

Our Place

Our place as Gentiles in the community of Israel

Jos Westerbeke

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Acknowledgement

I am thankful that I was able to write this book. It began with some posts on my blog¹ and because my interest in this topic it became a little booklet.

Don't pay too much attention to my language, because Dutch is my mother tongue; rather look at the message and compare it to what the bible says. The reason why I wrote this in English is because of the worldwide English speaking Messianic movement which is a speaking and study partner for me. And of course, the reader circle is much wider than only the Netherlands. Beside this, many people in the Netherlands can read English too.

I will thank my wife and two daughters for the provided time and Warren Nyack for reviewing it and his help.

This all comes forth from the goodness of the Lord God who gives it all. He is the Creator who becomes all credits. As said by Rabbi Jochanan ben Zakkai: *If you have studied much Torah do not take credit for yourself because for this were you created. (Pirkei Avo's)*

Him is all the glory. And if He becomes all the glory then there's no glory left for us without Him.

At best it all is just another spark of the Divine Being. There's no honor for us, the truth will come because of Him who is all the glory and honor.

Jos Westerbeke, The Netherlands
December, 2012

¹ <http://faithbasedworks.wordpress.com>

Foreword

This book asks the community of Churches to step back and look at themselves at this point in development of prophetic interpretation. It asks the church to ask itself does it belong in the front of the line in relationship with Hashem (God). The return of Israel to the land and growing number observant Jews begs the question will Messiah ben David come or for the church the return of the Messiah with strength and power. The question becomes who is who in a relationship to Hashem or God the Father.

The writer takes the reader through this very discussion and asks the church to take up the question in the light text that come from the Tanach, Luke's gospel and Paul's epistle to the Romans, and the Apocalypse of John. Then asks question of the Tanach, what does it mean to make Israel jealous? What does it mean as Israel to return to the land? The writer is asking us to look beyond the smallness of our individual communities and to see larger picture of the Church with Israel included.

One of the great questions that Jos and I discussed was the hiddenness of the Messiah. When you look through the parables of the Messiah, the Messiah says in Mat.13:11 "I have explained the secrets about the kingdom of heaven to you, but not to others." The hiddenness is throughout the gospels. Jos discusses this, asks the question why and seeks the answer. That he finds is worth listening to!

In asking us to look he points to Luke, the writer wants us to question ourselves do we see the liberation of Jerusalem as meaningful event? Then in turning to Paul's epistle he points back to the book of Deuteronomy 32 showing prophecy completed and fulfilled. With that he looks at the language of Paul and asks how are Gentiles to be included in the world to come. He expertly walks us through both the Tanach and the writings of the Apostles to find the answers.

He calls for the end of the anti-Semitic rhetoric that church has cherished. Points to the horrors that it has caused and asks the church to have courage to admit its mistakes and make peace with their brother the Jews. It calls upon the church and Jews to end the hatred, find peace so the pain of 2000 years can end. Then let the Messiah return so He in speaking to all, revealing all, and healing all. Before us, Jos the writer, has given us many things to consider regarding prophecy, regarding the relation of the church to the greater Jewish community and finally moving toward a mutual understanding and peace between the faiths.

This booklet you may not agree with it but read it to learn to ask the important question why is this so? Jos has left me with many questions. He was once my student and now he is my equal. This is the job of all men and women of faith to lift up all those around them. Truly this booklet achieves this.

Warren Nyack, a Jew

Preface

For quite some years I showed great interest in the first Jesus movement and its Jewishness. For many reasons I think Christianity is in need of this investigation. For too long we, as Christians, have left our traditions and beliefs as they are. We didn't the watch the changes in these traditions and beliefs as the church went from its roots. We need to go back to the source of it all.

I have the strong belief that, in spite of the fact that much is hidden and distorted by us as Christian people who have lost sight, that the Messiah is Jesus who is seen as the Christ and that he will be revealed soon **as he is**, as the Messiah both for Jews and Gentiles. This is my anchor as a Christian and my hope. That **as he is** is my quest alongside; to reveal for myself what is almost hidden. I am on more of a search than to have all truth. This makes me different from many others who take Him as he is presented by Christianity, this did not convince me. To meet God is more than just to confess what others say He is. It's a personal powerful conviction of truth what makes directly a *man in search of God*, in answer to *God in search of that particular man*. Without any doubt, this journey takes places within and throughout the bible.

That said, I am very open to learn from my Jewish friends who are teaching me about their understanding of the Tanach (the Old Testament) and the Messiah which is most excellent. My interest in Judaism gave me the ability to learn from Jesus and to learn who Jesus is. Of course, he is a Jewish Rabbi undoubtedly believed by Christians, Jews and Muslims too. I believe he is the Messiah, but the traditional Christian Jesus is far too less the Messiah to grasp for me.

Studying with the Hebrew movement, and Judaism, helped me to understand the apostles and also the particular let's say ambiguous apostle Paul. We need to understand this special man in his unique context. I think common Christianity from

the time of Paul until now has dramatically misunderstood him and used their teachings to abolish the Torah and the Jews. This is not exaggerated to say that this has led to things like the Crusaders and the Holocaust.

Now in this paper I would address Paul's starting point to the gentiles, his (scriptural) basis of his mission to the gentiles. It must be without any doubt that he, as a good learned Jew, has his conviction of his *good message* to the gentiles, deeply rooted into the Torah. Otherwise he couldn't been so convinced of giving the spiritual part in such an extraordinary manner to the gentiles. It was almost presented as a new religion. The other apostles indeed didn't understand him in certain ways. They, as believing Jews, called him to proof. (Acts.15) And very soon the Christians after him departed from Judaism and their Jewish brethren². They indeed conceived the teachings of Paul as a new religion, the Christian religion of the gentiles. However, Paul remain a Jew. He did not abolish the Torah. And he did not teach Jews another religion. While on one plain he argues that there's no difference between Jew and gentile, on another plain he stressed the difference of Jew and gentile. And that's our topic. This will be found in this paper as a principle. Paul reached out to the Gentiles.

In his letter to the Romans chapter 9-11, Paul speaks about the particular Jewish people and on the other side about the gentiles. He points there to the Song of Moses which is stated in Deuteronomy 32. He speaks about the Jewish identity and the relationship between Jew and Gentile. He also shows his conviction that the time of the gentiles had began with Jesus and the Jews temporarily had been set aside.

² This is reported in Justin Martyr's First Apology, Chapter XXXI, Of the Hebrew Prophets.

Hopefully this paper will give a certain pathway to think about this and will encourage people to study this topic further. For the sake of the Lord. May His glory come soon upon us and enlighten us that we, the almost blind or completely blind or who are in complete darkness, will see. To Him belongs all the glory.

Our place in God's calling with respect to the Jews

For many years, lets say two millennia, the church occupied a place which first belonged to Israel. This place which was preserved forever for Israel, was served unto the gentiles because of Israel's sins, as it is said: *They roused Him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations did they provoke Him. (Deut.32:16)* And: *They have roused Me to jealousy with a no-god; they have provoked Me with their vanities; and I will rouse them to jealousy with a no-people; I will provoke them with a vile nation. (Deut.32:21)*

The Jews left God so to say and their place became void before God. Because they strayed from their God and adulterously left Him, therefore God choose another nation. The free space was going to be filled with Gentiles, those who were called, at the time when the Jews rejected Jesus. It began with Jews, (they are the promises and the first right) but soon it became a gentile religion which was called Christianity. The treasures of heaven came especially to the gentiles while the Jews commonly entered a stage of exile, dispersion and curses, as predicted in the Torah, Deuteronomy 31.³ This is the topic and the tension to think about in this paper.

At the time when Jesus died and the new community emerged, what churches stressed to be the beginning of the Christian church, the apostle Peter said when the Spirit came down on Jew and Gentile alike, that this is *the promise for you and your children (Israel) and for "all who are far away", everyone (i.e. from the gentiles) whom the Lord our God calls him. (Acts 2:39)* It looks like he is citing a verse from the Tanach, but that is not so. What

³ This is said clearly by Paul in Rom.9-11. Paul said in this way according to CEV translation: "The people of Israel are treated as God's enemies, so that the good news can come to you Gentiles. But they are still the chosen ones, and God loves them because of their famous ancestors." (Rom.11:28) It's good to say here directly that the curse doesn't last for ever, in the end they all will be saved inclusive gentiles. All nations shall come and glorify thy name, Ps.86:9.

he does do is summarizing for whom the Torah was meant. For whom the covenant relationship was meant. For whom the promises were meant.

His saying was commonly known and understood by Jews at that time. And even now it's easy to understand for a Torah learned Jew. Peter said the Torah (and its promises) was first and only for the Jews (you and your children) but it was also for those "who are far away", who joined Israel with prayer and worship. Obviously the gentiles are meant here. And more specifically, those who joined not only the people of Israel as their fellowship, but also the God of Israel with true love, as many as "the Lord our God calls". An example here may be Ruth, the Moabite, who said: Your God is my God and your people is my people.

What was commonly known was the relationship between Gentile and Jew, but something what was totally new was the direct attachment of the gentiles to Israel and God by *the gift of God of renewal and rebirth*. A shortcut as it were. The Holy Spirit showed a supernatural power. This was said by John the Immerser: He who comes after me shall baptize with fire. (Lu.3:16) The baptism by the Spirit was never seen before among the gentiles, even not among the Jews of this generation. This signifies a brand new era of Messianic proportions. This huge change caused a lot of difficulties. Like the Jews, I mean the apostles, who met the (not knowledgeable) gentiles. The struggles the apostles faces whether a gentile must be fully converted or not, are obvious presented in the book of Acts (Chapters 10 and 11) and the letter of Paul to the Galatians. How could one be holy and gentile at one time?

It's all about the calling of the gentiles by way of rebirth through the gift of the Holy Spirit. It's a *divine calling*. They enter the special covenantal relationship of grace, the same as the true Israel, *but remain gentile*. In the Torah they are called a Ger. Here *the distinction line is the real calling and rebirth*.

Some are called in the same way as the Jews are 'chosen'. They are called effectually. Calling is used in different ways, what I use here is the divine effectual calling which makes them chosen people, as Jesus said *many are called but few chosen*. (*Matth.22:14*) It's (probably) a proverbial saying.⁴ Noting that not everybody, also from Israel, have true faith and gain eternal life.

We as gentiles

By Gentiles is meant all the people who are not Jewish. In speaking of Jewish it is meant all the people who are Jewish or converted to Judaism. There were always some gentiles who joined Jews, who were called by Jews “Ger we-Toshav” (גֵּר וְתוֹשָׁב / stranger and sojourner). They observe the 7 Noachide laws and more or less additional Torah laws. They were called God-fearers in the time of Paul. (Acts 13:16 and 26) After the time of Christ the gentiles got a different place in Judaism. In essence it was the same (Noachide laws, Acts 15) but practical it was quite different because of the new Message of Grace in Christ. After this they were called Christians, the Greek word for Messianics, along with Jewish believers, according to their believe of Jesus being the Messiah.⁵

The expression “those who are far away” as the apostle Peter says, is found in the prayer of Solomon in 1Kings 8:41-43. Here is referred to the stranger “who is not from the people Israel”. This are *the gentiles* were Solomon is praying for, saying: “hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and do

⁴ As similar sayings are found in the Talmud, like the parable of the invited servants, told by rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai, Sabbath 153a.

⁵ Ac.11:26 and Tosefta Avodah Zarah 8:4, B.Talmud, Sanhedrin 56b

according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for; that all the peoples of the earth may know Thy name, to fear Thee, as doth Thy people Israel, and that they may know that Thy name is called upon this house which I have built.” (1Kings8:43). Those are coming “for thy Name’s sake” gentiles who fear God, who have a burden to know God and joined Israel. They have a place, even in the holy temple, to worship with the people of Israel and pray with them. There’s nothing here what implies that the gentile must convert himself. They are allowed, but not obligated. What we see here are God-fearing gentiles who join Israel.

Christian gentiles are often addressed in the New Testament by Paul. Paul was the apostle of the gentiles. For example, he wrote to the gentiles of Efeze who believed in Christ in this way: “But now [made alive] in Christ Jesus you who once were far off are made near in the blood of Christ.” (Eph.2:13) He is referring to the “those who are far away” state and to the new state of a newborn being like Jews who have the promises and the Holy Spirit. Made to a “one new man”⁶ in peace with God. (Eph.2:15)

It is great to be a gentile and to be like the Master and Lord Jesus, in His love and passion to one another’s brother. It’s far more greater than to be just a Jew, without true faith.⁷

⁶ See also this book: *Awakening the One New Man*, Robert F. Wolff, Michael Brown and others, 2011.

⁷ A good article about the states of a gentile with respect to the Jews, is to find here: <http://blog.followingtheancientpaths.org/2011/06/its-okay-to-be-a-gentile-really/> Written by Lisa. Some excerpts: “We believe in the G-d of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We are not pagans or idolaters, we are G-d fearers and are recognized as sons (and daughters) of Abraham by the first century Apostles, by James the Righteous (Ya’akov haTzaddik) and the Elders of the Council in Jerusalem. We believe that He is true to His word and that Messiah is His agent (even the intentions of His heart made flesh, His son). We are told by the Apostles that we are accepted by HaShem based on our faith, like it was with Abraham. We are told that we do not need to convert to Judaism before He accepts us, and there were several examples that the early Apostles were directly involved in to confirm this teaching. This we understand and accept without any trouble. The Elders

The boundary marker for being incorporated into the people of God is **faith**. Faith in Christ rather than the works of the Law. According to Paul in Galatians.

