

# IS THE GENTILE NOW A JEW?

by Avram Yehoshua

[THE SEED OF ABRAHAM](#)



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# IS THE GENTILE NOW A JEW?

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The Gentile believer in Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) is part of the Commonwealth of Israel, but that doesn't make him a Jew, Hebrew, Israeli ('Israelite'),<sup>1</sup> or even a so-called 'spiritual Jew.' Yes, the Gentile is part of the Seed that Father Abraham was promised and he has also been grafted into the Olive Tree (Israel; Romans 11:11f.), but that doesn't change him into a Jew or a Hebrew anymore than when a woman marries a man. The man and his wife become 'one flesh' (Gen. 2:24), but the woman doesn't become a man. The Jewish and Gentile believers are 'one in Messiah' (Gal. 3:28), but the Gentile doesn't become a Jew. He remains a Gentile.

The Apostle Paul speaks of the Gentile believer now being part of the Commonwealth of Israel (Eph. 2:1-12).<sup>2</sup> What does it mean to be part of the Commonwealth of Israel? Let's take an illustration from the natural realm first to explain it—let's take an Irishman. He's part of the Commonwealth of Great Britain, but he's not an Englishman (or a Brit, as many Englishmen now like to call themselves). In other words, the Irishman is still an Irishman. He was an Irishman before Ireland came into the Commonwealth of Great Britain and also after. Being part of the Commonwealth of Great Britain means that both the Irishman and the Brit have the same king (or queen), and their rule of life (through the laws of Great Britain) is built upon the same foundation of English law (the Magna Carta, etc.), but it doesn't mean that the Irishman is no longer an Irishman or that he has become a Brit.

Now for the spiritual application. Let's take the classic Gentile—Ruth the Moabitess. The Covenant was given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and their Seed. Those who came on board with them, like Ruth, *remained a Gentile* and became part of the covenant people (i.e. Commonwealth) of Israel. Ruth, after she spoke of being 'one with Naomi, Naomi's people and her God' (Ruth 1:16-18) became one with Israel (without rabbinic conversion, which is an artificial, non-biblical concept because it declares the Gentile 'now a Jew'), but Ruth remained a Moabitess all the days of her life (Ruth 1:22; 2:2, 6, 21; 4:5, 10; cf. 2:10-12), and all the divine laws of Moses that applied to Jewish women applied to her, too. She was truly 'one' with Israel.

Boaz, as the kinsmen-redeemer<sup>3</sup> of Ruth, pictures Yeshua as *the* Kinsmen-Redeemer.<sup>4</sup> Ruth, the Moabitess, a woman from a pagan land, pictures the Gentiles of the nations who leave their father and mother, and their gods, and become one with Israel through Yeshua, the Kinsmen-Redeemer. These Gentiles, like Ruth, don't become Jews or Hebrews, but are one with Israel through their marriage to the Kinsmen-Redeemer.

Rabbinic conversion is a man-made concept that *artificially* declares a Gentile a Jew. There is nothing in

<sup>1</sup> The term *Israelite* is an archaic term from the Greek New Testament for an Israeli, hence, my use of Israeli instead of Israelite. I will be using these terms (Jew, Hebrew, Israeli) interchangeably. For an article on how the term *Jew* constitutes 'Israel,' ask for the PDF *Jews, Israel and the Jews Today*.

<sup>2</sup> The ASV, KJV, NASB, NKJV and the NRSV have *Commonwealth*, while the HCSB, NET and the NIV have *citizenship*. Either translation is acceptable, yet, *Commonwealth* is preferred because it speaks of the entity (Israel 'after the Spirit') rather than the individual within the entity.

<sup>3</sup> The term relative is used 11 times in the story (Ruth 2:1; 3:2, 9, 12 (twice), 13; 4:1, 3, 6, 8, 14). It can also be translated as kinsmen (KJV, NIV, etc.), which means kinsmen-redeemer.

