

Acts 21:28 crying out, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all *men* everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place."

Eph. 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Eph. 2:14 ¶ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

Eph. 2:15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace,

Eph. 2:16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.



The image of the Soreg inscription on the left is a replica, the image on the right is the original on display in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum. The inscription in Greek reads, "No intruder is allowed in the courtyard and within the wall surrounding the temple. Whoever enters will invite death for himself." The inscription is based on the warning in Num 1:51

"Soreg" is the Hebrew for "wall." This wall surrounded the Temple in Jerusalem indicating the closest point where Gentiles could approach the Temple. In Acts 21:28 Paul is wrongly and unjustly accused of bringing a Gentile into the Temple, that is, beyond the wall of separation. Warning inscriptions carved in stone, like the one on the right above, were placed at regular intervals along the top of the wall which was described by Josephus as being about 3 cubits, or 4.5 feet high. Twelve gates in the wall allowed Jews to enter into the inner areas of the Temple.

The historic value of the inscription is that it attests to the truth of Scripture. Spiritually, it reminds us that God, not man, determines the circumstances under which mankind can approach God in worship. It reminds us that there is something that separates man from God, which is sin and spiritual death. Further it reminds us that only God can remove the barrier between God and man.

The apostle Paul makes use of this imagery to describe the "wall of separation" which had formerly existed between Jews and Gentiles based on the Mosaic Law. In Eph 2:16 the wall of separation also exists between God and the human race. But now that Messiah has come and paid the penalty for sin, He is the "end of the Law for those who believe." (Rom 10:4), and the wall of separation between Jew and Gentile is removed as well as the barrier separating man from God. The work of the cross abolished "the enmity" with the result that for those in Christ He has reconciled them "both go God in one body through the cross."

This was a fulfillment of the Messianic prophecy in Isa 57:19 predicting that the Messiah will bring peace to "him who is far and to him who is near."

At the cross Jesus paid for our sins in full. He abolished the debt of sin for all humanity. So this means that though we are still born spiritually dead and separated from God, we can be given new life in Christ and eternal fellowship with God by simply accepting as our own, this payment for sin. At the instant we do so, we are given new life in Christ, eternal life, which can never be taken from us. For not only has the wall of separation between Jew and Gentile been removed, but we have been reconciled to God through the cross.