Our place distinguished from the Jews

In the New Testament writings we have no indication that the apostles gave up the differences between Jew and Gentile. They keep on saying Jews and gentiles. Once the Jews are addressed, then the gentiles. Of course, there are things they have in common, but Jews remain Jews by birth. And gentiles didn't become Jewish by conversion. This is one point. Another important point is what they have in common: A dividing line which goes right through all people, which parts one to be among the saved ones, the called ones, and puts another among those who perish, sinners who have no grace.

So far we see two distinctions:

Distinction 1: Righteous or not. (Righteous by grace, Divine calling and rebirth, whether Jew or Gentile, or not righteous like pagans, wicked people, idolaters, but also fake believers.)

on the Council in Jerusalem instructed us in Acts 15 that there are four minimum requirements for us to adhere to that we might be admitted into fellowship in the community. But the Apostolic Writings never tell us exactly where we fit into the community." ... "Many of us understand that faithful heroes like Caleb, Rahab, Ruth and Uriah were all non-Jews who attached themselves to the nation of Israel, and were welcomed. We, like them, have learned about the G-d of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and have chosen to submit ourselves to His Kingship and we have put our trust in Him."

Distinction 2: Jew or Gentile. (The covenant issue. There's a unique covenantal relationship with Israel.)

Although Israel has a special covenant as a nation (They are the people of God) we must note here that there are more covenantal relationships. The church in general also teaches such relationship where infant-baptism is a part of. Baptism is seen as a replacement of circumcision. Other churches like Baptists didn't teach a covenantal relationship with children. They don't practice infant baptism. The demarcation line there is personal repentance and confession. We can't go into the details of the church here. But what's clear is that the Jew are set apart and have their own covenant as we can clearly see in the regathering of the Jewish people into the land of Israel since the 20th century. (See also chapter: Our place in covenant relationships.)

The first distinction is most important. That's the question whether one is righteous or not. That line cuts right through Jew and Gentile alike. And divides genuine and fake. This is a matter of salvation or not.

There's much to say about this, but I will stress the one and only important thing: especially after the time the Holy Spirit was poured out because of the fulfilled work of the Messiah Jesus, immediately repented people received a new born being, a new spirit, a new will, a new attraction to serve God in the most possible holy way they can achieve. That makes the most important difference. That makes whether you belong to the people of God, the sons of God, no matter if you are a gentile or Jew, an American or a Russian.

What I will argue here is that a gentile will fit conveniently in the Jewish commonwealth. There had always been a place for them. The Torah never rules out a gentile, but rather punish a sinner. The most basic rules for everyone are the 7 Noachide laws.

What is righteous before God

This is a most important question. According to Judaism the righteous ones of the gentiles keep the 7 Noahides and the righteous ones of the Jews keep the portions 613 mitsvot that apply to them. However, righteousness is not *because* of the keeping of the laws. It's more than that. It is the total behaviour of the soul and the body followed by the heart. To be righteous before God is something that derives directly from God. He is the source of it. It comes through teshuvah (repentance) and circumcision of the heart. It is both human and divine. Nobody comes to righteousness but through God. That's the role of the Messiah who was righteous before God, and will give that to mankind. This Godly righteousness is applied to those "as many as the Lord our God calls." (Acts2:19) That's the righteousness from God which come through faith. (Phil.3:9) That's what is said: "The righteous shall live by his faith." (Hab.2:4)

Although it is not because of the law, it is undoubtedly true that the righteous one has a zeal for keeping the law. It's obvious that there is a distinction between those and the ungodly people and idolaters. And who are the righteous? It's not a Jew or Gentile, but *the man* whom is spoken about in Psalm 1:

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: But his delight is in the law of YHWH; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For YHWH knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish."

But to narrow this question of who is righteous further, we have to look at Psalm 2. (*Why gather the nations together against the*

Messiah.) Because there's a spiritual warfare between true and false faith. Between good and bad. And this all turns out to a battle of the highest order. It is about the Godly King or the human king. It's about serving yourself or serving God. One who serve his physical pleasures is in slavery of the world and its head, the devil. Every man has this evil inclination and by lack of fear of God the heart and desires are about to fight against the Messiah, the King. Also here, Jew and gentile have to deal with spiritual personal warfare. And the distinction line is where the soul repents and gives the glory to the only King. To take part in this battle causes the righteous soul to find "the King of the Jews", the hidden Messiah but revealed personal in victory and majesty there were personal desires are buried.

The hidden Messiah

To speak about Jesus for a broader audience is an almost impossible exercise. All the lines are blurred and worst of all, Jesus himself is not known as he should be. Who shall know him? It is like Salomon says: *'I will be wise;'* but it was far from me. *That which is, is far off and exceedingly deep. Who can find it out?* (Ecc.7:23-24) Maybe he was known in the past, I don't see it in our time.

Jesus is a hidden Messiah. Also in the time he was on earth. When John the Immerser was in prison he asked his friends whether Jesus was the Messiah or not, he showed great doubt. (Lu.7:19) John, highly esteemed and the greatest prophet according to Jesus, didn't see it? He knew that it was not just some miracles that would prove his messiahship. And the world had not change yet? (The Calendar had been not unified or corrected, which was expected to be done by the Messiah, the true high priest had not been selected, the return of the Ark of The Covenant, the expulsion of the Romans had not happened.)⁸ So, where is the Messiah? He couldn't believe. It was not that clear for him as Jesus appears in the NT for us.

When the Rabbi's asked Jesus for a sign whether he is the Messiah, he responded saying: *"An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign will be given it but the sign of Jonah the prophet. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* (Mat.12:39-40)

The only sign given by Jesus is that of the prophet Jonah. Jonah, a prophet who lived in a time Israel desperately needed a good prophet, was sent by God to the gentiles. A Jewish prophet sent to the gentiles? This was against all odds and

⁸ Statement of Warren Nyack's while in conversation with him.

Jonah didn't want to do this. It's a known story. Eventually he was three days and nights in the belly of the fish, and there he was, away from his own people, on the shore of a gentile country. A mission impossible indeed, but it was God who directed him and went to the gentiles sending his prophet. That was Jonah's great concern. God went to the gentiles instead of to the Jews. And he complained to God while he was in the land of Israel, because he knew that God had compassion and is a graceful God who has mercy and would go with the gentiles if they only repent. (Jonah 4:2) And that's exactly what happened. The Godly message that the great city of Nineveh would be destroyed within 40 days, was annulled because of their repentance. And Jonah lamented because the verdict of God didn't come true. Jonah died in the desert, his mission was completed. He didn't go back to the Israelites. Jesus said about that people of Nineveh: In the resurrection they would judge the Jews who didn't repent. (Luke 11:23) Jesus compared himself to Jonah. He also reached out to the gentiles and made many righteous people. Nineveh was a one time event, but now we speak about a timespan of about 2000 years of gathering righteous ones from the gentiles.

When Jesus came to preach among the Israelites he didn't play a foreground role. He rather said to his disciples: Don't tell this and that to the people. (Mark 6:43, Mat.9:30 and 12:16, Lu.5:14) Only those who are called would understand. He often spoke in parables addressing the crowd and gives the meaning only to his disciples. Why? Jesus said: *"To you is given the mystery of the Kingdom of God, but to those who are outside, all things are done in parables, that 'seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest perhaps they should turn again, and their sins should be forgiven them.'"* (Mark 4:11-12, citing Is.6:9)

Jesus (as Messiah and King) also didn't appear in a glorious state. He first appeared in Jerusalem on a donkey (Zech.9:9) and "the judge of Israel" was smitten. (Mich 4:14or5:1) Then he disappeared for two millennia and multiplied the time of exile. (Hos.6:1-3, Dan.9:20) This is almost everything what is said about the passion of the Messiah in scripture. Also

scripture itself doesn't speak that much about the despised Messiah. Jesus had to tell it and explain it to his disciples. (Luk.24:26-27en46) Many of the disciples didn't understand this. Jesus wasn't the expected king on earth. He rather established his kingdom in heaven. The earthly kingdom was future.

Our place is like Israel watched by the nations who watched Israel as the Servant who suffered. They suffered together with (so to speak) the Shechinah, the Kaboth (glory) of God, the great Messiah himself who put the human body on to be one with His brothers. He suffers as long as His brothers suffer. He is in exile as long as His brothers are in exile. Are we adopted by this Messiah? Then we suffer like Him and like them. Then we are part of that suffering people.

Our place is also that of the *glorified* Messiah (but still seen as the Man of sorrow), exalted above all others. Why? Because of Him who is the Messiah and gives salvation and forgiveness of sin which gives the greatest joy, all who have faith in Him. Given to all the nations, however, it turns out in history that only a very small part became true followers. The greatest part is anti-Messiah, not at least in the church.

When the time (of the gentiles, Luke 21:24) is fulfilled, however, He will build up His kingdom on earth. (Acts 1:6)

If the Master is in such a hidden state, how would his fellows be, other than very humble and down to earth, without glory, expecting it from the world to come? It's hard to see the right picture of the true people of God. Because they become like their Master. A Man of sorrow and pain, not from this world, hidden before the eyes of the natural people. It's only in the last days that they should say it and confess: this is the Servant, the one who was despised and rejected. But now they will become spiritually like the new man. (Col.3:10) Who is about to appear when the Messiah appears. Now they are buried, their flesh died in advance to the glorious revelation of the most glorious King, to live in his kingdom as righteous ones, without any blemish. The neshama (soul) is prepared for

righteousness by receiving grace. That's what Paul said: "For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." (Col.3:3-4) They are one with the Messiah. In his dead and in his life. And the life in heaven is already but not on earth yet. On earth is dispersion. This is not the world of the righteous.

The state of the true Godly people is given by picture of the Man of sorrow in Isaiah 53.⁹ They have a share in it. They share the same state. They have a physically broken state, at least they will die, but spiritually they gain the real life which is to come from above and turns to above. This real life is not the life of this world, but for the world to come.

That's why almost nobody sees the right picture of true Christianity, and true faith, and remain in deviation from the truth. It becomes organised anti christian and anti semitic powers (within the church) because they deny God, the King to rule over themselves. The church also didn't appear in a glorious state, the glory you see is all fake. The great buildings in Rome are far, far away from the picture the real people of God should show. Just a few will be saved in respect to the many who perish.

To truly believe is not that simple as many would advocate to just make a rational decision and it all would be given to you by grace. It is to get into the deepest affliction of the heart to hearken to His voice. To be called and touched by His Spirit. To repent and now, *today, when you hear His voice (Ps.95)* to come to the Messiah. Only if you hear His voice, he will appear. That's the meaning of the Jewish story of the Messiah

⁹ Although the prophet first speaks about Israel as being the servant (the classic Jewish view), it's obvious that also a Man (the Messiah) is meant by it. (The classic Christian view) I like the view of Franz Delitzsch who combined both. See also my note below in the section of Rom.9-11.

among the lepers.¹⁰ He is not here in his glory, but will even come to the very heart.

Do we need conversion?

In Judaism a gentile never needed to convert to being a Jew. It is even not advocated by the Jewish authorities. They found no reason for it, because they say that the righteous gentiles have a place in the world-to-come.¹¹ In Judaism there's always room for the gentiles.

On the other hand, one is free to come to the “Jewish citizenship” by way of conversion. Genuine converts were

¹⁰ R. Joshua b. Levi met Elijah standing by the entrance of R. Simeon b. Yohai's tomb. He asked him: 'Have I a portion in the world to come?' He replied, 'if this Master desires it.' R. Joshua b. Levi said, 'I saw two, but heard the voice of a third.' He then asked him, 'When will the Messiah come?' — 'Go and ask him himself,' was his reply. 'Where is he sitting?' — 'At the entrance.' And by what sign may I recognise him?' — 'He is sitting among the poor lepers: all of them untie [them] all at once, and rebandage them together, whereas he unties and rebandages each separately, [before treating the next], thinking, should I be wanted, [it being time for my appearance as the Messiah] I must not be delayed [through having to bandage a number of sores].' So he went to him and greeted him, saying, 'peace upon thee, Master and Teacher.' 'peace upon thee, O son of Levi,' he replied. 'When wilt thou come Master?' asked he, 'To-day', was his answer. On his returning to Elijah, the latter enquired, 'What did he say to thee?' — 'peace Upon thee, O son of Levi,' he answered. Thereupon he [Elijah] observed, 'He thereby assured thee and thy father of [a portion in] the world to come.' 'He spoke falsely to me,' he rejoined, 'stating that he would come to-day, but has not.' He [Elijah] answered him, 'This is what he said to thee, To-day, if ye will hear his voice.' B Talmud sanh. 98a

¹¹ Tosefta Sanh.13:2 J(Neusner) The Tosefta is an intermediate document between Mishnah and Jerusalem Talmud - page 71 in Everyone's Talmud, 2008 edition. "Now that it is in fact written, *All gentiles who forgot God*, indicates that there are also righteous among the nations of the world, who do have a portion in the world to come."

welcomed and highly esteemed, as said in Mechilta (to 22:20, 95a) It is said that a gentile who obeys the Torah is equal to the High Priest.¹² Who obeys the Torah? He who loves his brother. (1John 2:8-11) That's why Peter could call the gentiles (and Jews) a royal priesthood: "But ye [Jew and Gentile, divine called] 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." (1Peter 2:9)

In fact there's a personal repentance what is needed by everyone, and a choice to convert to Judaism. Why? Because Judaism remains with the Apostles and afterwards until now, with God's promises. (Clearly seen by God's activity with the Jews.) For repentance the church gives room for the gentiles. Of course, Jews are welcome to the church, but don't need to. On the other side there are the Jews and Judaism.