<sup>4</sup> Ex. 6:6; Lev. 25:25f.; Hosea 13:14; Rom. 3:24; 1st Cor. 1:10; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Titus 2:14; Heb. 9:12.

the *Tanach* (Old Testament) nor the New Testament to support this change of *racial* identity. Looking at Ittai, the *Gentile* general who served under King David, will reveal that Ittai remained a Philistine all the days of his life, even though he lived in Israel and was one with Her. In other words, Ittai didn't become a Hebrew even though he was 'one' with David and Israel, and even though he lived in Israel.<sup>5</sup>

When David fled from his own son Absalom, who wanted to murder him and assume the kingship over Israel, David and his entourage hurriedly left Jerusalem. In stopping to reconnoiter who was with him David saw Ittai and Ittai's men (soldiers). Scripture records:

'And the King went out with all the people after him and stopped at the outskirts. Then all his servants passed before him; all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men who had followed him *from Gath* (Philistines!) passed before the King. Then the King said to *Ittai the Gittite*,'

'Why are you also going with us? Return and remain with the king (Absalom), for you are a *foreigner* and also an exile from your own homeland. In fact, you came only yesterday.<sup>6</sup> Should I make you wander up and down with us today, since I don't know where I'm going? Return and take your brethren back. Mercy and truth be with you.'

'But Ittai answered the King (similar to how Ruth spoke to Naomi) and said,'

'As Yahveh lives!, and as my Lord the King lives! Surely in whatever place my Lord the King shall be, whether in death or in life, even there also your servant will be!'

"So David said to Ittai, 'Go and cross over!'"

'Then Ittai the Gittite and all his men and all their (wives and) children who were with him crossed over.' (2nd Samuel 15:17-22)

Ittai the Gittite's loyalty to King David is truly commendable because Ittai was a Philistine (general) from the Philistine city of Gath, as the *Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* brings out.<sup>7</sup> Ittai had come to serve the King of Israel, but he remained a Philistine all the days of his life,<sup>8</sup> as this passage reveals when David says to him, 'you *are* a foreigner' not, you *were* a foreigner. Ittai was still a Gentile, even though he was an integral part of King David's Israel.

As a Philistine Ittai should have been a mortal enemy of David, but he was now part of the Commonwealth of Israel and would receive benefits, both temporal and eternal, because of his love for King David and David's God.<sup>9</sup> Ittai pictures the Gentile believer, while King David pictures the Hebrew Christian.

<sup>5</sup> In one sense, Ittai would be seen as an Israeli, one who *lived* in Israel, but in racial terms, Ittai would always remain a Gentile.

<sup>6</sup> David doesn't literally mean that Ittai came 'only yesterday,' but chooses that phrase to say that Ittai hadn't been with David for a long time. David was trying to give him 'a way out.'

<sup>7</sup> Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, authors; M. Richardson, translator, *The Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* vol. 1 (Boston, MA USA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), p. 206. 'גת...of גת (Gath) הגתי (*haGiti*) 'from Gath; Jos. 13:3 2S 6:10f; 15:19-22; 18:2; 21:19; 1C 13:13; 20:5; pl. הגתים (*haGitim*) 2S 15:18.'

Also, גתי *Hebrew to English Dictionary and Index to the NIV Old Testament*, n.p. (numbers correspond to *Strong's Concordance*) '1785 [1663] גתי, *gittiy*, a.g. [1781; cf. 1780]. Gittite, *of Gath.*' *Accordance Bible Software*.

<sup>8</sup> 2nd Samuel 18:2, 5.

<sup>9</sup> See also Uriah the Hittite, one of King David's champions, as another example of a foreigner residing within Israel who was one with Israel, but wasn't seen as a Jew (1st Sam. 26:6; 2nd Sam. 11:3, 6, 17, 21, 24; 12:9; 23:39; 1st Kgs. 15:5), and the Gibeonites, who were in Canaan before Israel (Joshua 9:1ff.), but Joshua was deceived

A Gentile who comes to believe in Yeshua, the King of Israel, doesn't become a Jew, or a Hebrew, or an Israeli, but remains a Gentile. Yes, he is part of the Seed that Father Abraham was promised, but nowhere in the New Testament do we see any Gentile being referred to as a Jew, or a Hebrew, or an Israeli. Nowhere in the New Testament does it say that a *Gentile* Christian was anything other than a *Gentile* Christian.<sup>10</sup> All Christians are in Messiah's Kingdom, but not all are Jews or Hebrews yet, all are part of the Commonwealth of Israel, the Olive Tree, and The Seed of Abraham.

