

The Peace of the Cross



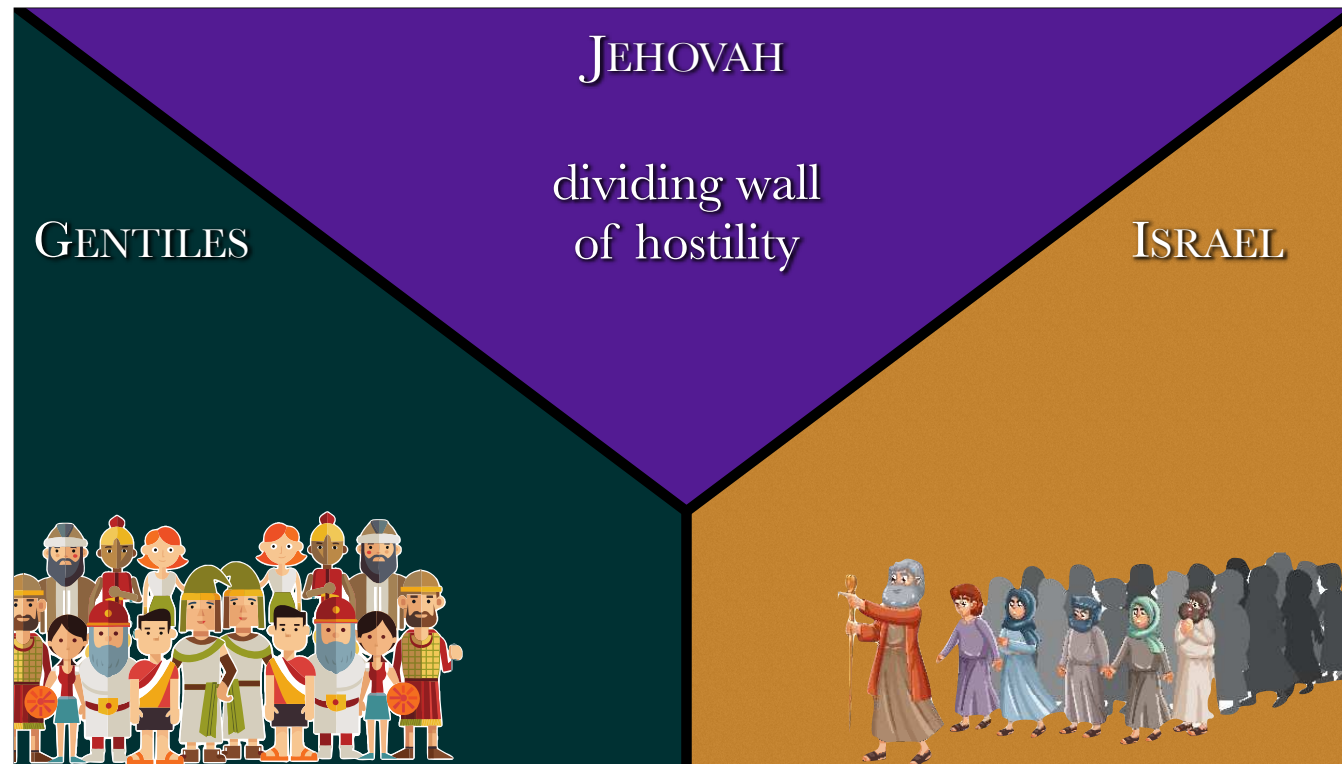
Ephesians 2:11-22



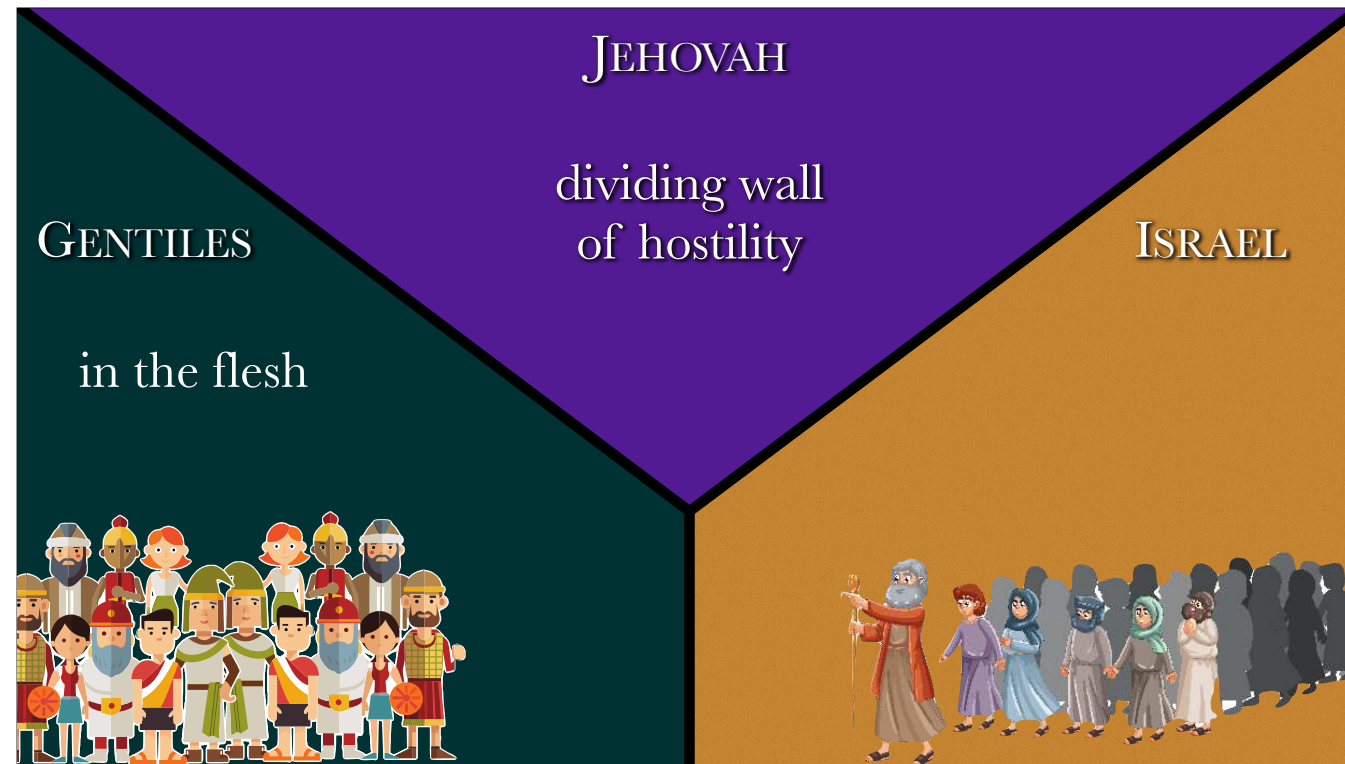
- Hostility
 - Cain and Abel
- 1 John 3:11-15 (ESV)
 - 11 For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 12 We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. 13 Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. 14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. 15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.



- Genesis 4:5-7 (ESV)
 - but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell.
 - 6 The LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.”
- What is Jehovah doing?
 - Jehovah is trying to make peace
 - Between Cain and Abel
 - Between Cain and Jehovah

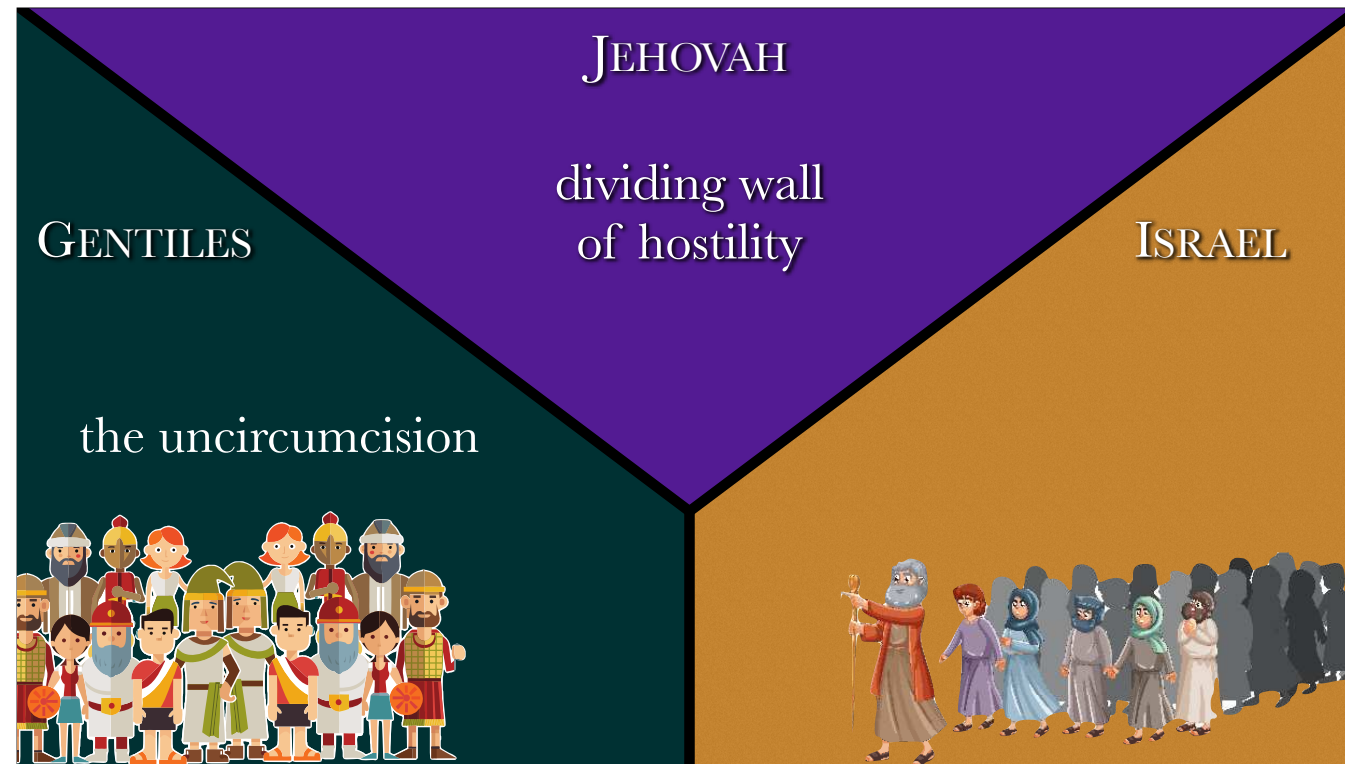


- The Dividing wall of hostility
 - Hostility: hatred, enmity
- Hatred divides us

