

Ask The Rabbi – May 11, 2021

Question:

I was reading today in Deut 23 and Nehemiah 13 that no Moabite is ever to be admitted as part of the assembly of God. But Ruth was a Moabite who became part of the assembly.

Was Boaz allowed to marry her because his mother was already a foreigner? David, and Yeshua, have an interesting bloodline with Rahab and Ruth. Or is it only Moabite men who are not allow to become part of the assembly? I understand that the Israelites broke this law all the time and married foreign women, but if God set down this law, why did he make an exception for these women in the line of David?

Response:

Deu 23:4 "No `Amoni or Mo'avi may enter the assembly of Adonai, nor may any of his descendants down to the tenth generation ever enter the assembly of Adonai,

Deu 23:5 because they did not supply you with food and water when you were on the road after leaving Egypt, and because they hired Bil'am the son of B'or from P'tor in Aram-Naharayim to put a curse on you.

Neh 13:1 It was also at that time, when they were reading in the scroll of Moshe, that it was found written that no `Amoni or Mo'avi may ever enter the assembly of God,

Neh 13:2 because they did not supply the people of Isra'el with food and water, but hired Bil'am against them to put a curse on them—although our God turned the curse into a blessing.

Neh 13:3 On hearing the Torah, they separated from Isra'el everyone of mixed ancestry.

Here we read that those of mixed ancestry, families were separated from others, but it does not stipulate that they were removed from the nation. They were separated so not to be assimilated into the population but separated so as to be identified as not being permitted from entering the Assembly of Adonai.

Yet there are other restrictions listed pertaining to the Assembly of Adonai, thus providing further context to entering the Assembly of Adonai.

Deu 23:2 "A man with crushed or damaged private parts may not enter the assembly of Adonai.

Deu 23:3 "A mamzer may not enter the assembly of Adonai, nor may his descendants down to the tenth generation enter the assembly of Adonai.

Therefore, in order to answer this question, we must first define what the "Assembly of Adonai" is.

Is the Assembly of Adonai the community, that is the nation? Considering that the nation is made up of an assembly of people and further are identified as God's unique treasure this is possible, but I don't believe so.

When we look a D'varim 23:3 and that of the mamzer, a child born of a Jewish father and Gentile mother who is technically not married and thus the child is illegitimate. Are they to be removed from the camp, that is the nation? If you recall, there were insinuations towards Yeshua as being a mamzer too.

Or is the Assembly of Adonai a body of individuals, men who governed the people, acting through judicial, political and policy matters. That is the council received from Yitro towards Moshe in Sh'mot 18...

Exo 18:21 But you should choose from among all the people competent men who are God-fearing, honest

and incorruptible to be their leaders, in charge of thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.

For associated with D'varim 23:3 and descendants of Moav so too those who were not eligible for service were eunuchs and illegitimate male children. Did they meet the standard conveyed by Yitro to Moshe? One might conclude that because of their current state, those identified as being ineligible to serve would not have been regarded by the people as being competent. God-fearing or incorruptible. Thus their ability to serve in Adonai's assembly would have been comprised.

Notice the emphasis is placed upon gender. In each situation we are identifying men and thus only men were permitted to serve in such positions.

Thus returning to Ruth, of Moav descent, who's first husband was of Jewish descent and thus a widow without an heir. Because she was married and there were no other heirs to her husband's father, Elimelekh, his line would have died out. Yet there was such a burden to continue the line of Elimelekh for this is the primary matter of the book of Ruth. For we read of what transpired through Boaz:

Rth 4:9 Bo`az addressed the leaders and all the people: "You are witnesses today that I am purchasing from Na`omi all that belonged to Elimelekh and all that belonged to Kilyon and Machlon.

Rth 4:10 Also I am acquiring as my wife Rut the woman from Mo'av, the wife of Machlon, in order to raise up in the name of the deceased an heir for his property; so that the name of the deceased will not be cut off from his kinsmen and from the gate of his place. You are witnesses today."

Rth 4:11 All the people at the gate and the leaders said, "We are witnesses. May Adonai make the woman who has come into your house like Rachel and like Le'ah, who between them built up the house of Isra'el. Do worthy deeds in Efrat; become renowned in Beit-Lechem.