The word *Jew* or *Jews* in the New Testament *always* refers to a person who was racially born from the Seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.<sup>11</sup> *God cements this concept* in the New Covenant by saying that the Gentile believers *weren't* to be circumcised like the Jews (Acts 15:1f.; 21:20-24; 1st Cor. 7:17-19; Gal. 2:3, etc.). The Pharisees who believed in Yeshua wanted the Gentiles to (artificially) become Jews via physical, covenantal circumcision (Acts 15:1-5f.), but God, through Peter and James, overruled them (*and* rabbinic conversion), reestablishing the biblical concept that Gentiles who align themselves with Israel are one with Israel, but don't become Jews.<sup>12</sup>

## BUT DOESN'T "GENTILE" MEAN PAGAN?

Some Gentile Christians are offended by the term Gentile because among Jews it can mean someone who is a pagan (heathen). The term Gentile, or *Goy/goy* in Hebrew, can be a pejorative term among the Jewish people because all the peoples or nations other than Israel were pagan, but the term is also used in a neutral way to describe someone who isn't Jewish. The Jews were the only people or nation that didn't worship idols (when they were following the Lord).

Originally the term *goy* in the Bible was used of any nation or people, even the Jews. The *Hebrew and English Lexicon* says that *goy* means, a 'nation or a people...of the Seed of Abraham...of Israel and Judah and...of non-Hebrew people.'<sup>13</sup> In other words, biblically, the term *Gentile* was used of both Jews and people of other nations, without any inference to paganism.

*The Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* speaks of *goy* as a people or a nation and says that the two (people and nation) are interchangeable.<sup>14</sup> *The Wordbook of the Old Testament* also states that the term *Gentile* refers to both Israel and the other nations:

"*Gentile, heathen, nation, people...*The term גוי (*goy/Gentile*) "is used especially to refer

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into making a covenant with them. Four hundred years later, in the reign of King David, they were still seen as strangers in the midst of Israel, yet one with Israel (2nd Samuel 21:1-2f.).

Also, read *Two Different Kingdoms? The Stranger and the Native-Born*, the Appendix in [The Lifting of the Veil: Acts 15:20-21](#) for the Old Testament distinction between the Gentile who became part of Israel (the *ger*; translated as *stranger* in the NKJV and NASB, etc.), and the natural Seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The schematic diagram of the five different types of Gentiles can also be found online in the article [Gentile Circumcision?](#)

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix A on p. 11 for Scripture cites that affirm that a Gentile Christian remains a Gentile.

<sup>11</sup> Gentiles who mistakenly convert to Judaism via the Rabbis are called proselytes and even though the Rabbis say that 'they are now Jews,' they are not, according to God's Word.

<sup>12</sup> See Acts 15:7-10, 14, 16-17, 19, especially v. 23 where these Gentile believers are still called Gentiles.

<sup>13</sup> Dr. Francis Brown, Dr. S. R. Driver and Dr. Charles A. Briggs, based on the lexicon of Professor Wilhelm Gesenius; Edward Robinson, translator and E. Rodiger, editor, *Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Lafayette, IN: Associated Publishers and Authors, 1978), p. 156. גוי

<sup>14</sup> Koehler, *The Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* vol. 1, p. 183. גוי, *Goy* used of Israel: Gen. 18:18; Is. 60:22; Ezk. 35:10; Ps. 106:5. *Goy* used of pagan peoples: Ex. 34:24; Lev. 18:24; Ezk. 5:6-8.

to specifically defined political, ethnic or territorial groups of people *without intending to ascribe a specific religious or moral connotation*. Thus in Gen 10:5” it “speaks of defined groups of people according to their territories. When God speaks to Abraham about Egypt as a strong nation the term גוי (*goy*) is used...In this general ethnic sense the term” is “used of Abraham’s seed...God said to Abraham, ‘I will make of you a great nation’ (*goy*) i.e. a political, territorial, identified people (Gen 12:2; 17:20; 21:18). In Ex 33:13 Moses, referring to Israel, a distinct body of people, says, ‘This גוי (i.e. nation) is thy people (אֶחָד *ahm*; people). In Deut. 4:6-7, Moses speaks of the Israelite nation as a political, ethnic body (גוי *goy*) which is a wise and understanding people’ (*ahm*) existing as, and recognized by other nations as, a specific national identity (Ps 83:4 [H 5]). It is necessary to stress that the Scriptures speak of Israel’s existing as a distinct nation in Moses’ time because of the widespread misapprehension that Israel became a nation only after entering Canaan. Israel was a nation in Moses’ time, just as it was in Joshua’s time (Josh 3:17; 4:1; 5:6). So also in Jeremiah’s time and thereafter, in spite of the exile (Jer 31:36).”<sup>15</sup>