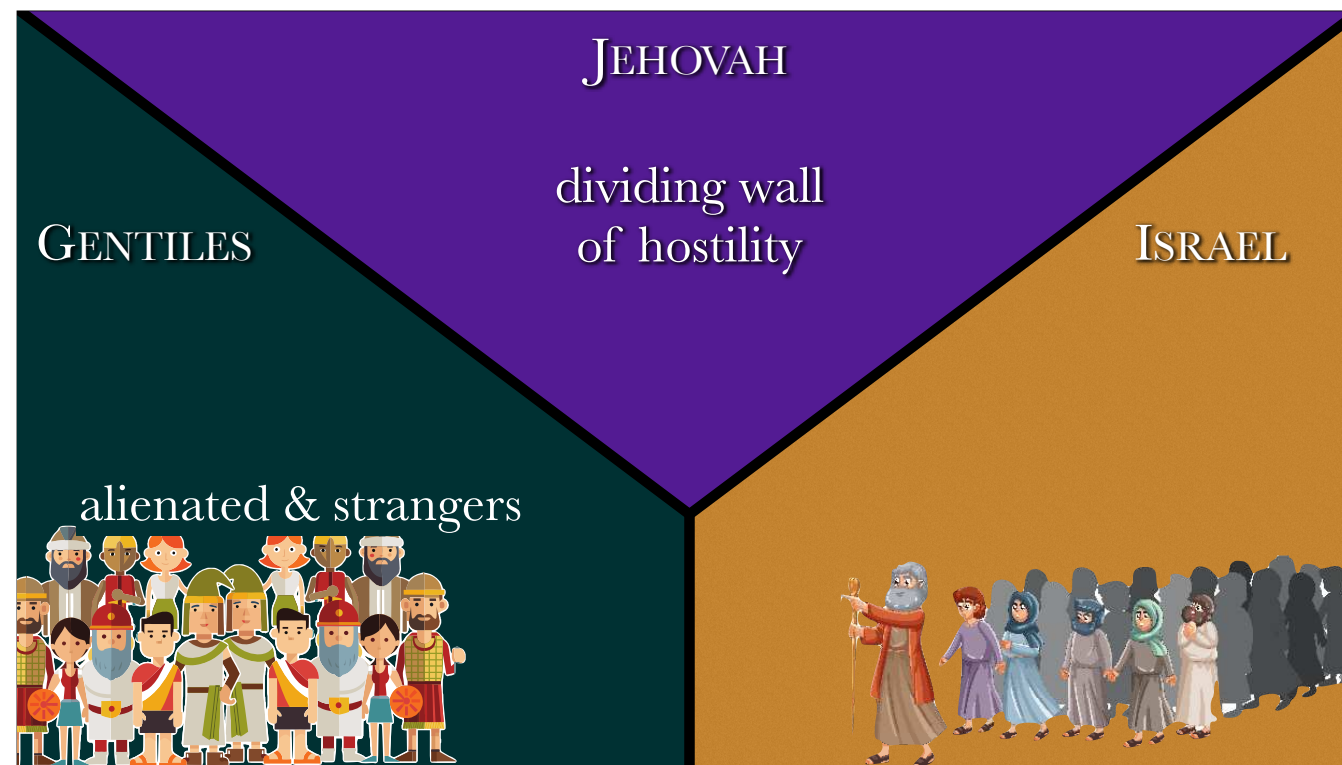


- The Gentiles

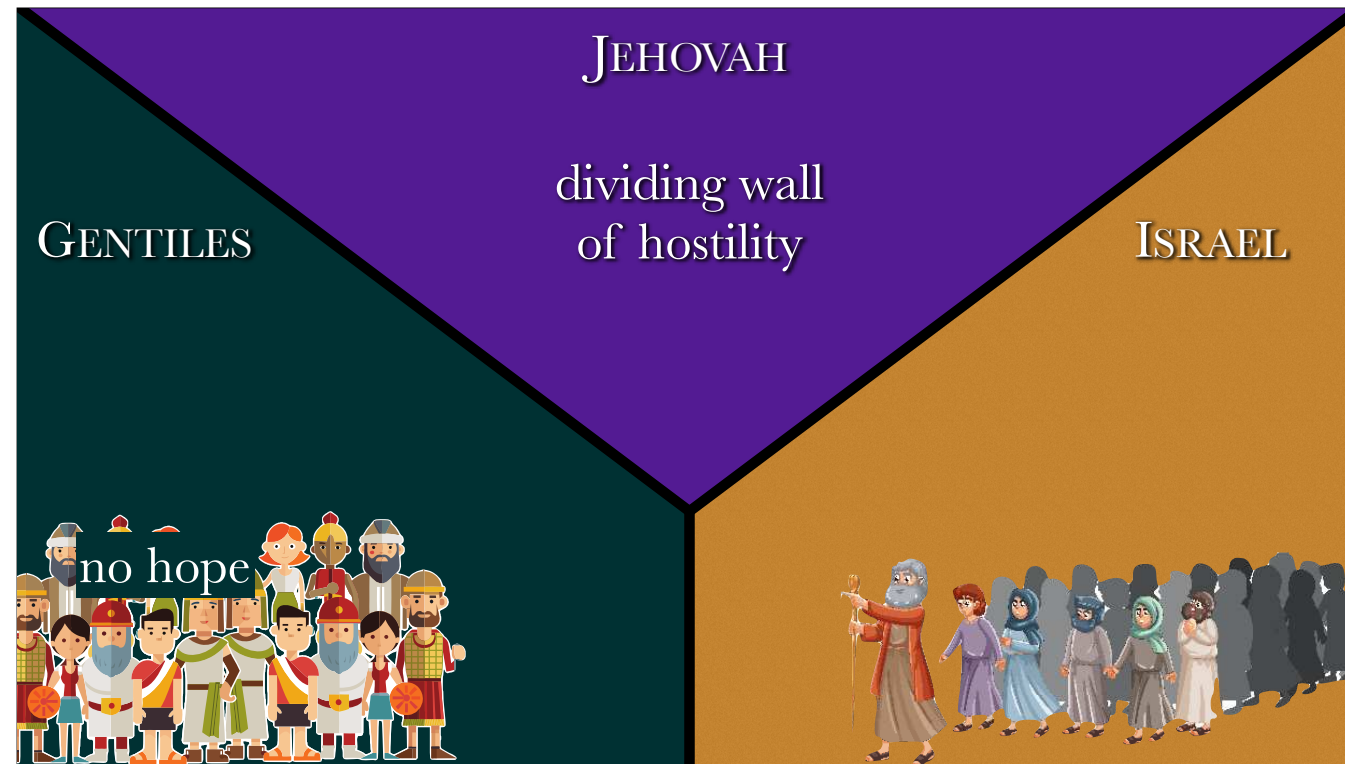
- in the flesh — Paul is making it clear that the distinction between Gentile and Israel was merely one of the flesh ... and therefore, in the eyes of God, still his creation and still worthy of being saved.



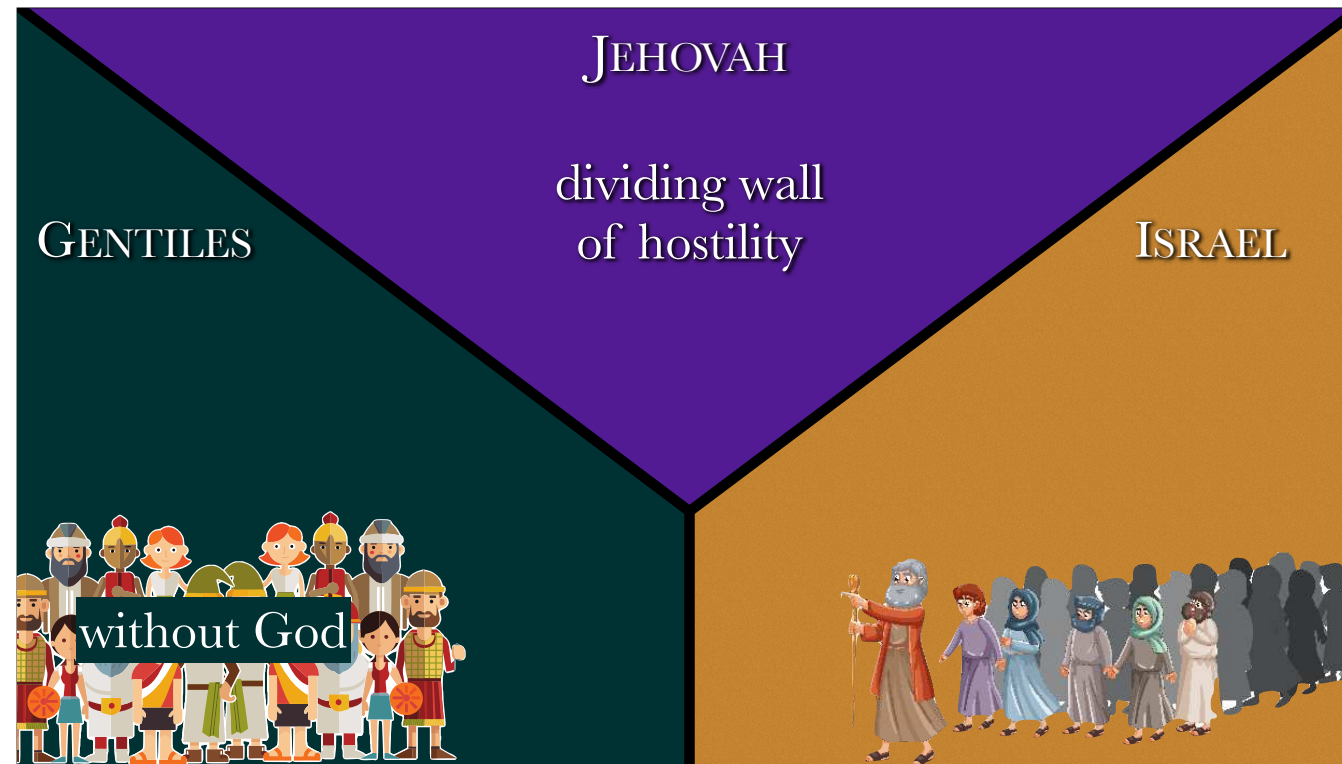
- called the uncircumcision — this was a derogatory condemnation given by the Jews against the Gentiles, it emphasizes the hostility that existed



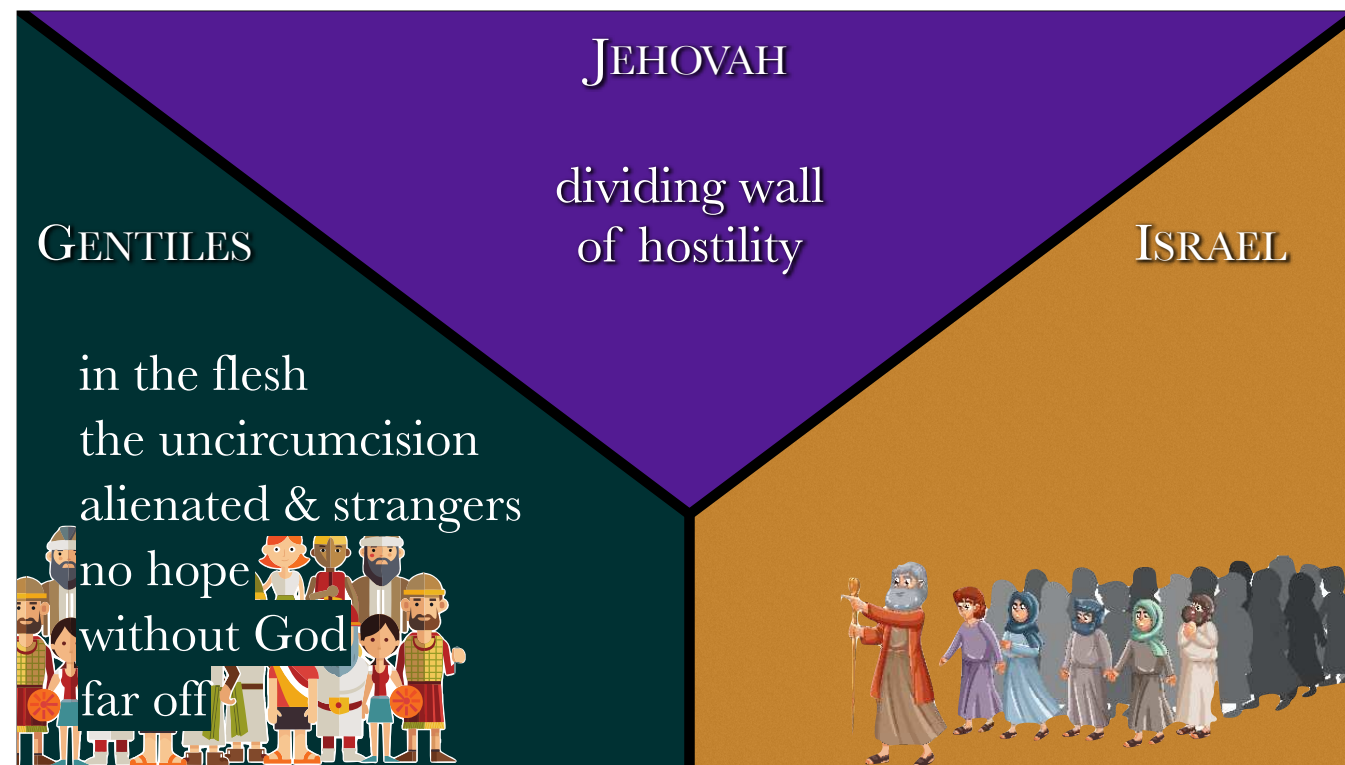
- alienated and strangers —
 - alienated from the commonwealth of Israel — not part of God's plan through Abraham to be a nation
 - strangers to the covenants of promise — no land, not God's nation
 - To the Israelites, this also would be a reason for thinking that the Gentiles were less than them (in God's eyes and their own opinion)