We read further that the first born of Boaz and Ruth, Oved, and thus by Jewish law the son of Elimelekh, would be the grandfather of David who would become King, thus head of the Assembly of Adonai. Therefore, wouldn't David have been ineligible because Ruth was of Moav?

The answer would be no. Why?

Because Oved's biological father was Boaz and his legal father was Elimelekh, all accounts through Scripture identify the lineage of descent to the Father. It was Elimelekh whose line of descent was redeemed, not Naomi who is also Jewish. Regarding Naomi, she too was of Jewish descent in that they would travel from their home – Beit Lechem to Moav where their sons would marry women from Moav.

Rth 1:2 The man's name was Elimelekh, his wife's name was Na`omi, and his two sons were named Machlon and Kilyon; they were Efratim from Beit-Lechem in Y'hudah. They arrived in the plain of Mo'av and settled there.

By today's standard of Judaism, the lineage of the mother is viewed as the means for determining one's lineage, thus if the mother is Jewish, the child is Jewish. This is the standard of today but not the standard we have seen throughout Scripture.

Tamar... Rachav ... Rut ... the wife of Uriyah (Bat-sheva), Women, especially those born Gentiles, were rarely included in biblical genealogies. These four were Gentile women whom God honored by including them among the recorded ancestors of Yeshua the Jewish Messiah-through whom Gentiles, women and slaves are saved equally with Jews, men and free.

Further, consider the proclamation of Ruth to her mother-in-law...

Rth 1:16 But Ruth said, "Don't press me to leave you and stop following you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God will be my God.

Rth 1:17 Where you die, I will die; and there I will be buried. May Adonai bring terrible curses on me, and worse ones as well, if anything but death separates you and me."

Therefore, the requirement of D'varim 23 applied specifically to men and thus was not applicable to Ruth for Adonai would not have broken His own Mitzvah. Further, it was not applicable to her son in that Oved's father was Jewish for which the mitzvah applied and by which the lineage was identified.

There was no objection to Boaz's purchase of the land and marriage of Ruth, by those who were witnesses. Adonai did not object because Oved was part of the lineage of Yeshua.

Question:

Abraham and Sarah were from Ur of the Chaldeans. Ishmael was part Egyptian. I know in the Scriptures he was called a Hebrew. Jacob had a name change to Yisreal. Here is the question--Where does the Jewish DNA come from?

Response:

Rather than looking specifically at one's DNA, in order to answer this question let's look at one's identity. It is true that Avram and Sarai were from Ur, yet that identity was to be transformed.

Gen 12:1 Now Adonai said to Avram, "Get yourself out of your country, away from your kinsmen and away from your father's house, and go to the land that I will show you.

Avram was instructed by Adonai to leave the land they were in. Considering they had already left Ur and

Gen 11:31 Terach took his son Avram, his son Haran's son Lot, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Avram's wife; and they left Ur of the Kasdim to go to the land of Kena'an. But when they came to Haran, they stayed there.

And thus were already on the way to the land Adonai would show bring them to.

Adonai calls Avram out of the land in order to do the following:

Gen 12:2 I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you, and I will make your name great; and you are to be a blessing.

I will make of you a great nation. At this moment in time, the nation does not exist in the world, yet will be established through the lineage of Avraham.

Gen 15:2 Avram replied, "Adonai, God, what good will your gifts be to me if I continue childless; and Eli'ezer from Dammesek inherits my possessions?

Gen 15:3 You haven't given me a child," Avram continued, "so someone born in my house will be my heir."

Gen 15:4 But the word of Adonai came to him: "This man will not be your heir. No, your heir will be a child from your own body."

Gen 15:5 Then he brought him outside and said, "Look up at the sky, and count the stars—if you can count them! Your descendants will be that many!"

The nation will be established through a blood line of descendants. Thus the place of origin pertaining to Avram and Sarai is not relevant to what Adonai is going to do. The key is in His descendants.

Gen 17:7 "I am establishing my covenant between me and you, along with your descendants after you, generation after generation, as an everlasting covenant, to be God for you and for your descendants after you.

