

**The Epistle to the Ephesians
(Special English Edition)**

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For Rogma International, Inc.

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WHEN THE WALLS CAME TUMBLING DOWN

Ephesians 2:11-18

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is exciting because it contains a remarkable event of history. It explains how a wall that separated Jews from all the other nations of the world for centuries, was crushed by the cross of Christ. This signaled the end of the Law for righteousness and opened the way for Jews and Gentiles to come near to God by the blood of Christ.

IMPORTANCE OF THIS LESSON

- ❑ It is important to know that Christ, our Savior, was born in a Jewish home and brought up as a Jewish child. He lived as a Jew and kept the Law. He did not come to destroy the Law but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17).
- ❑ When Christ died He bore the curse of the Law and redeemed both Jews and Gentiles, from that curse (Galatians 3:10-13).
- ❑ Born again Jews and Gentiles are now one in the Body of Christ (Ephesians 2:16).
- ❑ The main idea is to show how Gentiles, who are without hope, uncircumcised and enemies of God can become “one new man” with Jews who were God’s chosen people and who hated all Gentiles.

THE LESSON

- I. Ephesians 2:11 “Wherefore remember, that ye 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”**
- A. “*Wherefore*” – Whenever you come to a “wherefore” or a “therefore,” especially in the writings of the Apostle Paul, always stop and think about what he said before the “wherefore.” For example, Ephesians 2:1-10 clearly states what we should remember and why we should remember it.
 - B. “*Wherefore, remember*” – If you are a Christian, you should often remember and think about what you were at one time (Deuteronomy 7:6-11). Ephesians 2:1-10 speaks about your past life without Christ:
 - 1. You were “dead in trespasses and sins.”
 - 2. You lived in sin according to the ways of the world.
 - 3. You obeyed Satan, “the prince of the power of the air.”
 - 4. Your way of life was like all the other children of disobedience. You lived to fulfill the desires of the flesh.
 - 5. You were, by nature, a child under God’s anger.We all should be forever thankful for the truth in Ephesians 2:4-5.
 - C. “*Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh*” – “Gentiles” is a word used in Scripture that means all people of all nations who are not Jews. The phrase “*in the flesh*” does not refer to their old adamic nature but that they were Gentiles by birth.
 - D. “*who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision by the flesh made by hands*” Circumcision shows that God wanted to make Israel a special, separate, and holy people. Deuteronomy 7:6 – “*For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people who are upon the face of the earth.*”

1. In Genesis 12:1-3, God made an unconditional covenant (agreement) with Abraham. God marked this agreement with three “I wills.”
I WILL: (Learn these for exam)
 - a) make of thee a great nation.
 - b) bless thee and make thy name great.
 - c) bless them who bless thee and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.
 - d) shew thee a land.
2. In Genesis 17:7-14:
 - a) God assured Abraham that this covenant was an “everlasting covenant.”
 - b) God would give all the land of Canaan to Abraham and to his seed for an everlasting possession.
 - c) God established circumcision as the sign of the Abrahamic covenant – Abraham and every male child of his seed had to be circumcised.
3. We must note several things here. God wanted to make Israel a people that was different and separate from all the other nations. God wanted them to live according to His commands. Deuteronomy 7:6 – “For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God...”
4. Israel is called the “Circumcision” in Ephesians 2:11. The Jews mocked the Gentiles by calling them the “Uncircumcision.” Israel had special privileges (Romans 3:1-2; 9:4-5), and responsibilities which made them proud of their position, and caused them to mock all Gentiles. On the other hand, the Gentiles rejected circumcision. The Gentiles were jealous of Israel’s position and strongly hated the Jews. The wall separating Jew and Gentile had to come down.

II. Ephesians 2:12 – “That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world”

A. In this verse, the Apostle continues to remind the Ephesian Gentiles of their precious position and condition. He states 5 things:

1. “*you were without Christ*” – Paul began this great Epistle with the phrase, “*to the faithful in Christ Jesus.*” Everybody in the world is either “in Christ” or “without Christ.” No phrase could more accurately describe a person who is not saved. To be without Christ means to live in spiritual darkness: lost, spiritually blind, without hope, and without all the blessings of God’s great salvation.
2. “*being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*” – “Aliens” here means “foreigners.” To say they were “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel” means that they were not citizens of the Jewish State. They did not share in the special relationship Israel had with the true and living God. They were not privileged to have the blessings listed in Romans 3:1-2 and 9:4-5. Read these verses.
3. “*strangers from the covenants of promise*” – What are the covenants of promise? There are eight covenants (binding agreements) God made in the Scriptures:

Edenic-Genesis 1:26

Mosaic-Exodus 19:5

Adamic-Genesis 3:15

Palestinian-Deuteronomy 30:3

Noahic-Genesis 9:16

Davidic-2 Samuel 7:16

Abrahamic-Genesis 12:2

New Covenant-Hebrews 8:8

Three of these covenants contain special promises to Israel.