Although today the Hebrew term *goy* (Gentile) means a non-Jew, when used by a Jew, the term itself basically means someone belonging to a another people (e.g. Babylonians, Hebrews, Egyptians, Canadians, etc.) other than the Jews. By New Testament times the word had come to be applied to peoples other than Jews and that’s how it’s used in the New Testament, which uses the Greek term ἔθνος *ethnos*, which means, a ‘nation, people or a Gentile.’ The *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* says that it is used for ‘*non-Israelite Christians, gentiles* of Christian congregations composed of more than one nationality.’<sup>16</sup> There is no inherent evil in the term *goy* or *Gentile*.

## THE ISRAEL OF GOD

The Gentile believer never stops being a Gentile (‘one of the nations’).<sup>17</sup> *The Israel of God* is mentioned only once in the New Covenant (Gal. 6:16). Paul doesn’t teach on it as much as use it to highlight a response to the Judaizers, and as a sign-off. The Judaizers wanted the Gentile to be circumcised in order to be saved and to become part of the Jewish people (the people of God) the rabbinic way, but God had another way—through the death of His Son, which brings about the circumcision of the heart for all those who believe. The Israel of God could also be called ‘Israel after the Spirit,’ as opposed to the Israel ‘after the flesh’ (1st Cor. 10:18). The Gentile believer is part of this Israel ‘after the Spirit.’

In Acts the Gentiles who came to Christ were still called Gentiles. *After* the decision of James in Acts 15, that the believing Gentiles weren’t to be physically, covenantally circumcised, Scripture still calls them Gentiles:

“They wrote this letter by them: ‘The Apostles, the Elders, and the Brethren: ‘To the Brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings!’” (Acts 15:23)

“*But concerning the Gentiles who believe*, we have written and decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from things offered to

<sup>15</sup> R. L. Harris, editor; Gleason Archer, Jr. and Bruce Waltke, associate editors, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), pp. 153-154. גוי

<sup>16</sup> Walter Bauer, augmented by William F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 218. ἔθνος

<sup>17</sup> See Rev. 7:9; 15:4; 21:24, 26; 22:2 where *nations* can equally be translated *Gentiles*.



idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality.” (Acts 21:25 NKJV)<sup>18</sup>

In Romans the Apostle Paul speaks about the Gentiles who had come to believe in Jesus. According to Paul they were still Gentiles:

“that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that *the offering of the Gentiles* might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 15:16)

“who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all *the congregations of the Gentiles*.” (Romans 16:4)

The concept of the Gentile remaining a Gentile is a constant theme throughout both Covenants.<sup>19</sup>

## REMEMBER THAT FORMERLY YOU, THE GENTILES...

No other term is ever used for Gentile believers except perhaps ‘uncircumcised,’ to contrast the Gentiles with the circumcised Jews, as Paul does in Ephesians. In this passage some wrongly think that Paul is using the word *formerly* to mean that that’s what the Gentiles *used* to be called (Gentiles), but Paul’s use of ‘formerly’ specifically applies to how the Gentile Christians used to walk, ‘in the flesh,’ meaning in their Adamic carnality:

<sup>11</sup>“Therefore *remember*, that *formerly you*, the Gentiles *in the flesh*, who are called ‘Uncircumcision’ by the so-called ‘Circumcision,’ which is performed in the flesh by human hands—<sup>12</sup>*remember* that you were at that time *separate from Christ*, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.” (Ephesians 2:11-12 NASB; see also Eph. 3:6; Colossians 1:9-23 especially vv. 12, 21-22)

The phrase *formerly you, the Gentiles* doesn’t mean that the Gentiles were *formerly* called Gentiles, and now in Messiah they aren’t Gentiles any longer. *Formerly* applies to their former position as Gentiles *in the flesh—separated from Christ*, excluded from the Commonwealth of Israel, and having no hope of salvation. This is brought out with the NASB using *remember* before *formerly*, and also, after *human hands*, so as to reconnect Paul’s initial thought back to what he was saying: ‘*remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh...remember that you were...separate from Christ.*’ Paul is speaking about the condition of the Gentiles before they came to Christ. He’s not saying that they’re no longer Gentiles. The Gentiles were Gentiles before *and* after they came to Messiah. This is evident from Paul saying that they *are (still)* called *Uncircumcision*. (See also Eph. 3:1, 6; 4:17 and 1st Thess. 4:4-5 where Paul speaks to the Gentile believers not to act like Gentiles who don’t know God).

