

# Does God love Jews especially?

As in the early church, there is a growing problem with believers centring their Christian lives on Israel and all things Jewish. This is a deception to distract people from focusing upon Christ and in many cases it is a deception leading to deep delusion and heresy. There are various cultic movements using this ploy, such as: the disparate Jewish Root Movement containing many varieties of emphasis, political Zionism and those who support national Israel. Then there are radical Jewish sects, such as Noahidism, and finally there are well-meaning folk who just pray for Israel and get too preoccupied with Jewishness. The latter may just be a distraction, but the others are true deceptions. It is noticeable that many women fall for these errors.

One of the reasons for falling into these errors is the belief that God especially favours Israel and Jews in general; indeed, most would say that God's chosen people is Israel and the church is only blessed as an afterthought. This is the teaching of Dispensationalism and it is no wonder that many are badly affected by this error since Dispensationalism is so widespread.

So it is crucial to find what the Bible says about God's thoughts on Jews in general and Israel in particular. Now a detailed examination of the tenets of Dispensationalism and a rebuttal of all the various aspects of Jewish Root doctrine can be found in my book, '*The Veil of Moses*'; but here we are just looking at this one aspect – does God love Jews more than anyone else? For information on the early church's battles against a focus on Judaism see my paper, '*The twin problems affecting the early church*' – an antidote to the lies of Jewish Root teachers who distort history to support their case.

## Whom does God love?

The first question to be answered is whom does God really love?

The answer to this is simple; God only loves Christ, his only begotten Son. God cannot love ordinary men since they are all sinners, indulging in wickedness, and are under his curse from Eden. No man in sin can be loved by God. The only man who can be loved is the Son in whom there is manhood but not sin. Now Christ is the firstborn of a new creation of men who are united in him by the Spirit. They died and were raised in him and are born again as a new creation of men. These are also loved by God from eternity since they were elected to be placed into Christ and redeemed. Thus God only loves the elect because they are separated from iniquity by the atonement of Christ.

And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' Matt 3:17

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Rm 8:29

to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect. Heb 12:23

He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. Eph 1:4-5

The rest of mankind are lost in sin, rejected and hated by God. Multitudes of Scriptures testify to this but it is a doctrine not liked by modern people - but it is the truth. Only the elect are loved by God, who loved them fully and perfectly from eternity.

**You hate all workers of iniquity. You shall destroy those who speak falsehood; the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man. Ps 5:5-6**

**The LORD tests the righteous, but the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates. Upon the wicked He will rain coals; fire and brimstone and a burning wind *shall be* the portion of their cup. Ps 11:5-6**

**As it is written, 'Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.' Rm 9:13**

Reprobates are those whom God passes by in election, those who are doomed to destruction,

**God, wanting to show *His* wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction. Rm 9:22**

Reprobates are always hardened by the preaching of the Gospel. The Gospel is a two-edged sword; it brings life and faith to the elect but hardens the reprobate in their sins.

**Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens. Rm 9:18**

Scripture shows us that Jews (as well as Gentiles) are in this group of reprobates.

**And he [Paul] went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God. But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. Acts 19:8-9**

If someone is hardened by the Gospel then they are reprobate. These Jews were not only hardened but spoke evil of Christianity and sought to incite the crowds against Paul (which they did in most cities by the way). So, if Jews are amongst the reprobate, then they cannot be a nation beloved by God, they cannot be God's special people; they are just like any others. In fact, both Jesus and the apostles singled the Jews out as being particularly offended by Christ and the cross. It was the Jews who became the chief enemies of the Lord and the apostles. Peter also shows that those Jews who were offended by the cross are reprobate and appointed to hell.

**Therefore, to you who believe, *He is* precious; but to those who are disobedient, 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone,' and 'A stone of stumbling And a rock of offence.' They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. 1 Pt 2:7-8**

Thus Jews who are elect are loved in the same way that Gentiles who are elect are loved by God. God does not love Jews who are not elect.

God's people are called 'the church' that is the *ekklesia*, the body of people called out of the world. In this church there are Jews and Gentiles and both are equal under God. Not one or the other has special privileges; all are sons of God equally. There is only one body of saved people, the elect who are united with Christ and spiritually made to be his body on earth.

**For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body -- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free -- and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 1 Cor 12:13**

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Gal 3:28

There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, but Christ *is* all and in all. Col 3:11

Indeed, when people are saved they cease to be a member of the ordinary human race and shed their old allegiances and culture; they are new creations in Christ and are citizens of a heavenly kingdom not an earthly one. No earthly kingdom (including Israel) has any allegiance for them at all, other than the requirement to be law-abiding citizens where they live.

Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 2 Cor 5:17

Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.' Jn 18:36

They [OT saints] desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. Heb 11:16

**First conclusion:** God does not love Jews because they are Jews but only loves the elect because they are chosen to be united to Christ, the beloved Son. Thus all the elect become God's sons, in time, when they are converted; Jews and Gentiles equally. God does not favour any earthly nation, whether Israel or any other; his kingdom is spiritual.

## **God's interests are no longer with earthly nations but with the church in Christ**

### **Israel was a symbol to illustrate grace**

God chose Israel as an object lesson for his purposes under the Old Covenant.

Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea ... But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.' Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 1 Cor 10:1-11

'Examples' here means 'figures' or 'types' serving as an illustration of a truth. Israel's history was filled with figurative symbolism of all sorts in order to illustrate great doctrines and its history showed what God wanted in a righteous walk. Thus the Levitical worship system was replete with symbolic object lessons, all centred upon Christ as God's priest, sacrifice and dwelling place. Israel's greatest kings (David and Solomon) represented Christ as God's king over all and the Jewish kingdom was the people of God in submitted

obedience to him. The root of Israel, the calling of Abraham, was the foundation of the Gospel being based upon heavenly calling and justification by faith. We could go on.

A historical survey shows us that, despite the massive privileges, blessings, signs and wonders, Israel repeatedly turned from God and committed spiritual adultery, that is, turned to idolatry in religion and foreign alliances in politics. The apostles use Israel's history as a warning to believers not to apostatise as Israel did (e.g. Heb 3:14-4:1-11). Throughout Israel's history only a relative few people were saved as a remnant; this constituted the church in the Old Testament. Then, as now, only the elect truly knew God and faithfully served him. Though Israel was privileged by God in many ways, only a remnant were true Jews or true Israelites.

### **The Old Covenant was temporary and ceased at the cross**

The Old Covenant, being based upon Mosaic Law, was a temporary measure to demonstrate that no man can save himself or even obey the law perfectly. The law magnified sin and pointed to the need of a deliverer from God.

What purpose then *does* the law *serve*? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made. Gal 3:19

Sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful. Rm 7:13

The Mosaic Law was only until the promised Seed of Abraham should come and inherit all God's promises given to the righteous man. When he came it would be the Last Days, an entirely new dispensation of grace not law, of spirit not materialism, of the church not Israel.

For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. Jn 1:17

In these Last Days all the ministrations of the Old Covenant have passed away and the ministry of the Spirit of Christ in the New Covenant has begun,

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds. Heb 1:1-2

'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh. ... Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. ... This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.' ... Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.' Acts 2:17, 32-39

Thus the distinctive role of OT prophets ceased with John the Baptist, as with all Jewish institutions.

Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. Matt 11:11-13

Note that both the Mosaic Law and OT prophecy finished with John. Grace came after this with Christ. God cancelled all the forms of Mosaic Law at the cross and ensured that Israel could not continue in it by destroying the temple through the instrumentation of the

Romans in 70AD. With no temple there could be no sacrifices. [This is why the Pharisees constructed a completely fleshy and man-made religious system (rabbinic Judaism) summarised in the Babylonian Talmud, which is the basis of modern Judaism. Note this: modern rabbinic Judaism has little or nothing to do with the Judaism of Scripture. The Torah is of little value to modern Jews in comparison with the evil document known as the Talmud, a document which is perverse and blasphemous to the extreme.]

For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, He says: 'Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.' Heb 8:7-8

In that He says, 'A new *covenant*,' He has made the first obsolete [i.e. the Mosaic Law]. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. Heb 8:13 [Written just before it vanished with the destruction of Jerusalem.]

Under the Old Covenant salvation was only known in Israel (Deut 4:32-34, 7:6-8, 10:15; Ps 147:19-20; Isa 54:1-3; Acts 14:16; Eph 2:12) and only Gentiles who proselytised (became as Jews) could be saved. Even within Israel only a few people knew the ministry of the Spirit, and even then only for short periods for a specific task (such as Bezalel to make the Tabernacle). However, under the New Covenant all that has passed away and salvation is now offered universally to all nations in order for God's elect from all nations to be saved. Every saved believer knows the ministry of the Holy Spirit who indwells them permanently, something unknown under the Old Covenant. The New Covenant began with Jews and continued with Gentiles as the history of Acts reveals.