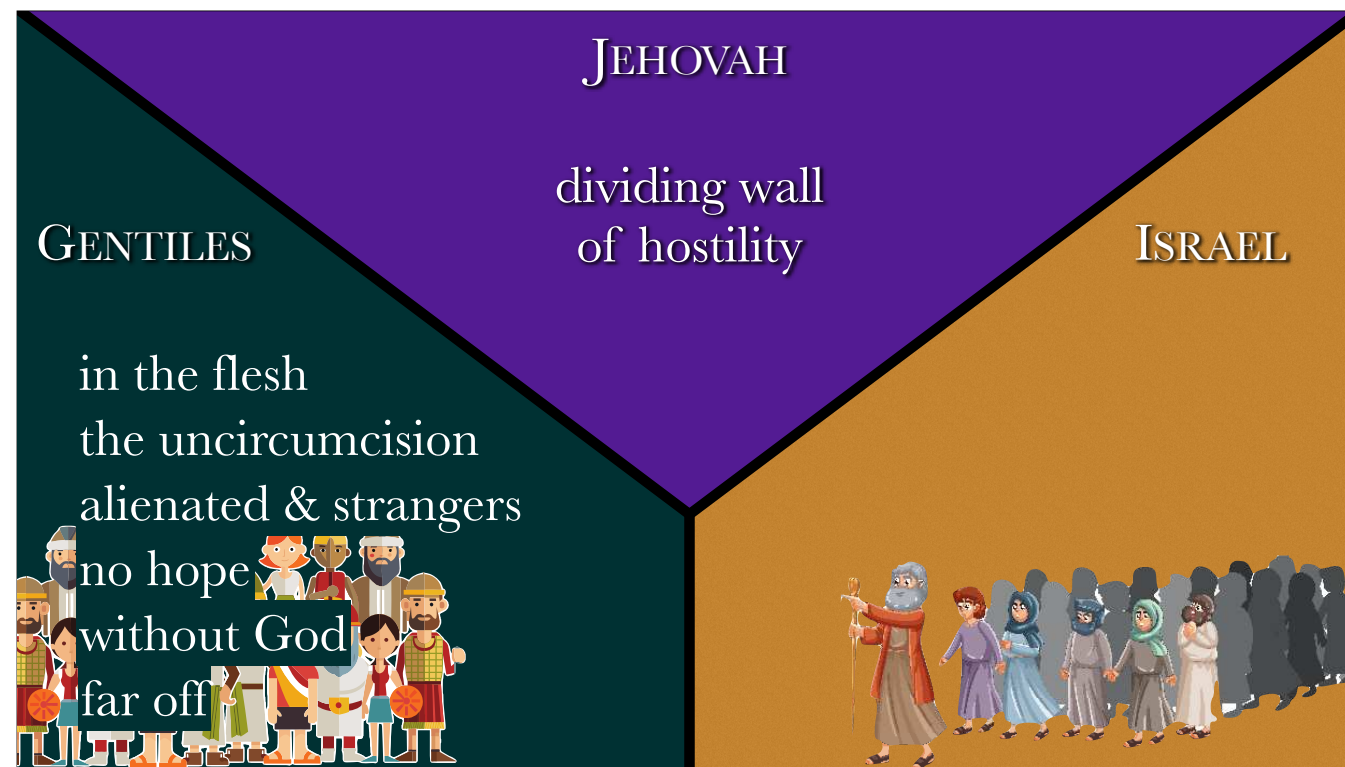
- no hope — because the promises were not made to them (kinda)
 - prejudicial view of Israel



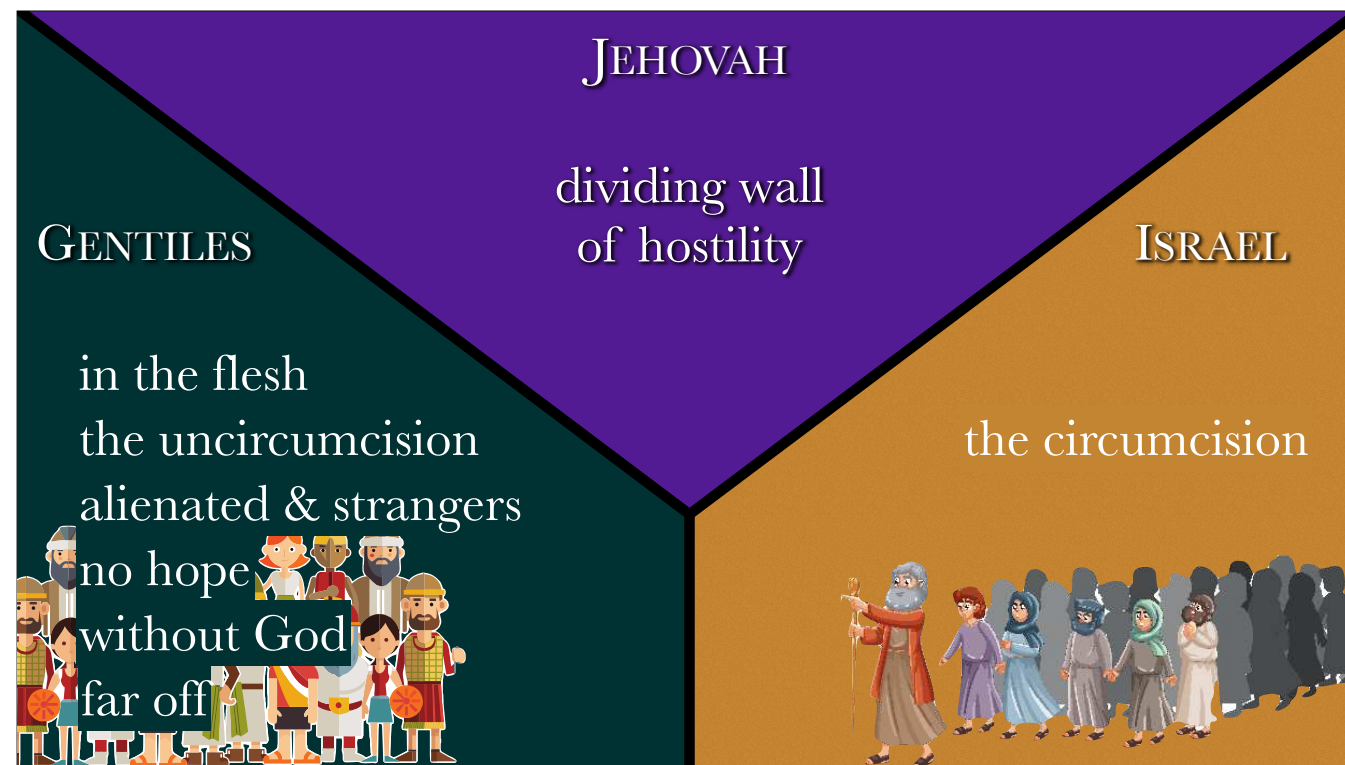
- without God — they didn't have the same relationship as Israel
 - prejudicial view of Israel
 - (Recall many times that Jehovah directed and spoke with Gentiles ... most famous is Jonah, the prophet, sent to the Gentiles in Nineveh ... to call them to repent from the wrath of God (God still cared for the Ninevites))



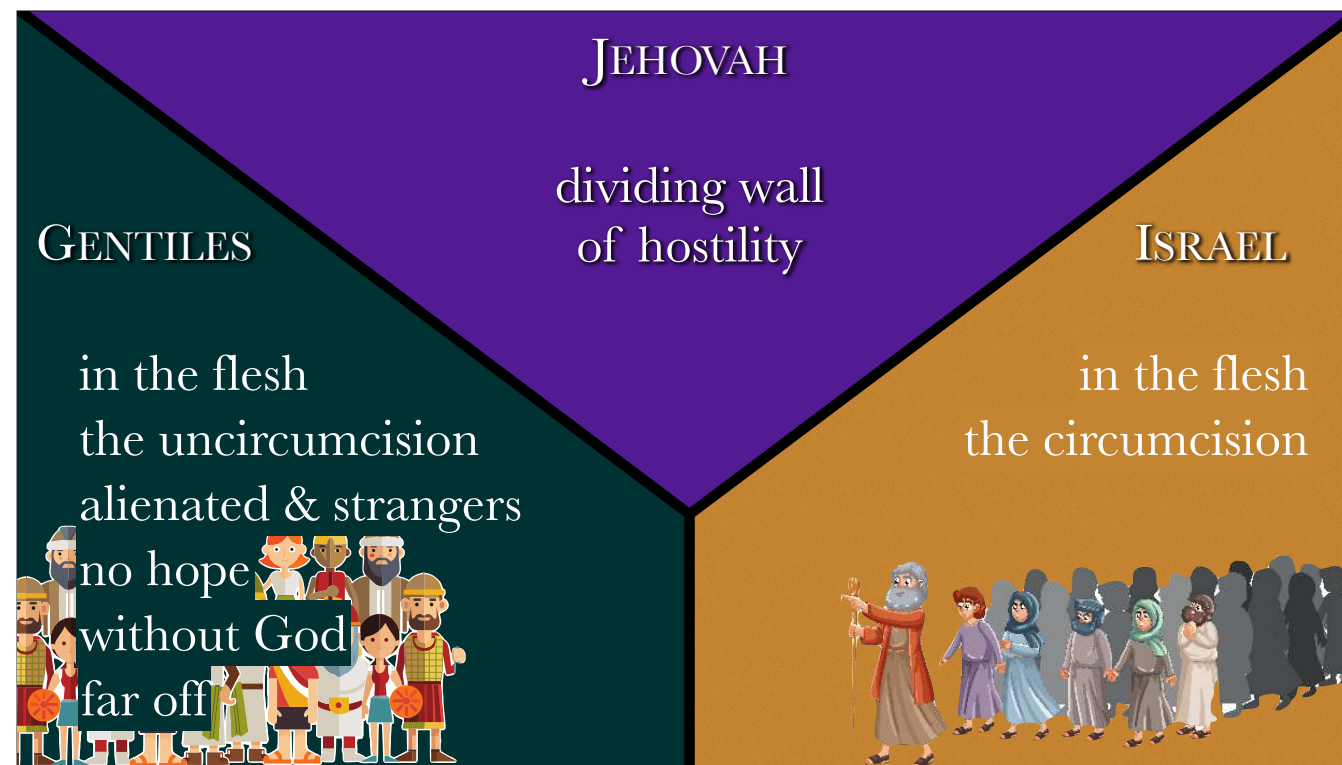
- Far Off — The Israelites considered all Gentiles as having less of a relationship with Jehovah; which was true in a sense, but they were not cut off from Him.