Gen 17:8 I will give you and your descendants after you the land in which you are now foreigners, all the land of Kena'an, as a permanent possession; and I will be their God."

Thus the two elements required for a nation have been identified – people, for whom will descend directly from Avram and land for which the descendants of Avram will come to possess.

With these two required elements for a nation, missing are descendants for which Adonai conveyed to Avram they would be as numerous as the stars in the sky. Yet, Avram and Sarai have no descendant. Avram has a son in Yishmael, yet it is not the son of Sarai. For Adonai reiterated the promise He has made to Avram and Sarai would be done through their offspring, not a surrogate.

Gen 17:15 God said to Avraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are not to call her Sarai [*mockery*]; her name is to be Sarah [*princess*].

Gen 17:16 I will bless her; moreover, I will give you a son by her. Truly I will bless her: she will be a mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

Gen 17:17 At this Avraham fell on his face and laughed—he thought to himself, "Will a child be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah give birth at ninety?"

Gen 17:18 Avraham said to God, "If only Yishma'el could live in your presence!"

Gen 17:19 God answered, "No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you are to call him Yitz'chak [*laughter*]. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

Therefore, the lineage has been defined as Avraham and Sarah only. Thus the unique combination of Avraham and Sarah who had only one child established the DNA of the nation. What ever their distinct markers were became the basis, the point of origin for that which the identity of the nation would be forever etched.

DNA was discovered in 1869 by Swiss researcher Friedrich Miescher, who was originally trying to study the composition of lymphoid cells (white blood cells). Instead, he isolated a new molecule he called nuclein (DNA with associated proteins) from a cell nucleus. While Miescher was the first to define DNA as a distinct molecule, several other researchers and scientists have contributed to our relative understanding of DNA as we know it today. And it wasn't until the early 1940s that DNA's role in genetic inheritance was even begun to be researched and understood.

<https://www.lunadna.com/history-of-dna/>

It would be through Yitzchak and Rivkah that the nation would be established via Yaakov (not Esav) and thus his wives and hand maidens. Through each, the DNA would differ slightly yet there are distinct markers that identify a familial connection. Therefore, the distinct DNA of Avraham and Sarah are a foundational combination that is unique to the Jewish people in that they only had a single offspring. If we actually had their DNA, one could ultimately determine if they were related.

Thus the nation established by Adonai also contains other unique aspects no other nation bears witness to.

Rom 9:1 I am speaking the truth—as one who belongs to the Messiah, I do not lie; and also bearing witness is my conscience, governed by the Ruach HaKodesh:

Rom 9:2 my grief is so great, the pain in my heart so constant,

Rom 9:3 that I could wish myself actually under God's curse and separated from the Messiah, if it would help my brothers, my own flesh and blood,

Rom 9:4 the people of Isra'el! They were made God's children, the Sh'khinah has been with them, the covenants are theirs, likewise the giving of the Torah, the Temple service and the promises;

Rom 9:5 the Patriarchs are theirs; and from them, as far as his physical descent is concerned, came the Messiah, who is over all. Praised be Adonai for ever! Amen.

The Jewish term is a result of the divided Kingdom and the prominence of the Southern Kingdom Y'hudah. Over time, the Jewish identity became universal rather than identifying a single tribe of the nation of Isra'el. We read of some from the Norther tribes returning to Y'hudah at the time of Assyrian exile...

2Ch 11:13 The cohanim and L'vi'im from wherever they lived throughout all Isra'el made themselves available to Rechav`am.

2Ch 11:14 The L'vi'im left their pasture lands and property and came to Y'hudah and Yerushalayim; since Yarov`am and his sons had thrown them out, not allowing them to function as cohanim for Adonai,

2Ch 11:15 and had appointed for himself cohanim for the high places and for the images of goat-demons and calves that he had made.

2Ch 11:16 Those from all the tribes of Isra'el who had set their hearts on seeking Adonai, the God of Isra'el, followed them to Yerushalayim to sacrifice to Adonai, the God of their fathers.