This deliberate choice of conversion to Judaism was always held up by Paul. Paul never forced anybody to convert to Judaism. Everyone agrees. But he also never held off someone's desire to convert to Judaism. What he was arguing to the Galatians is that nobody would make any (religious) act a reason to become part of the covenant of grace. He boldly declared that circumcision was not necessary. The opposite, it could become to serve as a barrier, as a false ground to build your faith on. That's why he was so furious about that topic.

¹² This is given by the exposition of the verse of Lev.18:5, (Sifra 5): "Whence is it deduced that even a gentile who obeys the Torah is the equal of the High Priest? From the words 'which if a *man* do he shall live by them.' Similarly it is said, 'This is the law of mankind, Lord God' (2Sam.7:19) It is not stated, 'This is the law of the priests, or the Levites, or of Israel,' but 'the law of mankind.' In like manner it is not stated, 'Open the gates that priests or Levites or Israel may enter,' but, 'Open the gates that a righteous Gentile keeping faithfulness may enter' (Is.26:2). Furthermore it is not stated, 'This is the gate of the Lord, priests or Levites or Israel shall enter into it,' but 'the righteous shall enter into it' (Ps.118:20) In the same way it is not stated, 'Rejoice in the Lord, oh ye priests or Levites, or Israel,' but 'Rejoice in the Lord oh ye righteous' (Ps.33:1). And it is not stated, 'Do good o Lord, to the priests, or Levites or Israel,' but 'unto the good' (Ps.125:4) Hence even a Gentile who obeys the Torah is the equal of the High Priest." (Cited from: Everyone's Talmud, p.66/67)

But he didn't say to the Jews that they might not circumcise themselves. Paul himself circumcised Titus who was born from a Jewish mother according to the law. Paul kept the Torah to the end of his life. (Acts.25:8 and 28:17) But he didn't let the gentiles become obligated to do it. (Acts15) There were many ways to fit a gentile into a Jewish community. That was not something rare or new at that time.

What was new, was the renewal of the heart by the Holy Spirit. And the apostle sought a way for the gentiles to join the journey along with the Jews. Together with Jews who also received the renewal of the heart. Together on only **one** ground: Jesus the Messiah, with **one** proof: the Holy Spirit. Which of course ultimately joined Jew and Gentile. But not for long, as history shows.

Our place in covenantal relationships

There is still a remaining difference between Jew and gentile, because the gifts to the people of the covenant and calling of Israel are irrevocable, even in the latter days of Jesus. This is explicitly stated by Paul in Rom.11:29: *For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.*

When Paul speaks about the calling of Israel, we may go back to the Torah portion Vayikra. In Lev.1:1 the Divine calling came to Moses who must speak to the people of Israel, the words which are directly spoken to him by God. This was the manifestation of the Godly word that came upon the *people of Israel*. It was part of the covenant God made with the people of Israel, which they committed by saying "we will do and hear". In fact Lev.1:1 is *the beginning* of the Torah, the Word what is given particularly to the people of Israel and which is incumbent upon them.

It is the final contract of the people of Israel who are called “out of Egypt” (Ez.16:16, Ho.11:10) It is the result of the calling of Abraham. It is the result of the calling of Adam. All those callings are irrevocable, but here Paul speaks in particular about the people of Israel. And they are a nation who were blessed with many promises and who bear the blessings and the curses. And if Paul speaks about the gifts, he obviously has (according to the context of Rom.9-11) the promises in mind which they would gain in future by the national acceptance of the Messiah.

Paul saw in advance that Israel must go another way than the non-Jews because of this special calling and blessing, but also of this special curse. They will come to redemption certainly, with great glory to all mankind, but after a long time in a way what he called a mystery.

Paul also saw a special calling among the Gentiles. A calling which adopts a Gentiles into Jewish citizenship. We can find this clearly in the letter to the Ephesians. That ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. (Eph.1:18) He does not say that a Gentile becomes Jewish. They only have a share in it. They became part of the household of God, built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. (Eph.2:19-22)

We can learn that God’s Glory (Shechinah) did not rest upon the gentiles outside Israel. We see this in Ex.33:15-16. There it states that God would go with the Israelites and not with other people: *And Moses said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go [with us], do not take us up from here. For how then will it be known that I have found favor in Your eyes, I and Your people? Is it not in that You will go with us? Then I and Your people will be distinguished from every [other] nation on the face of the earth."*

Rashi commented on it: “how will the finding of favor be known? Is it not in that You will go with us? One other thing I ask of You [I ask] that Your Shechinah shall no longer rest upon heathen nations. -[from Ber. 7a]” And: “Then I and Your people will be distinguished: Heb. וַיִּבְלְיֵנוּ. In this respect,

we will be separated from every [other] nation, like “And the Lord will make a separation (הַלְּזַרְתִּי) ...between the livestock of Egypt” (Exod. 9:4).”

Verse 17: *“And the Lord said to Moses: “Even this thing that you have spoken, I will do, for you have found favor in My eyes, and I have known you by name.”*

Rashi on it: “Even this thing: [namely] that My Shechinah should no longer rest upon heathens, I will do.

Why does it say: "I have known you by name?" Does God not know his own creatures? We can learn from here that God knows one, but also doesn't know one another. As is explained by a parable from Jesus where it states: "I have never known you." (Luk13:27, Mat.25:12)

This leaves that there's a community of God surrounded by outsiders. In the same sense is spoken about "Your [Gods] people/nation" and other people.

The community, the people of Israel is set apart as a nation. They are called from Egypt. (Hos.11:1) and received the Torah and entered the covenant as a whole nation.

This covenantal relationship has prerequisites, to be holy. And it sets people apart. This not only applies to the individual, but the whole congregation or nation of the covenant has a meaning in it. And this will give great responsibilities. In the midst of this environment, in this community, in this holiness, the glory of the Lord will come down, the Shechinah will dwell among them. And the people are thus called to be holy. God demands it, but will also give it in the heart. “But the word is very near to you, in your mouth, and in your heart, that you may do it.” (Deut.30:14)

This covenantal relationship is extended by the coming of the Messiah Jesus to the gentiles, “as many as the Lord our God calls”, according to Peter. It is obvious however that the covenant with the Jews (as a nation) remains. The extension is on a personal plain of relationship with God. A term to describe this, commonly used among the Protestants, is

Covenant of grace. The unbreakable eternal covenant wherein reborn Jew and Gentile have a share. This twofold layer in one covenant (sometimes called *outside* and *inside covenant*) was always been there and is often referred to by the Jews as the circumcision of the foreskin and the circumcision of the heart. The Christians adopted this and replaced it by baptism of water and baptism of fire (of the Holy Spirit). By circumcision as an example, they “invented”¹³ infant baptism. In orthodox circles (as the Puritans do) they put great emphasis on personal repentance and faith. Because a baptised child belongs to the church or community, but that doesn’t mean automatically that it belongs to God.

If the Jews are drawn aside by God for a time as it is written in Deut.31 that the punishment would come, and God let Himself to be found by gentiles, then we see that God used this kind of governing for the gentiles in the same way as He does by the nation of Israel. He established a covenant relationship with the gentiles by building families and elders who ruled the community. A new community, followers of Jesus. Not the church as a governing impersonal institute. This is an offspring of the old classic Roman power, which now rules as the Roman Catholic (antichrist) power.

The covenant of grace brings Jew and Gentile together and fits them in the age of the Messiah were is no distinction between Jew and gentile but they all are one before God. Namely saved and righteous by the Messiah Yeshua / Christ Jesus.

The covenantal relation is narrowed to a personal level as is said by Jesus: Narrow is the path and few are there who found it. (Matt.7:14) And the fearing of God would be no less, even for new upcoming gentiles. Jew and gentile even gain more

¹³ I’m not sure about this. I don’t know how far infant baptism goes back to the time of the apostles. It is however clear that the church always used infant baptism it as a covenantal sign.

fearing from the baptism of the Spirit. “*For you have not come to a mountain that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and to blackness, darkness, tempest, the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which those who heard it begged that not one more word should be spoken to them, for they could not stand that which was commanded, “If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned ;” and so fearful was the appearance, that Moses said, “I am terrified and trembling.” But [even more fearing] you have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable multitudes of angels, to the general assembly and assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling”.* (Heb.12:18-24) They have a share in the heavenly place and in the world to come. But now they are set apart and live under the yoke of the Messiah which is light to bear because of the Spiritual Comfort of the Godly presence, but what is heavy to bear because of the burden of persecution. No one could ever reach this heavenly Mount Zion, except those who are called and adopted through mediation of the Son of God. *Who shall see God and live?*

This *setting apart with God* will persuade the soul and will give the advance of knowing the sonship of God. This personal relationship is the foremost importance. But there is also a community which functions as a boundary to guard it for the bad influence of the outside world. In Christianity the church played an important role here. I mean the little local churches. (The mainstream (Roman) church always misused their power.) In Judaism the family is more important than the synagogue, but together with the rabbinical authority, it serves the same role as the church. They guarded the covenants to some extent.

So the covenant serves as a demarcation line. It makes a distinction. We can see this by the Jews based on the Torah, history and the prophets and the Oral Law within the Rabbinic Judaism. We can also see it in the church based on the New Testament and church tradition and counsels too, utilized by baptism.

So far we see that on one plain there are the righteous ones, and on another plain there is Israel, the nation of the covenant, which serves as a role model for all other nations. They are the ones with Godly promises and with binding of the Torah. They are *the* people of *the* covenant, the Torah. This Torah tells us in the last chapters of Deuteronomy what would happen to Israel and the Jews. The land of Israel shall be desolate and the Jews shall be scattered around the world. But it tells also that there will be a turn and the people of Israel will repent and will return to their land. This is the very Torah which is laid on the people of Israel, with a covenant. This is irrevocable and hence is to be fulfilled for the Jews. This is why the state of Israel was established in 1948 as the beginning of the restoration of the (whole) Jewish people. As Paul said: All Israel will be saved. (Rom.11:26)

Paul's "grafted in" analogy

If there's a covenantal relationship with Israel, and a divine calling of Jew and Gentile, then Paul comes into picture who merged these two into one, with his "ingrafted branches" analogy in Rom.11.

This analogy has a scriptural base and we can find it in Is.56 among other places. Isaiah speaks about the foreigners who join Israel. It's states:

"Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. 4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; 5 Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. 6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the

LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; 7 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. 8 The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.” (Is.56:3-8)

Rashi comments on it that this strangers and eunuchs are converts. These (converted heathens) have surely a place in the house of God and in His covenant, according to this words of God. But this also implicitly states that gentiles are not the same as the people of Israel. Otherwise these converts would not be mentioned as strangers, but were fully regarded as Israelites.

What we see here is that there are people who are faithful to God and the Jews, but they are not regarded Jewish. Probably because they are not fully Torah observant. What they did do however, is keeping the Shabbat and are faithful to the covenant. And here is a very significant remark about them, they *choose the things that please me.* (v.4) About them is said: *Blessed are they who do this.* (v.2) *To keep the judgement and do justice* (v.1)

When the ingathering of the Israelites happens, these ones are also ingathered with them.

This must be the idea of the apostles (Acts 15) that the gentiles have a place amongst the people of God. They may dwell in the tents of Jacob (Gen.9:27) and may come to Zion (Ps.87). And especially because the most profound thing ever happened since the giving of the Torah, that gentiles receive the Holy Spirit (before they convert to Judaism), the apostles believe firmly that the Messianic times were started and thought it is not good to obligate gentiles to keep the Torah in order to become part of the commonwealth of Israel.

In fact they created a new community within Judaism of גֵּר וְתוֹשָׁב (strangers and sojourners). This is a status of gentiles described in Leviticus 25:35. Now, since the Messianic age has begun, they have spiritually the same share in Sion as the Jews, “as many as are called”. And this is what Paul called “grafted in”. Now they become part of Israel, spiritual. And in this Messianic age there’s no difference between Jew and Gentile, “no difference between Jew and Greek” (Rom.10:12) “*They are one in Christ*”. (Gal.3:28) It is not that the status of sojourner is of less importance. At a deeper spiritual level such a confession shows a higher devotion to God. David himself claimed this status too, in Psalm 39:13, “*For I am a stranger with thee, A sojourner, as all my fathers were*”. And compare what Jesus said: “*But one who is the greater among you, let him become as the younger, and one who is governing, as one who serves.*” (Luke 22:26) And even in the land of Israel the Israelites are strangers (א גֵּר) as stated in Le.25:23.