And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. Acts 10:45

Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. Acts 11:1

Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life. Acts 11:18

### **Even under the Old Covenant, only the elect were saved**

The reason God chose Israel was because she was the smallest of nations (Deut 7:6-8) and God wanted to demonstrate that what is weak in the world with no power becomes glorious when God dwells within. In this is an obvious illustration of God's grace in the believer. There was nothing inherent within Israel that warranted this choice. Even though God set his love on Israel in calling her out from the nations, only those who were elect in Israel were saved. God did not save all Israelites; indeed the vast majority were lost. Over and over the prophets state that God only saved a small remnant from Israel. The elect alone were given faith to believe in God's coming deliverer and they manifested that faith in turning from iniquity.

'The Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,' Says the LORD. Isa 59:20

For the LORD will again rejoice over you for good as He rejoiced over your fathers, if you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law, *and* if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Deut 30:9-10

'Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways,' says the Lord GOD. 'Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit.' Ezek 18:30-31

Unless the LORD of hosts Had left to us a very small remnant, We would have become like Sodom, We would have been made like Gomorrah. Isa 1:9

In that day the LORD of hosts will be for a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty to the remnant of His people. Isa 28:5

Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them, and say, 'O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD!' Thus says the Lord GOD to the mountains, to the hills, to the ravines, and to the valleys: "Indeed I, *even* I, will bring a sword against you, and I will destroy your high places. Then your altars shall be desolate, your incense altars shall be broken, and I will cast down your slain *men* before your idols. And I will lay the corpses of the children of Israel before their idols, and I will scatter your bones all around your altars. In all your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate, so that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, your idols may be broken and made to cease, your incense altars may be cut down, and your works may be abolished. The slain shall fall in your midst, and you shall know that I *am* the LORD. Yet I will leave a remnant. Ezek 6:1-8

### **The nation of Israel, as part of the Old Covenant, ceased to be a representative of God after the cross.**

Jesus formally states this in Matthew 21:43:

Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.

The parable of the vineyard preceding this statement is a snapshot of Israel's history of rebellion against God. It is a terrible indictment of Israel ending in the condemnation of verse 41 for killing the Son, 'He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons.' The other vinedressers are the Gentiles.

Jesus condemnation of Israel's continual rebellion is not only repeated in several other parables and direct speech, but is taken up by the apostles and others. Stephen's sermon in Acts 7 is a remarkable summation of Israel's wicked history, culminating in condemnation for killing the Messiah.

Israel was not only removed from being God's kingdom but was utterly condemned as well. This is repeated in Scripture over and over again. The repeated denunciations of the prophets in the OT are continued in the condemnations of Jesus and the apostles.

The centurion answered and said, 'Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this *one*, "Go," and he goes; and to another, "Come," and he comes; and to my servant, "Do this," and he does *it*. When Jesus heard *it*, He marvelled, and said to those who followed, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matt 8:8-12

As Jesus compliments the faith of a Roman centurion, he not only says that he did not find such faith in Israel (where he should have found it) but he condemns the sons of the

kingdom of Israel to hell. Only those who had the same faith as the centurion would escape this condemnation.

Only a blind person could consider that the kingdom of God still rests in Jewish hands. Israel forfeited the kingdom by disobedience, a disobedience that led to the cross. This was in God's plan to make the kingdom universal and not restricted to a fleshly nation. The kingdom is no longer material, political or earthly, it is spiritual and heavenly – thus it cannot belong to Israel in any shape or form.

Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.'  
Jn 18:36

Abraham and the OT saints looked towards a heavenly inheritance and a spiritual city in the future, but believers have the foretaste of this in the Spirit now. However, those who make Israel the kingdom, or seek a millennial Jewish kingdom, have less faith than Abraham who never saw the kingdom (inheritance) as being materialistic.

But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. Heb 11:16

The church does not focus upon a materialistic, earthly Jerusalem at all, but what the OT Jerusalem symbolised – a heavenly city, the kingdom of God.

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven. Heb 12: 22-23

Those who centre upon materialism sin against God who demands that they set their sight upon spiritual matters, not the earth.

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Col 3:1-3

If we died to earthly things, then we also died to nationhood, race and earthly politics, and that includes national Israel. I say again, to focus your spiritual life upon Israel and Jewishness is to disobey God.

### **Israel is part of the world that God hates**

God's anger is set against the world that is full of sin. The world is at enmity with God and under God's curse. Only that which escapes the world by regeneration can be loved by God. Therefore, Christians must follow their Father and not love the world or anything in it; this includes Israel and Jewish culture.

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Jm 4:4

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world -- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life -- is not of the Father but is of the world. 1 Jn 2:15-16

We are not to love things of the world, and that includes national Israel.

Furthermore, the whole world is controlled by God's enemy, Satan,  
The whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. 1 Jn 5:19

Thus all the nations on earth are controlled by Satan, and this includes Israel. God has no interests in what is on the earth except for judgment and justice. Only that which is spiritual, which has escaped the world, which has been redeemed and re-created, is acceptable in God's eyes.

