

**Text Group 1: Introverted Israel (Leviticus)**

**Text 1a Leviticus 20: 22-26**

You shall faithfully observe all My laws and all My regulations, lest the land to which I bring you to settle in spew you out. You shall not follow the practices of the nation that I am driving out before you. For it is because they did all these things that I abhorred them and said to you: You shall possess their land, for I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey. I the LORD am your God who has set you apart from other peoples. So you shall set apart the clean beast from the unclean, the unclean bird from the clean. You shall not draw abomination upon yourselves through beast or bird or anything with which the ground is alive, which I **have set apart for you** to treat as unclean. You shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy, and I **have set you apart from other peoples** to be Mine.

**Text 1b: Whose People are You? Midrash HaGadol to Levit. 20:26.**

*I will separate you from the peoples.*

Through these two things will Israel be differentiated from the nations—sexual guidelines, and forbidden foods. *To be mine.* If you differentiate yourselves from the people then you are Mine; but if not, then you belong to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylonia, and his friends.

**ויקרא פרשת קדושים פרק כ**

(כב) ושמרתם את כל חקתי ואת כל משפטי ועשיתם אתם ולא תקיא אתכם הארץ אשר אני מביא אתכם שמה לשבת בה: (כג) ולא תלכו בחקת הגוי אשר אני משליח מפניכם כי את כל אלה עשו ואקן בם: (כד) ואמר לכם אתם תירשו את אדמתם ואני אתננה לכם לרשת אתה ארץ זבת חלב ודבש אני ה' אלהיכם אשר הבדלתי אתכם מן העמים: (כה) והבדלתם בין הבהמה הטהרה לטמאה ובין העוף הטמא לטהר ולא תשקצו את נפשתיכם בבהמה ובעוף ובכל אשר תרמש האדמה אשר הבדלתי לכם לטמא: (כו) והייתם לי קדושים כי קדוש אני ה' ואבדל אתכם מן העמים להיות לי:

ואבדיל אתכם מן העמים. בשני דברים הללו הובדלו ישראל מן האומות בעריות ובמאכלות האסורות. להיות לי אם מובדלין אתם מן העמים הרי אתם לשמי, ואם לאו הרי אתם שלנבוכדנצר מלך בבל וחביריו .

Text Group 2: Israel Viewed from Afar (Numbers)

2a: Balaam's Failed Curse:

Numbers 23:7-10

He took up his theme, and said: From Aram has Balak brought me, Moab's king from the hills of the East: Come, curse me Jacob, Come, tell Israel's doom! How can I damn whom God has not damned, How doom when the LORD has not doomed? As I see them from the mountain tops, Gaze on them from the heights, **There is a people that dwells apart, Not reckoned among the nations;** Who can count the dust of Jacob, Number the dust-cloud of Israel? May I die the death of the upright; May my fate be like theirs!

במדבר פרשת בלק פרק כג

(ז) וַיִּשָּׂא מְשָלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר מִן אֲרָם יִנְחֲנִי בְלָק  
מִלְדָּ מוֹאָב מִהַרְרֵי קְדָם לְכָה אָרָה לִי יַעֲקֹב  
וּלְכָה זַעֲמָה יִשְׂרָאֵל: (ח) מָה אֶקַּב לֹא קִבָּה  
אֶל וּמָה אֶזְעַם לֹא זַעַם ה': (ט) כִּי מֵרֹאשׁ  
צִרִים אֶרְאֶנּוּ וּמִגְבְּעוֹת אֲשׁוּרָנּוּ הֵן עִם לְבַדָּד  
יִשְׁכֹּן וּבְגוֹיִם לֹא יִתְחַשֵּׁב: (י) מִי מִנְהָ עֵפֶר  
יַעֲקֹב וּמִסֶּפֶר אֶת רֶבַע יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּמְתַּנֵּף  
מֹות יִשְׂרָיִם וְתִהִי אַחֲרֵיתִי כְמֹהוּ:

Text 2b: Rashi (Shlomo Yitzhaki 11C France) to Numbers 23:9.

*Indeed, a nation that dwells apart*—this benefit was due to the merit of their ancestors, that they would dwell alone. Not reckoned among the nations—as it is translated [in Aramaic]—they will never cease, as do other nations, as Jeremiah says, “I will put an end to the nations, etc.”—but they [Israel] are not numbered among the rest. Another explanation: when they [Israel] are happy, no other nation rejoices with them, as it says [Deut. 32:12], “God placed them alone.”

הן עם לבדד ישכון - הוא אשר זכו לו אבותיו  
לשכון בדד, כתרגומו: ובגוים לא יתחשב -  
כתרגומו, לא יהיו נעשין כלה עם שאר  
האומות, שנאמר (ירמיה ל, יא) כי אעשה כלה  
בכל הגוים וגו' אינן נמנין עם השאר. דבר אחר  
כשהן שמחין אין אומה שמחה עמהם, שנאמר  
(דברים לב, יב) ה' בדד ינחנו

**Text 2c: Rabbi Yosef Bekhor Shor (12C Spain) to Numbers 23:9.**

*That dwells apart*—meaning, they will dwell in safety, as in “[Thus Israel] dwells in safety alone, untroubled is Jacob’s abode” (Deut. 33:28). Because a person who has nothing to fear may dwell alone without need of allies. *Not counted among nations*—they are not considered like other nations that a person can curse.

