

“And he said to me, It is a great thing for thee to be called my servant, to establish the tribes of Jacob, and to recover the dispersion of Israel: behold, I have given thee for the covenant of a race, for a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation to the end of the earth.”

(Isaiah 49:6)

Light Of The Gentiles



The definition of “exclusivity” is as follows:

noun

1 the practice of excluding or not admitting other things: these banks maintain their exclusivity by setting minimum entry standards | the event was criticized for its gender exclusivity.

- the inability to exist or be true if something else exists or is true: those that maintain exclusivity of religion—that is, one particular religion is the only true religion.

2 restriction to a particular person, group, or area: those inside the circle cultivate an air of exclusivity | [as modifier] : we have exclusivity agreements with companies.

- the fact of an item or story not being published or broadcast elsewhere: there is no sense in us sharing coverage, and we would insist on exclusivity | agents and publishers can demand exclusivity.

Moses told the Israelites in Deuteronomy 14: 2:

“For thou art a holy people to the Lord thy God, and the Lord thy God has chosen thee to be a peculiar people to himself of all the nations on the face of the earth.”

A very exclusive chosen group of people;

There are two questions we need to ask. One, why were they chosen, and possibly even more importantly what were they chosen to do?

To answer the first question we have to go back to their illustrious forefather, the patriarch Abraham, whom many Bible scholars and teachers refer to as “the father of faith”.

“And the Lord said to Abram, Go forth out of thy land and out of thy kindred, and out of the house of thy father, and come into the land which I will shew thee. And I will make thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and magnify thy name, and thou shalt be blessed. And I will bless those that bless thee, and curse those that curse thee.

Genesis 12:1-3

“In that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, To thy seed I will give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates.” Genesis 15:18

“And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and I will multiply thee exceedingly.” Genesis 17:2

“And I, behold! my covenant is with thee.” Genesis 17:4

“But Abram shall become a great and populous nation. Genesis 18:18

“And an angel of the Lord called Abram the second time out of heaven, saying, I have sworn by myself, says the Lord, because thou hast done this thing, and on my account hast not spared thy beloved son, surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is by the shore of the sea, and thy seed shall inherit the cities of their enemies. Genesis 22:15-17

“And I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven; and I will give to thy seed all this land.” Genesis 26:4

“And thy seed shall be as the sand of the earth; and it shall spread abroad to the sea, and the south, and the north, and to the east.” Genesis 28:14

Examining the above verses it is clear that the promises God made to the Israelites centered around Abraham and his righteousness in obeying God by faith.

“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten [son,] Accounting that God [was] able to raise [him] up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him (Jesus) in a figure.” Hebrews 11:17,19

Were the Israelites, especially during the time of the prophets, blessed because of their righteousness and emulation of the early patriarchs?

If you are familiar with some of the Old Testaments most notable prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, you would certainly come to see this was not the case at all.

A poignant example of this can be found in Ezekiel, chapter eight.

“And he stretched forth the likeness of a hand, and took me by the crown of my head; and the Spirit lifted me up between the earth and sky, and brought me to Jerusalem in a vision of God, to the porch of the gate that looks to the north, where was the pillar of the Purchaser. So I went in and looked; and beheld vain abominations, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon them round about. And he brought me in to the porch of the house of the Lord that looks to the north; and, behold there were women sitting there lamenting for Thammuz. (Thammuz was the Sumerian god of life, death, and rebirth.) And he brought me into the inner court of the house of the Lord, and at the entrance of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty men, with their back parts toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces turned the opposite way; and these were worshipping the sun.” Ezekiel 8:3,14,16

This so grieved God that in chapter ten of Ezekiel it says:

“Then the glory of the Lord departed from the cherubs to the porch of the house; and the cloud filled the house, and the court was filled with the brightness of the glory of the Lord. And the sound of the cherubs’ wings was heard as far as the outer court, as the voice of the Almighty God speaking. Then the glory of the Lord departed from the house, and went up on the cherubs.

And the cherubs lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight: when they went forth, the wheels were also beside them, and they stood at the entrance of the front gate of the house of the Lord; and the glory of the God of Israel was upon them above.” V4-5,18-19

Then in Ezekiel 11 we are told:

“And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood on the mountain which was in front of the city.” V23

This was approximately eight years before Jerusalem was destroyed by Babylon. The Ark of the Covenant and the Shekinah Glory are not seen again in the Temple. What is commonly known as the Second Temple, Herod's Temple, never harbored the Ark of the Covenant. The priests used to hit the

floor where it would have stood.

