



Israel and the Nations

The Bible, the Rabbis, and Jewish-Gentile Relations

EUGENE KORN

Emunot: Jewish Philosophy and Kabbalah

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SUMMARY

Israel and the Nations explores the Jewish theology and law (*Halakhah*) relating to non-Jews. It analyzes biblical, talmudic, medieval, and contemporary Jewish writings about gentiles and their religions.

The Bible challenges the Jewish people to be “a blessing for all the families of the earth.” Yet throughout history, Jewish experience with gentiles was complex. In the biblical and talmudic eras most gentiles were assumed to be idolators. In the Middle Ages most rabbis considered their Christian neighbors idolators, and Christian enmity sharpened the otherness Jews felt toward their Christian hosts.

Muslims were monotheists, but Jewish-Muslim relations were sometimes positive and at other times difficult. With the advent secular tolerance in modernity, Jews found themselves in a new relationship with their gentile neighbors. How should Jews relate to gentiles today, and what are the bounds of Jewish tolerance and religious pluralism? This book will interest both Jewish laypersons familiar with Jewish tradition as well as scholars of theology and interfaith relations

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eugene Korn holds a doctorate in philosophy from Columbia University and is an ordained Orthodox rabbi. He has taught philosophy at Columbia, Yeshiva, and Seton Hall Universities. His books include *To Be a Holy People: Jewish Tradition and Ethical Values*, *Jewish Theology and World Religions*; *Plowshares in Swords?: Religion and Violence*; *Christianity in the Eyes of Judaism*; and *Covenant and Hope*. His works have been translated into Hebrew, German, Italian, and Spanish.

PRAISE

“Eugene Korn has long studied the Jewish people’s covenantal calling to be a light and blessing in our religiously pluralist world. In this marvelous compilation, Korn opens a panoramic vista onto rabbinic thinking about the religious other. In particular, he offers an Orthodox view consistent with Jewish law that relates to Christianity as a positive religious and spiritual phenomenon. He shows compellingly that the post-World War II Christian-Jewish relationship enables Jews and Christians to be partners in building a future based on a common religious mission. This enlightening book is itself a blessing of hope for our conflicted world.”

— Philip A. Cunningham, Professor of Theology and Director of the Institute for Jewish-Catholic Relations, Saint Joseph’s University