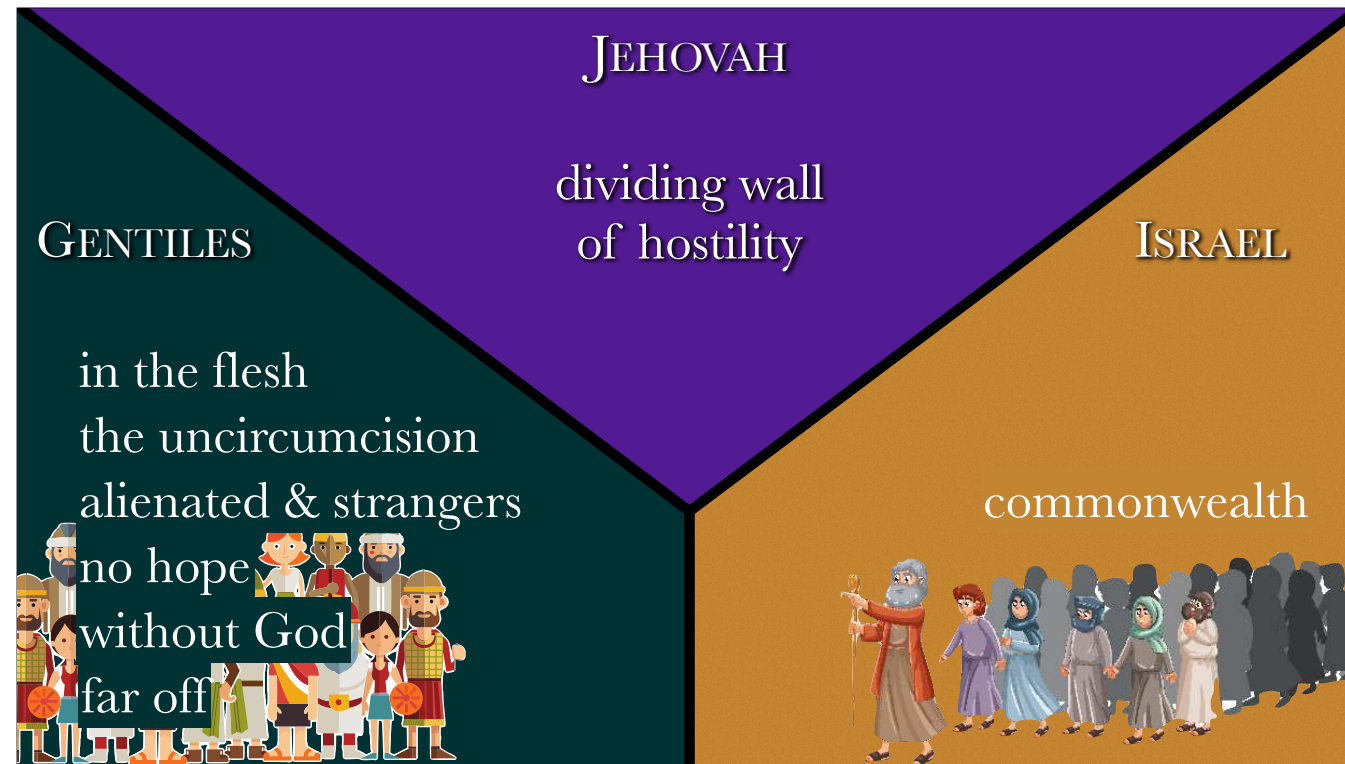
- The Israelites



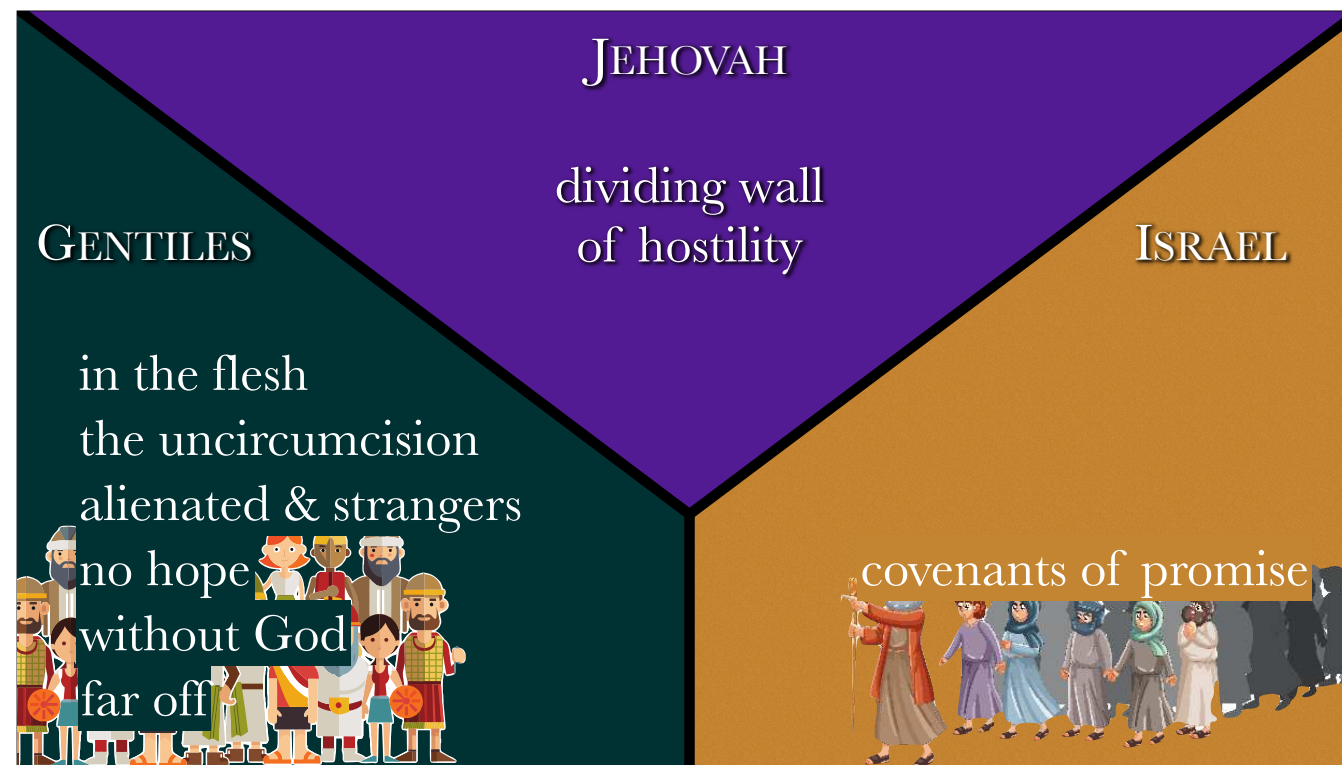
- What is called the circumcision
 - who called Israelites “the circumcision”?
 - Themselves — pride
 - Gentiles? — derisive



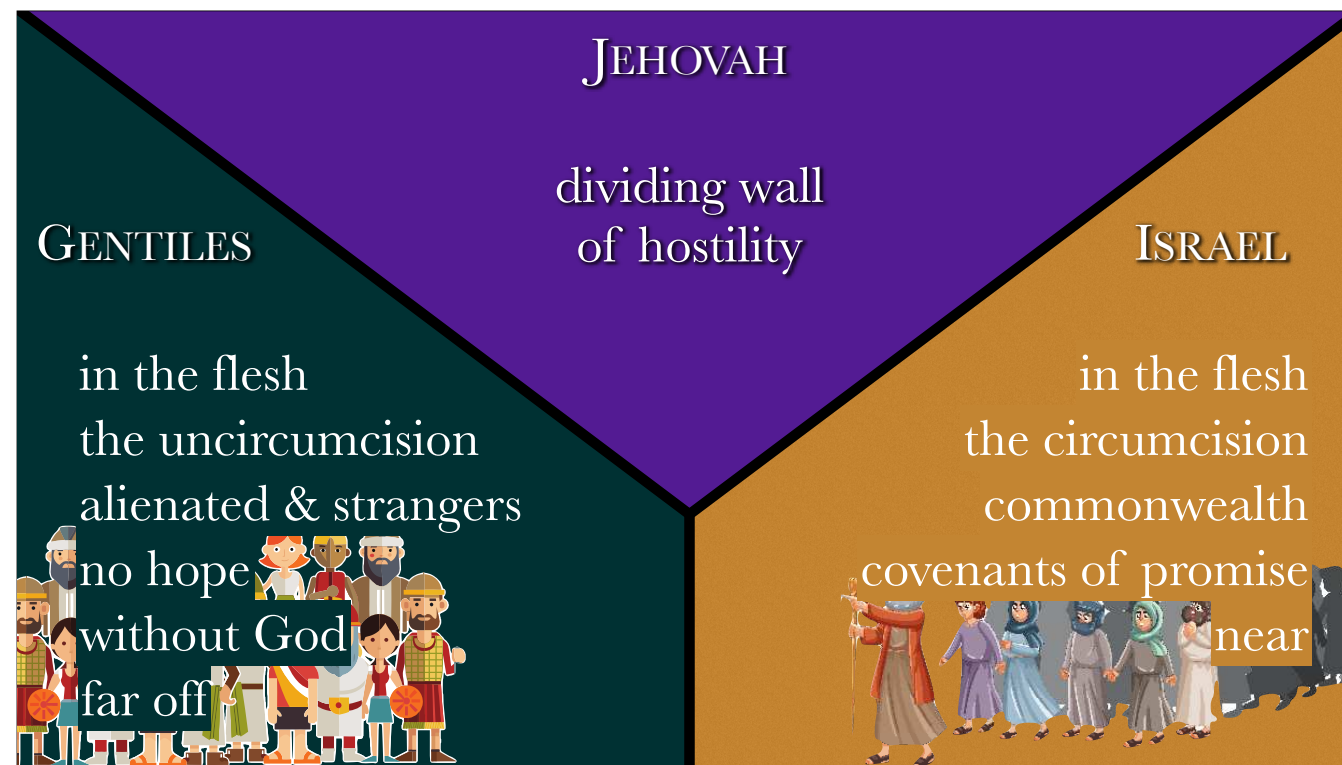
- In the flesh
 - the emphasis here is that being circumcised in the flesh was no guarantee that one was pleasing to God
 - as mentioned in previous lesson, circumcision was not just about the flesh (lips, ears, heart)



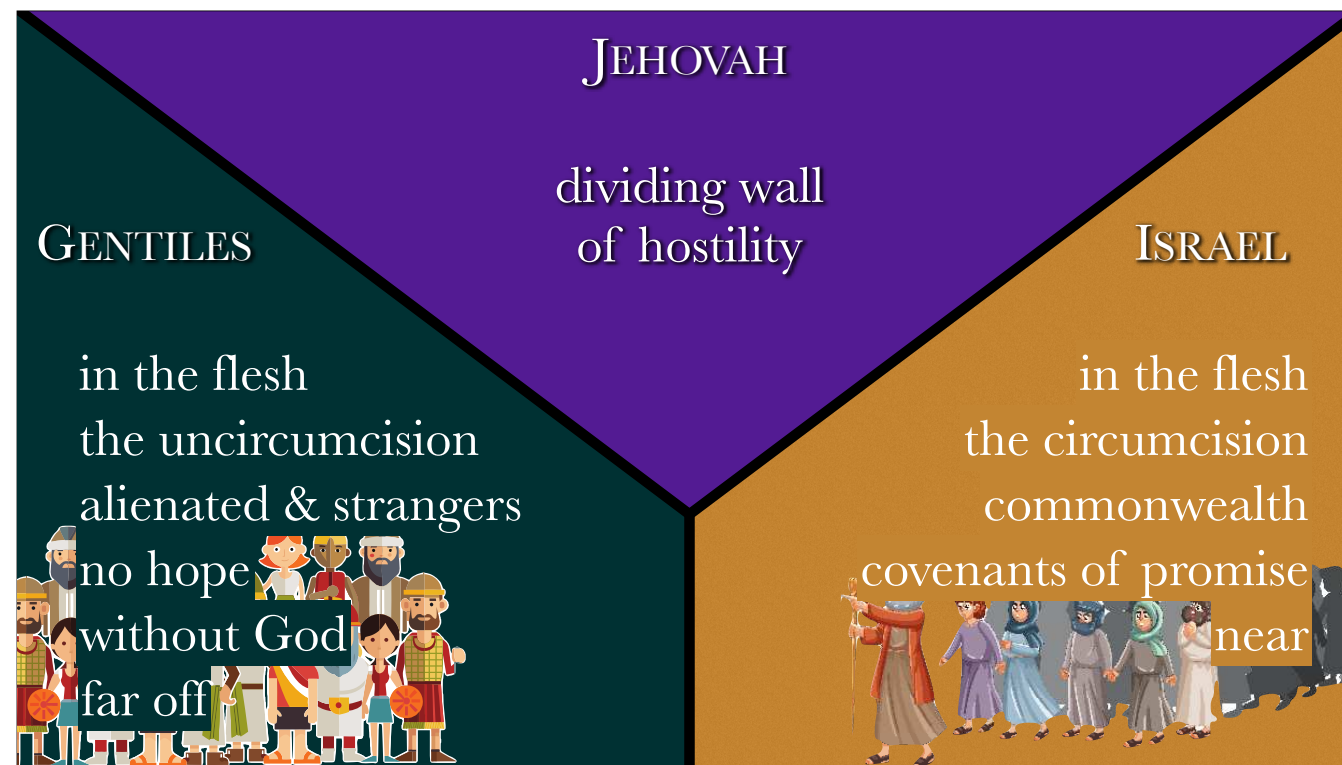
- Commonwealth
 - citizens: there was a pride for many Jews about being God's chosen people
-