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<sup>18</sup> This doesn’t mean that the Gentiles only have four rules and no others from the Law of Moses. See [The Lifting of the Veil: Acts 15:20-21](#), the chapter titled, *Acts 21:25—Observe No Such Thing!* for the Hebraic interpretation of this passage.

<sup>19</sup> See also Acts 11:1, 18; 13:48; 15:3, 17; Rom. 1:13; 3:29; 11:12-13; 15:7-12, 16, 18, 27; 16:4 Gal. 2:12; 3:8, 14; Eph. 3:1, 6; 4:17; 1st Tim. 2:7; 2nd Tim. 1:11.

# CIRCUMCISION IS NOTHING

The concept of the Gentile Christian remaining a Gentile is also seen in what the Apostle Paul says to the Corinthians concerning physical, covenantal circumcision, the circumcision of the Old Testament:

<sup>17</sup>‘Only as the Lord has assigned to each one, *as God has called each, in this manner let him walk*. And so I direct in all the congregations. <sup>18</sup>Was any man called when he was already circumcised? He is not to become uncircumcised. *Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? He is not to be circumcised.*’<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup>‘Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the Commandments of God. <sup>20</sup>*Each man must remain in that condition in which he was called.*’ (1st Corinthians 7:17-20)

First, in vv. 17-18 Paul speaks of the Gentile staying as God has made him—an uncircumcised Gentile. He wasn’t to be circumcised. This is reiterated in v. 20 where the Apostle commands the Gentile to *remain in that condition in which he was called*. Clearly, there’s no change of ethnicity here either—the Gentile remains a Gentile and the Jew remains a Jew.

Second, Paul says in v. 19 that circumcision *is nothing*, not because he doesn’t ascribe any value to physical, covenantal circumcision, but in the light of Yeshua, being circumcised or uncircumcised has no bearing on entering into Messiah’s Kingdom. It’s the circumcision of the heart, made without human hands (Col. 2:11) that matters for both Gentile and Jew. They both come into the Kingdom through faith in Jesus. Paul isn’t throwing circumcision away, though, for the Jew. He upholds it (Acts 21:20-24), because it’s God’s divine order for the Jew.

Third, Paul says that it is the doing of God’s commandments that matter (v. 19) more than if one is a Jew or a Gentile (circumcised or not), but how can the Apostle say to both groups ‘to keep the commandments (of the Law/Torah) if he’s just said that the Gentile must not be circumcised, a major commandment of Torah? He’s able to do that because physical, covenantal circumcision has given way to the sign of the New Covenant, which is water/Spirit baptism in the name of Yeshua. The Jew continues to physically covenantally circumcise his sons because *he is still literally a part of the covenant that God gave to Abraham* (Gen. 17:9-10f.). The Gentile was never part of that covenant.<sup>21</sup> The Gentile, although part of the Seed of Abraham, was never part of the Abrahamic Covenant. The Gentile believer remains a Gentile, just as the woman in a marriage remains a woman.

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<sup>20</sup> Paul isn’t speaking figuratively to the physically circumcised Jewish believer. There was in the days of Paul an operation that would re-attach foreskin to make the Jew look uncircumcised. Jews had been doing that since the days of the Maccabees, in order to fit into Greek and Roman society. For more on this ask for the PDF, *1st Corinthians 7:18—Removing the Mark of Circumcision*.

<sup>21</sup> Certain commandments of Torah shift or are revised in the New Testament. For instance, Torah speaks of only the Sons of Aaron, from the Tribe of Levi, were to become high priests after their father (Ex. 6:18, 20; 28:1; Num. 20:28; 25:13), but the New Covenant declares that Yeshua, from the Tribe of Judah, not the Tribe of Levi, is our High Priest (Heb. 5:1–7:28). This doesn’t do away with the earthly High Priest from Levi, but it highlights the temporal and eternal Kingdoms of Israel, in Canaan, and in the New Jerusalem, respectively. The (High) Priest Melchizedek is seen in Gen. 14:18-20 (and God *swears* that Messiah will be a [High] Priest like Melchizedek in Psalm 110:1, 4), so this *shift* is there in seminal form in Torah. In another example, circumcision of the heart is also seen in Torah: “Moreover *Yahveh your God will circumcise your heart* and the heart of your descendants, to love Yahveh your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live.” (Dt. 30:6)

