

Open Letter to the Editor, *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative Religions*

Re: Corrections and rebuttals to an article in Vol. 22, Issue 1, pp. 115-128, 2018.

Title: “The Children of Noah: Has Messianic Zionism Created a New World Religion?”

Author: Rachel Z. Feldman

Dear Editor,

I am compelled to respond to this article that was published in your journal, since it is rife with both incorrect and misleading statements. As Executive Director of the Noahide outreach program Ask Noah International, which has been operating world-wide for over 20 years as an independently incorporated charitable organization (not under the umbrella of any other organization). So I am very familiar with the subject and the history of Noahidism. I am also very familiar with the Noahide group in the Philippines that Feldman visited, because they are affiliated with my organization. The misinformation in the article begins with the title itself, because the term “Messianic Zionism” is a complete misnomer in this context, and Noahidism is not “new.” I will address those and other inaccuracies in the following review of statements in Feldman’s article. Several of the incorrect points are repeated numerous times, so I have not pointed out every occurrence of each one.

Sincerely,

Michael Schulman, PhD

p. 115

Quote: ABSTRACT: Today, nearly 2,000 Filipinos consider themselves members of the “**Children of Noah,**” a new Judaic faith that is growing into the tens of thousands worldwide as **ex-Christians** encounter forms of Jewish learning online.

Corrections:

(a) “**Children of Noah**” is not a “new faith.” It is a translation of the Hebrew phrase *Bnei Noach*, which appears in Genesis 9:18, 10:1, and 10:32. In the first two verses, it refers to Noah’s immediate children, Shem, Japheth and Ham. Genesis 10 then proceeds to list seventy heads of families who descended from them, and these are known as the 70 biblical nations from which all humankind are descended. Genesis 10:32 states: *These are the families of Noah’s descendants* [“**Bnei Noach**” in Hebrew], *according to their generations, by their nations; and from these the nations were separated on the earth after the Flood.* In general terms, “Children of Noah” therefore refers to all members of the human race, to whom the Seven Laws of Noah were commanded by God, through Noah.

However, Torah singles out one group of people for separate consideration, and these are called the “Children of Israel” (*Bnei Yisrael* in Hebrew). This term appears in Exodus 1:1 in reference to the 12 sons of Jacob, who was also called Israel (Gen. 32:29). Exodus 1:7 applies this term to their descendants: *The Children of Israel were fruitful ... and the land became filled with them.* Of these descendants, the ones who survived the slavery in Egypt and continued that lineage are those who were led out of Egypt by Moses and who stood at Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments from G-d, and to be distinguished by Him. This is stated in G-d’s words in Exodus 19:6: *You will be to Me [G-d] a kingdom of ministers and a holy nation;* *these are the words that you [Moses] shall speak to the Children of Israel.* In Hebrew, the word translated as “holy” (*kadosh*) also refers to something that is designated as separate from a general category. In this verse, it means that G-d

separated the “Children of Israel” from the general category of the “Children of Noah,” by obligating them in a separate set of 613 Torah commandments (which include the “Ten Commandments”).¹

The Torah is not something “new.” It was given in the Hebrew-calendar year 2448,² and we are now in the year 5781, which is 3,333 years later. It is a book of Divine laws, and among these laws is G-d’s definition of who are the “Children of Israel” and who are the “Children of Noah” for the rest of history. The “Children of Israel” are those who later became known as the Jews. The “Children of Noah” are those who later became known as the non-Jews, or Gentiles. Torah law defines these two groups as follows, in a binary fashion:³

Besides the people who assembled to hear G-d speak the Ten Commandments, the Jews are all subsequent people who were either born as a Jew (i.e. one whose mother was a Jew at the time she gave birth), or who converted in accordance with Torah law⁴ to become a Jew after they were born as a non-Jew (i.e., one whose mother was a non-Jew at the time she gave birth).

