

The term "Gentile" comes from the Latin translation of the Bible done by the early Roman Catholic Church. It is from the Greek word in the Septuagint for the Hebrew word "goy" which often means a non-Jew. Maybe we should not continue using a Latin-based Catholic word to mean a non-Jew.

The words most often used in the Tanach for non-Jew are "stranger" or "outsider" (ger), "alien" (nechar), "foreigner" (zar), and "sojourner" (toshav). English translations swap these around - there is little consistency in usage.

Many of us think of Abraham as the first Jew, but technically Jacob has that title. Therefore, the believers BEFORE his time were non-Jews.

Noah was the ONLY righteous man (about 1400 years after creation).

We don't know much about Noah's wife, nor the three wives of Noah's sons.

From this gene pool of only five persons comes all the people in the world today.

Shem was indicated to be the next standard bearer in Genesis 10-11.

The patriarchs mentioned in Genesis 10-11, and (probably) Job, were non-Jews.

Abraham (a descendant of Shem) was chosen. Why? Because he wanted to know YHVH in a personal way, evidenced by his actions later.

*Genesis 12:1-4*

Then YHVH said to Abram, "Get going out from your land, and from your relatives, and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you. My heart's desire is to make you into a great nation, to bless you, to make your name great so that you may be a blessing. My desire is to bless those who bless you, but whoever curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." So Abram went, just as YHVH had spoken to him.

Abram wasn't perfect, but because of his attitude and his trust (faith), he is the father (spiritually) of all who believe (Romans 3:19-4:25). He is mentioned 232 times in the entire Bible! Abram was a wealthy man later on, after all the gifts from the two kings. Abram had a lot of people in his group - he had 318 warriors born in his house, not including their families - and then all the other men and their families. He also acknowledged a priest/king of God Most High. At this time, there was no such thing as a Jew, but there were already different nations.

*Genesis 14:14,18,20,22*

When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he rallied his trained men, those born in his household, 318 of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. Then Melchizedek מֶלְכִי-צֶדֶק (king of righteousness\justice), king of Salem, brought out bread and wine—he was a priest of *El Elyon*. He blessed Abram and said, "Blessed be Abram by *El Elyon*, Creator of heaven and earth, and blessed be *El Elyon*, Who gave over your enemies into your hand." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything. But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I raise my hand in oath to YHVH, *El Elyon*, Creator of heaven and earth."

Next, God asked Abram [now named Abraham] to commit to a covenant that required action on the part of Abraham.

These were the first circumcisions that were for the purpose of identifying as part of the covenant with Abraham. Yet these men (and boys) are not descendants of Abraham [except Ishmael, Abraham's son].

*Genesis 17:11-13*

You must be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and this will become a sign of the covenant between Me and you. Also your eight-day-olds must be circumcised, every male, throughout your generations, including a house-born slave or a slave bought with money from any foreigner who is not of your seed. Your house-born slave and your purchased slave must surely be circumcised. So My covenant will be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

Was Abraham the only believing person in the world after Babel? No, those who traveled with Abraham trusted YHVH, because those men obeyed the circumcision command! They could have just left Abraham, if they didn't want to do it. My point is that Abraham was not the only obedient believer at that time. Those others believed as much as Abraham. So - - - all who believe (Jew or non-Jew) show their trust in God through obedience.

Before the Exodus, there were some believing non-Jews, who knew about the descendants of Jacob. During the centuries in Egypt, even more joined that group. At the time of the Exodus, many joined the Jews, possibly because there was no reason to stay in Egypt and the God who brought the plagues looked powerful. They left everything to join the Jews, which was an act of faith.

Some Christians seem to think that the apostle Paul was the first to reach out to non-Jews for the purpose of redeeming them to follow God. Non-Jews were following Torah in faith long before the second Temple period.

Since God is so personal, so very much "one-on-one", why did He come up with a concept that only the descendants of Jacob are THE ones to carry His principles to the rest of the world? Why not directly talk to each of us? Because that would mess up FREE WILL. Because it would be forced. Some of the descendants of Abraham continued a personal relation with God, and passed that on to their offspring. But not all rejoiced at being the Chosen People!

The foreigner among the Israelites who follows God is to be treated like one of them (except no direct inheritance of land); the foreigner is subject to the same consequences of disobedience. The foreigner could have his children marry a Jew, and thus a grandchild would be part of the promise and no longer a foreigner.

Each of us is personally responsible to respond to God - a contract of life directed by His Word. Here are some promises that include Jews and non-Jews.

no oppression of non-Jews *ger*

*Exodus 22:20(21)*

You must not exploit or oppress an outsider, for you were outsiders in the land of Egypt.