- a) The Abrahamic (Genesis 12:1-4) – God would make Israel a great nation. God fulfilled this covenant through Jacob and his family. God gave them the land of Israel for an everlasting possession (Genesis 13:14-17, 17:8).
- b) The Palestinian (Deuteronomy 30:3) – In this covenant God promises Israel that though they have been scattered all over the world due to disobedience, they will repent, return, and God will put them back in the land when Christ returns. (Read Deuteronomy 28:63-65, 30:1; Romans 11:25-27).

- c) The Davidic (2 Samuel 7:16) – God would establish the throne and kingdom of David forever. Of course, God did not include Gentiles in these special covenants. The Gentiles had no dealings with God. They had no understanding of the true and living God.
4. “*having no hope*” – Without hope man is like a leaf blown in the wind. When hope dies, nothing remains but fear and uncertainty. It is absolutely true that without God there is no hope for the unbeliever. There can be no hope without God. Israel had hope. They had the hope that their Messiah would come. They had the hope that God would establish them in the land He had promised. God dealt with the Gentiles in a different way. How precious it is for us who believe the Gospel. Believers have Christ within them “**THE HOPE OF GLORY**” (Colossians 1:27).
5. “*without God in the world*” – Millions today are going through life not believing in nor receiving the true and living God, the God of the Bible. The atheist, the doubter, the person who has an empty religion and rejects the God of the Bible, those who ignore God and do not care about spiritual things, know nothing about the living God in their lives. The unbelievers in Ephesus had no knowledge of God, no evidence of His blessing, no assurance of His salvation, and no hope of Heaven. Man is without God because man is a sinner by his own choice. God has not turned away from man and rejected him. (Read Romans 1:21-24).

III. EPHESIANS 2:13 – “BUT NOW”

“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” (See also 1 Corinthians 15:20; Romans 3:21.)

Here we find one of the great *BUT NOWS* of Scripture. This verse is best understood by looking back to Ephesians 2:12, “That at that time ye were without Christ.” The Gentiles were shut out “far off.” They had no high priest, no place of mercy, no Day of Atonement, no blood sacrifice, no hope, and no God. BUT NOW, God had opened a way for the Gentiles. The shed blood of Christ had opened the door and provided a way.

IV. Ephesians 2:14-18 – THE VERY HEART OF THIS LESSON

- A. Ephesians 2:14 – A wall separated Jews and Gentiles and it had to come down. That wall was the LAW given by God to Israel through Moses. It was the wall that separated Israel from all the other nations in the world. It was “*even the law of commandments contained in ordinances*” (Ephesians 2:15). Somebody or something had to do away with righteousness that could only come through keeping the LAW. This person had to provide a better way of salvation for both the Jew and Gentile. Before God could do away with the LAW, somebody had to obey it completely. This is exactly what Jesus did. In Matthew 5:17-18 Jesus said, “Not one jot or tittle of the Law would pass away until all were fulfilled.” He said, “I am not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it.” He brought down the wall by living an absolutely sinless life and thus could become the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people, Jews and Gentiles.

1 Peter 2:22 “*Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.*”

2 Corinthians 5:21 “*For God hath made him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us.*”

Hebrews 4:15 “*He was in all points tempted, like as we are, yet without sin.*”

To bring down the wall, the penalty and curse of the LAW had to be borne – and Christ became that curse.

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith”
(Galatians 3:10-14).

When the Walls Came Tumbling Down

The LAW and its curse were fulfilled in Christ. He became “the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth” (Romans 10:4). Salvation for Jew and Gentile is now entirely “by grace and through faith” (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:9-10).

- B. Ephesians 2:15 *“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:”*
Christ did away with “the law of commandments” by His sacrifice in our place and on our behalf, in order to make “in himself of twain (Jew & Gentile) one new man, so making peace.” That is peace with God and peace between Jews and Gentiles.
- C. Ephesians 2:16 *“And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby”*
Christ died that Jew and Gentile might be at peace, but He also died so that God could bring both Jew and Gentile back to Himself. In this way God formed one body (the church) by the cross. By the cross Christ broke down the wall and destroyed the hatred between Jew and Gentile. (We will study more about the church in our next lesson.)
- D. Ephesians 2:17 *“And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.”* He came and preached peace to Gentiles who were far from God, and to the Jews who were close to God.
- E. Ephesians 2:18 *“For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”*
Now through Christ, both Jews and Gentiles can come to God by one Spirit unto the Father (Hebrews 4:15-16). We close by pointing out that in the last sentence, you see the process of prayer. We must pray to the Father, by the Holy Spirit, through Christ. Amen.