To this day no one knows where the Ark is unless you happen to read II Maccabees 2:4-8:

“It was also contained in the same writing, that the prophet, being warned of God, commanded the tabernacle and the ark to go with him, as he went forth into the mountain, where Moses climbed up, and saw the heritage of God. And when Jeremy came thither, he found an hollow cave, wherein he laid the tabernacle, and the ark, and the altar of incense, and so stopped the door.

And some of those that followed him came to mark the way, but they could not find it. Which when Jeremy perceived, he blamed them, saying, As for that place, it shall be unknown until the time that God gather his people again together, and receive them unto mercy. Then shall the Lord shew them these things, and the glory of the Lord shall appear, and the cloud also, as it was shewed under Moses, and as when Solomon desired that the place might be honourably sanctified.”

Of course in the same books of the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, God not only offered condemnation and judgement, but also hope of redemption.

Why would God offer any hope to the people of Israel when they had sinned so terribly by falling into such idolatry and gone a “whoring” after other gods?

We read of two major reasons, maybe even more, why God offered some type of redemption after such grievous sins.

One can be found in Genesis 26:24:

“And the Lord appeared to him in that night, and said, I am the God of Abram thy father; fear not, for I am with thee, and **I will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for the sake of Abram thy father.**”

This was spoken to Isaac. Put simply, it was because of the promises God had made to Abraham and not because of any righteousness the Israelites may have displayed.

A second major reason can be shown in Ezekiel 36:22:

“Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord; **I do not this, O house of Israel, for your sakes, but because of my holy name**, which ye have profaned among the nations, among whom ye went.”

“I, even I, am he that blots out thy transgressions for mine own sake. Isaiah 43:25
For mine own sake I will do this for thee.” Isaiah 48:11

“Our sins have risen up against us: O Lord, do thou for us **for thine own sake**; for our sins are many before thee; for we have sinned against thee.” Jeremiah 14:7

“Yet he saved them for his name’s sake, that he might cause his mighty power to be known.” Psalm 106:8 (See also Psalms 23:3, 31:3, 79:9, 109:21, and 143:11)

God had to somehow fulfill His Word lest it would seem to appear amongst the gentiles that either His Word was not true or that He had lied.

“God is not as man to waver, nor as the son of man to be threatened; shall he say and not perform? shall he speak and not keep to his word?” Numbers 23:19

“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.” Titus 1:2

“That by two immutable things, in which [it was] impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.” Hebrews 6:18

Which brings us to our second major point, what where they chosen to do?

We purposely left off the endings of some of the verses concerning Abraham as well as some of the subsequent verses.

We’ll cover those now.

“and in thee shall **all the tribes of the earth** be blessed.” Genesis 12:3

“I have made thee a father of **many nations**.” Genesis 17:5

“and in him shall all the nations of the earth be blest.” Genesis 18:18

“And in thy seed shall **all the nations of the earth be blessed**, because thou hast hearkened to my voice.” 22:18

and **all the nations of the earth shall be blest** in thy seed.” 26:4

and in thee and in thy seed shall **all the tribes of the earth be blessed**.” 28:14

This is a promise of God, that not just Israel, but every nation on earth would be blessed because of Abraham's faithfulness.

How were they to be blessed? By coming to the knowledge of the living God.

Israel were God's chosen people to bring this knowledge to the gentiles. They were supposed to proselyte the gentiles. In other words be God's witnesses of His truth.

Unfortunately, often the conversion of the ancient Israelites, was reversed with the Israelites going after the gods of the gentiles.

Here are some verses concerning this matter if witnessing to the gentiles from some of the Old Testaments most venerated prophets.

Isaiah

“**And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall arise to rule over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust**, and his rest shall be glorious.” 11:10

“And he said to me, It is a great thing for thee to be called my servant, to establish the tribes of Jacob, and to recover the dispersion of Israel: behold, **I have given thee for the covenant of a race, for a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation to the end of the earth**.” 49:6

“And the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and they shall rest on their land: and **the stranger shall be added to them, yea, shall be added to the house of Jacob**.” 14:1

“I the Lord God have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will strengthen thee: and **I have given thee for the covenant of a race, for a light of the Gentiles**.” 42:6

“Hear me, hear me, my people; and ye kings, hearken to me: for a law shall proceed from me, and **my judgment shall be for a light of the nations**. My righteousness speedily draws nigh, and **my salvation shall go forth as light, and on mine arm shall the Gentiles trust**: the isles shall wait for me, and on mine arm shall they trust.” 51:4-5

“Behold, **strangers shall come to thee by me, and shall sojourn with thee, and shall run to thee for refuge**.” 54:15

“Give heed with your ears, and follow my ways: hearken to me, and your soul shall live in prosperity; and **I will make with you an everlasting covenant, the sure mercies of David. Behold I have made him a testimony among the Gentiles, a prince and commander to the Gentiles**.” 55:3-5

