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I want now to look at some of the Evangelical – Catholic differences in the light of the rightful role of Israel and of a Jewish understanding of the Scriptures.

1. Corporate and Personal

There is a major tension regarding the personal and the corporate as between the ancient Churches, Catholic and Orthodox, and the free (Evangelical) churches.

To put it in a slightly oversimplified way:

Catholic: God - Christ - Church - Christian

Evangelical: God - Christ - Christian - Church

A major question here is whether the Church is primarily a fellowship of the saved and redeemed or whether the Church is also an instrument of salvation (mother). Evangelicals emphasise **fellowship** and **choice-commitment**. Catholics emphasise **mother church** and **obedience**. Where Evangelicals speak of **fellowship**, Catholics speak of **communion**. The fellowship of Evangelicals is more focused on “covenant companionship, as it entails escaping moral corruption and the way of the world”¹ While Evangelical fellowship is more intense, with the emphasis upon decision, there is a much greater tendency to division. The Catholic concept of communion is less existential, we may say, and is directly related to liturgy and sacraments. Along with the emphasis on authority, Catholics pay less attention to the subjective aspects of communion and are less liable to divisions and splits.

A related issue is **voluntary association** and **organic unity**. Evangelical theologies of the Church have emphasised the concept of the **invisible church** (the Church is made up of all true believers in Jesus whatever organisation they belong to), while affirming the visible character of the Church in local assemblies². Catholic theology has always emphasised the **visible church** (the Church is made up of all who have entered the visible historic body by baptism). These ecclesiologies embody in a clear way the focus upon the personal and upon the corporate.

What difference does/could the Jewish/Israel question make?

¹ Report “Church, Evangelization and the Bonds of Koinonia” of International Consultation between the Catholic Church and the WEA (1993-2002), I, A, 2, *Information Service*, p. 86.

² “the church becomes visible in all local congregations that meet to do together the things that according to Scripture the church does (*Amsterdam Declaration*, 9)” (cited in Report, I, B, 3, p. 88).

The first important observation is that in the Jewish Scriptures of both covenants, there is not an opposition between person and community. The personal character of Israel's faith would seem to be protected by the concept of **corporate personality**, whereby one person represents the whole people: Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, suffering servant, Jesus. This makes impossible the tension/opposition between impersonal institution and individual person. The promises are given to Abraham and his seed. Here we have the personal and the corporate held together. Never abstract, always personal. "Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, 'And to offsprings,' referring to many; but referring to one, 'And to your offspring,' which is Christ." (Gal. 3: 16). This concept of CP largely lost through excising of history of Israel from our self-definition.

From Soulen's third point, we must also make the concept of **covenant** central to our theology, to our understanding of Christian faith. Covenant as belonging to our election. Not covenant in opposition, not covenant of remnant, but covenant of chosen people in all their ambiguity and messiness. Also Soulen point of Israel and the nations. By exclusion of Israel, we find ourselves with no theology for the nations. I notice that in reconciliation work, Evangelicals focus on national reconciliation, whereas historic Churches have more awareness of the importance of church reconciliation. National/tribal belonging is basic in almost everyone, but it only finds its theological meaning in the context of Israel. Evangelical protest against Church institutions linked to latter's distancing from Jewish roots.

The relation between persons and community in the New Testament is strongly upheld by the teaching on the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. While the term "Trinity" is not used, the reality of personal communion within the "God who is one" of the Jewish Shema is strongly present.

2. Scripture and Tradition

Here the importance of the Jewish root is easy to demonstrate, even if the full resolution is not immediately evident. The Jewish people cannot avoid the issue of tradition, because their identity as a people is tied to historical-generational descent from Abraham, or to integration into the community with descent from Abraham. Christians can try and define themselves solely with reference to Jesus, but this falsifies Jesus and dejudais him. Thus, the importance of the genealogies in Matthew and Luke, which are not just to prove the truth of prophecy, but to reveal aspects of the true identity of Jesus Christ, who is "the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt. 1: 1).

The notion of tradition is central to Israel's calling. Israel is the people of the covenant, of the promise, and they have to hand on the covenant and the promise to each new generation. "And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." (Deut. 6: 6 – 7).