### **Second conclusion**

Israel as a nation is no longer the representative of God on the earth. This only applied to the Old Covenant, as an object lesson of the church, which is now cancelled and obsolete. Under the New Covenant the church, comprising of people from all nations, is the ambassador of God and the body of Christ.

## **Scripture shows us that the chief enemies of the cross were Jews**

If this is the case, then these people cannot be considered to be loved by God at all. Those who are the enemies of God cannot be the people of God.

### **It was Jews who continually persecuted the OT church (the prophets)**

Over and over again the Jews were accused by Christ and the apostles of killing the prophets. This shows that the killing of Christ and the persecution of the early church were on a par with the killing of Old Testament saints. Jesus most effectively describes this in the parable of the vineyard (Lk 20:8-19) which ought to be read carefully.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate. Matt 23:37-38

For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judaeans, who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men. Acts 7:14-15

### **The enemies of Christ were Jews**

John's Gospel makes a significant point by the term 'the Jews'. The term is only used for the enemies of Christ, for those in opposition to the Gospel. When John wants to talk of people seeking the truth and following Christ he calls them, 'the people', even though these were Jews. So for John, the last writing apostle, Jews had become symbolic of opposition to Christ.

For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath ... Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. Jn 5:16-18

The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, 'I am the bread which came down from heaven.' Jn 6:41

After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judaea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. Jn 7:1

Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jn 10:31

When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. Jn 6:24



And many of the people believed in Him, and said, 'When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?' Jn 7:31

However, even amongst the Jewish opposition, some found repentance,  
Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.' Jn 8:31

Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him.  
Jn 11:45

### **Jews were responsible for Christ's death**

Jewish Root apologists weave all sorts of sophistry to remove this condemnation, but their efforts are pointless. There is no escaping the clear word of Scripture that it was Jews who killed Christ not Romans. Roman soldiers may have carried out the deed, but Christ prayed for them because they did it in ignorance, However, Christ utterly condemned those Jews who incited the execution.

The Jews themselves brought a curse on their heads by willingly accepting that Christ's blood was their responsibility.

And all the people answered and said, 'His blood *be* on us and on our children.' Matt 27:25

Stephen, in his final sermon, accused the Jews of not only killing the prophets, but of killing the Messiah and called them murderers to their faces. He was not addressing Romans but Jews.

Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers. Acts 7:52

Paul also made it clear that it was Jews who killed Christ as they killed the prophets,  
For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judaeans, who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men. 1 Thess 2:14-15

There is no doubt! It is the testimony of the Gospel, of Stephen in the Acts and Paul in the letters that the Jews were responsible for Christ's death.

### **Christ prophesied that the Jews would persecute the church like they persecuted the prophets**

Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' *guilt*. Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: *some* of them you will kill and crucify, and *some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. Matt 23:31-36

### **Acts shows that it was Jews who constantly stirred up animosity against the apostles**

In fact most of Acts is one long saga of the animosity of the Jews against the church beginning with attacks on Peter and John and ending in the trials of Paul.

- Arrest of Peter and John, Acts 4:1-22
- Arrest of apostles, Acts 5:17-20

- Arrest of apostles, Acts 5:27-40
- Trial and execution of Stephen, Acts 6:9-7:60
- Saul's persecution of the church, Acts 8:1; 9:1-2
- Jews plotted against Paul, Acts 9:23
- Jews tried to kill Paul, Acts 9:29
- Execution of James by Herod pleases the Jews, Acts 12:1-2
- Arrest of Peter, Acts 12:3-10
- Opposition of Elymas (a Jewish false prophet), Acts 13:6-8
- Opposition and persecution of Paul by Jews at Pisidian Antioch, Acts 13:45-50
- Opposition at Iconium, Acts 14:1-2, 5
- Persecution at Lystra, Acts 14:19
- Persecution at Thessalonica, Acts 17:5-9
- Persecution at Berea, Acts 17:13
- Persecution at Corinth, Acts 18:12-17
- Opposition at Ephesus, Acts 19:9
- Plot in Greece, Acts 20:3
- Persecution in Jerusalem, Acts 21:27ff
- Paul's various trials and imprisonment instigated by Jews Acts c 22-28

While there was some persecution at the hands of Gentiles, such as the opposition and riot at Ephesus led by worshippers of Artemis (Diana), in general Gentiles were open to the Gospel. The vast majority of the opposition to the early church was by the hands of Jews.

### **Paul spoke vehemently against Jewish opposition in his letters**

Paul's writings are filled with denunciations against deceitful workers, and most of these are directed at Jewish false teachers; those who imposed a Jewishness upon simple Christianity. This is what is happening in today's church and the following are examples at what Paul would say to such Jewish Root false teachers.