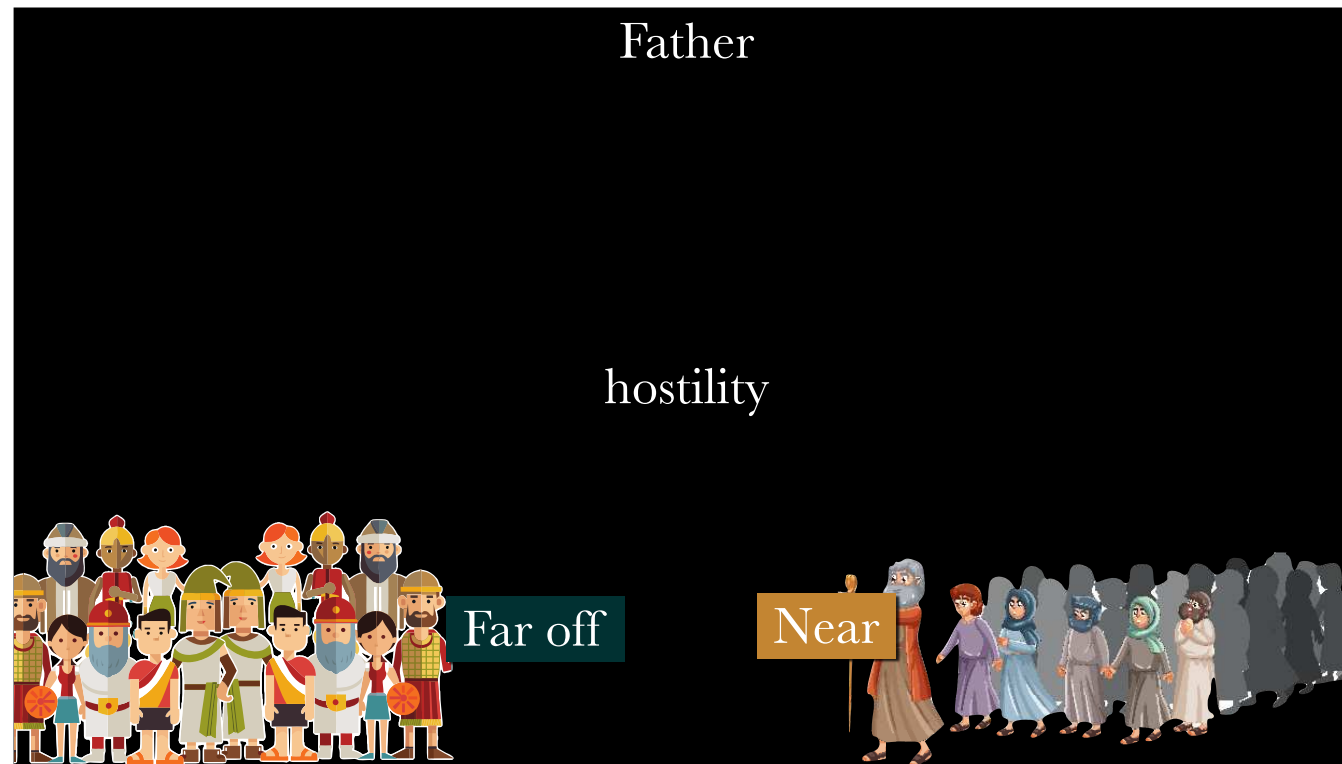
- covenants of promise
 - From time of Abraham: promises of a great nation and a land and blessing
 - Didn't really understand what it meant
 - They definitely saw themselves as having an advantage over the Gentiles in their relationship with God



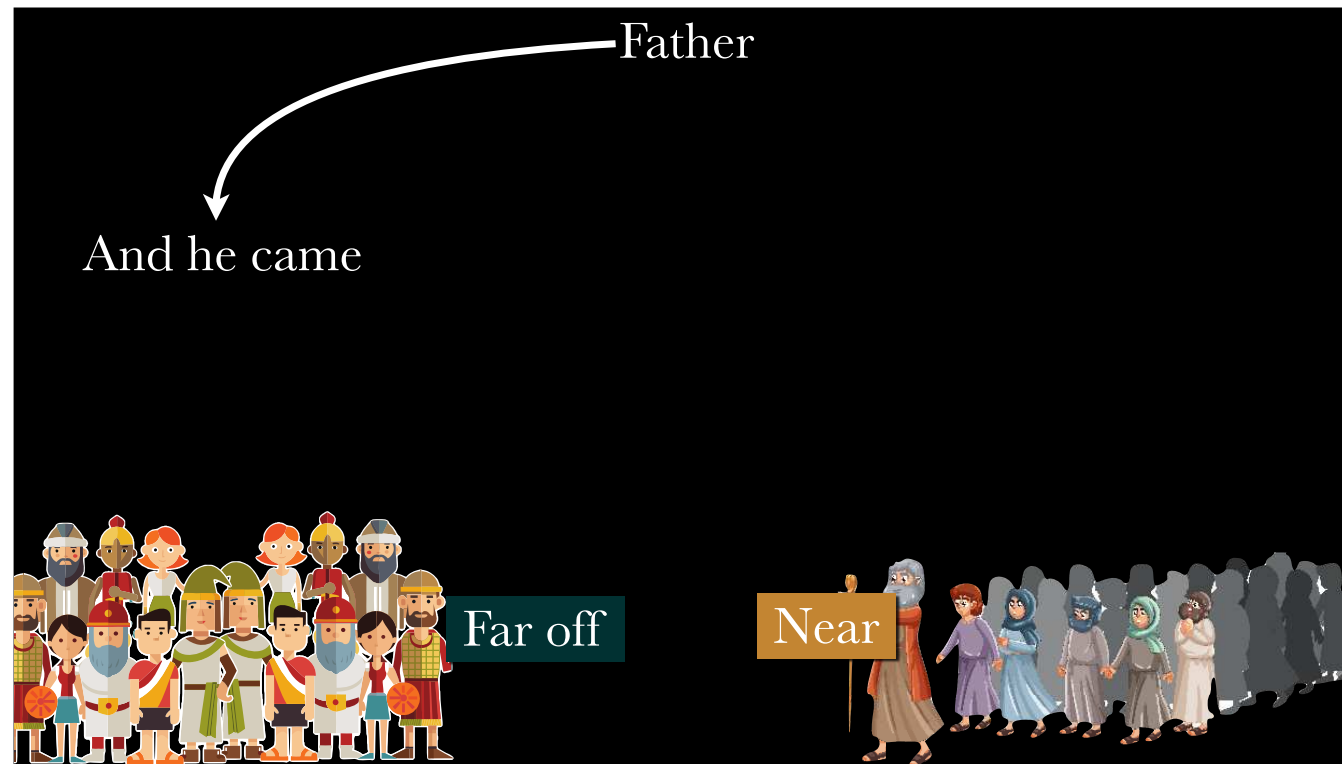
- They are “near”
 - Since time of Abraham, chosen by God
 - Brought out of Egypt and God’s special people
 - At this time, why are they near?
 - Is it because of their righteousness?
 - Rather, because they had been chosen
 - And through them would come the Messiah
 - Salvation for all the peoples



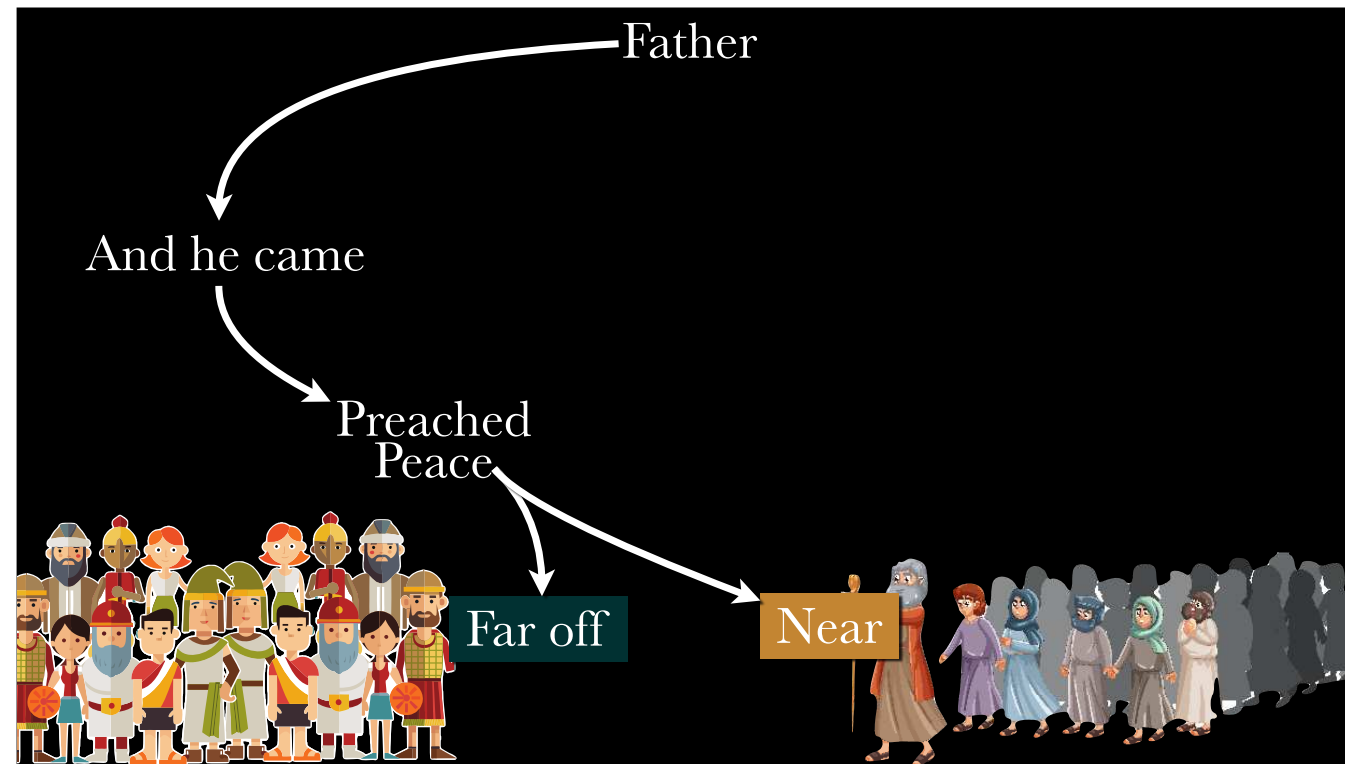
- Hostility
 - Gentiles toward the Jews
 - Jews toward the Gentiles
 - Jehovah toward sinners
 - Romans 5:9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.
- How can this hostility be resolved?
 - Is it possible for there to be peace?