2Ch 11:17 For three years they strengthened the kingdom of Y'hudah and made Rechav`am the son of Shlomo strong, because for three years they followed the way of life of David and Shlomo.

We read of the term Jew being used during the Babylonian exile in the book of Esther...

Est 2:5 There was in Shushan the capital a man who was a Jew, whose name was Mordekhai the son of Ya'ir, the son of Shim`i, the son of Kish, a Binyamini.

He was of the tribe of Binyamin of the southern Kingdom yet was identified as a Jew. Mordekhai was not of the tribe of Y'hudah but of the southern Kingdom.

We see Sha'ul using the term in a universal dynamic as well, not distinguishing between tribal identity but conveying that of a unified Kingdom,

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the Good News, since it is God's powerful means of bringing salvation to everyone who keeps on trusting, to the Jew especially, but equally to the Gentile.

Rom 1:17 For in it is revealed how God makes people righteous in his sight; and from beginning to end it is through trust—as the Tanakh puts it, "But the person who is righteous will live his life by trust."

One that is of the nation, Isra'el was considered to be a Jew though they may not have been descended from the tribe of Y'hudah. Hence this identity which originated at the time of exile exists to this day.

Question:

I still have a difficult time understanding the following verse. I know I have asked it before and I thought I understood it then but it still escapes me.

Matthew 11:10 - 12

Mat 11:10 This is the one about whom the Tanakh says, 'See, I am sending out my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you.'

Mat 11:11 Yes! I tell you that among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than Yochanan the Immerser! Yet the one who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he!

Mat 11:12 From the time of Yochanan the Immerser until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been suffering violence; yes, violent ones are trying to snatch it away.

Response:

These verses are part of a more comprehensive teaching by Yeshua...

Having instructed the Twelve and sent them away, Yeshua continues his itinerant healing and preaching; the narrative joins up with [Mat 9:36](#). The disciples of Yochanan the Immerser come to Yeshua with a message "in code," which he also answers in code ([Mat 11:2-6](#)). The interchange piques the crowd's curiosity, on which Yeshua capitalizes by challenging their understanding of Yochanan's ministry and pinning their attention to the chief subject of his preaching, the Kingdom of Heaven ([Mat 11:7-14](#); see [Mat 3:2](#)). Finding his hearers dull of spirit he provokes them first with irony over failing to penetrate the surface of things ([Mat 11:15-19](#)), then with direct reproach at not turning from their sins even when confronted with evidence that God is present in a new and mighty way ([Mat 11:20-24](#)). Finally Yeshua states plainly that he himself has power and authority directly from God the Father ([Mat 11:25-27](#)), closing with an unexpectedly gentle challenge that they trust Yeshua as the one who can meet their needs ([Mat 11:28-30](#)). JNT – David Stern

Thus looking closely at verses 10 – 12 we are witnessing Yeshua establishing a connection to Yochanan and that of the promises of Adonai, for which He alludes to Mal'akhi

Mal 3:22 "Remember the Torah of Moshe my servant, which I enjoined on him at Horev, laws and rulings for all Isra'el.

Mal 3:23 Look, I will send to you Eliyahu the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible Day of Adonai.

Mal 3:24 He will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers; otherwise I will come and strike the land with complete destruction." [*Look, I will send to you Eliyahu the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible Day of Adonai.*]

And therefore conveying to Yochanan's followers and those who were also in ear shot the magnitude of Yochanan's service.

Joh 1:22 So they said to him, "Who are you?—so that we can give an answer to the people who sent us. What do you have to say about yourself?"

Joh 1:23 He answered in the words of Yesha'yahu the prophet, "I am The voice of someone crying out: 'In the desert make the way of Adonai straight!' "

And thus preparing the way for Yeshua.

Joh 1:29 The next day, Yochanan saw Yeshua coming toward him and said, "Look! God's lamb! The one who is taking away the sin of the world!

Joh 1:30 This is the man I was talking about when I said, 'After me is coming someone who has come to rank above me, because he existed before me.'

Joh 1:31 I myself did not know who he was, but the reason I came immersing with water was so that he might be made known to Isra'el."