#### *Paul called them 'dogs'*

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Phil 3:2-3

This was ironic sarcasm since rabbis called Gentiles 'dogs'. He was also being ironic when he said that he had no confidence in the flesh since Jews (here called the 'circumcision') placed their confidence in literal flesh since they trusted in having been circumcised to count for being right with God.

Paul attack was chiefly upon those who turned Christians from concentrating upon Christ by deceiving them into focusing upon Judaism, hence 'evil workers'.

#### *He called them abominable*

For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans *are* always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work. Titus 1:10-16

*He wished that they castrated themselves*

I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off! Gal 5:12

‘Cut themselves off’ means to mutilate or amputate themselves. Again using irony, Paul wished that those who insisted upon Christians being circumcised would let the knife slip and castrate themselves.

*He called them false apostles, deceitful workers, ministers of Satan*

For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works. ... Are they Hebrews? So *am* I. Are they Israelites? So *am* I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So *am* I. 2 Cor 11:12-22

We could continue, but enough proof has been offered.

### **Third conclusion**

Without any doubt, the chief enemies of the cross have always been Jews, from the times of Jesus and throughout the early church history.

## **Jews were the chief antagonists of the true church on many occasions throughout later church history.**

This is not surprising as the Babylonian Talmud, the chief authoritative document of modern Judaism, tells Jews to betray, deceive, defraud and attack Christians. The vehemence against Christians follows their vilification of Christ. Believers who support rabbinic Judaism in any way ought to know what it says. The following (excerpted from my paper, ‘*What Supporters of the Jewish Root Movement Need To Know About Dispensationalism and Judaism*’) is shocking.

The (unedited) Talmud contains some of the most blasphemous sayings and is more critical of Christians than almost any other work.

- Jesus is said to be boiling in excrement in hell.<sup>1</sup>
- Jesus was conceived illegitimately during menstruation.<sup>2</sup>
- Jesus is called a fool.<sup>3</sup>
- Jesus is said to be a magician / sorcerer.<sup>4</sup>
- Jesus is said to be a bloody and deceitful man.<sup>5</sup>
- Mary was an adulterous prostitute.<sup>6</sup>
- Christians are described as murderers, idolaters,<sup>7</sup> or dung<sup>8</sup> and accused of bestiality<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> *Gittin*, 57a, 56b.

<sup>2</sup> *Kallah*, 1b (18b).

<sup>3</sup> *Schabbath*, 104b; *Sanhedrin* 67a.

<sup>4</sup> *Toldoth Jeschu*, *Sanhedrin* 43a.

<sup>5</sup> *Gittin* 56b.

<sup>6</sup> *Sanhedrin*, chap 7, 106b, *Iebhammoth*, last chapter.

<sup>7</sup> *Abhodah Zarah* 22a, *Iore Dea* 153.2, Maimonides *Vide Infra*, Chap2, p42, *Perusch* 78c. Christians are called by various names in the Talmud, such as *Akum*, *Goim*, *Notsrim*, *Abhodah Zarah*, *Obhde Elilim*, *Minim*, *Edom*, *Amme Haarets*, *Apikorosim*, *Kuthrim*, *Nokhrim*. Jews see Gentiles as covering all ‘Christian’ people.

<sup>8</sup> *Abhodah Zarah* 22b

<sup>9</sup> *Abhodah Zarah* 15b, 22.

- Christians were only created to serve Jews day and night and belong to Jews.<sup>10</sup>
- Christians are worse than dogs.<sup>11</sup>
- Incest is considered a 'light' sin compared to accepting Christianity.<sup>12</sup>
- Jews must avoid Christians, even if they are wounded and need a doctor, or even to learn from a teacher.<sup>13</sup>
- Jews are to injure Christians in every way possible, even killing them.<sup>14</sup> Jews who do good to Christians will not be resurrected.<sup>15</sup> Jews can steal from Christians.<sup>16</sup>
- Jews can deceive Christians by pretending to be one.<sup>17</sup>
- Jews can lie in order to condemn a Christian.<sup>18</sup>
- Jews must always try to deceive Christians.<sup>19</sup>

At various points in history this animosity against Christians has been worked out in various ways, sometimes through the instrument of a secular authority. For instance, it explains why Jews can be so callous and ruthless in their treatment of Palestinians. It should be noted that the Palestinians had a strong history of Christianity, as well as Islam, going back to ancient times. In one incident on 30 September 2000, as reported by Noam Chomsky, the IDF (Israeli army) reacted to some Palestinian kids throwing stones by firing a million rounds of ammunition. This was followed by helicopters that were used to attack civilian complexes, killing and wounding dozens of people. There isn't space here to list the huge number of human rights violations, murders, evictions and disregard of UN resolutions by Israel against Palestinians. Israel has been in breach of far more UN Security Council resolutions than Saddam Hussein ever was; over 80 at last count.

The communist revolution in Russia led to terrible persecution of evangelical Christians. The roots of this revolution were the philosophical principles of a Jewish revolutionary thinker and the monetary backing of the Jewish bankers, the Rothschilds. As a result of stealing the wealth of the Tsars and confiscating treasures of the Orthodox Church, the Bolsheviks repaid the Rothschilds a sum equivalent to \$50 billion.

To demonstrate the strength of animosity against Gentiles (Goyim) we can give one example. Rabbi Yitzhak Shapira wrote a book called, *Torat Ha'Melech*, or the King's Torah. This book comprises of 230 pages on laws concerning the killing of non-Jews. Shapira, says that Non-Jews are '*uncompassionate by nature*' and should be killed in order to '*curb their evil inclinations.*' '*If we kill a gentile who has violated one of the seven commandments ... there is nothing wrong with the murder.*' Shapira continues, citing Jewish law, '*There is justification for killing babies if it is clear that they will grow up to harm us, and in such a situation they may be harmed deliberately, and not only during combat with adults.*' Two leading rabbis, Dov Lior and Yaakov Yosef, endorsed the book. Despite a controversy, the Israeli government did nothing and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu kept silent.

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<sup>10</sup> Midrasch Talpioth 225d; A Rohl, Die Polem. p20

<sup>11</sup> Rabbi Schelomo Iarchi on Deut 14:21. Iebhammoth 61a.

<sup>12</sup> Abhodah Zarah 17a.

<sup>13</sup> Iore Dea 155.1, 153.1.

<sup>14</sup> Iore Dea 158.1; Orach Chaiim 330.2. Choschen Ham. 425.5, 388.15; Abhodah Zarah 26b; Zohar 1.25a, II.43a, I.38b,39a; Sepher Or Israel 177b; Ialkut Simoni 245c. n. 772.

<sup>15</sup> Zohar 1.25b,

<sup>16</sup> Babha Bathra 54b; Choschen Hammischpat 156.5, 183.7, 266.1. Babha Kama 113b.

<sup>17</sup> Iore Dea 157.2 Hagah.

<sup>18</sup> Babha Kama 113a,b. Kallah 1b, p18.

<sup>19</sup> Zohar 1.160a.

There should be no surprise that modern Judaism is antagonistic to Christian principles and individuals since it has been so from the time of Christ.

#### **Fourth conclusion**

The main authoritative document for modern Judaism commands that Jews deceive, defraud and attack Christians. Consequently, there have been times in history when Jews instigated persecution against Christians through secular means.

### **Biblical teaching on what a real Jew is under the New Covenant**

What is important is to understand what God says a Jew is today. This is the spiritual meaning of being a Jew; clearly in the world there are various definitions of what a Jew is but this is not our point here.

*For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God. Rm 2:28-29*

Today, in the time after the cross, God says that a Jew is not an outward matter of the flesh but an inward matter of the heart. Israel meant 'prince with God' and Jews were those who were descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who were princes with God. For God, a Jew is one whose heart has been circumcised (Col 2:11), that is who has been regenerated and become a new creation. Physical circumcision means nothing to God under the New Covenant, and this is the distinctive feature of being Jewish in the world. This alone teaches that God has no special place for Jews according to the flesh.

Being Jewish is thus a spiritual matter and not a matter of law or regulations. For God, a Jew is one who is filled with the Spirit. Judah means 'praise' and Jews are those who praise God, who worship God truly. This was always meant to be the case even under the Old Covenant; true Jews were those with faith who lived righteously. God was always only the God of those who were faithful and righteous. Being right with God was never just a matter of being born in the right place.

*Truly God is good to Israel, to such as are pure in heart. Ps 73:1*

God called the Jews to be a nation for him when he called Abraham out of Mesopotamia and established the nation at the time of the Exodus. They were supposed to follow his laws and listen to his heart, but they mostly fell into spiritual adultery. The outcome of following God's law and having faith under the Old Covenant was supposed to lead to following Christ and believing in him under the New Covenant, thus a true Jew is as Paul describes. The outcome of what being a Jew meant in OT times is being a Christian in NT times. Only a few Jews managed this when Christ came, such as Simeon or Anna (Lk 2:25-38).

Thus Paul called Gentile Philippian Christians, 'the true circumcision', i.e. true Jews.

