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MINISTRIES

“The following is a direct script of a teaching that is intended to be presented via video, incorporating relevant text, slides, media, and graphics to assist in illustration, thus facilitating the presentation of the material. In some places, this may cause the written material to not flow or sound rather awkward in some places. In addition, there may be grammatical errors that are often not acceptable in literary work. We encourage the viewing of the video teachings to complement the written teaching you see below.”

Parashah Points: Nitzavim - The People of YHWH

Welcome to another episode of Parashah Points—short thoughts from the weekly Torah Portion.

This week’s Parashah Point comes from Nitzavim, which is Hebrew for “Standing,” and it goes from Deuteronomy 29:9 to Deuteronomy 30:20.

In this Torah portion, Moses tells the people of Israel that they stand before God to enter into Covenant with him. He speaks of curses that would come as a result of violating this covenant but that forgiveness and restoration are available to all who repent. Moses goes on to teach that God’s commandments are not beyond reach, and concludes by exhorting God’s people to “choose life” by loving God and keeping his commandments.

There’s a lot we can talk about in this Torah Portion. Today we’re going to talk about the people of YHWH.

Deuteronomy 29:10-15

You are standing today, all of you, before the Lord [YHWH] your God: the heads of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, **and the sojourner** who is in your camp, from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your water, so that you may enter into the sworn covenant of the Lord [YHWH] your God, which the Lord [YHWH] your God is making with you today, **that he may establish you today as his people, and that he may be your God**, as he promised you, and as he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. It is not with you alone that I am making this sworn covenant, but with whoever is standing here with us today before the Lord [YHWH] our God, and with whoever is not here with us today.

This passage describes the people being assembled to enter into covenant relationship with YHWH—as “his people.” By entering this covenant relationship, the people undertook certain obligations. They were to faithfully live according to God’s commandments.

What’s fascinating about this passage is that it gives us a definition of the people of YHWH. Contrary to

popular opinion, YHWH's people in the Old Testament are not defined by their ethnic status. As we see, the *sojourner* is included among those who are being established as "his people" in this passage. YHWH's people are called Israel. Thus, the sojourner, who is not an Israelite by ethnicity, if he is aligned with YHWH by faith, he is part of the people of Israel.

Deuteronomy 29:1

These are the words of the covenant that the Lord [YHWH] commanded Moses to make with the **people of Israel** in the land of Moab, besides the covenant that he had made with them at Horeb.

In the Scriptures, "Israel" refers to the totality of the Covenant people of YHWH. While this entity called Israel mostly consisted of those who were ethnically descended from Jacob in the Old Testament, it was not exclusive to them. God has always welcomed *anyone* who desires to follow him to be part of his people, Israel.

Isn't this the same message we see in the New Testament?

Ephesians 2:11-13, 19

Therefore remember that at one time **you Gentiles** in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, **alienated from the commonwealth of Israel** and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus [Messiah Yeshua] you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ [...] So then **you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.**

Thank you for joining us for another Parashah Point!

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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1) FB banner text (Short sentence or two)

In this week's Parashah Point on the portion called Nitzavim we are given a definition for the people of YHWH.

2) A short summary of the teaching for the Vimeo description

In this week's Parashah Point on the Torah Portion called Nitzavim, we read Deuteronomy 29:10-15 and find out not only what it takes to be the people of YHWH, but also who it includes. This definition comes directly from the Creator through the mouth of Moses; this is the Creator's definition, not man's.

3) Include keywords, longer description, and some key scripture verses

Parashah Points, Nitzavim, The People of YHWH, who are the people of God?, God's people, Deuteronomy 29:10-15

