

FROM
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THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN

Jews,
Gentiles
and Christians

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The Difference Between JEWS, GENTILES, AND CHRISTIANS

One of the causes of confusion in the minds of the Jews regarding Christianity is their failure to understand the three God-given divisions of people in the world. There are many divisions from a human standpoint, such as race, nationality, party and religious belief, but in the mind of God there are but three great divisions which ignore all other distinctions, and these are Jews, Gentiles, and Christians or the true church of God. (1 Corinthians 10:32).

Their relationship to God makes these distinctions. Before Abraham all people were Gentiles. Abraham being the father of the Jews. From the time of Abraham to that of Christ there were only two divi-

sions, Gentiles and Jews. From the resurrection and ascension of Jesus the Messiah to the present time there have been three of these divisions, Gentiles, Jews and Christians.

WHO ARE THE GENTILES?

The great majority of the human race are Gentiles, whether civilized or savage, ignorant or learned. They may be very religious, according to their ideas of God and ways of worshiping Him, or they may seem to have no religion. And though they like to identify themselves with the people of God, yet they do not enter into covenant relationship with God. Thus the "mixed multitude" which came out of Egypt with the children of Israel were **with** Israel but not **of** Israel (Exodus 12:38), and they became a stumbling-block to Israel (Numbers 11:4). At the present

time Gentiles like to identify themselves with the church and call themselves Christians, but instead of submitting themselves to the Word of God they follow the teachings of men, such as popes and other religious leaders. It is this "mixed multitude" in the churches to-day that causes strife, worldliness and persecution. Sometimes they gain high positions in some churches, yet in God's sight they are nothing but Gentiles and hypocrites. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

Gentiles are not in covenant relationship with God. Therefore being strangers to the covenants of promise, they were foreigners to the Jews. God made promises to the Gentiles, but they never en-

tered into any definite agreement with Him. For example, God made an everlasting covenant promise of redemption to Adam and Eve in the promised seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15). He later established this covenant to Noah and gave additional promises (Genesis 9). But the covenant was all one-sided—an expression of God's attitude toward man. All idolators, unbelievers in the true God and such as have not entered into covenant relationship with Him are Gentiles, no matter what their race, color, nationality, education or professed religion may be.

WHO ARE THE JEWS?

The Jewish nation originated in Abraham. God called Abraham out from His own people to establish a righteous nation through which He could reveal Himself to the whole world. They were to be the writers and preservers of the Holy Scrip-

tures, the channel for the incoming of the promised Messiah and a witness among all nations or Gentiles to the true God. God promised to give them the land of Palestine for an everlasting possession. Abraham entered into covenant relationship with God and received circumcision as the token of that covenant (Genesis 17:11). Thus through Abraham all his descendants who receive the token of circumcision are in covenant relationship with God for an earthly kingdom, earthly glory and an earthly possession.

About 500 years after Abraham the Jewish people as a nation entered into further covenant relationship with God through Moses. In this covenant God promised to make them a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, a peculiar treasure above all other people in the earth (Exodus 19:5, 6). But the blessings of this

second covenant to Israel were conditioned upon their obedience to the voice of God. As a sign or token of this covenant God gave Israel the seventh-day Sabbath (Exodus 31:16, 17), which represents a dispensation of law. All Israel entered heartily into this covenant and promised to obey (Exodus 19:8). But we only need to look upon the pages of history to see how much they have failed to keep this covenant, even ignoring the token of the covenant. And as a result of their failure the covenant is broken (Jeremiah 31:32), and the Jews are under the curse of God, and have nothing to expect from the Mosaic covenant but condemnation for their sins; for it is written—“Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them” (Deuteronomy 27:26).

But you may ask: How then are the

Jews of to-day in covenant relationship with God if they have broken the covenant which God made with them through Moses? Only through Abraham. And this Abrahamic covenant affords only an earthly kingdom and blessings to those who are living when Christ returns and sets up His kingdom on earth. Spiritual blessings and the forgiveness of sins depend, as they always have, upon atoning blood (Leviticus 17:11).

WHO ARE CHRISTIANS?

They are the true church of God. Through whom and how are they in covenant relationship with God? First let us repeat, there are multitudes of Gentiles who hold membership in churches, call themselves Christians, and may really believe that they are Christians, who have never entered into covenant relationship

with God. Baptism or church membership does not make a Christian.