*For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Phil 3:3*

After condemning Jews after the flesh in verse two he identifies true Jews as those who worship God spiritually, are in Christ and who place no confidence in the flesh. This is the opposite of modern national Jews who put huge confidence in the flesh, considering themselves God's offspring and able to treat other nations badly, calling them 'dogs' and deceiving them.

### **Fifth conclusion**

We must not focus upon what the world says a Jew is but on what God has plainly said. Jews after the flesh are not in God's plan any more as a nation; what God promised to Israel in the OT is now fulfilled in the church under the New Covenant. Jews only enter into God's blessing if they become Christians and thus fulfil the potential they had under the Old Covenant.

## **Why do people believe that God loves Jews especially?**

It arises from a failure to understand how to interpret the Bible according to its own rules. This usually comes from following Dispensational theology which demands an unswerving literal interpretation of OT prophecy. That this is unsustainable is easily proved but would take too long in this paper; I refer you to my book *'The Veil of Moses'* or my *'Questions'* section of my website. In essence, the NT shows that many parts of the OT which are taken literally by Dispensationalists are treated symbolically by the apostles. Over and over again Christ and the apostles took OT prophecies and applied them to the Messiah or the church when Dispensationalists apply them to national Israel. So, an over-literal interpretation of OT prophecy is actually sinning against the Lord himself.

In the Bible revelation is progressive and moves historically according to God's plan. Thus later prophets understood more about salvation than earlier prophets. Moses knew that the coming deliverer sent from God would be a prophet whom the elect must listen to; Isaiah, writing hundreds of years later, knew that he would come as a suffering servant and give his life as a sheep to the shearers. Zechariah prophesied that the king would be humble and would arrive on a donkey.

This means that later revelation must interpret earlier revelation. It also means that the overriding factor is the latest revelation. This is given us as apostolic doctrine and thus the NT was the final words of Jesus given to the church as he promised (Jn 16:13-15). So the NT unlocks the OT. Dispensationalists and Jewish Root teachers reverse this order and focus upon the OT making it contradict the NT. This is a recipe for deception.

The apostles show us that the whole concept of Israel and the religious nature of OT Judaism have changed. Whole books are written on this such as Galatians and Hebrews showing that we must not look to the shadows of salvation but to the reality, which is Christ. The shadows pointed to Christ and are now rescinded; the reality of Christ's salvation and the gift of the Spirit are now operating in the New Covenant.

**There are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, 'See *that* you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.' But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Heb 8:4-7**

**The law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. Heb 10:1**

**Let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. Col 2:16-17**

This in turn means that all the religious features of the Old Covenant are cancelled and no longer operative. Thus sacrifices, temples, feasts, a separate order of mediatorial priests, vestments, instrumental music and so on have all been rescinded and absorbed within the spiritual order that Christ brings. Thus the temple is now the body of Christ not a material building and the blood offerings are fulfilled in the cross.

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? 1 Cor 3:16

Previously saying, 'Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and *offerings* for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure *in them*' (which are offered according to the law), then He said, 'Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.' He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. ... For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. ... *then He adds*, 'Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.' Now where there is remission of these, *there is* no longer an offering for sin. Heb 10:8-18

But Christ came *as* High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Heb 9:11-14

It also means that the focus on the land of Israel as a material, physical entity has also ceased. This is fulfilled in Christ; the blessing of the land is now the spiritual inheritance that is in Christ and given to the church.

Paul explains, unequivocally, that the idea of Jerusalem is now spiritual and not physical, For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar - for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children - but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. Gal 4:24-26

Note what Paul says:

- The Mosaic Covenant now produces bondage and corresponds to physical, national Jerusalem.
- Focusing upon earthly Jerusalem produces bondage.
- The children of earthly Jerusalem (Jews) are also in bondage, wherever they are.
- The new covenant idea about Jerusalem is spiritual, and represents the city of God's people which is now in heaven. Thus the church is the New Covenant Jerusalem, the mother of us all. [Note that Paul was not speaking to Jews but to Galatian Celts.]

The writer to the Hebrews entirely agrees with this,

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect. Heb 12:22-23

Without any doubt whatsoever, Jerusalem now represents the church of Christ. The New Covenant idea about Jerusalem is heavenly, spiritual and not physical or material. Focusing upon national Israel will produce bondage.

### Examples of proper interpretation of Jerusalem and the land of Israel

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'May they prosper who love you. Peace be within your walls, Prosperity within your palaces.' For the sake of my brethren and companions, I will now say, 'Peace *be* within you.' Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek your good. Ps 122:6-9

In the light of apostolic teaching, this must now be attributed to the church. We are to pray for the church, which is the place of the brethren and which is the house of the Lord. Not only is this so because we now understand what Jerusalem represents, but also because we know what the house of God is – it is the church. We seek the prosperity of the church because it is where the house of God is.