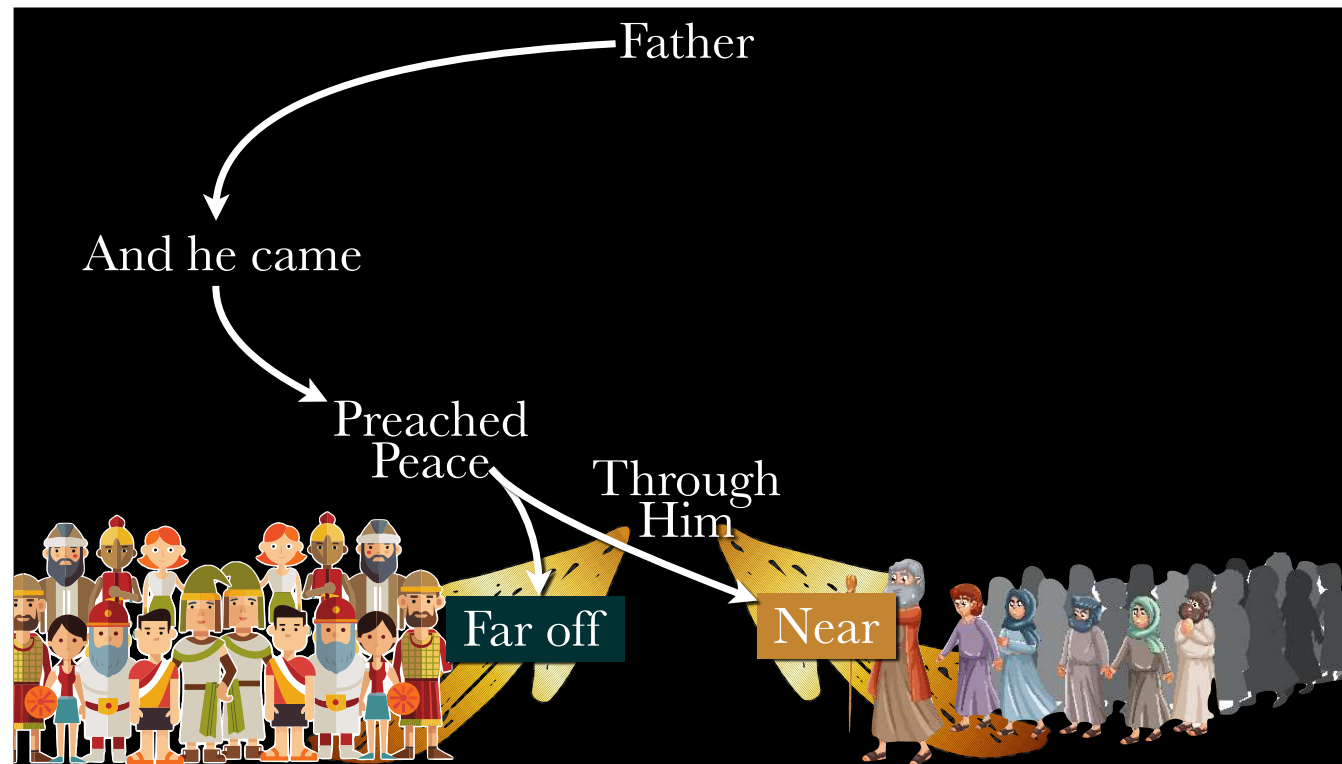
- One thing is pretty clear ... we tend to not be the one's to strive to make peace.
- Just like with Cain, Jehovah takes the first step.



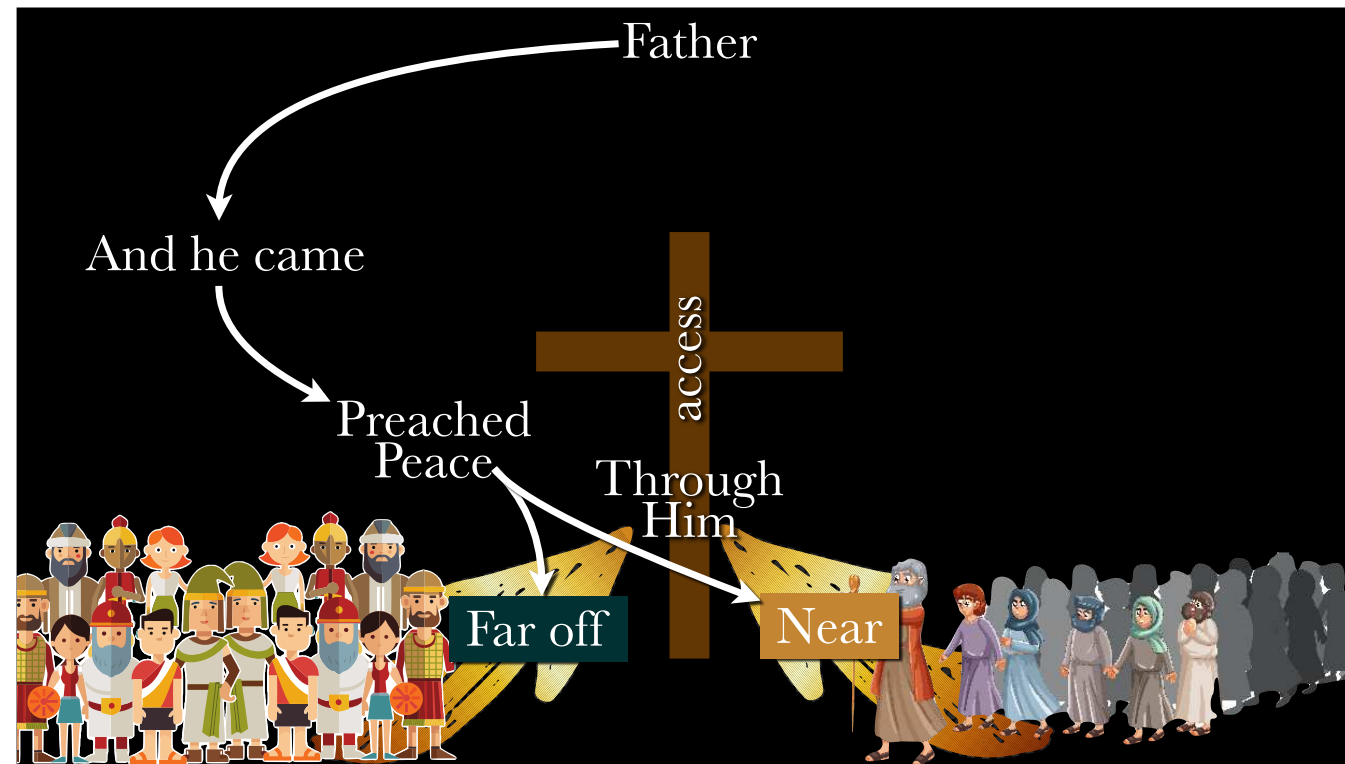
- He came (17)
 - Not a “pop-in” visit
 - He chose to become one of us, human: live, suffer, die
 - God with us

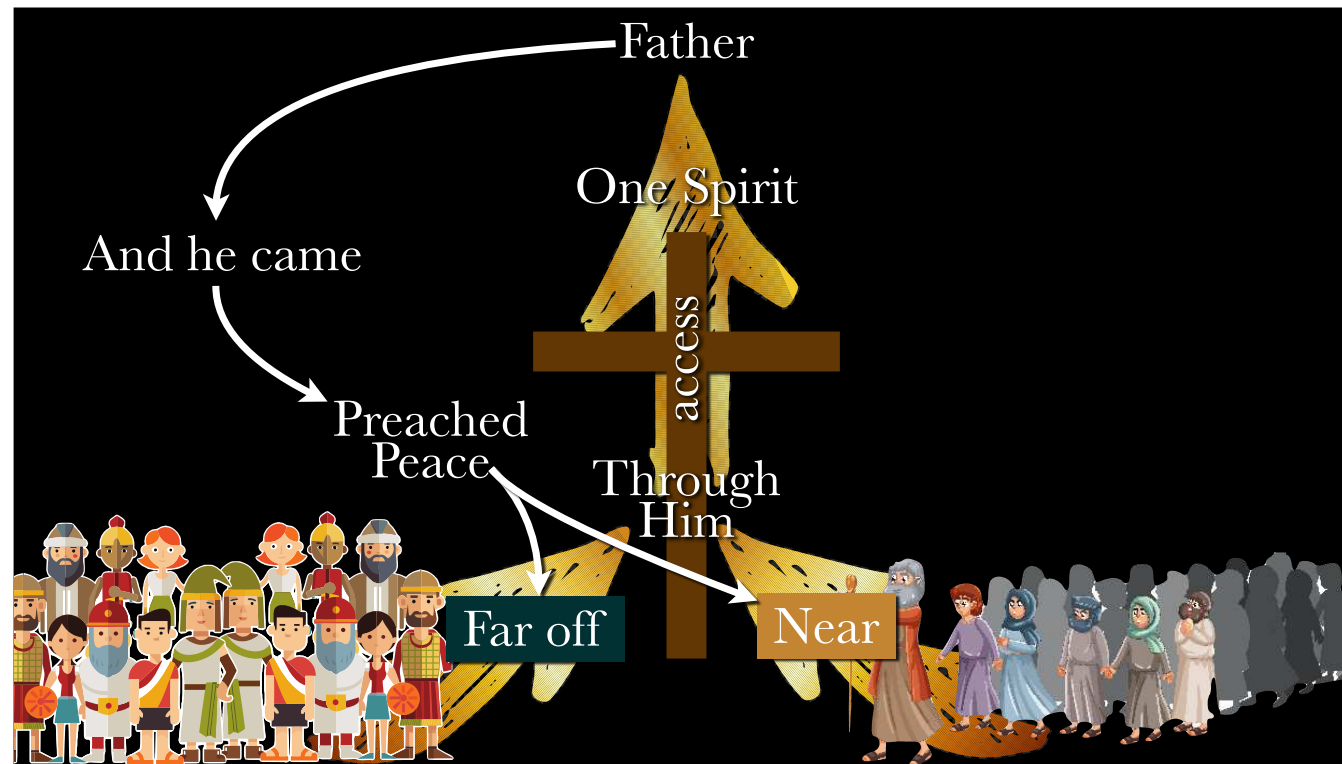


- He preached peace
 - Proclaimed that the kingdom was coming ... but not just for the Jews, for all.
 - Repent
 - Believe

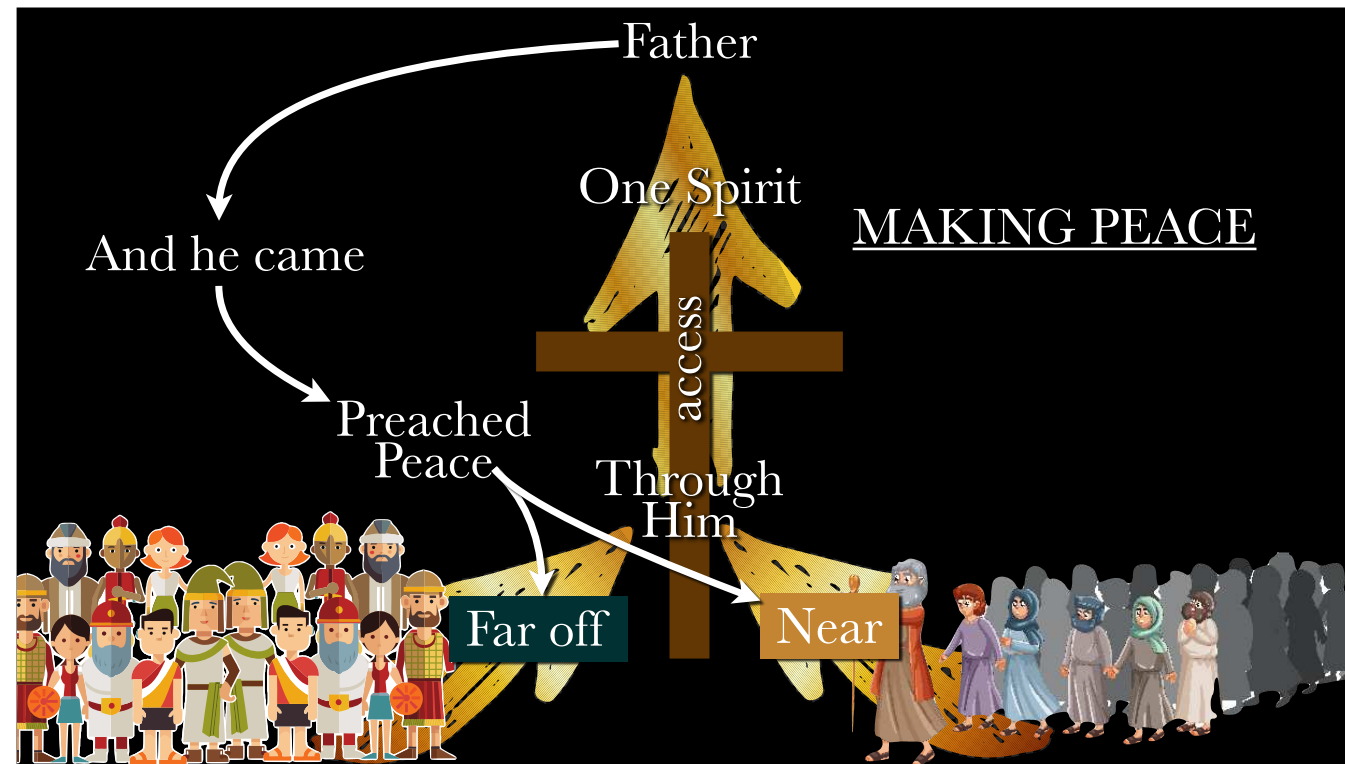


- 18: through him
- John 14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
 - There is a way to the father!