Therefore, when a non-Jew identifies as one of the “Children of Noah” (*Bnei Noach*), he is using the biblical phrase to indicate his acceptance that as a non-Jew, he (and every other non-Jew) is obligated to observe the Seven Laws of Noah, all of which have source verses in the Five Books of Moses.⁵ This is **not** a “**new faith**.” It was discussed in the Talmud, Tractate *Sanhedrin* 56a-60a, and its precepts were codified by Maimonides in *Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings* 9-10 more than 815 years ago. Among non-Jews, it was publicized (based on *Mishneh Torah*) by the early international jurists, Hugo Grotius⁶ (1583-1645) in the Netherlands and John Seldon⁷ (1584-1654) in England. More recently, it was publicized in the early 1900’s to non-Jews by Aimé Pallière in Europe (see below), based on the teachings of Rabbi Eliyahu Benamozegh (1822-1900) of France that are found in his book *Israël et l’humanité (Israel and Humanity)*.

(b) “**Children of Noah**” is not a “Judaic” faith. It is a term of self-identification and self-obligation for non-Jews, based on acceptance of the divine origin and eternity of the Five Books of Moses and the Seven Laws of Noah.

(c) The people who identify themselves as “Children of Noah” are not limited to “**ex-Christians**” (which includes ex-Catholics). In my work as Director of Ask Noah International, I have also encountered people who identify as “Children of Noah” who are ex-atheists, ex-Muslims, ex-Hindus, ex-unaffiliated-religionists, and others.

Quote: Under the tutelage of Orthodox Jewish rabbis, Filipino “**Noahides**,” as they call themselves,

Misimpression:

Here Feldman gives the misimpression that “Noahide” is another name for what she is incorrectly calling a “new Judaic faith.” The title “Noahide” was used in Latinized form in the cited writings of Grotius and Seldon. The words “Noahide” (or “Noachide”) and “Noahidism” (or “Noachism”) were used in reference to a religious faith in the text of *Israël et l’humanité* by Rabbi Eliyahu Benamozegh,

¹ Maimonides, *Sefer HaMitzvot (Book of the Commandments)*.

² *Seder Hadoros*.

³ Tractates *Yevamot* 23a and *Kiddushin* 68b, based on Deut. 7:3-4 (see Rashi there); see also Ezra 10:2-3.

⁴ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhos Issure Bi’ah (Laws Governing Forbidden Sexual Relations)* 13-14.

⁵ See <https://asknoah.org/7-commandments/locate-sources>

⁶ Hugo Grotius, *De jure belli ac pacis libri tres*.

⁷ John Seldon, *De Jure Naturali Et Gentium Juxta Ebraeorum*.

cited above, and again in 1927 in the book *Le Sanctuaire Iconnu (The Unknown Sanctuary)* by his non-Jewish student, Aimé Pallière (1875-1949). In both of those texts, the term was used as a title to refer to the “Children of Noah,” and in the context of what they called the “Noahide religion.” So this is not something new, especially since we now know that Sir Isaac Newton (1643-1727) was also a follower of the creed of the Seven Laws of Noah, which he studied from the writings of Grotius and Seldon. See, for example, the article *The Newton You Never Knew*, by Dr. Arnei Gotfried:⁸

Here is it appropriate to quote the words of Rabbi Benamozegh to Aimé Pallière which were published in *Le Sanctuaire Iconnu* [bracketed text and bolding added]:

“We Jews have in our [safe-]keeping the religion destined for the entire human race, the *only* religion to which the Gentiles shall be subject and by which they are to be *saved*, truly by the Grace of G-d, as were our patriarchs before the [Torah] Law. Could you suppose that the true religion, that which God destines for all humanity, dates only from Moses, and carries the impress of a special people? **What an error!** Learn that the plan of God is vaster. The religion of humanity is no other than *Noachism*, not that it was instituted by Noah, but because it dates from the covenant by God with humanity in the person of this just man [Noah]. Here is the religion preserved by Israel to be transmitted to the Gentiles. This is the path which lies open before your efforts, before mine as well, to spread the knowledge thereof, as it is my duty [as a Jew] to do. And it lies open to the efforts of any one, whosoever believes in Revelation [communicated by the prophets in the Hebrew Bible], without necessarily adhering to Mosaism, which is the particular statute of [the Children of] Israel, or to the Christian, or to the Moslem churches, because these are founded on the principle of the abolition of the [Torah] Law even for the Jews, and because they ignore in the Jewish prophets all that you yourself have so well known to find in them.”