Now if we attribute all this to earthly Jerusalem, we sin against God's revelation and dishonour the Holy Spirit who inspired it. If we say that material Jerusalem is where the house of God is then we are denying Scripture, which says,

*I write* so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. 1 Tim 3:15

For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? 1 Pt 4:17

You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Pt 2:5

As with the concept of Jerusalem, so also the concept of the land of Israel. The 'land', in God's eyes, is now the people of God, the place where God is manifest in and through his people – the church. The land is spiritual and not physical.

But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, **a holy nation, His own special people**, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. 1 Pt 2:9-10

This shows categorically that the concept of the 'land' (the home of the people of God) is now the province of the church and not a fleshly nation. It also shows that God's 'special people' are Christians and not Jews. This is why the term 'Israel' is applied by the apostles to the church.

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. Gal 6:15-16

'And' here has the meaning of 'even'. Paul is writing to Gentiles and proves to them that following Judaism is wrong. After demonstrating that all the teaching of the Judaisers is heretical, he closes his letter by showing that only a new creation (regeneration) counts; he then blesses those who walk as born again people, even the Israel of God i.e. the spiritual nation separated to God. If he meant national Israel it would deny all his previous teaching and would be starting a new discussion, but his letter ends two verses later.

Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh -- who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands -- that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise,



having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. Eph 2:11-22

Paul's argument here is very clear. Gentiles used to be outside of the Covenant of God, which was centred in Israel. The Gospel promise was in the Abrahamic Covenant but centred in Jewish religion. Gentiles thus had no hope unless they became Jews.

What Christ did in the cross was to cancel the previous centring in Israel, cancel the Mosaic Law and universalise the Gospel promise; in fact the original Gospel promise to Abraham was for all nations to be blessed in him – Christianity is the fulfilment of this. This means that the wall of separation between Jews and Gentiles was finished at the cross; it no longer exists. Christians are no longer to think of two separate people but of one in Christ. Elect Jews and elect Gentiles are reconciled and share the promises that were previously restricted to Israel, or rather to Abraham's physical tribe (which includes Arabs) since Israel did not then exist. Both elect Jews and elect Gentiles now have access by one Spirit to God and together make one household of God. They are fellow citizens and not separate nations.

Any believer who denies what God has joined together blasphemes God. Any Christian who focuses upon national Israel, or fleshly Jews, as something separate and special dishonours God.

In Christ, in the church, there are no Jews and Gentiles (Greeks) but only regenerated believers, a new creation

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. Rm 10:12

Thus Abraham is the father of all Christians,

And he [Abraham] received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had while still* uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, and the father of circumcision to those who not only *are* of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham *had while still* uncircumcised. For the promise that he would be the heir of the world *was* not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Rm 4:11-13

For they *are* not all Israel who *are* of Israel, nor *are they* all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, 'In Isaac your seed shall be called.' That is, those who *are* the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. Rm 9:6-8

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal 3:28-29

### **Final conclusion**

Jews who are descended from Abraham according to the flesh are not automatically the people of God. The true Seed of Abraham is Christ (Gal 3:16) who gains the inheritance promised by God and shares it with all those who are united in him (believers). Thus Abraham is the father of all elect people, whether Jews or Gentiles. Israel in God's eyes now is spiritual; it is all those who share the faith of Abraham and are believers in Christ. Peter declares that God's 'special people' is the church. Those who are especially loved by God are not earthly Jews but believers in Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles.

## **Conclusion**

What is the believer to do in the light of all this?

The first thing is that we should love Jews just like we should love everyone else. There is no reason why the antagonism of Jews to Christians should stop us loving them and doing them good individually; we are to love our enemies.

Secondly, we should not treat Jews any differently to the way we treat other people. I hesitate to say other races since being Jewish is not a racial matter. In fact, it is very hard to actually decide what being Jewish really means in the world. Usually people say that it derives from a Jewish mother, but there are very many Jews who did not have Jewish mothers and children of Jewish mothers who become Messianic Christians are excluded from Jewry by religious Jews. However, we should treat all Jews the way we treat other people. We should not distinguish between people but see all men as opportunities for the Gospel and do them good.

However, in order to be Biblical and to obey God, we must not adopt a way of thinking that elevates Jews above other men. In fact, we certainly should not support the nation of Israel that has conducted such consistent illegal and murderous activities. Scripture condemns such unrighteous nations (Ps 94:20). Finally, it is vital that we deny the theological systems which teach that God loves Jews especially. God loves his elect people and only his elect, which is the universal church comprising of Jews and Gentiles.

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