*Deuteronomy 10:18-19*

He (YHVH) enacts justice for the orphan and widow, and loves the outsider, giving him food and clothing. Therefore love the outsider, for you were outsiders in the land of Egypt

no partiality in judgments *ger*

*Deuteronomy 1:16*

I commanded your judges at that time saying: 'Hear cases between your brothers, and judge fairly between a man and his brother or the outsider with him.

cities of refuge *ger toshav*

*Numbers 35:15*

These six cities of refuge are to be for *Bnei-Yisrael* as well as for the outsider and the visitor in their midst, for anyone killing a person by accident.

*Joshua 20:9*

These were the appointed cities for all *Bnei-Yisrael* and for the outsider who is dwelling among them, so that whoever kills any person unintentionally might flee there and not die by the hand of the blood avenger, before standing trial before the congregation.

red heifer offering *ger*

*Numbers 19:10*

The one who gathers the heifer's ashes is also to wash his clothes as well as be unclean until evening. It will be a permanent statute for *Bnei-Yisrael* and for the outsider living among them.

Shabbat *ger*

*Exodus 20:10*

but the seventh day is a Shabbat to YHVH your God. In it you shall not do any work - not you, nor your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your cattle, nor the outsider that is within your gates.

Pesach *ger*

*Exodus 12:48-49*

But if an outsider dwells with you, who would keep the Passover for YHVH, all his males must be circumcised. Then let him draw near and keep it. He will be like one who is native to the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat from it. The same Torah applies to the native as well as the outsider who dwells among you.

*Numbers 9:14*

If an outsider living among you would celebrate Passover to YHVH according to the requirement, so he should do. There will be for you the same regulation for the outsider and the native of the land.

Yom Kippur is for all *ger*

*Leviticus 16:29*

It is to be a statute to you forever, that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you are to afflict your souls, and do no kind of work - both the native-born and the outsider dwelling among you.

offerings accepted *ger*

*Numbers 15:14-16*

Whenever an outsider resides with you, or whoever is among you for your generations to come, and he is to present a fire offering as a fragrant aroma to YHVH, as you do, he must do exactly the same as you are doing. The community will have the same rule for you as well as for the resident outsider. It will be a lasting statute throughout your generations. As for you, so for the outsider will it be before YHVH. The same Torah and the same regulations will apply to both you and the outsider residing among you.

no eunuchs, Ammonites, Moabites *ger*

*Deuteronomy 23:2(1),4(3)-5(4)*

No one who is a eunuch, whether he have been crushed or cut, is to enter the community of YHVH. No Ammonite or Moabite is to enter the community of YHVH - even to the tenth generation, none belonging to them is to enter the community of YHVH forever - because they did not meet you with bread and water on the way when you came out from Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia to curse you.

and yet - honored Moabites *nechar*

*Ruth 2:9-11*

Then she fell upon her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes that you have noticed me, even though I am a foreigner?" Boaz replied and said to her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law since your husband's death has been fully reported to me - how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth, and came to a people you did not know before. May YHVH repay you for what you have done, and may you be fully rewarded by YHVH, God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."

HOWEVER - obedience wins *nechar*

*Isaiah 56:3-8*

Do not let a son of a foreigner who has joined himself to YHVH say, "YHVH will surely exclude me from His people." Nor let the eunuch say, "Behold, I am a dry tree." For thus says YHVH, "To the eunuchs who keep My Shabbatot, who choose what pleases Me, and hold fast My covenant: I will give to them in My House and within My walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters. I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off. Also the foreigners who join themselves to YHVH, to minister to Him, and to love the Name of YHVH, and to be His servants - all who keep from profaning Shabbat, and hold fast to My covenant - these I will bring to My holy mountain, and let them rejoice in My House of Prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar. For My House will be called a **House of Prayer for all nations.**"

Herod's Temple - Court of "Gentiles" - Non-Jews were allowed to enter only the Court of the "Gentiles" - forbidden to go any farther than that outer court - both ancient writings and archaeological studies indicate that the commercial activity increasingly obstructed genuine worship, especially for non-Jewish believers.

*Matthew 21:13*

And He (Yeshua) said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it 'a den of thieves!'"

avoiding non-Jews is wrong

*Acts 10:28*

He (Peter) said to them, "You yourselves know that it is not permitted for a Jewish man to associate with a non-Jew or to visit him. Yet God has shown me that I should call no one unholy or unclean."

no anti-Semitism allowed

*Romans 11:17-18*

But if some of the branches were broken off and you - being a wild olive - were grafted in among them and became a partaker of the root of the olive tree with its richness, do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, it is not you who support the root but the root supports you.

believers join together

*ger*

*Isaiah 14:1*

For YHVH will have compassion on Jacob, and will again choose Israel and settle them in their own land. The outsider will join himself with them and will cling to the house of Jacob.

All of us can now directly connect to God, as we obey His Word

*Hebrews 10:19-22*

Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have boldness to enter into the Holies by the blood of Yeshua. He inaugurated a new and living way for us through the curtain - that is, His flesh. We also have a High Priest over God's household. So let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and body washed with pure water.