These are published teachings from the late 1800’s about the scriptural basis for the religion of Noachism (or Noahidism) and its pre-Judaism observance by Noah and the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So it is not a “new Judaic faith.” Rather, it is the eternal and most ancient faith for Gentiles, that was preserved for them by the Jewish people from the time of Moses. By including the Seven Noahide Laws as part of the Torah Laws that were given through Moses at Mount Sinai, and as a result of new commandments were given to the newly-established Jewish people, G-d at that time added three aspects to the Noahide Laws:⁹

- (a) some additional details were revealed (e.g., how the laws of interactions between Gentiles and Jews differ in some ways from the laws of interactions between Gentiles and their fellow Gentiles);
- (b) they were elevated to the status of being eternal, since the Torah is eternal;
- (c) from that point on, just as for the Torah’s Jewish commandments, there could no longer be any addition, subtraction, or change made to the Noahide commandments.¹⁰

Quote: Under the tutelage of Orthodox Jewish rabbis, Filipino “Noahides,” as they call themselves, study Torah, **observe the Sabbath,**

Correction:

It is incorrect to say that (a) the Noahides of this group in the Philippines are engaging in “Sabbath observance,” or that (b) they are being tutored in this by Orthodox Jewish rabbis. Sabbath observance

⁸ <https://chabadnj.org/page.asp?pageID={EFCC0F2F-5A38-4247-9ADF-D588BFF0E91C}&displayAll=1>

⁹ As explained by Rabbi Moshe Weiner in his Introduction to *The Divine Code*, pub. Ask Noah International.

¹⁰ See Deuteronomy 13:1.

is defined in the Torah as observing the Sabbath *restrictions* that are commanded upon Jews.¹¹ The Talmud states in Tractate *Sanhedrin* 58b (and Rashi further explains there), that along with the Seven Noahide Laws, Noah himself – and through him, all *Bnei Noach* – were commanded by G-d **not** to observe any Sabbath-like restrictions on their activities. This point was included by Maimonides in *Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings* ch. 10. Feldman – perhaps due to not understanding this fact – probably misinterpreted the Noahides’ choice of Friday night and Saturday for their community services, and for enhanced family meals, as constituting “Sabbath observance.” The fact is that eating, singing, praying or lighting candles do not constitute observance of the Jewish Sabbath.

Likewise, those activities do not constitute a “new religion” for Gentiles who observe the Torah’s Noahide Code, since they do not make any claim that their activities of that nature are sanctified or constitute observance of any commandment. We can compare this to the fact that the development of new customs by Orthodox Ashkenazic or Chassidic Jews does not make either of those groups a “new religion,” separate from Sephardic Judaism, because the Jewish religion is not defined by customs. It is defined by core beliefs and the obligation to observe a core set of commandments. The same is true of Noahidism, which has also been extant for thousands of years.¹²

Quote: and passionately support a **form of messianic Zionism**.

