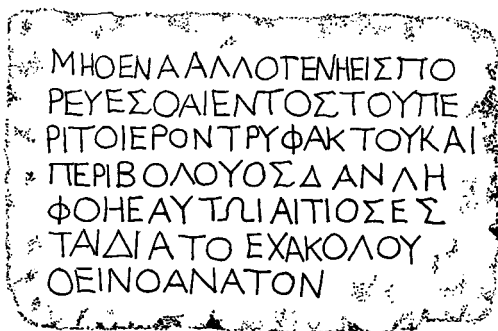


THE WALL SEPARATING JEWS AND GENTILES

During excavations of Jerusalem in 1871, two archaeologists, Clermont and Ganneau, discovered what is known as the Soreg Inscription. Written in Greek, the sign warns non-Jews to keep out of the temple area. It states:

“No foreigner is to enter the barriers surrounding the sanctuary. He who is caught will have himself to blame for his death which will follow.”



Temple Warning Inscription

The historian Josephus also mentions this inscription in chapter 15 of his work, *Antiquities of the Jews*:

“The center of the structure was the tallest, with the front wall being built with beams which sat upon interlocking pillars. Highly glossed stones made up this wall, so finely polished that those who looked upon it for the first time marveled at it in amazement. This was the description of the first structure. Located within it, and nearby, were steps which led up to the second structure, which was surrounded by a **stone wall used as a barrier, engraved with an inscription not allowing foreigners to enter into it under the penalty of death.**”

And it is of this inscription which the apostle Paul refers to in his letter to the Ephesians:

‘Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles . . . that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, **and has broken down the middle wall of separation**, . . . that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, . . . And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Now, therefore, **you are no longer strangers and foreigners**, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:11-22

Next Chapter >>