



21705 South State Highway J
Box 583
Peculiar, Missouri 64078
779-4445
Don Ward, Pastor
Cell Phone 529-2940

More Greek than Hebrew

“*Something to Think About*” Series by Don ward

GREEK HEBRE

The gospel has undergone a transformation since the time of Jesus’ earthly ministry.

The roots of the gospel are Hebrew, (the ancient name for Abraham’s descends, known today as Israel or Jews). Jesus is a Hebrew, the apostles were all Hebrews. Jesus preached a Hebrew message, the Kingdom of God, predicted by Hebrew prophets and promised to faithful Hebrew people. Jesus is a descendent of David a Hebrew king, and, as such, is the heir to his throne (Luke 1:32, Rev.22:16). The Hebrew message became the basis for the Christian message and the Hebrew Messiah became our Savior.

Only Hebrews, Abraham’s descendents, were heirs of God’s Kingdom. So then, how is it that Gentile Christians could also, “*inherit the Kingdom of God*”?

Quickly stated, here is what happened. At first only the natural descendents of Abraham were God’s selected people. That’s why Jesus was not sent to the Gentiles, but only to the Hebrews (Matt. 10:6 & 15:24). Even after Jesus had finished His work of redemption, the gospel message was to go only to the Hebrews (Acts 13:46). However, as a people, they rejected their Messiah and refused the gospel message preached to them, allowing the gospel to be opened up to the Gentiles (Romans 11:11-21).

About three and one half years after His resurrection, our Lord prepared the apostles to take the message to the Gentiles who could also now become heirs of the Kingdom by faith. In effect, God created a new Israel, based no longer on being natural descendants of Abraham, but based on belonging to Jesus Christ, a descendent of Abraham. Being united with Christ, then, qualifies Gentiles (and Jews) as Abraham's faithful children and heirs as well (Gal.3:27-28). God looks on us as the children of Abraham and the "Israel of God" (Rom. 9:6, 8; Gal.3:7-9, 6:16)

Does all this sound unfamiliar to you?

What was clearly explained to the church by the apostles has all but disappeared from popular preaching. The gospel message has become more Greek than Hebrew. Christians are taught, not that they are heirs of God's future Kingdom on earth, but at death, will go heaven and heaven will be their eternal home.

As the gospel message penetrated the Greek world, gradually the Greek world began to penetrate the gospel. For example, the church began to teach Plato's immortality of the soul.

To the Greeks, resurrection was foolish and undesirable. Gradually Greek inherent immortality replaced the resurrection. According to the bible, resurrection is the only hope for Christians that die. Today, many give lip service to the resurrection but "we can do just fine without it, thank you very much, since we have an immortal soul that continues to live on in heaven without benefit of the resurrection". Just one example of a gospel more Greek than Hebrew.

Consider this. Greek Gnosticism, a powerful influence before, during and after NT times, held that there was only one Supreme

God. Sound familiar? One God composed of several persons. Sound familiar? They explained the discrepancy this way. They said it was a mystery. Sound familiar? The term for this God was *Pleroma*.

Did Christians also borrow this concept from the Greeks and call it Trinity? The most important tenet of the Hebrew faith (affirmed by Jesus) was, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Deut. 6:4). Can there really be three who are God and yet, at the same time, only one God? Does this not describe a God more Greek than Hebrew? Did Greek influence replace true monotheism of the Hebrews and early Christians (1Cor.8:4, 6) with a mystery based on Greek philosophy? Several well-known scholars think so.

Today, for example, it has become necessary to use words and terms borrowed from Greek philosophy to explain present-day Christian doctrine; such commonly used words as Trinity, immortal soul, incarnation and others. None of these words can be found anywhere in the bible! Don't you find that disturbing?

The language of the apostles should be sufficient to express the faith of the apostles, both then and now. Anything else is suspect.

If immortality is something we now possess, why should we "seek" it, Romans 2:7?

If there really are three co-equal Gods, would not something that fundamental be stated clearly at least once or twice? In fact, there are many many scriptures that preclude such a finding.

Many today follow a gospel that is more Greek than Hebrew.

If you wish to study this further please contact me or go to

<http://www.mindspring.com/~anthonybuzzard/articles.htm> or <http://www.comingkingdom.org/ATCmag.html>