On the other side Paul warns the gentiles not to be proud of it and not to think they are now the replaced Israel, because that was certainly not the case. It even doesn’t abolish or change the existing covenant with the Jews.

Now if we see Jews and Gentiles, separate on one plain but together on another plain, we can better understand the message Paul gives us.

Paul’s message to the gentiles about the Jews

Paul’s letter to the Romans contains the most clear message in the NT about the role of the Jews. In three chapters (9-11) he writes his exposition about the special place the Jews have in world history. Paul used to backup his point with scripture. We can see here that he builds his case about the place of the Jews (Rom.9-11) upon the song of Moses of Deuteronomy 32.

Before Paul begins to write his message, he showed in the previous chapters that the Torah on one side was a law that condemns the (misleading) physical pleasures of mankind and on the other side the Torah is a spiritual life which gains eternal life through the yet risen Messiah. He also showed that one cannot deny the Messiah Jesus and complete the Torah. For such person lacks the spiritual salvation and therefore is condemned by this same law. But there is more to say about the people of Israel as a nation than just to conclude with this statement. Because they have the promises and the covenants which are irrevocable. (Rom.9:3 and 11:29) And so he paved the way to bring his message about two different people: Jews and Gentiles.

He ends chapter 8 with a praise to God of the glorious time of redemption which has yet began through the Messiah Jesus in a spiritual way. *Who could bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, yes rather, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.*

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Could oppression, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Even as it is written, "For your sake we are killed all day long. We were accounted as sheep for the slaughter." No, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom.8:33-39)

But now there's a problem because of the Jewish denial of Jesus. This thought is present by Paul at the background, he called that a mystery and is about to show this as far as he and his audience can understand. Paul really had a problem when he saw that the greatest part of the Jews rejected Jesus. All prophets spoke about the redemption of the Jewish people and peace on earth. How can one believe that Jesus is the Messiah if the Jewish people will be lost? Therefore Paul found a scripture in the Song of Moses which shows a shift of the heavenly presence to the gentiles for a certain time, while

the Jews paid the price of their sins. Afterwards the roles will turn the other way around when the wrath of God will come upon the gentiles who showed themselves enemies in the end of God and the Jewish people.

Romans 9-11, Opening statement

Paul explains in Romans 9-11 the place of the Jews and the Gentiles. Hereby he uses the crucial verse of the Song of Moses, (Deut.32:21) what speaks about the distinction of Jews and Gentiles. It's the only place in his letters where he speaks about the *difference* of Jew and Gentile. And I would say that we as Christians hardly need this 3 chapters to understand the place of the Jews and hence our place, the place of Christians.

Let's go through some parts of the text, it begins with:

I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. (Rom.9:1-2)

An opening verse and important statement: great sorrow because of the state of unbelief of the Jewish people as a nation and the separation of these Jews from their spiritual renewal and salvation through their Messiah. And this as long as the time of the gentiles will last.

Paul begins hereby and ends with saying that all Israel will be saved. (Rom.11:26) In between he addresses the gentiles with information about their place regarding the relationship with Israel.

For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel. (Rom.9:3-5)

This extraordinary and unusual saying of Paul signifies not only his zeal for his own Jewish people, but it also alludes to the view he has in mind of the role the Jewish people would serve in God's plan. This is given in the following two verses 4-5.

They are the Israelites whom belongs the:

- the adoption of sons (prior to the gentiles)
- divine glory (*KaVoD*/Shechinah)
- covenants
- the receiving of the Torah
- the worship (the temple sacrificial system, Avodah(service))
- the promises.
- the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) from which comes Christ.

All these seven special gifts Paul mentioned, marks the uniqueness of this special people as a nation. As a nation they will be redeemed in the end. These gifts are given and bound to a nation. And they are irrevocable because it are Godly covenants and promises. However, Paul says that the Jews have stumbled over the stumbling stone. (v.32-33) This is the problem. But they do not fall completely and forever. (Rom.11:11) He marks his point boldly that Israel as a nation will remain with the promises. And his concern is that they may be saved and restored. (Rom.10:1) As soon as possible for the sake of his brothers. He knows that in the end "all Israel will be saved" and there he is longing for.

Paul first expresses a great personal tension. He said he wishes to be cut off from Christ for the sake of Israel. It's one or the other for Paul: with Israel and deny Christ, or with Christ and without the commonwealth of the people of Israel. Though in the end he declares that this Christ, who comes from their flesh, is God worthy to praise above all. (v.5)

But Paul goes on saying "not all Israelites truly belong to Israel". (v.6) Hereby he makes place for a time that Israel rejects his Messiah and give room for a calling of gentiles.

For Israel then, there could be a time that it seems that Israel would not make it and will be trampled down by the nations.

But again he stresses that in the end “all Israel will be saved”. The *promise* is the identifier. (v.8) The promise will remain and God will fulfill His words. (This is not what we see now happening or This is not what we see happening since the people of Israel did not accept)This is not what we see now what happened since the people of Israel didn't accept their Messiah, but shared anger(but rejected him) instead. It's about what we have to expect based upon the promises made to the people of Israel which is written in the Torah. This is what he says in Rom.9:6-22, it's about the promise which is now also extended to the gentiles, as much as there are called. The gentiles who now enter an era of grace. This was clearly seen by Paul that God elected people from the gentiles to become people of God.

So now Paul has a message to the gentiles regarding their place with respect to the Jews.

I suppose that Paul has the song of Moses (Deut.32) in mind when he wrote chapters 9-11. When he sees what happens, that the gentiles are foregoing the Jews in respect of the time of salvation, he must have a scripture what backed this up. If this people, the witnesses of the revelation of God (on Sinai), the people of the Torah and the promises, as he said, if they rejected Jesus, he *must* have a scripture for this. It could not only be a convincing Spiritual persuasion, and even not only an appearance of Jesus Himself, otherwise you could be a false prophet according to the Torah if you don't have more than some miracles (deut 13:1) and you're not based on scripture. I suppose he is building up a case upon the Song of Moses in this part of the letter to the Romans, chapter 9-11.

When Paul addresses the gentiles he speaks to the called ones, the reborn gentiles who came to faith in the God of Israel.

Romans 9-11, Faith brings righteousness for Jew and Gentile

Paul begins to point to the stumbling of the Jewish people as a matter/cause what brings salvation to the gentiles. But he directly points out too, that the salvation is first the Jew and then the Greek (Rom.1:16) This salvation is to be attained since Christ completed the suffering self sacrifice as an atonement for the sins of “all Israel”. And now the time has come that gentiles also may be part of “all Israel”. All this is done by faith in this Christ which gives true righteousness. And the “all Israel” factor is a mystery what will be revealed in the future. (Of course in future, otherwise it would eliminate the free will and choice to repent.)

Paul marks what really matters: faith. (Rom.10) The faith (emunah) is the true righteousness and will gain the true Torah. This is not something new to the Jews. It is the most basic tenet together with repentance. Paul explains this with a well known verse of the Torah, Deut.30:12: *For this commandment which I command you this day, it is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it to us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? But the word is very near to you, in your mouth, and in your heart, that you may do it.* And what is the Torah? It is the rule of Life. It is that what brings life.

And this is Paul’s midrash (commentary) on it: *For Christ is the fulfillment of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness of the law, “The one who does them will live by them.” But the righteousness which is of faith says this, “Don’t say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down); or, ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.)” But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth, and in your heart;” that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is*

Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart, one believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Rom.10:4-10)

I have to say that many of the church communities are taught that the law (Torah) is the opposite (opposed) to grace. Paul doesn't do this here: Christ (grace) is *the end* of the law. (Rom.10:4-6) Not the opposite. Moses described the righteousness of the law, (v.5) but the same Moses described the righteousness of faith (v.6) in Deut.30:12.

Now the gentiles can get the same reward as the Jews can get, but it is not due to the law, but by means of belief that Christ fulfilled it and gives it to the believer.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise. (Gal.3:28-29) Paul here pointed back to the Abrahamic covenant in which *all the people of the earth* will be blessed. (Ge.12:3)

But it is all about those who are righteous. There's a calling amongst Jew and now also gentiles, to become righteous, and an election to become one of them, one of the chosen people. This is what Paul says in Romans chapter 9. It's not just Israel: *For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel. (Rom.9:6)* And then Paul shows on the hand of the patriarchs how Israel became Israel. Not by ethnic descendant, but by election. And not by works, but by faith. You can't rely on the fact that you are the seed of Abraham: *Neither, because they are Abraham's seed, are they all children. But, "In Isaac will your seed be called." (Rom.9:7)* And you can't rely on what comes from Isaac, because before the children were born it was already known that *it was said to her, "The elder will serve the younger." Even as it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." (Rom.9:12-13)* There's an election according to God's grace. And since the Messiah has come, this election is extended to the gentiles. The true people of God comes from anything but he who calls. (Rom.9:11) There's a calling now also for the gentiles. It's all from God who says: *I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom*

I have compassion. (Rom.9:15 / Ex.33:19) Will that eliminate the free will? Far from that: But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed ask him who formed it, "Why did you make me like this?" Or hasn't the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel for honor, and another for dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath made for destruction, and that he might make known the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory, us, whom he also called, not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles? (Rom.9:20-24)

Now Paul concludes: the goyim who didn't seek righteousness got it, but, again, as many as are called. We can't stress this enough. It's an investigation for all of us: are we really called? Do we have true faith? Do we walk the right path? What are our deeds? Did we give our heart to Him who it belongs to? It are not the Jews, it is not the church, it is not our community, but those who fear God. (Ps.118:4)

The problem Paul faces is the lack of faith by the people of Israel. He admitted they have a zeal (אִנּוּן kinah, rendered back to Hebrew) of God (Rom.10:2), but what he wishes he would see by the Jews is the righteousness what comes through faith, which what he said is *that if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.* (Rom.10:9)

Romans 9-11, Grace for Gentiles

Now Paul says: *Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.* (Rom.10:13) What then about the Jews? He asks himself. *How would they call on him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in him whom they have not heard? How will they hear without a preacher? And how will they preach unless they are sent?* (Rom.10:14-15) Because, indeed, it is said that the Jews have

the good tiding? *How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the Gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!*” How would they bring it if they don’t believe in Jesus? Now Paul points to Isaiah: *Lord, who has believed our report? (Is.53:1)* In fact, many didn’t believe in the Good News. (Rom.10:16)

Didn’t the Jews hear it? Of course they hear it. *Their sound went out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. (Rom.10:18)* But they didn’t understand, they didn’t know it. Why? Because of this prophecy from the song of Moses: *I will provoke you to jealousy with that which is no nation, With a nation void of understanding I will make you angry. (Rom.10:19)* And as Isaiah says: *I was found by those who didn’t seek me. I was revealed to those who didn’t ask for me. (Rom.10:20)*

Romans 9-11, The beginning of the Age of the gentiles

The Jews heard the good news, they have the scriptures, (Rom.3:1) they brought it to the ends of the world. (Rom.10:18) But they rejected repenting. The common Jews didn’t hear the gospel yet in Paul’s time. And therefore they couldn’t tell it to the world also and detract the message of Christ.

They are still in the time of exile and bear the curse as it is written in the Torah. And although Paul sees the glory of the Messianic times in the prophecy (Rom.10:15) of Isaiah, he stresses here the fact that it is also stated in scripture that they [the Jews] are not all obedient to the gospel (v.16) and hence, like Isaiah said *Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?* the Jews failed to understand.

In general the Jews did not accept the messiah and take the gospel with repentance. And then he comes to the conclusion

that there must be a time of rejection of the Jewish people, a time of suffering. (In this case you can see to the classic Jewish view on Isaiah 53¹⁴) The people of Israel didn't understand. (Rom.10:2,19,21; Rom.11:8) The time wasn't there yet for the restoration of the people of Israel, the end of the exile, and the gathering in the land, to live in peace. This will not mean that the gentiles understood it well. They all were furious, *Why do the nations rage, and the peoples plot a vain thing? Against the Anointed one? (Ps.2)* The Roman power is the best example for this.

Just a few, a very few who are faithful and take the yoke of the despised Messiah. There would come a time of suffering rather than a glorious Messianic time on earth. And we see now that the people of Israel have its own unique role. Based on their special covenant as a nation and special blessings they also have special curses as a nation. The church have easily understood the curse in the past (and misused it), but now we see the emerging blessing since they have the land Israel back again. But also those who are called from the gentiles share the suffering. Since the great Master suffered, all his fellow people have a share in it, and a new era is about to begin. Not the glory of this world, but the world-to-come was expected. And despite of suffering, they already had glorious times because of the victory of the Messiah. That's why Paul in the midst of his exaltation quoted psalm 44:23 *Yes, for your sake we are killed all day long. We are regarded as sheep for the slaughter. (Rom.8:36)*

Although now the age of the gentiles was emerging, we must not forget that in every case God always sought the Jews first. Also now when Jesus came, he came to: *first the Jew and then the Greek (Rom.1:16)*. This is obviously said by Jesus himself. *Go*

¹⁴ I like the view of Franz Delitzsch. He refers to it as a pyramid: At the top a single servant who suffers vicariously for true Israel, at the middle a remnant within Israel and at the bottom the elect nation as a whole. [Franz Delitzsch](#), *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, trans. James Martin, commentary on the old Testament. (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1973) 2:174-75

not into the way of the gentiles or into any city of the Samaritans... but go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (Matth.10:5-6, 15:24) and: It's not proper to take bread of the children and throw it to the dogs. (Matth.15:26) At the beginning of his teachings he directed only to the Jews, as he instructed his disciples to do so. And God even never will forget them. Without any doubt, nothing else is so clear in scripture.