Correction:

The term “**a form of messianic Zionism**” is a completely misleading in this context. We would ask Feldman, at what time in history does she contend that this particular “form of messianic Zionism” began? Does this single out some sect the Noahides support that believes that (a) there will be a Messiah, and that (b) the dispersed Jewish people are destined to all be gathered to their Holy Land, and that (c) it will be the Messiah who gathers them all there? If that is the case, then Maimonides was the prime example of this “form of messianic Zionism,” because that is exactly what he codified as a matter Torah law in *Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings* ch. 11, and in his famous *13 Principles of Jewish Faith*, based on explicit prophetic verses in the Five Books of Moses. In other words, a Jew in any generation who does not accept this, as codified by Maimonides, is a denier of Torah and has not accepted the Torah-true Jewish religion. Therefore, Feldman’s remark, to be openly and honestly stated, should rather be written as, “passionately support traditional Orthodox Judaism,” and likewise in the title of her article.

Quote: Filipino Noahides believe that Jews are a **racially superior people**,

Correction:

It may be that Filipino Noahides believe that Jews have some inherent positive qualities, but it is impossible for a correctly educated person to believe that this is based on race, because “Jew” is not, and never was, a race. From biblical times until now, Jews have been absorbing people of different races into their fold, through non-Jews becoming Jews by the process of conversion as defined in Torah law, and then marrying and having children within the Jewish people. Likewise, a child born to a Jewish mother is a Jew, regardless of whether the father is a Jew or a non-Jew, or what race he is (or she is). Throughout history, there have been groups, tribes, and even nations of non-Jews of various

¹¹ See, for example, Rav Yehoshua Y. Neuwirth, *Shemirath Shabbath: A Guide to the Practical Observance of Shabbath*.

¹² See Tractate *Avodah Zara* 24b and *Minchat Chinuch* (Mitzvah 284), that King David purchased the site of the Holy Temple’s altar in Jerusalem from a Jebusite *Ger Toshav* (II Samuel 24). A *Ger Toshav* was a Non-Jew residing in the Holy Land in biblical times, who accepted observance of the Seven Laws of Noah.

racess that converted and were absorbed into the Jewish people. The Filipino Noahides are aware of the simple facts that (a) the Jews are not a race, (b) one's identity as a Jew is instead defined as point of Torah law by the birth-mother or by conversion (as explained above), and (c) any superiority that Jews might be believed to have would have to be on account of some reason other than race.¹³

Quote: According to their rabbi mentors, they are forbidden from performing **Jewish rituals** and even reading **certain Jewish texts**.

Misimpression:

First of all, those Torah laws, which apply to all non-Jews, were codified by Maimonides in *Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings* ch. 10, based on Tractate *Sanhedrin* (cited above), so there is nothing new about this. Those sources explain that the "certain Jewish texts" are in-depth texts of Oral Torah that are unrelated to the Noahide Code.

Secondly, Feldman is contradicting her own statement two sentences before. She wrote (incorrectly) that the Filipino Noahides are being tutored by Orthodox rabbis to observe the Sabbath – which is a Jewish ritual commandment – and here she says that that the rabbis are forbidding them from performing Jewish rituals. The correct explanation is that the Jewish rituals which are forbidden to non-Jews are the supra-rational Jewish *mitzvah*-rituals that have no practical benefit or logical reason. Since this would only be done in a manner of adding more commandments beyond the Seven Laws of Noah, it is forbidden for non-Jews as a matter of Torah law (as explained above).¹⁴

Quote: These restrictions have **necessitated** the creation of new, distinctly Noahide ritual practices and prayers modeled after Jewish ones.

Correction:

The restriction on non-Jews from performing Jewish *mitzvah*-rituals and reading "certain texts" does not necessitate that Noahides must create anything. I am acquainted with Noahides who determinedly refrain from any distinct practices. Rather, it is purely a matter of personal choice and preference for the individual Noahide. Like-minded Noahides may join together to engage in practices and prayers of their choice, as long as it is not done in a manner of creating new commandments for themselves.

Quote: Filipino Noahides are practicing a **new** faith that also affirms the **superiority of Judaism**

Corrections:

(a) As explained above, what they are practicing is not a new faith. It has existed for thousands of years.