# THE SPIRITUAL JEW

Paul writes in Romans of the spiritual Jew. Some Gentiles take this passage, which speaks of a ‘true Jew’ being one *inwardly* and having the circumcision of the heart, to mean that they, Gentiles, are now *spiritual Jews*:

<sup>28</sup>‘For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh, <sup>29</sup>but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter, and his praise is not from men, but from God.’ (Romans 2:28-29)

It’s obvious that the term *Jew* in Rom. 2:28 is not a Gentile. Does Paul’s focus change for the next verse? Excluding v. 29 for a moment, the term *Jew* or *Jews* occurs 190 times in the New Testament,<sup>22</sup> and in every instance it speaks of literal Jews. Are we to now understand that Romans 2:29 is an exception, speaking of the Gentile as a spiritual Jew?<sup>23</sup> Of course not, especially as it makes no reference to a Gentile or says that the Gentile Christian is now a spiritual Jew.

Paul is using two male Jews as an illustration. Both of them, obviously, are circumcised in their flesh, but only the Jew who believes in Yeshua is ‘a Jew who is one inwardly,’ whose (true) circumcision is of the heart, by the Holy Spirit. In other words, the *real Jew* is the one who believes in Yeshua. Paul is not making all Gentile Christians into *spiritual Jews*.

Paul immediately turns around to those who would put down the *circumcised in the flesh only Jew*, and writes in Romans 3:1-4a:

‘Then what advantage has the (non-Christian) Jew?! Or what is the benefit of circumcision?! *Great in every respect!* First of all, that they were entrusted with the Word of God. What then?! If some did not believe, *their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?*<sup>24</sup> May it never be!’

Spiritually the Gentile is part of the Seed of Abraham, but just not the Jewish part. Abraham is just as much the Father of the Christian Gentile as he is the Father of the Christian (and non-Christian) Jew.

“As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a Father of *many nations* (*goyim*). No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you a Father of *many nations* (*goyim*).” (Genesis 17:4-5)

“After these things I looked, and behold! A great multitude, which no one could number, of *all nations*, tribes, *peoples*, and tongues, standing before the Throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the Throne and to the Lamb!’” (Revelation 7:9-10)

Gentiles are still Gentiles in Revelation. The Gentile is part of the Seed that Father Abraham was promised, and the Commonwealth of Israel. He has the same King that the Jewish believer has and he should keep everything in Torah that the Jewish believer keeps, except for physical, covenantal circumcision.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> *Accordance Bible Software* (Altamonte Springs, FL: OakTree Software, 2011).

<sup>23</sup> Some Gentile believers also say that because Jesus is a Jew, they are (spiritual) Jews, too, but this finds no scriptural support in either Covenant.

<sup>24</sup> The *faithfulness of God* means that even though the majority of the Jews haven’t believed in Yeshua yet, God will still keep His promise to Abraham that his Seed would have Him for their God (Gen. 17:7-8; Ex. 6:6-8). This is powerfully brought out in Rom. 11:25-31.

<sup>25</sup> See [Gentile Circumcision?](#) for why the Gentile believer must not be physically, covenantally circumcised ‘in or-

# DR. LUKE

Paul's sense of 'Jew and Gentile' is also seen when he begins to close his letter in Colossians Four. He speaks of Onesimus (Col. 4:9) as 'one of you,' which means that he was a Gentile, part of the Colossian congregation. He had been a former slave of Philemon (Philemon 1:10), Philemon seeming to have been an overseer (pastor) of the church that met in his home (Philemon 1:2)<sup>26</sup> in Colossae.

In Col. 4:10-11, Paul writes of Aristarchus, (John) Mark and a certain Jesus who was also known as Justus, *being the only Jews* with him that 'send their greetings,' with the obvious inference that the rest are Gentiles:

<sup>10</sup>“My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)

<sup>11</sup>Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are *the only Jews* among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me.” (Colossians 4:11 NIV)

Paul then goes on to mention Epaphras and 'Luke, the beloved physician,' as well as Demas (vv. 12-14). How could Paul even think about making such a distinction if all the Gentiles were now Jews?