Romans 9-11, A no-people: the church emerged

Paul further writes in chapter 11 that the Jews are still there, but along them a gentile people emerged and received Godly blessings. They are called a no-people in the song of Moses Deut.32:21 , which concept Paul adopted here. It is just a minority from the broad spectrum of gentiles from then until now that are “called ones”, who got light, who are grafted in the olive tree, the tree of Israel, of true Jews. Of saved gentiles. Now the times of the gentiles began. A period in which God would choose gentiles along the Jews. Moreover, He went to the gentiles. This was written in the song of Moses. There God said if they [the Jews] leave me and serve other gods, I'll leave them and go the other people, to a no-people. The time of the gentiles definitely came to existence since the Jews exiled after the temple was destroyed in the year 70. After then there was definitely a parting of the ways of Jews and Gentiles¹⁵. Judaism last as a religion apart from Christianity which became strong organized since Constantine the Great in the fourth century. The church came to existence. It adopted pagan customs and deviated highly from its Hebrew roots. In our time there's a new interest on the original Hebrew sources by the Messianic movements, often

¹⁵ See for this topic: The Parting of the Ways - Between Christianity and Judaism, James Dunn, 1991

driven by Jews (from the past 100 years or so) who came to faith in Jesus. It was the Jews who began to point to the failings of the church. However, notwithstanding all the failings and idolatry, within that church always had a minority of true believers that existed within it. The church brought gentiles to the God of Israel.

The times of the gentiles will last until the trampling down of Jerusalem will come to an end. (*Luke 21:24: Jerusalem will be trampled down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*)

Romans 9-11, The warning

The times of the gentiles will come to an end. A huge warning was made by Paul for those who might think that the gentile church became in the place of the Jewish people. How is it possible that replacement theology or supersessionism had become such a vastly held doctrine in the church? With such a bold warning; *Don't be conceited, but fear; for if God didn't spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. See then the goodness and severity of God. Toward those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in his goodness; otherwise you also will be cut off.* (Rom.11:20-22) Unfortunately, most Christians are part of the instrument used to torture the Jews. How much have the Jews suffer in the name of Christianity! Reading books like *Our hands are stained with blood*, By Michael G. Brown (1991) helps Christians understand how they have caused the suffering of Jews.

And by this 'Christian' behaviour, surely the punishment written in the song of Moses will take place upon those, upon the church, upon the gentiles. We can see the severity of God by the people of Israel. There is only one way to avoid it: repentance. We as the church, wherever denomination we

belong to, we are in great need of repentance. There's no other way. We must repent. Only then we can go through the narrow corridor of anger of God, which is about to fall upon us. *Vengeance is mine, and recompense [said God] At the time when their foot [of the church] shall slide. (Deut.32:35)* repentance, nothing else we can do. The only problem is, we (as the church) don't see our faults yet.

The Song of Moses

*Give ear, you heavens, and I will speak;
Let the earth hear the words of my mouth. (Deut.32:1)*

Paul was a well versed Torah scholar who extraordinary came to faith through a revelation of Jesus the Messiah. The spiritual sense was highly emphasized and promptly he used the Torah to teach his Jewish brothers against the common practice of just following the instructions and to be good and helpful to others so God would give the reward, sooner or later. His conviction that Jesus was the Messiah offered Paul a great challenge: How can it be that the Jews as a people didn't see and accept Jesus as their Messiah? He certainly knows without any doubt that they (as a complete nation and once completely restored as 12 tribes) **must** accept the Messiah. And the Messiah must restore the nation and makes the world a place of devotion and reason for all people to glorify the only God. We saw at the beginning of chapter 9 that Paul faces this challenge. He knew the strong tension between the spiritual part of the Messiah now revealed, and the physical part, the restoration of Israel, not revealed yet. He found himself anywhere in between, knew that both were true, but couldn't quite comprehend it as he called it a mystery that Israel rejected Jesus at that time, but in the end would accept him as the ultimate Messiah.

In this situation he (and we too) must ask the question how does this all fit into the Torah?

It's quite clear that he used a concept of the song of Moses in Romans 9-11: a no-people who caused the Jews to jealousy. And he combined it with the prophecies of Isaiah.

Since there were so many gentiles who came to faith after Jesus ministry, Paul explained this must be the time spoken about in the song of Moses. (Deut.32) There it states that God turned His face from his beloved Israel to the gentiles who are called there: a no-people. All Because of the sins of Israel who turned away from God to other lovers. This shift caused a calling of the gentiles to faith. They are called a no-people and many of them are enemies of Israel and God. We saw that in history. However, there is a little part of true people what is called and adopted into the great nation and people of God, the righteous ones. Christendom is the vessel of them.

Paul uses following verse as the foundation of his message about the Jews' relation to the gentiles in his letter to the Romans, chapter 9-11. Perhaps this is the key to understand Rom.9-11.

He build his case on Deut.32:21:

*They have roused Me to jealousy with a no-god;
they have provoked Me with their vanities;
and I will rouse them to jealousy with a no-people;
I will provoke them with a vile nation.*

הֵם קִנְאוּנִי בְּלֹא-אֵל
כְּעִסּוּנִי בְּהַבְלִיָּהֶם
וְאֲנִי אֶקְנִיאֵם בְּלֹא-עַם
בְּגוֹי נָבֵל אֶכְעִיסֵם

We need to consider the broader context. The song of Moses is a most highly profound poetry which speaks in a few sentences about the whole story of the people of Israel. It is a culmination of the whole Torah with respect to the world history and its God and the place of the people of Israel. One who sees the meaning of this song sees the past, the present and the future in one sense. Therefore much is hidden and there isn't that much of a simple meaning of the text.

But now Paul provides us a key to understand this verse. And in some sense, we are blessed that we live in a time were so much happened already, from shoah to the state of Israel, and from crusaders to Israel-lovers, that we can see more then we have ever seen before, only if we got eyes for it.

A good comment on this important verse is given by Keil and Delitzsch. Here's their explanation of Deut.32:20-22:

"And He said, I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end will be: for they are a generation full of perversities, children in whom is no faithfulness. They excited My jealousy by a no-god, provoked Me by their vanities: and I also will excite their jealousy by a no-people, provoke them by a foolish nation. For a fire blazes up in My nose, and burns to the lowest hell, and consumes the earth with its increase, and sets on fire the foundations of the mountains." The divine purpose contains two things: - first of all (Deuteronomy 32:20) the negative side, to hide the face, i.e., to withdraw His favour and see what their end would be, i.e., that their apostasy would bring nothing but evil and destruction; for they were "a nation of perversities" (taphuchoth is moral perversity, Proverbs 2:14; Proverbs 6:14), i.e., "a thoroughly perverse and faithless generation" (Knobel); - and then, secondly (Deuteronomy 32:21), the positive side, viz., chastisement according to the right of complete retaliation. The Israelites had excited the jealousy and vexation of God by a no-god and vanities; therefore God would excite their jealousy and vexation by a no-people and a foolish nation. How this retaliation would manifest itself is not fully defined however here, but is to be gathered from the conduct of Israel towards the Lord. Israel

had excited the jealousy of God by preferring a no-god, or הבלים, nothingness, i.e., gods that were vanities or nothings (Elilim, Leviticus 19:4), to the true and living God, its Father and Creator. God would therefore excite them to jealousy and ill-will by a no-people, a foolish nation, i.e., by preferring a no-people to the Israelites, transferring His favour to them, and giving the blessing which Israel had despised to a foolish nation. It is only with this explanation of the words that full justice is done to the idea of retribution; and it was in this sense that Paul understood this passage as referring to the adoption of the Gentiles as the people of God (Romans 10:19), and that not merely by adaptation, or by connecting another meaning with the words, as Umbreit supposes, but by interpreting it in exact accordance with the true sense of the words.¹⁶

Where God chooses, it always meant “as many as they are called”. So when we read *all gentiles* or *all Israel* or the gentiles *in the place* of Israel, we must not read it as altogether, but we have to go with quality, not quantity. There’s one people of God and it is a minority. The kingdom of God is extended with people from outside Israel since the calling of the gentiles after the death of Christ. This is explained by the analogy of the grafted-in olive branches.

¹⁶ Keil and Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1864, on Deuteronomy 32. ([Online](#) at [Biblos.com](#))

The Song of Moses, God chooses a no-people

And I will rouse them to jealousy with a no-people. (Deut.32:21)

The terms non-god and non-people are used as the same expression in verse 21. The first expression is used to describe the idolatry of Israel who “provoked God with a non-god”. In return, God went from Israel and chose a non-people, a nation void of counsel (v.28) who were not educated with Torah.

It is a retaliation to Israel who chose another God, which is not a God, therefore God chose another people which is not a people. A people without Torah and without God couldn't exist. But God went to that people and brought them to existence and gave salvation and eternal life. At the same time God forces Israel and make them jealous.

Thus the time of the gentiles emerged. And *a light unto the nations* came to teach them as many as are called.¹⁷ However, we have to note here that the greatest part of the nations remain enemies of Israel and unfortunately even the greatest part of the Christians. The same thing happened amongst the Christians as happened to the Jews: when *Jeshurun waxed fat*, they deviated from the truth and strayed from God. They became enemies of the true Christians too. However, Paul in his time experience and watched a revival amongst the gentiles. And structured a religion of the gentiles.

Paul certainly knows that the exile did not come to an end yet under the Roman empire. The curse still was upon the Jewish people. (Deut.28 and Lev.26) The Jews, certainly the 10 tribes, were scattered amongst the nations and under government of a strange power. The words were fulfilled: “*I will set my face*

¹⁷ The Jews and the Messiah are described by Isaiah, but here the Messiah Jesus is the first one, called the Servant, who put that light unto the nations, including the Tanach.

against you so that you will be defeated by your enemies; those who hate you will rule over you” “If after all this you will not listen to me, I will punish you for your sins seven times over. If in spite of these things you do not accept my correction but continue to be hostile toward me, I myself will be hostile toward you and will afflict you for your sins seven times over.” (Lev.26:14-45) And if you put here the prophecies of the 70 years of exile of Jeremiah and the 7x70 of Daniel and even the hidden times given by Daniel, then, by putting here about 2000 years of Christian gentiles, we see the period of the gentiles, along with the exile of the Jews. As the Lord says: “They will forsake me and break the covenant I made with them. On that day I will become angry with them and forsake them; I will hide my face from them, and they will be destroyed.” (Deut.31:16b-17) It’s a hard way. But they, the Jews, will learn, they have the promise and they will repent too. And what about the gentiles? Can we see something in these text about the gentiles? “you [Jews] will sow your seed in vain, for your enemies [gentiles] will eat it. I will set my face against you, and you will be struck before your enemies. Those who hate you will rule over you.” (Lev.26:16) “I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies.” (Lev.26:36) “The foreigner [ger] who is in the midst of you shall mount up above you higher and higher; and you shall come down lower and lower.” (Deut.28:43)

If it says that the foreigner (ger) will raise up and the Jew will become lower, than a shift is taking place exactly as the song of Moses tells us, namely that a no-people will raise and provoke the Jews to jealousy, as written: *and I will rouse them to jealousy with a no-people; I will provoke them with a vile nation.* (Deut.32:2) So when the gentiles come into picture here, they are called a no-people who will raise up even with a blessing because of the fornication of Israel who chose other gods. Because God chose the gentiles, as much as they are called, in return. Why? To make the Jews jealous. To bring them to study Torah even more, and doing repentance and to find eventually the Messiah Jesus. But it would take a long, very long time. “For the children of Israel shall sit solitary many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, ..” (Hos.3:4) Now we see already nearly 2000 years of Christian gentile superiority, mostly as “old Roman” oppressors.

Paul saw a beautiful start of a no-people in his time what became a people “grafted in” the wonderful people called Israel. It was clear that the Holy Spirit came over them and made them as reborn ones with a zeal for the Torah by gift. Because God invited them and called them to join Him. But that no-people had also another side. Very soon there was the development of anti-christ within the denominations of repented gentiles. The apostle John told us this in 1 John 2:18: *Little children, these are the end times, and as you heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen. By this we know that it is the end times.* That no-people created a power which was described by the prophet Daniel as the Roman power, also called Edom. Of course that power like the Roman Catholic church or the crusaders e.g., did not picture the true believers.