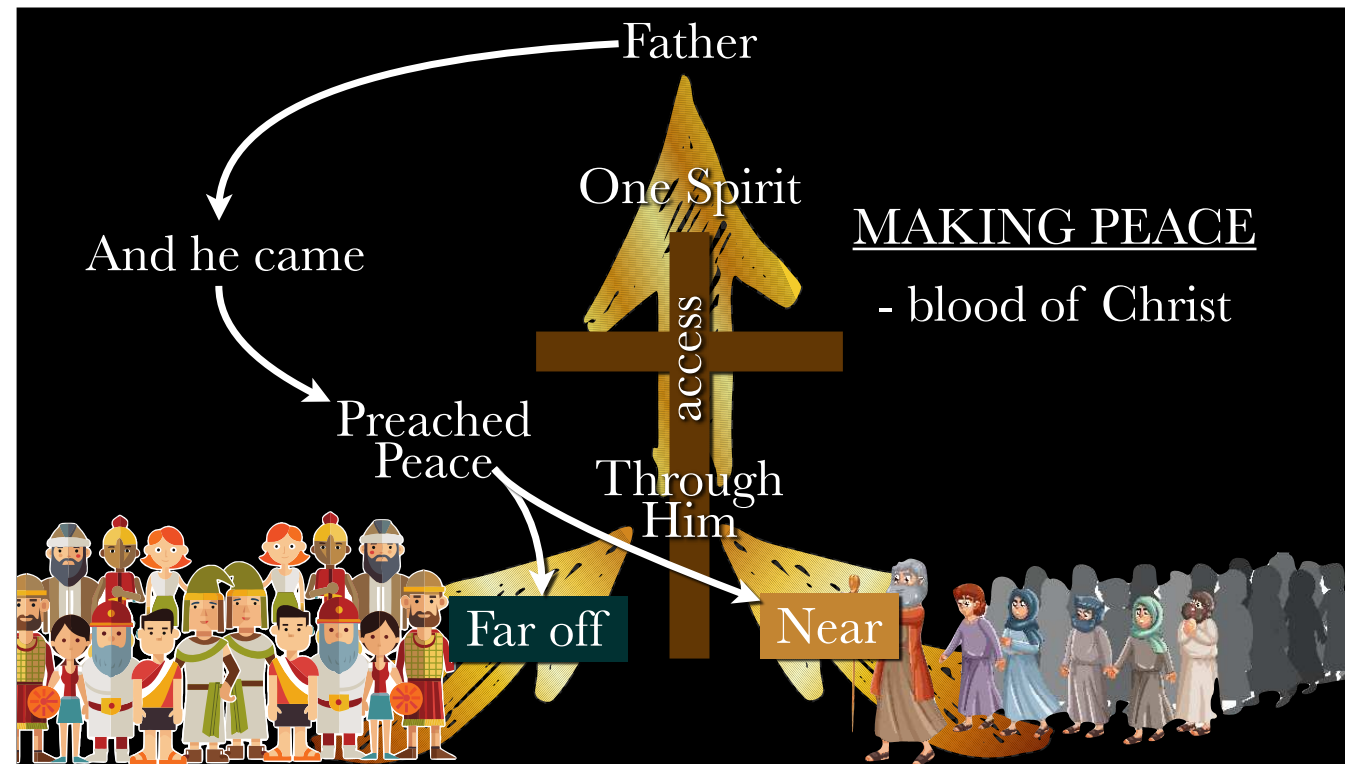




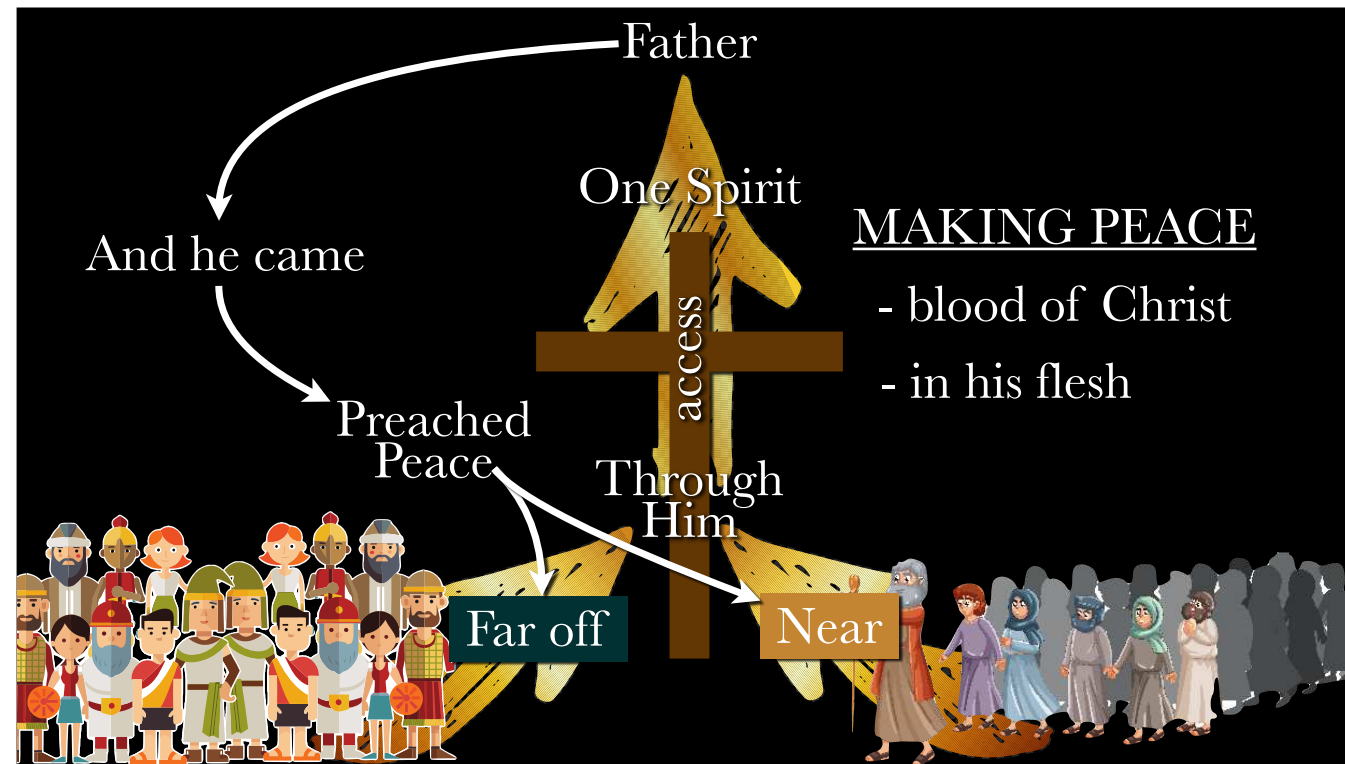
- 18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.
- By going to the cross Jesus was making peace.



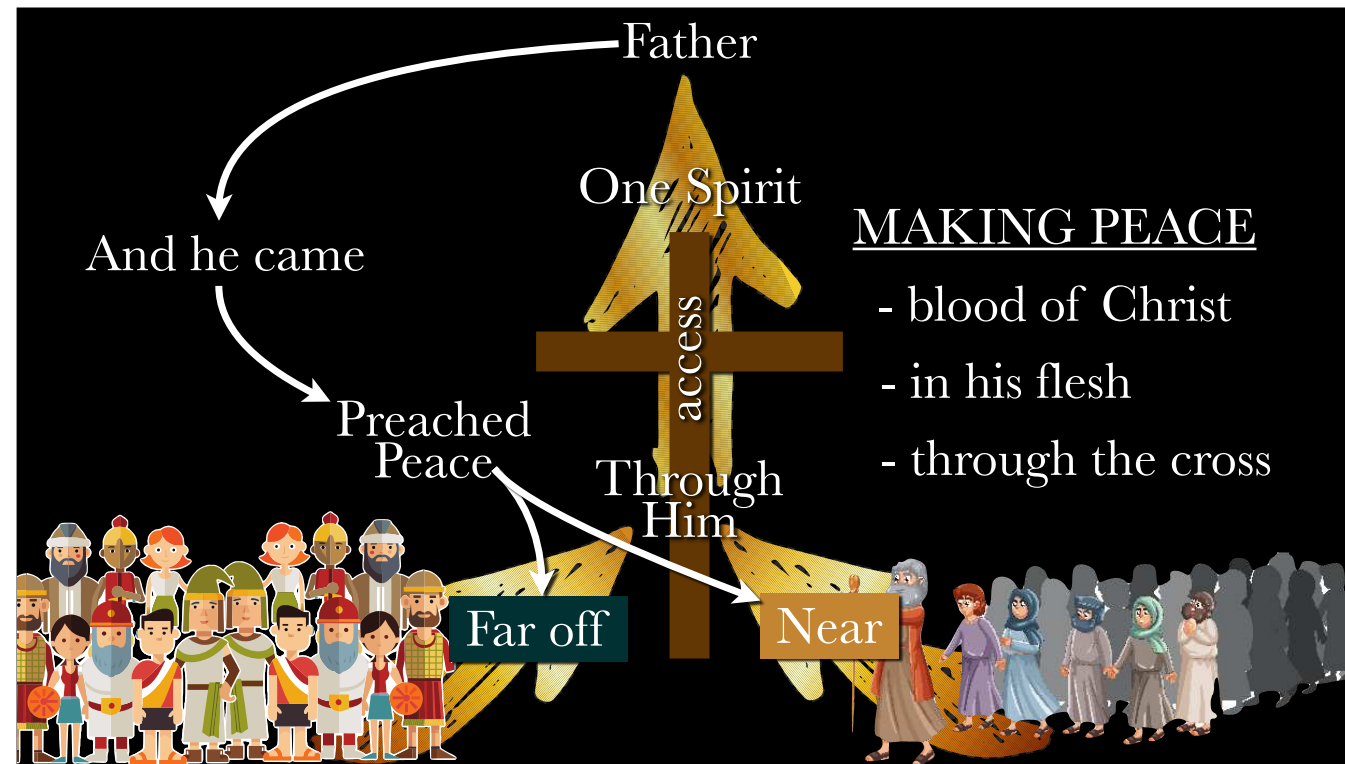
- How did Jesus make peace?