CONCLUSION

God has not thrown away His people Israel. Please read the Davidic Covenant in 2 Samuel 7:4-16. God will establish David’s throne, his house, and his kingdom forever. As a nation, Israel is blind to the truth of who Christ was. That blindness was “in part,” or temporary. This blindness is until “the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.” Israel will yet be saved when their Deliverer, their Messiah returns in glory and power (Romans 11:25-27).

Ephesians
Exam – Lesson 6

Name _____

Address _____

Multiple Choice – Circle the letter in front of the correct answer. Only one answer is correct unless otherwise stated.

1. The remarkable historic event spoken of in Ephesians 2:14-18 is: (Value 4 points)
 - a. the wall that separated Jews and Gentiles was broken down by the resurrection.
 - b. the wall that separated Jews and Gentiles was broken down by the ascension.
 - c. the wall that separated Jews and Gentiles was broken down by the death of Christ on the cross.
2. The important truth found in this segment of Scripture and supported by Matthew 5:17 is: (Value 3 points)
 - a. Christ did not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it.
 - b. Christ did not come to fulfill the law but to destroy it.
 - c. Christ came to show us how we can fulfill the law.
3. When we encounter a “wherefore” or a “therefore” in the writings of Paul we should: (Value 4 points)
 - a. skip over it.
 - b. check what preceded it.
 - c. check what followed it.
4. In the light of Ephesians 2:1-3, we should be grateful for Ephesians 2:4-5 because: (Open Bible) (Value 3 points)
 - a. God loved us enough to give us new life.
 - b. God did not condemn us.
 - c. Christ rose from the dead.
5. In the Bible the word “Gentile” refers to: (Value 4 points)
 - a. Americans.
 - b. only the strangers that lived among the Jews in Palestine.
 - c. all people of all nations who are not Jews.
6. Circumcision indicated to the Jews that: (Value 3 points)
 - a. God had not forgotten about them as a nation.
 - b. God would love them and care for them forever.
 - c. God wanted them to be a separated and holy people.
7. The Gentiles hated the Jews because: (Value 4 points)
 - a. the Jews were a separated people.
 - b. they were jealous of the Jews and rejected circumcision.
 - c. the Jews hated the Gentiles.

8. To be “without Christ” means: (Value 3 points)
- you have never heard about Him.
 - that you are not a Christian.
 - that you are not a member of a local church.
9. “Being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel” means: (Value 4 points)
- they were Romans instead of Jews.
 - they were great sinners.
 - they were not citizens of the Jewish state.
10. “Strangers from the covenant of promise” meant that: (Value 3 points)
- the covenants God made with Israel did not apply to the Gentiles.
 - they were not citizens of the Jewish state.
 - they were Romans instead of Jews.
11. “Without God in the world” means: (Value 4 points)
- that a person never has heard about God.
 - that a person has not been born yet.
 - that a person is godless, having no personal connection with God.
12. Which three of the following covenants made promises to Israel? (Circle the letter in front of the correct ones.) (Open Bible) (Value 9 points)
- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. the Edenic – Genesis 1:26 | e. the Mosaic – Exodus 19:5 |
| b. the Adamic – Genesis 3:15 | f. the Palestinian – Deuteronomy 30:3 |
| c. the Noahic – Genesis 9:16 | g. the Davidic – 2 Samuel 7:16 |
| d. the Abrahamic – Genesis 12:2 | h. the New Covenant – Hebrews 8:8 |
13. The reason the wall between Jews and Gentiles had to come down was: (Value 4 points)
- their hatred for each other.
 - their system of sacrifices was no longer needed when Christ died on the cross.
 - the law of commandments for Jews and Gentiles had to be fulfilled and abolished.
14. What was the wall that separated Jews and Gentiles? (Value 4 points)
- man’s sinfulness
 - the sacrificial system God gave to the Jews
 - the law given by God to Israel through Moses
15. Christ put an end to the law as a way of gaining righteousness, so people now are saved by: (Value 4 points)
- doing good works.
 - grace through faith.
 - biblical baptism.
16. God has not forsaken Israel, but has: (Value 4 points)
- made them dead in trespasses and sin.
 - caused them to return to the land of Palestine.
 - made Israel temporarily blind spiritually.
17. According to Ephesians 2:14-15, what did Christ accomplish on the cross? (Open Bible) (Value 12 points)
- _____
 - _____

c. _____

18. In Ephesians 2:1-10 there are five things mentioned that are true of a person before he becomes a Christian. Name three of them. (Open Bible) (Value 12 points)

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

19. What are the four "I wills" that are found in Genesis 12:1-3? (Open Bible) (Value 12 points)

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____