What Paul saw was the beginning of a small, narrow line of believers who came to faith through the Messiah Jesus, and spread this gospel around the world. They shared the oppression and rejection of Christ. They were not from this world, but expected the world to come. They did not live for today, but lived in faith looking out for what is to come. This always was a small part of that no-people and it was destined to serve the world as long as “the time of the gentiles” there was. It turned out in history the same as what happened by the Jewish people: deviating from God, astray and walking after other gods. Just a little remnant what remains faithful. And that little is not listened to.

So, although Paul describes that these blessed gentiles are saved from eternal death and have a share in the commonwealth of Israel and its salvation, the far greater part (it looks like entirely) of that no-people is not faithful.

But Paul also knows that all the Jewish people will be brought back to their land and live in peace. Hence, in the time he was living, when he sees that the Jewish people did not accept the Messiah yet, he points the gentile believers to the song of Moses. There it states that at the time of repression and curse of the Jewish people there will be a *no-people* that will bring the

Jewish people to jealousy and provoke them to anger. (Deut.32:21) A no-people that comes into picture because God chose them. A No-people what would prevail because of the curse what came upon the Jewish people. This all happens for a certain period, yet the Jews are never abandoned. It was just for a time because of the curse. Like the prophet Hosea said that they would not be God's people for a time.... YET they will be unmeasurable. (Hosea 1:10) And ultimately they will be My people were I have compassion for. Then the roles are changed. So Paul doesn't see the salvation of Israel in his time, but based on the scripture, and particularly in the Song of Moses here, he knew that it would come surely.

The Song of Moses, Jealousy

*And I will rouse them to jealousy with a no-people;
I will provoke them with a vile nation. (Deut.32.21)*

Where does Paul points to and what does he see in this text of the song of Moses? (Deut.32:21) That there would be a "no-people" that will get as much glory as to make the people of Israel *jealous*, to cause them to have a zeal for the truth. God chose from among the gentiles a new community, provided with the Holy Spirit through Jesus, as much as are called. That's what Paul saw.

However, the Jews would be despised and rejected by that no-people soon after the time of the apostles. That "no-people" are the gentiles in general. The mainstream however is Christianity and we may consider Islam too in this context. In the last 2000 years mainstream Christianity is corrupted and became an huge enemy of the Jews, unfortunately.

But in fact Christianity leans on the shoulder of just a very few righteous ones (to begin with Paul and the apostles) who stick to Christ and the Word. Common Catholic Christianity is

considered by them as an antichrist power ruled by a false head, in stead of Christ. The old Protestants pictured the Pope very clear as the antichrist. But nowadays even Protestants doesn't differ that much with Catholics and with the Reformation they didn't finish their job so to say.

So in the beginning Paul saw the good part of that no-people, but soon it disappeared under the greater deviating church.

The text of Deut.32:21 could be compared to a relationship. When a woman walks after another men to make sins with, she provokes her husband to anger and jealousy. So does Israel do with God. Now God is saying when you do this to Me, I'll do the same and choose another people (as a husband) from the goyim, to provoke you, oh Israel. (Like the analogy of Hosea ch.1)

That this text is used by Paul as one of the fundamentals he used to build his case upon, is seen by the places he mentioned by the word jealousy. We need to understand this word. It also means zealot.

Paul used it in: Rom.10:2, 19, 11:11.

For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. (Rom.10:2)

But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. (Rom.10:19)

I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. (Rom.11:11)

This are key points in his message. What we need to do is to take a look at this word, the Hebrew word כְּנָף (kenah). It's translated as jealous, zeal, zealous, eager.

Etymologically, jealousy and zeal came from the same source. Originally they both came from the Greek zelos. This passed into post-classical Latin as zelus, which later produced the

adjective *zelosus*. Old French incorporated this as *gelos* or *jelous* and passed it on to English.¹⁸

The Greek word denoted "jealousy" and "fervor, enthusiasm", and it is this strand of meaning that has come down to us as *jealous*. *Jalousie* was the French equivalent of *jealousy*. Most of the words that became distinctive terms for "jealousy" were originally used in a good sense of "zeal" and "emulation".¹⁹ The Hebrew word *kenab* has the meaning of intense desire or intense jealousy. It also could have a good sense in it. And since we are looking for the meaning of the Hebrew word, we have to look at that language and tradition.

The root idea in the Old Testament word *jealous* is to become intensely red. It seems to refer to the changing color of the face or the rising heat of the emotions which are associated with intense zeal or fervor over something dear to us. In fact, both the Old and New Testament words for jealousy are also translated as "zeal." Being *jealous* and being *zealous* are essentially the same thing in the Bible. God is *zealous* —eager about protecting what is precious to Him.²⁰

It affects the body with an emotional power, it moves the blood to the head, and would result in anger or hard working for the sake of the reason what caused it. An expression with a direct connection with this text is given in Is.65:5. The transgression of the people of Israel caused God to say: "These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burns all day". And our text gives: *For a fire is kindled in My nostril, and burneth unto*

¹⁸ Etymological Dictionary of the English Language, and: The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary.

¹⁹ See: <http://wordinfo.info/unit/2343/ip:1/il:Z> and: <http://www.christinyou.net/pages/jealousy.html> See also this blogpost: <http://lorettaoakes.blogspot.nl/2008/07/zealous-and-jealous-hebrew-perspective.html>

²⁰ <http://bible.org/seriespage/jealous-god>

the depths of the nether-world. (Deut.32:22) All this sounds not that positive, but it can turn out in a positive way though. Just to note, when the Hebrew speaks of a zealous God, then it is in the positive sense, because He is a true lover.

Jealousy creates power to act. And when Paul renders this to the gentiles who makes the Jews jealous, (Rom.11:11) because God is passing the promises to the chosen ones from the gentiles, he gives this a positive turn to make the Jews act and get the grace (back) from their God. Their everlasting God who doesn't abolish the law/Torah, covenant and promises etc. There's a Jewish tradition that says that in every negative thing lies something positive. They will seek God after all.

We can see it that Paul used it with the meaning of zealous in Rom.11:14. There it says: *If by any means I may provoke [parazelo] to emulation my flesh and might save some of them.* In other words he would be zealous for the truth and his body filled with power to cause his brothers to get saved. I know that the word *flesh* is normally used as for the Israelites who are his brothers according to the flesh, but why can't we read it in this way?

The Hebrew word *kenah* (קנא or קנאה) is used in the following verses. (And many other verses.)

It is one of the attributes and name of God: *for thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.* (Ex.34:14)

For I the LORD thy God am a jealous God. (Ex.20:5)

The zeal of the God of hosts will perform this. (Is.9:6)

The LORD will not pardon him, but then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy will smoke against that man, and all the curse that is written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD will blot out his name from under heaven. (Deut.29:20)

We see it in scripture by Pinchas who in his zeal for God killed Zimri to stop the wrath of God which came upon the people of Israel because they sinned. There it states: *Phinehas the son of Eleazar the son of Aaron the kohen has turned My anger*

away from the children of Israel by his zealously avenging (*אֶת־הַקִּנְיָנִים*) Me among them, so that I did not destroy the children of Israel because of My zeal. (Num.25:11) Rashi commented on this: The term *הַקִּנְיָנִים* always denotes someone motivated to take vengeance for some matter. And this is exactly what is meant: It should cause Israel to take vengeance because of their former sins to correct their behaviour and repent, for now they see that God choose gentiles to be His children and moved away from His original covenant people.

At another place we see that Joshua also was zealous, but not in the right way. He complained to Moses that Eldad and Medad were prophesying and thought that belongs only to his master Moses. Whereon Moses responded: "Are you zealous for my sake? If only all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would bestow His spirit upon them!" (Num.11:29) Rashi comments on the word *Kinab*: "The term *הַקִּנְיָנִים* is used to denote a person who takes a matter to heart, whether to avenge or to help; in old French, *enportement*; holding the bulk of the burden."

And what about Paul himself? He was *exceedingly zealous for the traditions of his fathers*. (Gal.1:14) Several scholars think he belonged to the Zealots²¹, a first century Jewish movement, written in hebrew as: *קִנְיָנִים* Paul certainly knows what it was to be zealous, to have a zeal for the truth. He also knows however, that it was God who wanted him to repent, to use his zeal in the right way. And that is exactly what God is doing with the Jewish people.

Another verse which makes sense in our context is from Zachariah. When the angel asks God: *how long will you not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which you have had indignation these seventy years?* (Zec.1:12) (Here the 70 years of exile are meant, which are thousands of years actually.) On

²¹ As James Dunn does. (Dunn, Old Doctrine, p.23.)

what the Lord response: *Thus saith the Lord of hosts: I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased with the nations that are at ease; for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction. (Zec.1:14-15)*

This correlates with the last part of the song of Moses. *I thought I would make an end of them [the Israelites], I would make their memory cease from among men; Were it not that I dreaded the enemy's [common gentiles] provocation, lest their adversaries should misdeem, lest they should say: Our hand is exalted, and not the LORD hath wrought all this. (Deut.32:25-26)*

But in fact God would use (a chosen part of the) gentiles to make the Jews jealous. This is what Paul not only believed, but also experienced. And this, as seen in the song of Moses, is all a part of the story of the people of Israel. They were the chosen people. They were the commandments, they were the blessings and the curses. They were the promises. They fell into apostasy. They were brought up again. But if they are now drawn into the greatest exile ever and must go through the greatest punishment ever and must suffer more than any nation, are they abandoned now? Is it all over? NO says Paul. Of course not. Gentiles are part of the story, but they are not interchanged with Israel!

*I say then, Have they [the Jews] stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to **jealousy** (**παράζηλώω parazēlōō**). (Rom.11:11)*

Paul brings the meaning of Deut.32:21 here into reality. A no-people, chosen by God, who provoke the people of Israel to jealousy. Paul sees it happen. Based on the verse Deut.32:21 of the song of Moses, we can assume that the words jealousy and zeal have both a place in the Hebrew word for jealousy (*kinab*). The Greek and the English word have the same voice.

*For I bear them record that they have a **zeal** (**ζήλος zēlos**) of God, but not according to knowledge. (Rom.10:2)*

Here we see the word in a positive sense. The Jews would be more and more dedicated to the Torah. A more zeal for the Torah. And you can see it: After the destruction of the temple rabbi Jochanan ben Zakkai e.g. began with a great school in Javne to learn Torah. And it expanded greatly with works of describing the oral Torah (Talmud) and many chachamim (sages) came after him, like Rambam and Rashi, expounding the Torah for the people of Israel. They have a great zeal. They are provoked by the loss of the temple, the loss of a king, the loss of the sanhedrin, the loss of the land, the loss of the prophets, and so on. But they are also provoked by a no-people, a people who utterly proudly claim the promises as the common Christians and Muslims do. They have to take stand against them. And that makes Israel to a stand-alone people, at best they have the Torah as partner, but the Divine Glory moved away and turned to a tiny little community of true believers in Jesus the Messiah. They are provoked by this community, mostly by reflecting on the witnesses (apostles) as is described in the so called New Testament. They have very strong premises. In fact they are one of them. If that comes close, then they are bothered whether what to believe. Jews are challenged when truth comes to its original source.

The people of Israel have a zeal for God. And they are called to have a zeal for God. They are even called to be an example before all the people of the world. They are a light unto the nations. That's why they have a great responsibility. And you might say whether they are an example when they fall? Certainly yes, especially in this part. An example for everybody! Who do not fall? Paul warned the gentiles for this: *"Do not boast over those branches [the Jews]. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. (Rom.11:18)*

Paul let us now that they have a zeal for God in his time. (Rom.10:2) And we can see throughout history that the Jews have a zeal for God. But what says Paul, how does he put that *zeal for God* of the Jews with respect to Jesus? He followed the statement with: *but not according to knowledge*. If we render the word knowledge back to Hebrew it is the word *Da'at*, we'll get some insights into the deeper meaning of it. Knowledge

here involves love, kindness and fear-of-God. It's about knowing God and having light. As it is said: *The entrance of your words gives light, it gives understanding (Binah). (Ps.119:130)* And we read this: *Without knowledge (Da'at) there is no understanding (Binah), without understanding there is no knowledge. (Pirkei Avot 3:21)* Or to go even deeper in it: *For, as is known, the term Knowledge (Da'at) connotes a sensitivity of the soul, and this is comprised of Grace (Chesed) and Power (Gevurah). Grace (Chesed) gives rise to love and Power (Gevurah) to fear. Only when one possesses the attribute of Knowledge (Da'at) and spiritual sensitivity, will one experience the kinds of love and fear of God.*²²

The problem Paul faces is that the Jews didn't have the understanding and the real wisdom which comes from the Holy Spirit who teaches us. They want to achieve it but they didn't receive it. Because they didn't receive it and because it was given to the gentiles, to a no-people, Paul was arguing to the gentiles that this would give them a reason to show the beauty they have got, to make the Jews jealous. Then, at least, it would give the gentile believers a reason to live a good life as an example for the Jews, to remove any (remaining) antisemitism.