לבדד ישכון, כלומר לבטח ישכון כמו  
"בטח בדד עין יעקב", דמי שאינו ירא כלום  
יושב בדד ואינו צריך חבורה. ובגוים לא  
יתחשב, אינם נחשבים כשאר גוים שיכול  
אדם לקללם

**Text Group 3:**

**3a. Haman's Slander of the Jews, Esther 3:8**

Haman then said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people, scattered and dispersed among the other peoples in all the provinces of your realm, whose laws are different from those of any other people and who do not obey the king's laws; and it is not in Your Majesty's interest to tolerate them.

וַיֹּאמֶר הָמָן לְמֶלֶךְ אַחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ יִשְׁנֹו עַם אֶחָד  
מִפְּזָר וּמִפָּרֶד בֵּין הָעַמִּים בְּכֹל מְדִינֹות  
מִלְכוּתְךָ וְדִתֵיהֶם שְׁנוֹת מִכָּל עַם וְאֵת דְּתֵי  
הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵינָם עֹשִׂים וְלִמְלֶךְ אֵין שׂוֹה לְהַנִּיחָם:

**3b. Commentary of Malbim (19C Ukraine)**

*Haman said*—The meaning is that Haman deceived King Ahasuerus in two ways. First, he didn't identify who this people is that he is slandering, for perhaps if Ahasuerus knew about the Jews that they are renowned as a wise and discerning people he would not heed Haman's voice. Then, he didn't reveal his intention to destroy them, for even if they were a more lowly and despised people, [Ahasuerus] might not have heeded him. But Haman was wily and said "there is a people"—not known well enough to recognize their name—and since he wanted to slander them and say that they were causing harm to all peoples, whether by their faith or their political conduct, and he [Haman] knew that if they were all concentrated in one state they could not damage other states, or even if they were settled across many states but concentrated in specific cities, they also would be no threat to the king. For this reason, he began "there is a scattered people," that they have no state of their own, and they are distributed, that they also don't have their own cities, but are found in every neighborhood, across the entire empire, and therefore they threaten all people.

#### Text Group 4: Gentiles to Join Jews at Redemption

##### 4a. Zecharia 2:14-17

Shout for joy, Fair Zion! For lo, I come; and I will dwell in your midst—declares the LORD. In that day many nations will attach themselves to the LORD and become His people, and He will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that I was sent to you by the LORD of Hosts. The LORD will take Judah to Himself as His portion in the Holy Land, and He will choose Jerusalem once more. Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD! For He is roused from His holy habitation.

(יד) רְנִי וְשִׂמְחִי בֵּת צִיּוֹן כִּי הִנְנִי בָּא וְשֹׁכְנֵתִי  
בְּתוֹכְךָ נְאֻם ה' (טו) וְנָלוּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים אֶל ה'  
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וְהָיוּ לִי לְעָם וְשֹׁכְנֵתִי בְּתוֹכְךָ  
וַיִּדְעַתְּ כִּי ה' צְבָאוֹת שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֶיךָ: (טז)  
וְנַחֵל ה' אֶת יְהוּדָה חֶלְקוֹ עַל אֲדַמַּת הַקֹּדֶשׁ  
וּבָחַר עוֹד בִּירוּשָׁלַם: (יז) הִס כָּל בֶּשָׂר מִפְּנֵי  
ה' כִּי גֵעוֹר מִמְּעוֹן קֹדֶשׁוֹ:

##### 4b Tzeephania 3:9

For then I will make the peoples pure of speech, So that they all invoke the LORD by name And serve Him with one accord.

כִּי אֲז אֶהְפֹּךְ אֶל עַמִּים שְׂפָה בְרוּרָה לְקֹרֵא  
כָּלֵם בְּשֵׁם ה' לְעַבְדוֹ שְׂכֵם אֶחָד:

##### 4c. Commentary of Malbim to Zechariah 2:15

*Then many nations will accompany the Lord*—meaning that they will convert and accept the true faith. Nevertheless, *I will dwell in your midst*—that is, within Israel, as it says, “and I will walk in your midst, and you will know that the Lord of Hosts has sent me to you”—for my first mission was to warn the nations, but this mission is to you, to encourage you that there is hope.

וְנָלוּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים אֶל ה' שִׁיתְגִּירוּ וַיִּקְבְּלוּ דַת  
הָאֵמֶת וּבכ"ז וְשֹׁכְנֵתִי בְּתוֹכְךָ הֵינִי בְּתוֹךְ  
יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּמ"ש וְהִתְהַלַּכְתִּי בְּתוֹכְכֶם, וַיִּדְעַתֶּם  
כִּי ה' צְבָאוֹת שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֶיךָ, כִּי הַשְּׁלִיחוֹת  
הַקּוֹדֵם הִיָּה לְהַזְהִיר אֶת הַגּוֹיִם, וְשִׁלְחוֹת זֶה  
הוּא אֵלֵיכֶם לְבָשָׂר אֲתֹכֶם כִּי יֵשׁ תְּקוּהָ: