not His people. This is the bottom line and has been from the beginning. This is clearly seen in the scriptural use of the number two or 'bet'. There are two masters, two kingdoms, two gates, Cain and Abel, Yitz'chak and Ishmael, Ya'aqov and Esav, he that hath and he that hath not, heaven or hell, natural and spiritual, flesh and spirit, 'Elohiym and satan, belief and unbelief,

bondman and free, foundation of rock or of sand. I could go on and on. It is from the mouth of YHVH that we are told that those who were His people, would, because of rebellion, NOT be His people. Then we are told that those same people, who were not His people, would someday be His people.

Hoshea 1:6 to 2:1

"And she conceived again, and bore a daughter. And [Elohiym] said unto him, call her name Lo-ruhamah; for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel, but I will utterly take them away. But I will have mercy upon the house of Y^ehudah, and will save them by YHVH, their 'Elohiym, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen. Now when she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived, and bore a son. Then said [Elohiym], Call his name Lo-ammi; for ye are not my people, and I will not be your [Elohiym]. Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass that, in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, YE are the sons of the Living 'Eloyim. Then shall the children of Y^ehudah and the children of Israel be gathered TOGETHER, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land; for great shall be the day of Yezreel. Say ye unto your brethern, Ammi (my people) and to your sisters, Ruhamah (have obtained mercy)."

Those who are the people of YHVH are identified by several names or terms. The people of YHVH are called Israel (Sh'mot 4:22, Acts 2:36); the congregation, assembly or church (D'varim 23:1, Acts 2:47); the holy ones or saints (Mizmor 50:5, Romans 1:7); His children (Sh'mot 7:4); His firstborn (Sh'mot 4:22, Ivrim 12:23); and My people (Sh'mot 6:7, 1 Kefa 2:10). These are all terms that refer to the same people of 'Elohiym. Those who are not His people are also not His assembly, not His church, not Israel or His saints. They are referred to as the nations, the heathen, or the Gentiles. Those who call themselves Israel, but are not called of Avraham or of Yitz'chak are not really Israel. This is why Sha'ul says that *"... they are not all Israel, who are of Israel ..."* (Romans 9:6). If one is not of the faith of Avraham, whether they call themselves Israel or not, then they are NOT His people. If you are NOT His people, then there is only one other people you can be, the nations, or the Gentiles. This is an important concept to grasp. Let me attempt to put it another way. The house of Israel was prophesied by 'Elohiym to rebel and turn from the one true God. They were scattered among the nations and mixed with the Gentiles, and because they were no longer the people of the God of Israel, they were numbered among the Gentiles. However, YHVH knew that the Messiah would be responsible for bringing back His people from among the Gentiles and reuniting them with their brother Judah. Listen to the words of Ya'aqov in Acts 15:14:

"Symeon hath declared how 'Elohiym first did visit the Gentiles, to take OUT of them a PEOPLE for His name."

The people referred to in Ephesians 2:11-13, WERE Gentiles in the flesh, they WERE without the Messiah, they WERE aliens, and they WERE strangers. It is the house of Israel that was foreknown by YHVH to estrange themselves from Him and turn away, but then to turn back and be His people once again. It is within the Gentiles, or the nations, that the people of YHVH would be taken from.

Yechezk'el 14:5-11

"That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all ESTRANGED from me through their idols. Therefore, say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith YHVH 'Elohiym: REPENT, and turn yourselves from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations. For every one of the house of Israel, or of the STRANGER that sojourneth in Israel, who separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to inquire of him concerning me, I, YHVH, will answer him myself . . . and they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity; the punishment of the prophet shall be even like the punishment of him that seeketh unto him, That the HOUSE OF ISRAEL may go no more astray from me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions, but that they may be MY PEOPLE, and I may be their 'Elohiym, saith YHVH 'Elohiym.

The house of Israel has separated itself from YHVH and has rebelled against His commandments and ways. The temple, by the time of the Messiah, is governed primarily by the Y^ehudiym (Jews). If one is a Gentile and has not been redeemed through the blood of the sacrifices, or circumcised in the heart, then, according to the law, that person cannot enter into the inner court of the temple. When a Gentile was ready to worship and serve the God of Israel, and their sins had been atoned for, then they were no longer considered a Gentile, were numbered with Israel, and could now enter the inner court.

Yechezk'el 44:9

"Thus saith, YHVH 'Elohiym: No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, or uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel."

We are now going to get to the meat of the matter. The middle wall of partition is not just a wall set up to divide the uncircumcised from the circumcised, but was prophesied to be the means, through it's removal, by which the house of Israel is reunited with the house of Y^ehudah. See you next time.

Shalom Alecheim!