How long had Luke been a believer? According to Luke he had 'perfect understanding from the very first' (Lk. 1:3), which seems to imply that he was one of the first Gentiles to come to Christ in Antioch (Acts 11:19-20), which is dated about 41 AD.<sup>27</sup> How many years had Dr. Luke been with Paul when he wrote Colossians? Luke first 'appears' in Acts 16, with the beginning of his 'we' passages that speak of Luke writing of Paul's events first hand.<sup>28</sup> Acts 16 is seen to have taken place about 48-49 AD. The letter to the Colossians is said to have been written from Rome about 58-62 AD.<sup>29</sup> Luke had been with Paul for at least nine years, and had been a Christian for at least 17 years. Why hadn't this Gentile man 'become a Jew' in all that time, if Gentiles coming to Christ were no longer Gentiles, but now Jews?<sup>30</sup>

## ONE LAST POINT

There is one place in Scripture that seems to speak of a Gentile becoming a Jew, and that's in the Old Testament Book of Esther, which was written after the Babylonian captivity<sup>31</sup> (about 470 BC). This takes place in ancient Persia (modern Iran). The Hebrew word is מִתְיָהָדִים (*mit'yahadim*) a *hitpa'el* masculine, plural participle:

“And in every province and city, wherever the king's command and decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a holiday. Then many of the people of the land be-

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der to keep Torah.’

<sup>26</sup> [Philemon](#).

<sup>27</sup> Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Bible Dictionary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 25th printing, 1976), pp. 486-488.

<sup>28</sup> Acts 16:10, 11, 12, 13, 16; 20:6, 13, 14, 15; 21:8, 10-12, 14, 18; 27:1f., etc.

<sup>29</sup> Geoffrey W. Bromiley, general editor; Everett F. Harrison, Roland K. Harrison and William Sanford LaSor, associate editors, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. one (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p. 692. *ISBE* has 58 AD.

Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, p. 233. *Unger's* has 61-62 AD for when Colossians was written.

<sup>30</sup> For why Luke is a Gentile see [Luke the Jew?](#)

<sup>31</sup> Jerusalem and the First Temple (of King Solomon) were destroyed by the King of Babylon in 586 BC.

came Jews because fear of the Jews fell upon them.” (Esther 8:17 NKJV)

It seems that some Gentiles became Jews, but *HALOT* brings out that it would be better translated that they had ‘embraced Judaism,’ or even ‘posed as Jews.’<sup>32</sup> This is supported by the *NIV Exhaustive Concordance* which says that the Hebrew word ‘can mean to join the Jewish faith or simply to act like a Jew.’<sup>33</sup> Therefore, Esther 8:17, the one cite in all of Scripture that seems to declare a Gentile *becoming* a Jew and no longer being a Gentile, cannot be used to defend that position. Also, there is no second witness.<sup>34</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Racial identity doesn’t change when a woman or a man enter into a marriage, and it doesn’t change when a Gentile becomes part of Israel after the Spirit. Nowhere does the New Testament call Gentiles, Jews or Hebrews or Israelis, but part of Israel and the Seed that Abraham.

Gentiles are *one* in the Body of Messiah, the Commonwealth of Israel, with their Jewish Christian counterparts, and as such, they should observe the same laws as their Jewish brothers and sisters except physical, covenantal circumcision for the male Gentile, which is only for the male Jew who has literal lineage back to Fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Gentiles remain Gentiles. Dr. Luke is an excellent example of this. After many years of traveling with Paul, the Apostle doesn’t speak of Luke as a Jew, but includes him with other Gentiles.

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<sup>32</sup> Koehler, *The Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* vol. 2, p. 393. יהד, denom. from יְהַדִּים...מִתְיַהֲדִים: to pose as a Jew (Ehrlich; KBL; alt. to embrace Judaism, TWNT 6:73; Bardtke 376) Est. 8:17,” or to identify with the Jews in the sense of being for them rather than against them.

<sup>33</sup> *Hebrew to English Dictionary and Index to the NIV Old Testament*, n.p. 3366 [3054] יָהַדַּךְ yahad...[3374; cf. 3373].

<sup>34</sup> See Dt. 17:6; 19:15; Mt. 18:16; 2nd Cor. 13:1; 1st Tim. 5:19; Hebrews 10:28 for the concept that two or three witnesses are needed to establish a truth in a matter.

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## *Articles Cited*

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[The Lifting of the Veil: Acts 15:20-21](#). These two chapters in the book are:

*Acts 21:25—Observe No Such Thing!*

*Two Different Kingdoms? The Stranger and the Native-Born.*

# APPENDIX A

There are some who erroneously teach that the Gentile Christian is no longer a Gentile, but a Jew. The following are Scriptures that disprove that, and also, a popular definition of what Goy (i.e. Gentile) means in Scripture:

“The term Goy/Goyim biblically, originally not only refers to non-Hebrews, but also the Hebrew people. The word *goy* means ‘nation’ in biblical Hebrew. In Torah, *goy* and its variants appear over 550 times *in reference to both the Israelites and the non-Israelite nations*. The first recorded usage of *goyim* occurs in Gen. 10:5 and applies innocuously to non-Israelite nations. The first mention of *goy* in relation to the Israelites comes in Gen. 12:2, when God promises Abram that his descendants will form *a goy gadol* (a ‘great nation’). In Ex. 19:6, the Israelites are referred to as *a goy kadosh*, a ‘holy nation.’ While the books of the Hebrew Bible *often* use *goy* to describe the Israelites, the later Jewish writings tend to apply the term to other nations.”<sup>35</sup>

“One of the more poetic descriptions of the [chosen people](#) in the Hebrew Bible, and popular among Jewish scholars, as the highest description of themselves: when God proclaims in the holy writ, *goy ehad b’aretz* or ‘a unique nation upon the earth!’ (2nd Sam. 7:23; 1st Chron. 17:21).

It’s important for us to be open to change when Scripture reveals that we’re not walking according to God’s Way, but according to Man’s thinking,<sup>36</sup> which many times is contrary to the Word. Nowhere does it say in the New Testament that any Gentile Christian stopped being a Gentile and/or has become a Jew. Here are some Scriptures that plainly reveal that Christian Gentiles are not Jews:

“But concerning the **Gentiles who believe** (present tense; not Gentiles who believed), we have written and decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality.” (Acts 21:25 NKJV)

“Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, *just as among the other Gentiles*” (Romans 1:13 NKJV). Obviously, Gentile Christians.

“**For I speak to you Gentiles**, inasmuch as I am an Apostle *to the Gentiles*, I magnify my ministry” (Romans 11:13 NKJV). Paul is obviously writing to Gentile Christians.

“that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the *offering of the Gentiles* might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:16 NKJV). The offering has to be of the Gentile Christians, not Gentiles who don’t believe in Jesus.

“It pleased them indeed, and **they are their debtors**. For if the **Gentiles** have been *partakers of their spiritual things*, their duty is also to minister to them (the Jewish believers) in material things.” (Romans 15:27 NKJV)

“for before certain men came from James, *he (Peter) would eat with the Gentiles*, but

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<sup>35</sup> From <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goy>.

<sup>36</sup> Jesus called Peter, Satan, saying to Peter that he wasn’t thinking as God, but as Man: “But Yeshua turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men!”” (Matthew 16:23 NKJV). All Peter wanted to do was stop Jesus from being crucified; a noble intention, but obviously, not of God. The same is true of Gentiles calling themselves Jews.

when they came, he (Peter) withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were *of the circumcision*” (Galatians 2:12 NKJV). Peter wasn’t eating with non-believing Gentiles before he withdrew himself from them, but with believing or Christian Gentiles. Also, ‘the circumcision’ speaks of Christian Jews.

“that the blessing of Abraham might *come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus*, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” (Galatians 3:14 NKJV)

“For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus *for you Gentiles*—” (Ephesians 3:1 NKJV). Was Paul speaking to the whole world of Gentiles or to *Gentile Christians* in Ephesus?

“This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should *no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk*, in the futility of their mind” (Ephesians 4:17 NKJV). Here Paul distinguishes between Gentile Christians and Gentiles who don’t believe in Yeshua.

Again, Paul speaks of the same to the Thessalonians: “not in passion of lust, *like the Gentiles who do not know God*” (1st Thessalonians 4:5 NKJV). As opposed to the Gentile Christians who do know God.

“for which I was appointed a preacher and an Apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—*a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth*” (1st Timothy 2:7 NKJV). Paul was not speaking of teaching non-believing Gentiles, but Gentile Christians.

Again...“to which I was appointed a preacher, an Apostle, and *a teacher of the Gentiles*.” (2nd Timothy 1:11 NKJV)<sup>37</sup>

No one in the New Testament speak of any Gentile being a Jew. The teaching that Christian Gentiles are now Jews (or Hebrews) is false.

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<sup>37</sup> This article was revised on Tuesday, November 16, 2021.