

One new thing I learned in this week's reading was that the Pharisees also recruited Gentiles into the faith. The Pharisees were strict in their teachings and practice of the Mosaic law (Torah) that distinguished the Jewish people from all the other nations (Gentiles). The Gentiles were considered unclean and uncircumcised. From the perspective of the Mosaic Law, the Gentiles were morally blemished. To be honest, I am still having trouble believing that Pharisees recruited Gentiles for the teaching and practice of the Mosaic Law. Jesus pushed back against the Pharisees and called them hypocrites. Meanwhile, as I reflect on Matthew 23:15, Jesus spoke of the Scribes and Pharisees traveling over the sea and land to make a single proselyte, making the newcomers twice as much a child of "Hell" as themselves. Perhaps the newcomers were Gentiles? Meanwhile, the Pharisees were a religious group that rejected the teaching of Christ concerning their salvation. The Pharisees were self-righteous in justifying their own righteous actions. However, the bottom line remains that Yahweh is engaged in all of humanity in a relationship of blessings with himself. It is only Yahweh that can and will restore humanity in His original purpose. Oswalt, reminds his readers that the principles of the Torah are enforced to all believers in Christ. (p. 524). Isaiah 46:12-13, reminds us that it is Yahweh, that softens the stubborn hearted, those who are far from Christ righteousness. However, Christ is merciful, and he will bring his righteousness near to his people who were once far away, and Christ salvation will not be delayed. So, whether it was the teaching of the Pharisees or the teachings of the pagans; it is Yahweh that will cause his righteousness to rest upon those he has chosen.