(b) Feldman's statement presents the Noahides' affirmation of "the superiority of Judaism" as being unqualified. That is incorrect. Rather, the Noahide's affirm Torah-based Judaism as being the superior religious faith and observance for Jews, and they affirm Torah-based Noahidism as being the superior religious faith and observance for non-Jews.

¹³ See Rabbi J. Immanuel Schochet, *Who is a Jew?: 30 questions and answers about this controversial and divisive issue*, 2nd ed., 1987, pub. Shofar Association of American.

¹⁴ Rabbi Moshe Weiner, *The Divine Code*, 4th ed., Part I, ch. 3, pub. Ask Noah International.

Quote: and Jewish biblical right to the Land of Israel, in line with the aims of the growing messianic Third Temple Movement in Jerusalem.

Misimpressions:

This statement is misleading. The “Jewish biblical right to the Land of Israel,” is, as the phrase indicates, stated in the Hebrew Bible. It has therefore always been a **permanent mainstay** of the traditional Jewish religion, and it is something that is accepted by all Jewish and non-Jewish believers in the eternal truth of the Torah. Other sects, at any distance near or far from a Torah-based faith, may decide to accept that principle, while rejecting any number of other principles from Torah, or while having any number of different aims. Therefore, just because there is a sect that agrees on one point with a Torah principle that is also accepted by Noahides, that does not mean that the Noahides are “in line” with the *aims* of that sect.

Feldman’s description of a “growing movement” in Jerusalem is also misleading. For upwards of 1,950 years, traditional Jews have been praying every day for G-d to bring the coming of the true Messiah who will establish the Third Temple in Jerusalem. Because this is based on the eternal truth of the Hebrew Bible,¹⁵ Noahides also affirm those points, and there is nothing new in that.

However, Feldman is incorrectly and misleadingly conflating this with a separate movement that arose in the past few decades, of people (some of whom are in Jerusalem) who advocate for the Third Temple to be built *before* the Messiah comes (as she reveals later in her article). That aim contradicts the Torah law of traditional Judaism, codified by Maimonides,¹⁶ that the Third Temple will be established only by the Messiah when he comes, and not before. The Filipino Noahides accept the correctness of this Torah law, and they are not “in line” with that aim of that break-away movement.

p. 116

The author’s claims on this page about a “**new Judaic**” faith that includes **Sabbath observance** and support for a “**form of messianic Zionism**” were addressed above.

Quote: According to Jewish law, a “Noahide” is a non-Jew who follows the “Seven Laws of Noah” ... These [7] laws [of Noah], considered to be a moral code for all humanity, will guarantee the non-Jew a place in the “world to come.” [this is followed in the text by a listing of 7 laws]

Corrections:

(a) Feldman has neglected to spell out the actual terms of the guarantee, as codified by Maimonides in *Mishneh Torah* which she cites as her source. Maimonides states:¹⁷

“Anyone who accepts upon himself the fulfillment of these seven commandments and is precise in their observance is considered one of ‘the pious (*chassidei*) among the gentiles (*umot ha’olom*)’ and will merit a share in the world to come.

This applies only when he accepts them and fulfills them because the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded them in the Torah and informed us through Moses, our teacher, that Noah’s descendants had been commanded to fulfill them previously.

However, if he fulfills them out of intellectual conviction, he is not a *Ger Toshav*, nor of ‘the

¹⁵ See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhos Melachim (Laws of Kings)*, ch. 11.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ *Laws of Kings* 8:11

pious among the gentiles,' nor of their wise men.”