But let us look at the true Christian—what is his relationship to God? The true Christian has a threefold relationship with God—a covenant relationship by repentance from sin and acceptance of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, who is the Mediator of the new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-33); second, a vital relationship by his union and identification with Christ Jesus, his representative and living Head; and third, a spiritual relationship by the impartation of the divine nature and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Let us consider this threefold relationship more closely. God called out the Jewish people to establish a righteous nation, ready to receive and share in the kingdom of the Messiah. But they turned to sin and unbelief to such an extent that

their understanding was darkened and their eyes blinded, as predicted in Isaiah 6:9, 10; 29:10-14; Jeremiah 5:20, 21; Ezekiel 12:2; so that they did not know the Messiah when He did come and therefore rejected Him. From their rejection of the Messiah to the present time God is calling out individuals from among Jews and Gentiles as volunteers to form the nucleus of a righteous kingdom who will serve His as kings and priests unto God (Rev. 5:10). No one is forced into this relationship nor brought into it except by the individual's voluntary will to turn from sin and accept Jesus Christ as his Saviour and Lord. Even children of Christian parents are not Christians until they of their own free will choose to enter into this covenant relationship with God. The token of this covenant is the baptism of the believer.

The second relationship of the Christian to God lies in his identification with Christ. (The word "Christ" is the same as "Messiah" and both words mean "Anointed One".) It would require too much space to describe this identification. But suffice it to say that as he accepts Christ's sacrificial death in his stead for his sins he is united with Christ in His death, resurrection and divine life and becomes a joint heir of Jesus Christ in His relation to God the Father and the coming glory of the Messianic kingdom.

And lastly this relationship of the Christian to God is intensified by the agency of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit takes the surrendered believer who is cleansed from sins by the blood of Jesus Christ and imparts to him a new nature which is divine in character and thereby transforms his life. The Christian is a

new creature (1 Corinthians 5:17) and possesses a divine nature (2 Peter 1:4) which gives him victory over sin if he be fully yielded to the Spirit's voice. This phase of the Christian's relationship to God is also so deep, that it cannot be explained in so small a space.

There is an important difference between the blessings of Israel and the blessings of the church. Israel's blessings will be found in her earthly citizenship, such as earthly greatness, riches and power, while the blessings of the church are found in her heavenly citizenship (Phillipians 3:20, R. V.), such as fellowship with God, righteousness in Christ and joy and peace in the Holy Spirit. In the present life the Christian must expect tribulation and persecution from the world (John 16:33), but glory is assured in the kingdom of Christ.

The Gentiles have a racial standing before God, and because of the sin of Adam, their representative head, they are under the sentence of death. The Jews have a national standing before God, and because of the faith of Abraham, their national head, they will be preserved as a nation, but they are under condemnation for sin owing to their failure to keep the Mosaic law or covenant in all points. The Christians have an individual standing before God, and because of what Christ is, their representative Head, there is therefore no condemnation to them (Romans 8:1). Without Christ both Jews and Gentiles are guilty before God, but in Christ they are redeemed and united in one body, "the middle wall of partition" being broken down (Ephesians 2:14). The Lord Messiah Jesus is God's remedy

for all of the earth's ills.

Now dear Jewish reader, what is **your** relationship to God? Are your hopes resting in the fact that you are descendant of Abraham and are you trusting in the Mosaic covenant for righteousness? Let me tell you in all sincerity and love that your hopes are hanging on a broken chain which will let you fall into the bottomless pit of hell. The Mosaic covenant is broken and its laws only condemn you "to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2). You are under its curse, as it is written, "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them" (Deuteronomy 27:26). Or are you trusting in the Abrahamic covenant? If so, are you sure you will live until Jesus Christ returns to reestablish Israel? Even if you live until Christ returns, you must accept Him then if you will enter into the promised

blessings of Abraham. Why not accept Him **now** and enjoy all the blessings which God has in store for them that love Him? Only through the sacrificial death of Christ (Isaiah 53) and His present work as High Priest can we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins, fellowship with God and joy and peace forevermore.

Tear off and post to address below :

To **BIBLICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY**
361 KOORYONG RD., ELSTERNWICK, S.4.,
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Please send me a Free Copy of The New Testament referred to in Tenach (Jeremiah 31:31-33).

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