

## **144,000 Jews of circumcised flesh or 144,00 Jews whose hearts were circumcised by the Spirit?**

*But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God (Romans 2:29).*

*For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel (Romans 9:6b).*

Herein lies one of the most significant controversies in the professing Christian Church today. One side believes literal fleshly Israel are the sealed, while the other side believes spiritual Israel, the New Testament Christian Church, comprising both Jew and Gentile believers, born of the Spirit, are the sealed.

Had Paul not written several Epistles emphasizing in the eyes of the Lord there is no difference between believing Jews and Gentiles (Romans 10:12); that He has made the two groups into one and has broken down the barrier of the dividing wall of hostility (Ephesians 2:14-16; 3:6), there might be credibility to the doctrines promulgated by Dispensationalist Futurists.

### **A Central Bible Truth Not Accepted by All**

The Old Testament foreshadowed Christ through innumerable types comprised of people, sacrifices, ordinances and holy days. This is without controversy.

The controversy swirls around the identity of God's New Testament Israel, Christ's true Church, His Body and Spouse. Did the Lord foreshadow the anti-type New Testament Israel,

the true Church of Christ, using Old Testament Israel as the type?

In 1 Corinthians 10 Paul testifies Old Testament Israel prefigured New Testament Church ordinances such as baptism and the Lord's Supper. They even drank from a spiritual rock, which was Christ. Yet that was not sufficient to save them, for they were yet in unbelief as to the promises of God.

*Now these things were our types* [Greek: τυπος] (1 Corinthians 10:6a). These Old Testament Israelite types were for our edification, benefit and warning (verse 11). Idolaters who profess to be followers of Christ are doomed, as was idolatrous Israel. The sacrifices made by the Gentiles (of which unregenerate Israel were partakers) were not sacrificed to the true God, but to demons (v. 20). But does this fact hold true today? Is the sacrifice of the Mass the prophetic anti-type of which Paul describes? Certainly no true Christian, born of the Spirit, sealed by the living God, would willingly dare provoke the wrath of God by partaking in a ritual which openly denies the once for all, never to be repeated, perfect sacrifice of Christ. Nor would such a person willingly mock the wisdom and grace of God in sending Christ in the first place. Or would they?

### **New Testament Christian Meaning Given to Old Testament Judaism**

The first chapter of Revelation gives us the key to understanding how we are to interpret the numerous OT Hebraisms. John sees Christ as the high priest in the holy place

of the Temple among the seven lampstands (vs. 12-13). Christ interprets these as the seven churches. Thus, unless otherwise noted, that which is spoken in Hebraic terms are types describing their Christian anti-types.

Incredibly, this truth is taught throughout the New Testament.

1. Christians, Jew and Gentile, are the house of God, the temple of God (Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 2:5).
2. We are a holy priesthood offering sacrifices acceptable to God, unlike the unholy sacrifices of the Christian posers (1 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 13:15).
3. We are now considered Israelites, fellow citizens of true Israel (Ephesians 2:11-19; Galatians 6:16; Matthew 8:11; Matthew 15:24; Acts 5:31; Philippians 3:3).
4. Heavenly Jerusalem is our 'mother' (Galatians 4:26).
5. James writes his Gospel letter to Christians, whom he calls the 12 tribes.
6. The noun translated 'assembly' in James 2:2 is actually the Greek noun for 'synagogue' (Strong's # 4864).
7. We Gentiles are grafted into the same olive tree which God will one day graft back a multitude of Jewish believers (Romans 11:24).

### **Hebraisms in the Letters to the 7 Christian Churches**

*I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are*

*Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan* (Letter to church in Smyrna).

The Lord is speaking to professing Christians, yet uses metaphors to emphasize the relationship of OT Israel, the type, to NT Israel, the anti-type.

*Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols* (Letter to church in Thyatira).

The Lord uses the OT wife of Ahab as a metaphor to describe a wicked female prophetess who, though claiming Christ as Lord and Savior, seduces men to sacrifice to false gods.

*Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee* (Letter to the church of Philadelphia).

Once again, the Lord uses metaphors to emphasize the relationship of OT Israel, the type, to NT Israel, the anti-type.

*Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name* (Letter to the church of Philadelphia).

The Lord corroborates Paul's doctrine that Gentile Christians are now viewed as equal to Jewish Christians communing with the God of Israel in the temple and city of God.

It is noteworthy the Lord mentions the seriousness of the sin of *eating things sacrificed to idols* several times.

Is it possible the modern sacrifice of the Mass falls into this category?

### **Conclusion**

The 144,000 sealed are those elect Jews and Gentiles whose hearts have been circumcised by the Spirit. These have been *taken out* of the mass of professing Christians, according to the will and good pleasure of God. These are the wheat who have been separated from the tares. They are the seed of the woman; the spiritual seed of Abraham; the spiritual seed of Christ.