(b) Feldman footnotes Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*¹⁸ as the source for her listing, but she inaccurately states one of those Noahide Laws, in comparison with her cited source:

<u>Law</u>	<u>Feldman</u>	<u>Maimonides</u>
1)	Do not deny G-d.	Do not commit idol worship.

p. 117

Quote: the growth of Noahidism in the twenty-first century is **undoubtedly** linked to Israel's current prominent place on the world stage and the **growing political and financial power of messianic Zionism.**

Correction:

Feldman does not present any evidence to support her claim that there is correlated linkage between the growth of Noahidism and what she calls “growing political and financial power of messianic Zionism.” In truth, the main reason for the growth of Noahidism in the world over the past 50 years has been the growth during that time of freedom of religion, freedom of speech, tolerance and respect for observant Jews, and increasing opportunities in societies for interactions between Gentiles and observant Jews. (For example, many Gentiles discovered during this time that Jews do not have horns.) The obligation of Jews to encourage non-Jews to observe their Seven Noahide Commandments is a matter of Torah law that was given to Moses at Mount Sinai and codified in *Mishneh Torah*, as is the obligation of Jews to observe their Sabbath restrictions and to eat on kosher food, etc. The only reason for the long hiatus was that from the time that the Jews were exiled by the Romans until the end of WWII, it would have been dangerous (and in most cases a mortal danger) for them to approach non-Jews about belief in the One G-d – the G-d of Israel – and observance of the Seven Laws of Noah from the Torah. In countries where that danger passed, mostly around 50 years ago and especially in the United States, observant Jews have been safely able, and therefore obligated, to renew their fulfillment of that Torah-based obligation.¹⁹ It must also be pointed out that the alert to the Jewish people, that the favorable conditions and the obligation for this activity had returned, was primarily from the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson in Brooklyn, NY.²⁰

Quote: the rabbis who mentor them online ... largely members of **Israel's** religious Zionist demographic, believe that the messianic era **begins** with the establishment of a Jewish theocratic state in Israel, supported by communities of Noahides worldwide. [Paragraph break] The **majority** of the rabbis who mentor Noahides are active members, or at least ideological supporters, of the Third Temple Movement in Israel, which aims to rebuild the Third Jewish Temple on the Temple Mount/Haram ash-Sharif in Jerusalem ... reestablish a Jewish priesthood, and lay the foundations for a fully theocratic state operating under Torah law.

Corrections:

(a) The majority of the rabbis who mentor Noahides online reside *outside* of Israel.

(b) The majority of the rabbis who mentor Noahides online accept the Torah law that the messianic era begins with the coming of the true Messiah and the prophesied events will be accomplished by him.²¹

¹⁸ Ibid., ch. 9.

¹⁹ Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, quoted in *Hisvaaduyos* 5744, Vol. 2, pp. 769-770. See also *ibid.*, 5747, Vol. 2, pp. 615-616; *ibid.*, 5745, Vol. 4, pp. 2466-2467; *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 26, p. 143.

²⁰ See *To Perfect the World: The Lubavitcher Rebbe's Call to Teach the Noahide Code to All Mankind*, pub. Sichos In English, 2016.

²¹ Maimonides, *Laws of Kings* ch. 11.

(c) Feldman is speaking here about a recent break-away sect that negates the Torah law that the Third Temple can only be rebuilt by the true Messiah when he comes. In contrast, the majority of rabbis who mentor Noahides are Orthodox rabbis who **reject** the revisionist aim of that break-away sect.

p. 118

Quote: Due to the convergence of various social and political factors in Israel, since 2011 the Third Temple Movement has grown **significantly**, gaining support from the Israeli religious-nationalist demographic and Israeli lawmakers

Misimpression:

While it may be true that the Third Temple Movement has grown significantly from tiny to small, the support gained from the Israeli religious-nationalist demographic is also small, and the number of Israeli lawmakers involved has been limited to a few individuals.

Quote: the Third Temple Movement has grown significantly, gaining support from ... Christian and Noahide communities.

Misimpression:

Almost all of the financial support for the break-away Third Temple Movement has come from international Christian communities. Clearly, their aims differ from those of ex-Christian and other Noahides who are accepting of Torah law. In terms of Noahide communities, the main ones that have formed are accepting of Torah law, and therefore reject any aim of building the Third Temple before the Messiah comes.