²² As said by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, Tanya, Likutei Amarim, end of Chapter 46. (<http://www.chabad.org/dailystudy/tanya.asp?tDate=5/6/2009>)

The Song of Moses, Those who are not called by My name

I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. (Deut.32:21)

Paul uses Isaiah 65 to prove his explanation of the verse of the song of Moses. He mentioned the opening words of this part of Isaiah's prophecy. "I was found by those who didn't seek me. I was revealed to those who didn't ask for me." (Is.65:1 as Paul cited it in Rom.10:20) This prophecy is the mirror of the verse of the song of Moses. It shows the view Paul had in mind and we can read it in the first part of chapter 65, but especially in the first verse: "I gave access to them that asked not for Me, I was at hand to them that sought Me not; I said: 'Behold Me, behold Me', unto a nation that was not called by My name."

What we see here is that a nation is invited which is *not called by My name*. Here the gentiles are meant *as many as are [to be] called*. This nation, this new community is formed by means of a calling of the gentiles. Now it seems that God's purpose has changed from the election of Israel to an election from among the gentiles. Now God says to the gentiles the for the Jew very known and intimate Hebrew words: Hineny, Hineny! (See, here I am, Is.65:1) two times to stress its meaning. God passes the Jew and invites the Gentile. This is not something common in scripture. Instead, it's rather hidden, the same as the story about the suffering Messiah. But it still is there and this is what Paul used and explained to make his religion as it were for the gentiles. This is not an invention of Paul. Rather he sees it happen that the gentiles receive the Holy Spirit (glory/presence of God) and the revelation of God through Christ. After the Messiah revealed himself to him in an extraordinary way, he moved on to comprehend this new development in history.

Again, not that there is one great gentile nation now what obeys God in the true manner. No, the opposite, John said

that there will be soon an antichrist power what will dominate. So the common gentiles are not the community called by God. The greatest church power is dominated by Roman rules, and not by the true Messianic King. True hearts who have the true King, are walking the way of the suffering servant. (And are certainly not anti semitic...)

But it is astonishing that the calling of God goes to the gentiles instead of the Jews. In Isaiah 1 there are many parallels with the song of Moses. There also is a verse which points to the gentiles: *Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom! Listen to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah! (Is.1:10)* This is very rare that the people of Gomorrah are summoned to listen to the word of God. Here the prophet passes the Jews to get the gentiles listening.

God goes on through the words of Isaiah to depict Israel as a sinful nation. *Behold it is described before Me (Is.65:6)* As it is in the curses in Deut.28 However there's a remnant (Is.65:8-10) what will be rewarded with a possession of the land. But those who have forsaken God will be punished. (Is.65:11-12)

Then verse 15 tells us something special. *And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto Mine elect: 'So may the Lord GOD slay thee'; but He shall call His servants by another name.* It says your (the Jews) name will be a curse for the chosen ones (as many as are called from the gentiles). Who are the chosen ones? Those who became a servant of God and his Messiah Jesus. *But His servants will be recalled with a different name.* Namely: Christians. They are set apart from *Jewishkeit*. They didn't hear the Torah. They bear a different burden, the "cross" what means that they become a servant like their Master, a suffering servant. They learn the Torah while "standing on one foot": Love.²³

²³ According to a well-known tradition of Hillel and Shammai, the Golden Rule. As stated: *You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Lev.19:18)* Rabbi Akiva says: "This is a fundamental [all-inclusive] principle of the Torah." - [Torath Kohanim 19:45]

They suffer because they are hated by the world, and because the fight against selfishness and the satan.²⁴

This community is Greek and Western colored, not Hebrew. The Hebrews or Jews are colored by the Talmud, the Torah covenant and scriptures. They have a considerable distance from Christ. For a long period of nearly 2000 years already. But the last hundred years are turning. After many Jews assimilate in Europe and departed from the Torah, the greatest tragedy happened: A total *Endlösung* was issued, the shoa happened. After this they were drawn back to Torah and the state of Israel was established, albeit secular, but it was regarded as the beginning of the redemption of the Jewish people. Now since they have the land, time is running out and obviously things are being prepared for the great meeting with the Messiah.

Because in the end, in the Messianic Age, we would reach another state of being. *For behold. I'm creating new heavens and a new earth. The wolf and the lamb will gaze as one*" See also Is.66, the second part which ends with: *And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.*

Isaiah 65 shows us the preparation of the Kingdom of God where the gentiles are called to join since the Messiah has come and fulfilled all the necessary things to get everyone, from the end of the world, in the glory of God, the eternal life and the complete salvation. On the other side it shows the wrath of God on the godliness people. And if the wrath appears on the chosen ones, how much more would it be poured out on all the gentiles who didn't hear the good message of peace and didn't repent before the merciful King!

²⁴ Jews are used to call this "evil inclination" (Hebrew: Yetser Hara)

The Song of Moses, The analogy of Hosea

*He said, I will hide my face from them,
I will see what their end shall be:
For they are a very perverse generation,
Children in whom is no faithfulness. (Deut.32:20)*

Hosea was a prophet who lived in the time before the exile. He was summoned to exchange his wife for another, a wife of prostitution. This wife bore him a son and his name was called Yezreel which means the scattered ones. It was a prophecy about Israel that they will be exiled, and they will be sown among the peoples. And she went forth and bore Lo-ruhama (no mercy) and Lo-ammi (not my people). Israel in exile was depicted by this woman and her family. Because of the idolatry of Israel the temple was destroyed and they were scattered all over the world. Only through the house of Judah God continued to keep his promises and to lead the faithful ones to Him. The 10 tribes left scattered until now, both physical and spiritual. They were named by Lo-ruhama. Judah returned and built the second temple and gave the son of God, the King David, the Messiah, although despised and rejected from the majority. Subsequently Judah also exiled after the year 70.

A mother is a type of life giver. She shapes the entire family and by her the society is set. If she is filthy the family is filthy too. And where does a family go when the mother runs after other men? The family is in trouble. At best they accuse her and turn to God. This is likely what the prophet Hosea would say. They are still *the children of the living God (Hos.2:1)* And the promise still is there: *And the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea. And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head, and they shall go up from the land, for great is the day of Jezreel. (Hos.2:2)*

Rashi says: "For you are not My people, and I will not be yours." I will show Myself as though I am not yours, and you shall be exiled among the nations, and even there you shall

multiply and grow, and there you shall lay it to your heart to return to Me, as it is said through Moses (Deut. 30:1,3): “And you shall lay it to your heart among all the nations where... has exiled you etc. And the Lord your God shall return your captivity.”²⁵

We see here that Israel is completely as 12 tribes in exile seemingly away from God for a certain time. This makes place for the time of the gentiles. The gentiles will end up falling completely away from God and cause the wrath of God to be poured out among all flesh. In this darkness of time the great return of the Jews will happen because God will come back to his people with great mercy and re-establish the kingdom of their father David in great glory. Then they will call God אִשִּׁי (Ishi, my man) and no longer בַּעֲלִי (Baali, my idol) (Hos.2:18).

The way of repentance and the way of restoration into the image of God is a way of learning that a man is cut off from the tree of life and has to be grafted in to the new tree. We have to put off the old man and put on the new. (Eph.4:22-24)

Even so with the nation of Israel. This is what happens according to the analogy of the prophet Hosea: There would be a state that the people of Israel will be without God as their personal and national God, as their Father. They are not the people (lo-ammi) of God. They are cut-off from the tree of life. Why? To learn and to get back through repentance to the tree of life as a new man.

The people of Israel as a *lo-ammi* of God has to make the same way as one who is called by God to be his child forever. As one whose confession is: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (Ps.22:1) Who is despised and a man of sorrow. (Is.53) Like it states in Psalm 102:9-10: *For I have eaten ashes like bread, And mixed my drink with tears, Because of your indignation and*

²⁵ Rashi on Hosea 2:1

your wrath, For you have taken me up, and thrown me away. To be cut-off, away from God is to suffer greatly, like Israel did the past 2000 years and more. But it has a purpose, suffering cleans the soul, also the soul of a nation.

All this suffering is for a certain time, because the purpose is to reconnect to God, to be restored into the image of God as he made us in the beginning. And the people of Israel has a role of a people chosen by God to show salvation and to give salvation by the Messiah to the nations. And while they are now cut-off and in exile, their Messiah was also cut-off but he is restored already and is the salvation of the gentiles and soon the salvation of the nation of Israel. (Just to note, that his first salvation is for the Jews and this still stands. They have the firstborn rights.) Israel will be restored to great glory. The state of lo-ammi is for a certain time until the time of the gentiles is over. This is what we see since 1948 and on, the beginning of the restoration of Israel.

This is what needs to be done, to be cut-off in order to become a new reestablished Adam without sins, completely clean, full in glory before God who made this new creation. This is why Israel has to be cut off. This is why the Messiah has to be cut off. (Dan.9) This is why the people of God has to be cut off (Rom.9:28) Because this is the punishment: we must die because of our sins. Nobody entered the land because of the sin. Only by merit of the promise Joshua and Caleb did enter and they will come as new beings. But we can live in this world already because of God who made the way for us which we can go only by repentance. What else could it be that the heavenly Father cuts his son off, other than to re-adopt him with great mercy? This is what everyone should have to learn in his life: to become a new being. This is what the nation of Israel is gone through.

It will all be fulfilled, both for the individual as well as for the national Israel. What began with the first verse of the song of Moses will now end with the fulfilment of the prophecy of Hosea. It was first said: *Give ear, you heavens, and I will speak; let the earth hear the words of my mouth.* (Deut.32:1) And now Hosea

wrote: *And it shall come to pass on that day, [that] I will answer, says the Lord; I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth. (Hos.2:23)* The song of Moses as a witness shall be sung forever and God will answer.

The Song of Moses, The time of the Gentiles

Our hand is exalted. (Deut.32:27)

For I don't desire, brothers, to have you ignorant of this mystery, so that you won't be wise in your own conceits, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. (Rom.11:25)

Through their fall salvation is come unto to Gentiles, (Rom.11:11)

The age of the gentiles begins with the great awakening after the death and resurrection of Christ when the Holy Spirit was poured out.

The song of Moses informs us of the times of the gentiles. God went to the no-people because of the idolatry of Israel. And they got not only material prosperity, there also was a calling among the gentiles to become a son of God. However, it is a little minority who joined God and comes to faith through Jesus.

The new community of Christian believers distinguishes itself directly from contemporary Judaism by an active missionary approach to reach out to all gentiles to the end of the world. Especially Paul was used by God for this task. (Acts 9:15) It also distinguish itself by a dominant gentile rule, based on the Jerusalem convent. (Acts 15) And Paul's *rule to all churches*,

(1Cor.7:17-24) which is *that each person should remain in the calling he was in when God called him.*²⁶

If Paul pinpoints the time of Jesus as the beginning of the time of the Gentiles, (Rom.11:11) then there will be an end too. And actually he is referring to the end by this words: *Until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. (Rom.11:25)* There must be an end to the reign of the Gentiles, the no-people, according to the song of Moses. *It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them. (Deut.32:35)*

The word fullness [of the gentiles] is to understand as a quality, not a quantity. It's not the fulness of a number. It's to understand in the sense of fulness of ripeness or the fulness of time. It is to read with the same meaning as Jesus said in Luke 22:34: *Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*

The age of the gentiles will end with great apostasy, ungodliness and unrighteousness. The "lawless one" who speaks blasphemies will rule.²⁷ At the end of this period of gentiles in which God gives salvation to (a little part of) this

²⁶ Studies in Christian Jewish relations, David J. Rudolph, 2010, Vol.5, Is.1, Art.2, P.3.

²⁷ And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming. (2Thess.2:8) And there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months. (Rev.13:5) From the Talmud: - Thus hath R. Johanan said: in the generation when the son of David [i.e., Messiah] will come, scholars will be few in number, and as for the rest, their eyes will fail through sorrow and grief. Multitudes of trouble and evil decrees will be promulgated anew, each new evil coming with haste before the other has ended. - In the generation when Messiah comes, young men will insult the old, and old men will stand before the young [to give them honour]; daughters will rise up against their mothers, and daughters-in-law against their mothers-in-law. The people shall be dog-faced, [they have no shame] and a son will not be abashed in his father's presence. (Sanh.97a)

no-people, Israel will be restored according to many prophecies. We can see the beginning of this by the establishment of the state of Israel. Now we can say that its duration is roughly about 2000 years. This years are dominated by Roman power and secondly Islamic power. The reign of Christ is far, far away from the appearance of these might, especially the rule of the Roman church and the Pope who pretends to be placeholder of Christ. However, there are still true believers as many as there are called.

At the end of that period the time will come that the people of Israel will say: *Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds. After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence. (Hos.6:1-3)*

Then the era of the Messiah will occur and Jew and Gentile shall see the glory of God. (Jer.33:16, Is.66:18, etc.)

The Song of Moses, A no-people as oppressors of the Jews

*How should one chase a thousand,
and two put ten thousand to flight. (Deut.32:30)*

Why is it that Paul use the no-people in a positive way to preach the good news unto them, while in the song of Moses the no-people will be punished because they behave as enemies of Israel?

Actually, this is the theme in the song of Moses. It is not that clear who are the enemies of Israel and God. It raises the question of who really are the Lord's people.

In the beginning of the time of the gentiles it looks great when the Holy Spirit was poured out and caused true godliness, soon foreign spirits came to power and the community was deceived from its roots. In a few hundreds of years a religion almost foreign to Judaism was born under Roman government. Christianity was not a part of Judaism anymore.

