

Ephesians 2:8-19 The Middle Wall of Partition

By Re'uel Dillon

"For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Yeshua (Jesus) The Messiah unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember, that you being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time you were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Yeshua HaMashiach you who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Messiah. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God"

Verse 8-9 starts out by reiterating that we are not saved by doing works, but by faith. We know from previous passages in scripture that true faith produces righteous works (Ya'akov/James 2:26, Romans 3:31), but that anyone who strives to be justified by works will fail (Ephesians 2:8-9). But, just as verse 10 implies, if we are in Yeshua (Jesus), and He in us...He will fulfill His righteous works through us which have been before ordained (Torah). Verses 11-12 really describe our new relationship to Israel and the covenants of God.

"Wherefore remember, that you being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time you were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:"

It is interesting to note that the previous verses indicate that term "Gentiles" is a past term. And, that while we were considered Gentiles we were without Messiah...being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise...having no hope, and without God. So, if we being considered Gentiles by Sha'ul (Paul) in the past have now come to Messiah what does that make us? If we have become believers, and followers of Messiah Yeshua, than we have become part of Israel... not replacing them, but grafted into believing Israel (Romans 11:17). In fact, if

we are not a part of Israel we are not a part of the New Covenant, because the New Covenant has only been given to Judah, and Israel.

Hebrews 8:8 "For finding fault with them, he says, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:"

Hebrews 8:10 "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people"

Jeremiah 31:31-33 "Behold, the days come, says YHVH, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, says YHVH: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, says YHVH, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."

So then, if we are of the house of Israel we should act like it, and not act like the house of the Gentiles who are strangers to the covenants of promise, and without God. What did Sha'ul (Paul) mean about the "middle wall of partition"?

14-16 "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"

The middle wall of partition was the man-made wall composed of man-made ordinances, and commandments made by rabbinical authorities that served to separate Jew, and Gentile. A great example of this was the separate court that the Jews built in the last temple to separate the Gentiles from the Jews. Was this in God's instructions? Or, was this a man-made court. If you guessed man-made you are correct! God's temple was to be a house of prayer for all nations, not just the Jews.

Mark 11:17 "And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves."

Isaiah 56:6-7 "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to YHVH, to serve him, and to love the name of YHVH, to be his servants, every one that keeps the sabbath from polluting it, and takes hold of my covenant; 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."

Another good example of this is found in the section of scripture when God gave Kefa (Peter) a vision found on this site under Acts 10:9-20. Man-made rules were separating him from having fellowship with righteous men who were born Gentiles. This was the wall that our Heavenly Father wishes to abolish...not his commandments. The problem has always been us...not HIM. Blaming His instructions (Torah) would be a misguided attempt to resolve the core issue...our sin! In Messiah, God has removed the artificial man-made wall, and has created "One New Man". But, this man is apart of the commonwealth of Israel, and was created to do what Israel should have done from the beginning...walk in obedience through faith. Unfortunately, many Christians have interpreted these passages to mean that it was God's instructions (as found in His Torah) that kept Jews and Gentiles divided. But, many of us know better. Contrary to what some think...God's instructions only unite when they are actually followed. The conclusion of these verses is that Gentiles that have come to faith are no longer strangers, "but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God".