However, Yeshua did not end with identifying Yochanan but alludes to those coming against the Kingdom of Adonai.

*The Greek is difficult. As rendered, it means that **violent ones** (demons and their human vehicles) are trying to keep God from carrying out his plan through Yeshua, e.g., through Herod's having put Yochanan in prison ([Mat 11:2](#)). JNT – David Stern*

The Kingdom of Adonai has been threatened by those coming against it by any and all means available, violence not being off the table. Thus the challenges we experience as believers potentially include violent persecution. We have read of it throughout the New Covenant writings.

The Adversary is not going down without a fight, hence we as believers in Yeshua are directly in his line of sight and the line of sight of all his advocates.

Yochanan was imprisoned and beheaded, but will have the last laugh on the day of Adonai, the Day of Judgment. For Yeshua warns of such challenges prior to His departure...

Mat 24:5 For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Messiah!' and they will lead many astray.

Mat 24:6 You will hear the noise of wars nearby and the news of wars far off; see to it that you don't become frightened. Such things must happen, but the end is yet to come.

Mat 24:7 For peoples will fight each other, nations will fight each other, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various parts of the world;

Mat 24:8 all this is but the beginning of the 'birth-pains.'

Mat 24:9 At that time you will be arrested and handed over to be punished and put to death, and all peoples will hate you because of me.

Mat 24:10 At that time many will be trapped into betraying and hating each other,

Mat 24:11 many false prophets will appear and fool many people;

Mat 24:12 and many people's love will grow cold because of increased distance from Torah.

Mat 24:13 But whoever holds out till the end will be delivered.

Today, we are seeing the move against the body of Messiah through government and other non-governmental entities. And this is just the beginning. Thus there is a violence with the intent of destroying the Kingdom. Knowing that the Adversary can't destroy the Kingdom, he will go after those of the Kingdom.

Regarding the statement Yeshua makes:

"Yet the one who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he!"

I have yet come to a satisfying understanding of this statement, nor have I seen a commentary that effectively addresses Yeshua's statement. When one would ultimately prepare the way for Yeshua, in one hand Yochanan is elevated, while in another the least will be greater than him.

Question:

Why, when Torah says the scapegoat is to go free, yet rabbinic Judaism says the goat is to be “led” over a cliff and killed? It seems that they are editing/modifying Adonai’s words...

Response:

Lev 16:21 Aharon is to lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the transgressions, crimes and sins of the people of Isra'el; he is to put them on the head of the goat and then send it away into the desert with a man appointed for the purpose.

Lev 16:22 The goat will bear all their transgressions away to some isolated place, and he is to let the goat go in the desert.

The premise here conveys that the goat is merely to be lead out of the camp by a designated escort. Where

The Mishna reports: When the lot designated the goat for Azazel, the Cohen ha Gadol tied a piece of crimson yarn on his head. Ten booths were set up between Jerusalem and the cliff which was known as Bet Hadura. At each of these stations the goat was offered food and water. When the cliff was reached, the man in charge would divide the strip of crimson wool in two: he would tie one part to the goat's horns, the other to the rock/ Then he would topple the goat backward over the cliff; before the animal was half way to the bottom, its body would be crushed. The Targums attempted to harmonize these verses and the text by stating that the man would release the goat, whereupon a violent wind would hurl the beast over the cliff.

Note: The Targums - The Aramaic translation of the Bible. It forms a part of the Jewish traditional literature, and in its inception is as early as the time of the Second Temple.

I believe the mindset was in order to prevent the goat from returning to the camp, thus the sins of the people returning to them. Thus this would be considered a case of man intervening on behalf of God and thus not trusting in God, whereby there was a lack of faith and an intervention of man's actions for which Adonai does not require and is not stipulated.

Thus these preventative actions further add to (as opposed to editing or modifying to) Adonai's mitzvot.

Deu 4:1 "Now, Isra'el, listen to the laws and rulings I am teaching you, in order to follow them, so that you will live; then you will go in and take possession of the land that Adonai, the God of your fathers, is giving you.

Deu 4:2 In order to obey the mitzvot of Adonai your God which I am giving you, do not add to what I am saying, and do not subtract from it.