Quote: The Noahide religion responds to this question by carving out a place for non-Jews in the messianic Zionist project, providing them with a new spiritual identity

Corrections and Misimpressions:

(a) The place for non-Jews in the time leading up to the coming of the true Messiah, and in the messianic era, is not being carved out by the Noahide religion. It was already spoken about and promised by the prophets of the Hebrew Bible.²²

(b) The Noahide identity may be new to an individual in the sense that he takes in on as a replacement for his previous beliefs, but it is not new religion, as explained above.

Quote: In some first-world Noahide communities, this new friendship between Noahides and Israeli rabbis takes on an economic dimension, as Noahides, particularly in the American Southwest, participate in **bankrolling** the Third Temple Movement in Israel. (Footnoted: The Temple Institute, which held its Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Celebration with Noahides in Dallas (2012), donated funds to support the Temple Institute's activities in Jerusalem.)

Misimpression:

(Feldman's footnote states that the Temple Institute donated funds to support the Temple Institute's

²² See, for example, Psalms 86:9; Zechariah 8:20-23,14:9; Tzeplaniah 3:9; Isaiah 2:2,11:9,40:5,66:20.

activities, which we can assume is an editing error.) The amount of funds donated to the Temple Institute by any Noahides is miniscule compared the many millions of dollars that it receives from Christians, so it is a great exaggeration to say that Noahides are participating in bankrolling that organization. Also, the Institute's activities in Jerusalem which it fundraises for mostly involve making replicas of the Holy Temple's vessels for the Institute's museum, which is a tourist attraction. Therefore, a donation to the Temple Institute do not necessarily mean that the donor supports the Institute's far-fetched and misguided aim to build the Third Temple before the Messiah comes.

Quote: Noahide ideology has a markedly **racial** dimension that posits Jews as a **racially** superior people with an innate **physiological** ability to access divinity. ... Noahidism continues to uphold an ethno-national idea of Jewishness, where contemporary Jews are believed to be the bloodline descendants of the ancient Israelites described in the Torah. [Paragraph and page break] In the Philippines, this underlying **racial** and ethno-national ideology is used to reinforce the idea that Jews and Noahides are different categories of humanity, with different roles to play in **initiating** redemption.

Correction:

This is false, as explained above. Any superiority which Jews may be posited to have cannot be attributed to race or physiology, because the Jews are not a race. Contemporary Jews, as Jews always have been, are all people who meet the definition in Torah law of who is a Jew, which I explained above. For example, there are Jews today who are bloodline descendents of the original Israelites **and** the great number of converts from other nations who left Egypt with them and stood with them at Mount Sinai to become the initial population of the Jewish people.²³

That Jews and non-Jews (of any religion) are "different categories of humanity" is simply a matter of a Torah law from Mount Sinai that reflects G-d's choice of the Jews for a different mission in the world, which bears upon which category of Torah commandments an individual is obligated to observe. The Noahides in the Philippines accept this Torah law. Furthermore, the messianic redemption – which was originally and permanently defined in Torah (and remains unaffected by various later man-made revisionist ideas) – will be initiated by the true Messiah when he comes, and not before.²⁴

p. 119

Quote: Filipino Noahides... **lack the financial resources** to access the larger Jewish world where they might encounter more diverse and competing interpretations of Jewish identity, Jewish law, and Zionism.

Correction

Here Feldman contradicts what she wrote on p. 117: "the rabbis who mentor them online". In our Internet age, a large percentage of the Filipino Noahides have Internet-connected smart phones, so they are equally able to access writings, web sites, video lessons and social media from any diverse and competing interpretations. The Filipino Noahides whom Feldman visited are well aware of those competing resources which Feldman promotes, and they simply choose to reject their validity, in favor of resources that are based on the Torah tradition.

To be continued in Part 2, "בעזרת ה'".

²³ See Rashi's explanation of Exodus 12:38.

²⁴ Maimonides, *Laws of Kings* ch. 11.