It is true and significant that Jesus reproaches the Pharisees and scribes: “for the sake of *your tradition*, you have made void the word of God.” (Matt. 15: 6). Understand this in the Jewish context: the absolute need to hand on the Torah. See Matthew 5: 17 – 19.

Paul to the Jews of Rome: “Brethren, though I had done nothing against the people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.” (Acts 28: 17). “For I delivered [*parédwka*] to you as of first importance what I also received, ...” (1 Cor. 15: 3).

First question is discernment between authentic tradition (handing on) and inauthentic. The whole OT is a developing tradition, as is the NT. But the OT was written over many centuries. It represents a making canonical of the authentic tradition. Judaism has had the same Scripture – Tradition issue to deal with as the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. Mishnah, the written form of the “oral tradition” attributed to Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi (d. c. AD 229). The Talmud embodies the Mishnah and the Gemara (collection of discussions on the Mishnah): Palestinian and then Babylonian Talmuds formed in 5th century. Karaite reaction against Mishnah and Talmud, similar to Evangelical Protestant position.

Messianic Jews face this issue in a new way. Some try to deal with it by saying they espouse biblical Judaism which is contrasted/opposed to rabbinic Judaism. But this is too simplistic. Rabbinic Judaism, though not then normative and only at an early stage of development, already existed at the time of Jesus. Jesus comments on the positions of Hillel and Shammai. David Stern says: “

Does the Scripture – tradition problem arise from the separation between Church and synagogue, both having a similar problem? In the Ephesians “one new man” model of the Church, the priority of the Jewish element was to have been the Church’s protection: the priority of the sources, the uniqueness of the Scriptures, is bound up with the first place of the Jew (Rom. 1: 16).

3. Divine Initiative and Human Mediation

Throughout the history of Israel, we find divine initiatives, acts of God’s sovereign intervention in the life of his people: the call of Abraham, the deliverance from Egypt, the theophany of Sinai, the call of the prophets, the election of David and of Jerusalem. However, these divine interventions enter deeply into Israel’s history. They ground Israel’s liturgical celebrations, they give rise to the institutions of Israel’s life as a people. The people sovereignly constituted as God’s own are commanded to hand on the memories, the terms of the covenant, the rites and the laws, to each succeeding generation.

The rise of institutions, the formation of traditions, do not exclude further divine interventions. The history of Israel is a history of rebellion and of repentance, a history of ancient memories and of new beginnings, a history that combines the

priestly, the kingly or governmental, and the prophetic. The coming of the Messiah involves greater divine intervention: above all in the Incarnation itself, in the virgin birth, and in the resurrection of Jesus, but they all enter into history and transform it.

Evangelicals are rightly concerned about self-contained Church institutions that are not open to repentance for their past, not open to the light and challenges of the Holy Spirit. Catholics are rightly concerned about Evangelical opposition to human mediation in principle, and about Evangelical suspicion of human mediation as inevitably derogating from divine sovereignty. Jaroslav Pelikan on “Catholic Substance and Protestant Principle”: need to add “Pentecostal Life”.

But how did replacement thinking affect this understanding of divine initiative and human mediation? The divine initiative always involved the choice of a particular person and thus of a particular people. The divine initiatives are never a series of “one off” unconnected acts like flashes of lightning: they lead to covenant, and the history of a covenant people. God reveals himself to be a faithful God. “I will be your God and you shall be My people.”

4. Word and Sacrament

In the scriptures there is no opposition between the word and ritual action. Yes, there are protests against hypocritical outward lip-service. But Israelite-Jewish worship (until the destruction of the temple) always involved the proclamation of the scriptures and the celebration of actions prescribed in the scriptures.

How did replacement theology affect this issue? Primarily by removing the covenant from the centre. The covenant was with a people. The strongly Jewish concept of *memorial*, seen especially in their observance of Passover, was a covenant concept. Remember the covenant. “For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God’s truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, “ (Rom. 15: 8). The command of Jesus to ‘Do this in memory of me’ was totally in line with the Israelite/Jewish heritage of ritual commemoration of the saving events forming the covenant people. With the biblical renewal in the Catholic Church, there is a fresh understanding of the eucharist as the memorial that makes present but does not repeat the unique sacrifice of the Lord.