

Building The Church

Let us pray.

BAR-CHU et Adonai ham'vorach. Baruch Adonai ham'vorach l'olam vaed. Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha-olam, asher bacher banu mi-kol ha'amim, v'natan lanu et Torato. Baruch Atah, Adonai, notein ha Torah.

BLESS ADONAI who is blessed. Blessed is Adonai who is blessed now and forever. Blessed are You, Adonai, our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has chosen us from among the peoples, and given us the Torah. Blessed are You, Adonai, who gives the Torah.

Amen.

Isaiah 40:3 A voice of one calling in the wilderness, "Prepare the way for the Lord".

These are the end of days. The last of days. The days of preparation for the coming of Messiah and the kingdom of God on earth. In these days of preparation Jesus will complete the building of his church.

Ephesians 1:22,23 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

God raised Jesus from the dead and seated him at His right hand in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 1:20) and appointed him to be head over the church which Jesus has been building from the time of his resurrection until today. At first, the church was made up only of the Jews of Judah. But soon God brought Peter and Cornelius together (Acts 10) and the Holy Spirit came on all who heard.

Acts 10:44-48 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, "Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." So, he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

And so, Gentiles began to be added to the church. And Paul stepped in as missionary to the Gentiles and provided the foundational teaching for the church of Jews and Gentiles.

Ephesians 2:19-22 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

We see that without Gentiles Jesus's body, the church, would not be complete. Because it is through the church that God is fulfilling his covenant with Abraham.

Genesis 12:2,3 "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

Jesus was of Abrahams seed. And the church is Jesus's body and therefore also of Abraham. And through the church all the peoples on earth are being blessed. And it will be from the church that Jesus will

choose his bride. Not everyone who is in the church will be invited to the wedding feast of the bride (Revelation 19:9).

Now we come down the long road of history to today. We find along that road that while Christ has been building his church, man has been building churches also and they have not always been faithful or honoring to their roots in Abraham. In fact, through most of this history of man-made churches, Jews have been excluded from them. This is shameful and sad for as Paul pointed out in Ephesians a true church is made up of both Jews and Gentiles.

But we are in the last days. And as these last days have approached, we've seen new Jewish congregations who believe in Jesus springing up. So, we see that Jesus has been busy building his church. Yet there is a large piece missing in this temple that Paul speaks of. I will call it the Ephraim piece.

Ezekiel 37:18,19 "When your people ask you, 'Won't you tell us what you mean by this?' say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am going to take the stick of Joseph – which is in Ephraim's hand – and of the Israelite tribes associated with him, and join it to Judah's stick. I will make them into a single stick of wood, and they will become one in my hand.' "

God has yet to return the ten tribes of Israelites to the land and join them to Judah. This will happen and until this happens the church is not complete. Nor is the Bride. Jesus needs to add from those tribes to his church, and select from those he adds for his Bride.

I will also point out that God intends to make Ephraim and Judah one in his hand. A single stick of wood. This is important, they will not be two separate people. They will not have two identities and sets of traditions; they will become one. Think about this. The Jewish nation and especially religious Jews have developed a very strong identity and heritage. Their traditions are deep. Too often when a Jew accepts Jesus, Christians have tried to Christianize him. Make him leave his Jewish heritage and traditions behind. This is wrong.

These are the last days. It is in these days that God will not only return the ten tribes of Israel but he will bring both the people of Israel and the people of Judah into his New Covenant, Jesus (Jeremiah 31:31-34). All of them, from the least to the greatest (Jeremiah 31:34). So, when the ten tribes return from their exile in the nations they will need their brother Judah to teach them the old ways, the traditions, and their heritage so that they can truly be one stick of wood. Let us all preserve Jewish tradition.

And with these future believers Jesus will complete the building of his church.

Let us pray,

BARUCH atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha-olam, asher natan lanu Torat emet, v'chayei olam nata b'tocheinu. Baruch Atah, Adonai, notein ha Torah.

BLESSED ARE YOU, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has given us a Torah of truth, implanting within us eternal life. Blessed are You, Adonai, who gives the Torah.

Amen.

Thank You,

A Voice in The Wilderness