How is it possible that this tiny community of followers of Jesus within a few hundreds of years became the greatest religion and joined with the Roman power the greatest enemy of the Jews?

The answer is to confess that the evil lies in the church itself. Such a confession happened with the Reformation. From within the church. Martin Luther saw the errors of the established theology and the church governmental power. This was a major achievement of a true honest people who seek the truth. What they saw is astonishing: the head of a church being the antichrist. Especially the Puritans (English Protestants) had great insight in that matter.²⁸ They worked it out and saw a reign of the antichrist of more than 1000 years which fits in the 2000 years of Christian history.²⁹

This makes that common Christianity in history appeared as an evil power towards two things: true faith and the Jews. Also Islam, first appearing as a religion which brings people to the one God, but by the time in many cases hate towards the Jews was manifest. It's the same as by the Christians in some sense they have got something from the Jews and they soon used it

²⁸ Briefly told in the book: The Rise and Fall of Papacy, Robert Fleming jr., 1848. Based on great men like sir. Isaac Newton.

²⁹ It is believed by the Puritans and many other Protestants that the anti christ must reign for a period of 1260 years based on the prophecy of Daniel and the book Revelation of Christ. Attached to that they saw a period a *rise* and a *fall*, both a few hundreds of years. Remarkable are the years around 600-800 when the pope received power over both religion and politics. With the corresponding 1860-2060 what marks the final fall.

against the Jews. Here we see the no-people clearly as oppressors of the Jews. They lack righteousness.

History shows, and it is conform many places in scripture, that it is only a very few people who have righteousness. And that are not those who dominate the society. The opposite: they mostly are not tolerated and is not listened to. They are, however, chosen ones from God. And in that sense they joined Israel and at the same time have a share in the fight against evil and the worldly nations. They joined Israel not only in the commonwealth but also persecution. But a great thing happened unto them: they became children of God. As Peter said to the ger-we-toshav (gentiles, strangers and sojourners, see verse 11): *You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, ... who in time past were no people.* (1Pe.2:9-11) Thus joining the gentiles fully with (the promises for) Israel. Peter definitely shows the election and calling of gentiles in his letter subsequently to what he said in the beginning of the awakening among the gentiles: *as many as the Lord our God calls.* (Acts 2:39) This is the calling to the true and only God. Whether Jew, gentile, from the church, from the community, from the bondage of sin. They are called to be part of another life.

Paul saw the beginning of this (Christian) era when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the gentiles. He knew that this would be the beginning of the end of times. It all would be culminated in the salvation of *all Israel*. He also knew that there was another side of the coin of the gentiles. The *man of sin* was about to be revealed. The power of satan, who will be believed and adored like God. (2Thess.2) This is not the place to go into detail, but it is clear that almost the entire world would be against Israel and just a tiny part would seek the truth and obey the only Lord and King of the world. This tiny part consists of a remnant of gentiles and Jews who ultimately come out of this battle as winners, though they were expected to be miserable, despised and rejected.

To that people who don't know true faith, which would be almost the entire world and I know it's hard to believe but it is

satan who drove them such and so into unbelieve To that people applies these words: *I will bring vengeance upon my adversaries and repay those who hate Me (Deut.32:41)*

As long as they live without a (Godly) law and without God, they will oppress the Jews. This is allowed through the God of the Jews because of the curse laid upon them for a certain time.

But again, just to note, in the end all people will give glory to God as is said: *Sing out praise, o you nations, for His people! (Deut.32:43)*

The Song of Moses, The return of the Jews and the retaliation of the no-people

*Vengeance is mine, and recompense,
At the time when their foot shall slide:
For the day of their calamity is at hand,
The things that are to come on them shall make haste. (Deut.32:35)*

In the end of ages it shall be obvious and it is already, that the no-people are an enemy of God and in a common sense they are an enemy of Israel too. First Paul saw something great of that no-people (they came to faith) but soon an antichrist, or better to say, an evil spirit or anti Messiah of Israel took part of them and led them astray and against the truth. A false Christianity, a false Islam, and now we live in a time where atheists raised their secular power and ruled science, politics and the world, God forbid.

But there's a great change happening, which is not seen that clear so that people are aware of it. Because God is turning towards his old covenant people Israel. And He also turns

toward His adversaries. That no-people which became totally off from God should have an end with their behaviour.

Here is spoken about by the prophet Ezekiel:

This is what the Sovereign Lord says: In my burning zeal I have spoken against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, for with glee and with malice in their hearts they made my land their own possession so that they might plunder its pastureland.' Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel and say to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I speak in my jealous wrath because you have suffered the scorn of the nations. Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I swear with uplifted hand that the nations around you will also suffer scorn. "But you, mountains of Israel, will produce branches and fruit for my people Israel, for they will soon come home. I am concerned for you and will look on you with favor; you will be plowed and sown, and I will cause many people to live on you—yes, all of Israel. The towns will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. (Ez.36:5-10)

Mind that it states *All Edom* as a special allude to the Roman power.

In these verses is pointed to the *fall* of the antichrist and the nations *while* Israel is being restored.

An important part of the people of Israel is the land (of Israel). When Israel is exiled the land would be desolate. However, when Israel will return (according to the prophecies), the land flourish again. When this happens, the tide of the Jewish oppression will turn and the age of the gentiles will come to an end. The gathering of the no-people will come to an end. A new nation will be born. *Who has ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such things? Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet no sooner is Zion in labor than she gives birth to her children. (Is.66:8)* This will be the day of the Lord and Israel will be a light unto the nations.

This great shift causes quite another perspective for the church. As they were first evangelizing the nations, now they

have a place *within* Israel and have a share in their glory of Messianic (for us mystic) proportions. Then there *is* a Light and they *are* a light and the nations *will* come to the beauty of the world in Jerusalem. (Zech. 14)

The nations joined to wage war unto the Messiah (Ps.2) for thousands of years , but now a retaliation would take place because the time of mercy for Israel has come (Is.54:7), and the Lord returned to Jerusalem with mercy. (Zach.1:16)

Then *the appointed day of their reckoning is near, and what is destined for them hastens.* (De.32:35) A final judgement will take place. (see Rev.18) And it will come to an end of antichristian powers.

Our time

If there is an age of the gentiles, where are we right now or where should we stay right now?

The era began with the dead and resurrection of Christ. And its end will be when God's mercy will come upon the Jews and they will be regathered as stated in Daniel 12:7 - *it shall be for a time, times, and a half; and when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people*³⁰, *all these things shall be finished.* And they will repent (Deut.30:1) and the glory will be restored on the Jewish people (Deut.30, Ez.37:25, Jer.30:10, 31:34, Is.2:1-5, 12, 62:1-3, etc.)

³⁰ *Breaking in pieces the power of the holy people*, or: scatter the hand of the holy people, יד-עם-קדש--תִּכְלֶנָה The meaning is: when the adverseries have made an end of oppressing and scattering Israel, it shall be finished.

This is what the last verse of the song of Moses is telling us: O nations! sing the praises of His people for He will avenge the blood of His servants. (Deut.32:43)

In other words: Righteousness is restored on earth and the people of God will live in peace, Jew and Gentile.

Where do we live now? We have a marker what says: Jerusalem will be trampled down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. (Luke 21:24) and Behold, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'" (Luke 13:35)

So when Jerusalem is going to be restored, the time of the gentiles will come to an end. What does it mean? Not that there's no grace for the gentiles anymore. But rather that there'll be an abundance of grace for those who repent from their evil ways. They will come with the people of Israel to celebrate sukkot. (Zach.14:16) It means that the restoration of Israel is at hand. The Messiah will come and reign in his glory.

When the restoration of Israel is a marker, many think the year 1967 is important because since then the Jews got authority of the city. Whatever it be, it looks pretty obvious that the time of the gentiles (the non-people) is coming to an end. Glory to God! The time is near of the final restoration of Israel.

As many as the Lord our God calls

I often stated here: *as many as the Lord our God calls*. It's a saying from Peter in Acts 2:39. It's clear that he restricted the new community of God to those who are called by the only true God through His Spirit and his power. They became a reborn people with a zeal for God. They have a former and a latter life, no matter if they are Jew or Gentile, no distinction is here. These are the called ones only. As stated before, it is

not the big church, but in fact only a small community. A community which is often bigger when persecuted, and smaller in times of wealth.

When Peter addresses his first letter, he wrote it to the “strangers”. It’s not that clear, but I assume that he meant by this both Israelites and Gentiles. *Strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. The elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit. (1Pet.1:1-2)* The plain text reads the people of Israel in exile, but in the context of the whole letter we see he adds the “strangers” from the gentiles to this community of called ones.

All believers would call themselves strangers in this world. This is also what David did in Ps.39:12: *Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.* With respect to this we can see what kind of people he wrote about in his letter.

And this is what he said about this people:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. (1Pe.1:3-9)

With this words Peter describes a people of a new beginning. A newborn people with a new attraction but with old papers: the Torah, which now became the living word, the eternal life.

The Messiah was born, even in the very heart of the called ones. *Until Christ be formed in you. (Gal.4:19)* A new attraction with Messianic proportions: The love of God in the heart and love towards mankind. And the hope of an *inheritance that can never perish*. And a glorious joy, although suffering now griefs for a short time, they will finally *receive the goal of their faith, the salvation of their souls*.

Am I different than a Jew? - a conclusion

In this paper I do not answer the many questions that have arisen. For me it took years to answer many questions that arose while studying the Hebrew roots of our Christian faith. But the answers are still in the Hebrew scripture, the original bible, the source of our faith. Most questions would be about the statements of Paul that there's no difference between Jew and Gentile. Wherever he says this it's by meaning of spiritual argumentation. There is no difference in the way to get saved, or the prerequisites we think we must have. The only thing Paul always is warning for is to rely only on Jesus as the final and ultimate salvation, whom is everything and all you need. And the point of concern is that this is exclusively. E.g. you can't rely on circumcision or whatever. You can't rely on yourself, you can't rely on another one. You have to rely on the Torah alone which according to the bible is Jesus himself. The Messiah of God. The image of God, the imprint of God among mankind. And since he is the Messiah, the times are changed (not the Torah) and through Him only is the salvation.

What then is the difference? Let's begin to say that there are many differences in life. Every human being is different. And what is also different is the state of a person. We have kings and we also have workers of any kind. We have a government and citizens, we have fathers and children. It's not about who

is more or less. In the kingdom of God there's no more or less. And if there is more or less, then it's quite the opposite of what we think Jesus said when the apostles were arguing about who is more or less: *If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all. (Mark 9:35)*

What we do have are different rules. In a community are leaders and followers. There's an order in nature and among mankind. And the most perfect order for mankind is given by God in the Torah. When He established the people of Israel He ordered the Levites to work in the religious ceremonies. Only they were allowed to come into the holy places of the tabernacle or temple. The common Israelite was not allowed to enter that place. They were both people of God and in the ultimate redemption they'll share the same place. But in practice they were different.

On that plain we can also see the relation of Gentile and Jew. They do different jobs. Spiritually they both share the same glory. The greatest glory and salvation. Those who believe are all spiritual priests of the Lord, because they enter the Messianic times already, as a new being with new attractions to God which are of higher order than this world. But in examination there are different jobs and different roles. So Israel could be a priestly nation and the nations around could join and celebrate the feast of tabernacles for instance. (Zach.14:16) Or for instance, the righteous ones could be those who serve in the temple and rule with the Messiah (Rev.7:14-15, 20:6)

Our place in the world-to-come

If we speak about the future then we say things we don't know. At least we have to be very careful. Why then should I address it here? I just will give here some references from the bible regarding the distinction of gentiles and Jews.

The first one is from Ezekiel. Ezekiel saw the future temple, the so called third temple. After he gave many details about the temple, he described the borders of the land and the portions of the twelve tribes of Israel. Then it states: *So shall ye divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you and to the strangers that sojourn among you, who shall beget children among you; and they shall be unto you as the home-born among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that in what tribe the stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give him his inheritance, saith the Lord GOD.* (Ez.47:21-23)

Here again the strangers (גֵּרִים) are mentioned and it is said that they are regarded as home-born among the children of Israel. This comes quite close to the “grafted in” view of Paul. These strangers who are attached to Israel receive a place in the land of Israel, among the tribes where they reside.

Then we see in Revelations 21 that John saw the new Jerusalem descended on earth and the temple of God among His people where He will dwell. The city has twelve gates named after the twelve tribes of Israel and twelve foundations named after the twelve Apostles. Just to note: this is all Jewish so far. Then it states: *And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there will in no way enter into it*

anything profane, or one who causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. Here also the nations (which are saved) are mentioned apart of the Jews.

May we be blessed by His grace and time will quicken so that this verse of Isaiah 62:2 will come true soon:

And the Nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.

Literature

The Torah

That means:

The holy Word of God given by Moses on the mountain, received by the people of Israel. Extended with the holy Writings and Prophets. Revealed again as flesh and blood in the person of the Messiah Yeshua/Jesus who is the eternal King, Prophet and Priest. Witnessed by the Apostles as written in the Apostolic Writings.