“**And I will give it to the strangers that attach themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be to him servants and handmaids; and as for all that keep my sabbaths from profaning them, and that take hold of my covenant; I will bring them to my holy mountain, and gladden them in my house of prayer: their whole-burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be acceptable upon mine altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations**.” 56:6-7

“Go through my gates, and make a way for my people; and cast the stones out of the way; **lift up a standard for the Gentiles**.” 62:10

Jeremiah

“For if ye thoroughly correct your ways and your practices, and do indeed execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; and **oppress not the stranger**, and the

orphan, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, and go not after strange gods to your hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land which I gave to your fathers of old and for ever.” 7:5-7

“And it shall be, if they will indeed learn the way of my people, to swear by my name, saying, The Lord lives; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; **then shall that nation be built in the midst of my people.**” 12:16

“O Lord, thou art my strength, and mine help, and my refuge in days of evil: **to thee the Gentiles shall come from the end of the earth**, and shall say, How vain were the idols which our fathers procured to themselves, and there is no help in them. Will a man make gods for himself, whereas these are no gods? Therefore, behold, **I will at this time manifest my hand to them, and will make known to them my power; and they shall know that my name is the Lord.**” 16:19-21

“**And it shall be for joy and praise, and for glory to all the people of the earth**, who shall hear all the good that I will do: and they shall fear and be provoked for all the good things and for all the peace which I will bring upon them.” 40:9

“And the chief captain of the guard took him, and said to him, **The Lord thy God has pronounced all these evils upon this place: and the Lord has done it; because ye sinned against him, and hearkened not to his voice.**” 47:2-3

“**And kings shall walk in thy light, and nations in thy brightness.**” 60:3

Ezekiel

“And I gave them my sabbaths, that they should be **for a sign** between me and them, that they should know that I am the Lord that sanctify them. and hallow my sabbaths, and **let them be a sign** between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.” 20:12, 20

“In thee they have reviled father and mother; and in thee **they have behaved unjustly toward the stranger**: they have oppressed the orphan and widow. That sorely oppress the people of the land with injustice, and commit robbery; oppressing the poor and needy, and **not dealing justly with the stranger.**” 22:7, 29

Moses even mentions in the book of Deuteronomy that the seed of Esau who lost his birthright to Jacob were the brothers of the Israelites.

“Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, because he is thy brother; thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian, because thou wast a stranger in his land. If sons be born to them, in the third generation they shall enter into the assembly of the Lord.” Deuteronomy 14:7-8

Job was an Edomite.

“And Job lived after his affliction a hundred and seventy years: and all the years he lived were two hundred and forty: and Job saw his sons and his sons’ sons, the fourth generation. And Job died, an old man and full of days: and it is written that he will rise again with those whom the Lord raises up.

This man is described in the Syriac book as living in the land of Ausis, on the borders of Idumea and Arabia: and his name before was Jobab; and having taken an Arabian wife, he begot a son whose name was Ennon. And he himself was the son of his father Zare, one of the sons of Esau, and of his mother Bosorrha, so that he was the fifth from Abraam. And these were the kings who reigned in Edom, which country he also ruled over.” Job 42:16-17

Paul then administers the “coup de grace” on exclusivity when he said:

“For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither [is that] circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he [is] a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision [is that] of the heart, in the spirit, [and] not in the letter; whose praise [is] not of men, but of God.

What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit [is there] of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. Romans 3:1-2

It should be noted here that there is a world of difference comparing what the Tanakh, the Old Testament, and what the Talmud teaches concerning this issue of the stranger and the gentiles. The great majority, not all, of religious Jews in the world today place far greater importance on the Talmud than on the Old Testament.

The Talmud consists of the so called oral traditions of Moses. It can be very easily proven from just two verses in the Old Testament that there was no oral traditions of Moses.

“And afterwards Joshua read accordingly all the words of this law, the blessings and the curses, according to all things written in the law of Moses. There was not a word of all that Moses charged Joshua, which Joshua read not in the ears of all men, and the women, and the children of Israel, and the strangers that joined themselves to Israel.” Joshua 9:34-35 the Septuagint

“And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.” Joshua 8:34-35 KJV

If interested do some research on the Talmud. This may perhaps help to explain some of the problems in the mid-east today.

“And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following thee; for whithersoever thou goest, I will go, and wheresoever thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.” Ruth 1:16

In summary: Why were they chosen, because of their illustrious forefathers the patriarchs, in particular Abraham. And what were they chosen to do, to be a witness to the world of the truth of the living God.

Did they succeed? You can decide.

All Old Testament verses are quoted from the Septuagint unless otherwise noted.

“But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past [were] not a people, but [are] now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.” 1 Peter 2:9-10

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