



Jewish Blessings for the Gentile Believer
Ephesians 2:11-22 | February 28th - March 5th, 2016

Warm Up: Do you believe it is important to think about and appreciate the heritage of our faith in Jesus Christ as having such deep roots in Judaism? Explain.

- ❖ **Read Ephesians 2:11-13** aloud. Rabbi Barney Kasdan, a Messianic Rabbi (meaning he loves and serves Jesus Christ as a *completed Jew*), encourages us to first **Contemplate** the reality of these verses.
 - Why do you think we are told to “remember” (v. 11, 12) that at one time we as Gentiles were separated from Christ?
 - According to these verses, what kinds of things characterized our lives prior to being exposed to the gospel of God’s grace?

- ❖ **Read Ephesians 2:14-16** aloud. As modern Gentile believers in Messiah it can be difficult to **appreciate** and wrap our minds around just how much hostility (v.14, 16) existed between Jews and Gentiles in the First Century. British Theologian, Adam Clarke, writes: *“The enmity of which the apostle speaks was reciprocal among the Jews and Gentiles. The former detested the Gentiles, and could hardly allow them the denomination of men; the latter had the Jews in the most sovereign contempt, because of the peculiarity of their religious rites and ceremonies, which were different from those of all the other nations of the earth.”* Doe this kind of hostility exist in your personal experience much today? Why or why not?
 - What seems to be the main point of these verses (2:14-16)?
 - The Lordship of Jesus Christ in our lives ought to be greater than any difference we have with others, be those differences political, racial, economic, language, geography or whatever! In what ways does this truth challenge or convict you personally?

- ❖ **Read Ephesians 2:17-22** aloud. From these verses, Rabbi Barney encouraged us to **participate** in a spirit and lifestyle of unity with Jewish followers of Messiah. Consider how radical these verses must have been for First Century hearers.
 - What is being said here? Do these verses, and **Eph. 2** in general, encourage you to seek more unity with believers with whom you have differences? How so?

Wrap Up: Pray that the Lord might impress upon your minds and hearts what actions you can take *this week* toward building greater unity with Christians of all kinds. Pray also for the Jewish people, and especially those whom you know, that they may see the love of Christ flow through your life!