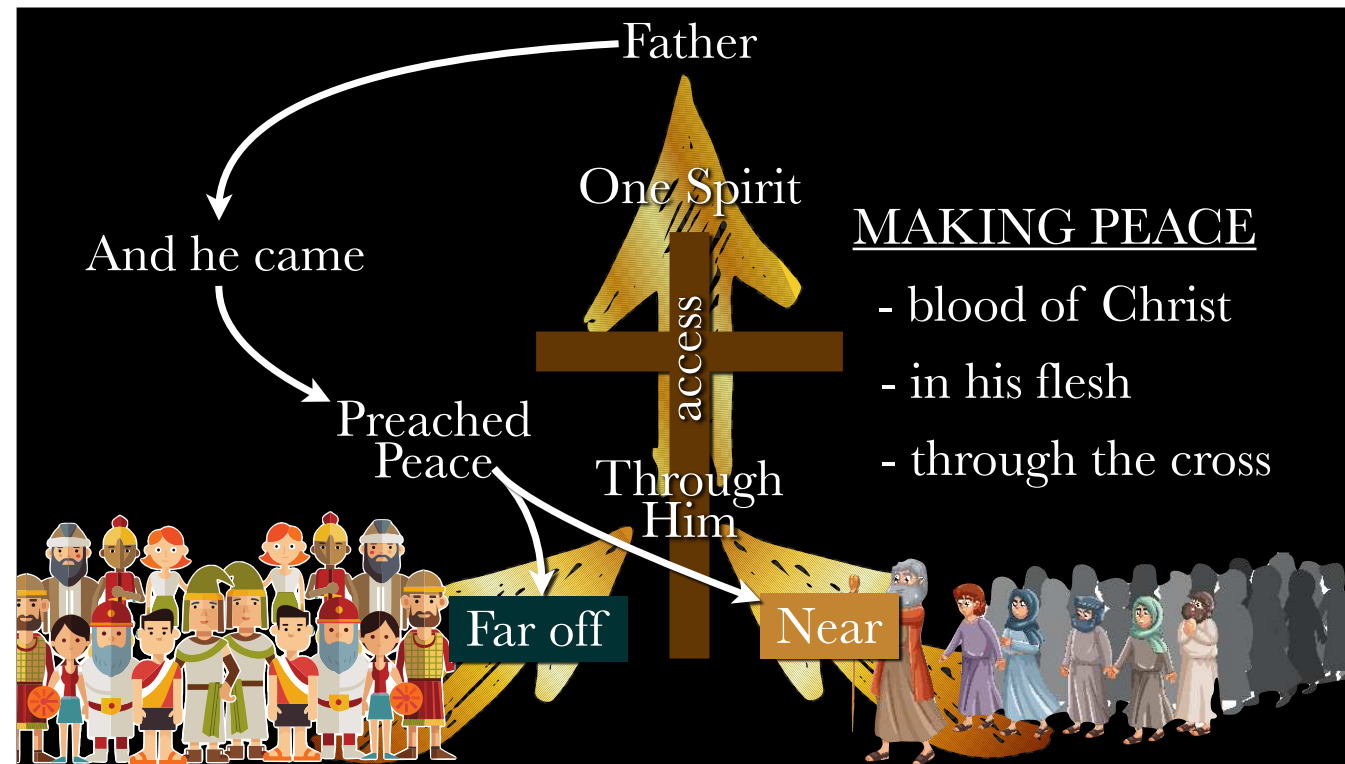
- 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.
 - Shedding of blood and forgiveness



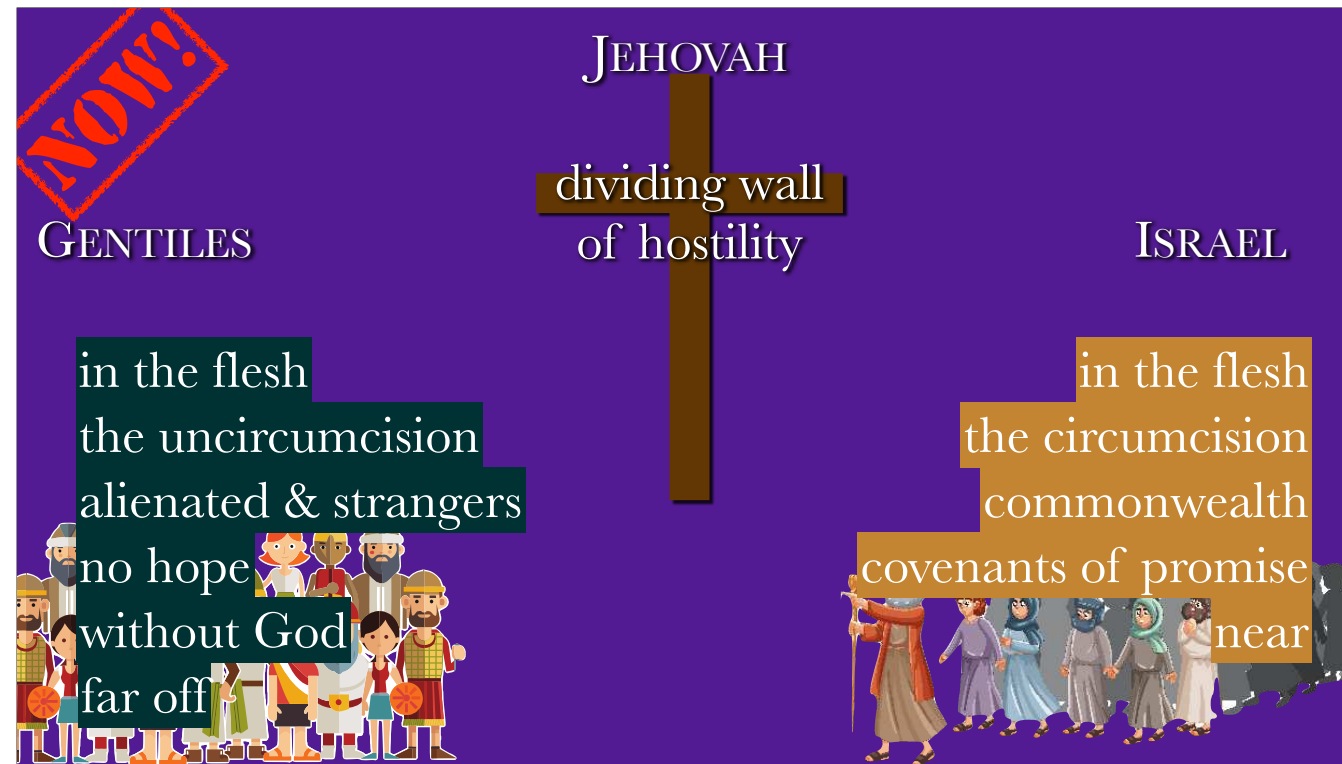
- 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility
 - Sacrifice



- 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.



- Reconcile
 - (CWSB Dictionary) the restoration of a relationship of peace which has been disturbed
 - (MED) restore to favor



- This reconciliation brings us out of the state of hostility with God and with each other
- But it's not just a cessation of hostilities
 - It's a deeper and greater change.



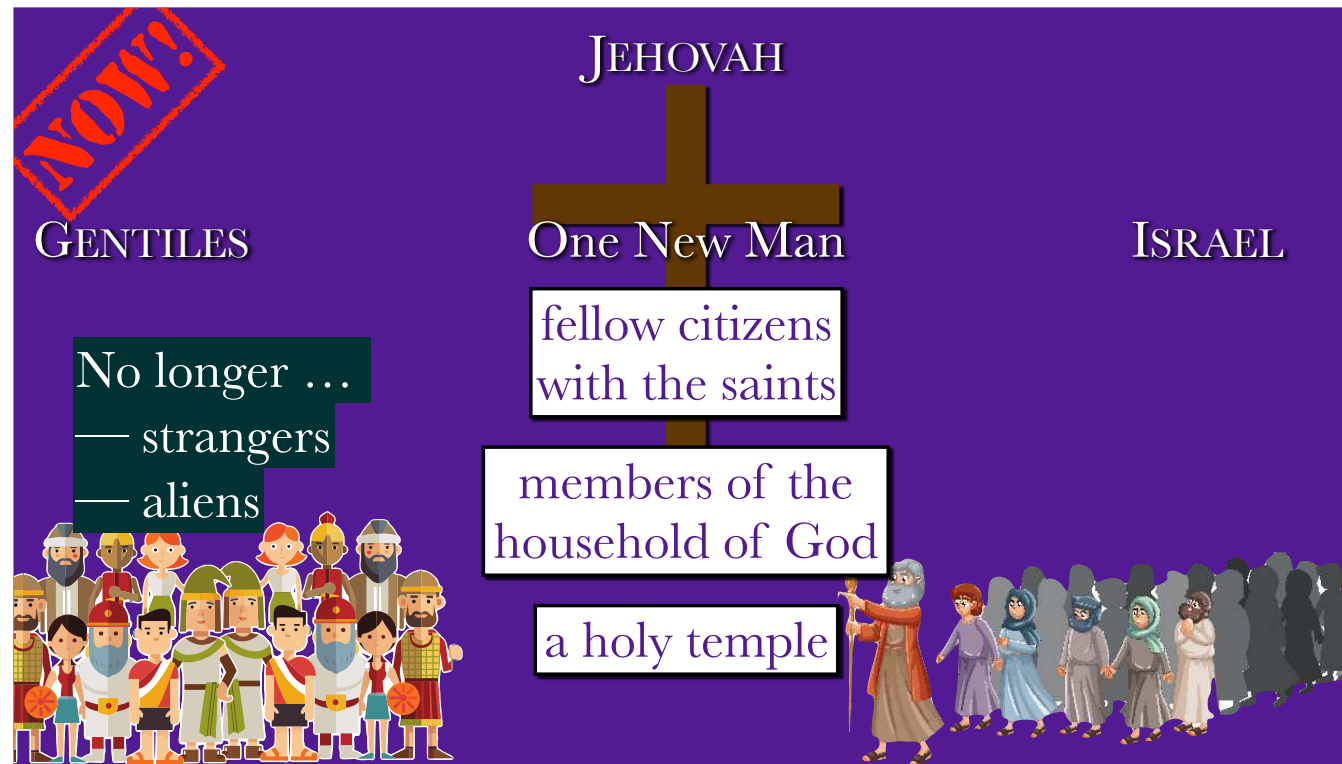
- Our Father is creating one new man
 - 14: made us both one
 - 16: in one body
 - 18: one Spirit
- When Jesus died on the cross, it wasn't just about individuals
 - Yes, he was providing forgiveness for our sins
 - But, more, he was also making us into one man
 - Unity for all of us



- 19: you are fellow citizens with the saints
 - Kingdom!
 - Not second class citizens, there aren't the usual social castes that we tend to establish
 - Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.



- members of the household of God
 - Family!
 - even closer than a kingdom?
- What is the basis of this family and Kingdom
 - Foundation: apostles & prophets
 - Jesus: cornerstone
 - What is revealed by God, truth, things we can be sure of



- a holy temple
 - reminds us that this is a spiritual unity
 - our focus is not on this life, but eternal life
- whole structure (not select parts)
 - joined together (unity)
 - grows (living, active)
 - built together (unity)
 - dwelling place for God (unity)
 - by the Spirit (with God's helper, not just us)



- Jesus has brought us to this place.
- Are you making peace?
 - I realize that you may be the one who was hurt.
 - I realize that you may have been treated poorly or wrong.
 - I realize that the one who has done this may not know, or care
 - Jesus made peace, he was a peace maker.
- If we are going to be one new man
 - We need to be peace makers
 - Unity, by the Spirit
- Despite what we are often told, it can be done.

We implore you
on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5:20

Call to Action

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The Peace of the Cross

Ephesians 2:11-22

Synopsis: Paul describes the hostility between Gentiles, Israelites, and between God and Man. He shows how we have peace because Jesus came, and through his death on the cross we have this peace and become one new man.

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"Let all that you do be done with love."