

# EQUALITY BETWEEN JEW AND NON-JEW

*Written by Rabbi Mordecai Silver. Posted in Articles*

The following is the definition of the Hebrew word Goyim according to the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament by Moody Press:

(362e) ywg (goy) 1) nation, people 1a) nation, people 1a1) usually of non-Hebrew people 1a2) of descendants of Abraham 1a3) of Israel 1b) of swarms of locusts, other animals.

Strong's Concordance defines this word (#H1471) as being from the same roots as H1465 (in the sense of massing); a foreign nation; hence a Gentile; also (fig.) a troop of animals, or a flight of locusts: -- Gentile, heathen, nation, people.

Despite these definitions, a separatist attitude runs rampant in the Messianic Jewish Movement today. This attitude has been able to take root because of the growing interest of non-Jews in their Hebraic Roots.

Ephraim needs to understand that, usually, when a Jewish person uses the terms Goy or Gentile he is not using it to refer to a non-Jew in a nice way. It is used in a derogatory manner, and it insinuates that non-Jews are not equal to one of Jewish descent. But this attitude does not have a Biblical basis. It is not founded on truth. The true meaning of Goy or Goyim is nation. And use of this term is not meant exclusively for those of non-Jewish descent because it has been used by God Himself to identify the people of Israel.

The term is used today to differentiate between those of Jewish heritage and those who are not. But this is a definition developed by man and not by God. Today, when the Jew uses the term Gentile to refer to the nations, the implication is that they are pagans. Therein is the difference between what God intended and man developed.

In the Apostolic Scriptures the term that equals Goy/Goyim in the Greek is ethnos (εθνος), which means nations. Other uses of Gentile occur in, for example, Romans 3:9. In some translations it has been rendered Gentile, but in actuality Hellen in Greek --- when correctly translated means Greek and not nation.

Sometimes Roman is translated as Gentile. While it might be accurate to say that Greeks and Romans were Gentiles or non-Jews, and that, as we understand this they might be pagans, still, Scripture shows there is a difference, so a blanket application of “Gentile” cannot be used to label all Believers. From a strictly Biblical perspective they are not pagans.

Rav Shaul/Paul makes this clear in his teaching on grafting. He defines the natural branch as Judah and the wild olive branch as non-Jews and even perhaps Israelites. Messianic Judaism teaches that the wild olive branches are Gentiles and that they are grafted in among the natural branches, the Jews, and they claim that they become part of the tree of Judaism.

But Shaul said the natural branches, meaning the unbelieving Jews, were cut off from the tree. And when they become Believers in Yeshua, they are grafted in “again” (Romans 11). So the tree cannot be a Jewish tree, as they claim.

Instead, the tree is Israel, and the Root of the tree is Yeshua. He nourishes the branches, be they of Judah, Israel or true non-Israelites. All are grafted into the tree that is Israel reunited, all receive their nourishment from the Root, Yeshua.

Once grafted into this tree, one is no longer a “Gentile.” Instead, these people are Israelites and must be received that way (Ephesians 2:11-12). The Messianic Jewish division of “Jew and Gentile” has no Biblical foundation. It only keeps Judah and Ephraim and their companions divided by a re-built middle wall of partition. On one side, Messianic Judaism builds up their part of the wall and on the other side, Christianity builds up their part.

Messianic Israel wants to tear down this wall! We want to fellowship together as one people, one nation, united in Yeshua the King and Messiah of ALL of Israel!

When a non-Jew sees himself as a Gentile, he gives himself second-class status in Israel. He accepts the inferior status Messianic Judaism seeks to put on him. But instead, Ephraim needs to see that he is part of Israel and he needs to accept his own Israelite heritage.

If you have experienced this division, from their side of the fence, if you have had enough of it, we invite you to join Messianic Israel. We are a people who honor the

Biblical promise of equality for all Believers in Yeshua. We honor both Judah and Ephraim.

We do this because Shaul makes it clear that one becomes part of Israel through grafting in, and one does not need to ‘convert’ to Judaism. Therefore, because of grafting, conversion is rendered a mute point.

Still, to maintain their false sense of being “The Chosen People” of God, Messianic Judaism must keep non-Jews from becoming equals. But the chosen of God are not made up of the Jewish people alone. The chosen people of Israel is made up of thirteen tribes (assuming you count Joseph’s two sons: Ephraim and Manasseh). Are all these tribes Jewish? No! Only those of Judah, Benjamin and Levi were considered to be “Jewish.” The remaining tribes were known as Ephraimites. A Jew could be part of Israel and not be an Ephraimite; an Ephraimite could be part of Israel and not be a Judahite. Simple...but difficult for both Messianic Judaism and Christianity to swallow.

The bottom line is this: Ephraim, get upset that someone is calling you a Gentile or Goy and do something about it! Judah, don’t let your brothers be mistreated this way! Be equal partakers of the covenant promises God gave to Israel and see the vision of the two houses!! Let’s put an end to “Jew and Greek” divisions (Galatians 3:28).

Does this mean that there are no longer any differences? Physically there are but in faith in Yeshua there is not. We cannot change the facts about our individual heritages, and neither should we try to. But we do need to stop calling Ephraim a Gentile/Goy. We need to encourage him to step up and be a full partaker in Israel.