



The Mystery of Continuity and Fulfillment: A Guide to Understanding Our Christian Identity

INTRODUCTION: THE ENIGMA THAT CONFUSES MANY

One of the questions that often puzzles both believers and outsiders to the Christian faith is this: *"If Jesus was a Jew, why aren't Christians—especially Catholics—also Jewish?"* At first glance, it seems like a contradiction. Shouldn't we preserve His original faith? Wouldn't someone who keeps the Sabbath, circumcision, or Hebrew feasts be more "faithful"? Isn't our religion a betrayal of His roots?

These questions are not only historically significant but also carry deep theological and pastoral weight. In this article, we will unravel this mystery through Sacred Scripture, the living Tradition of the Church, and the history of Revelation. Our goal: to help you understand why it is not only logical but divinely intended that the Catholic Church is not merely a continuation of Judaism but **its supernatural fulfillment in Christ**.

1. JESUS, SON OF ISRAEL

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, raised in Nazareth, and lived as a Jew. He was circumcised on the eighth day (Lk 2:21), participated in Israel's festivals (Jn 7:2,10), made pilgrimages to the Temple (Lk 2:41), prayed in synagogues (Mk 1:21), and frequently quoted the Torah and the Prophets. There is no doubt: Jesus was a faithful son of the people of Israel.

But here's the key: **Jesus did not come merely to reaffirm Judaism but to bring it to its ultimate fulfillment**. He was not just another reformer. He was the promised Messiah. In His own words:

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."
(Matthew 5:17)



In other words, Jesus did not discard the Old Testament but **filled it with meaning**. Judaism prepared the way. Jesus **is the Way**.

2. FROM PROMISE TO FULFILLMENT: PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

The history of salvation is not static. God acts in history as a divine teacher. He begins by calling a man (Abraham), then a people (Israel), and finally all humanity (the Church).

The Old Testament is full of promises, symbols, and figures that point to something greater. The Passover lamb, the manna in the desert, the Temple, the Mosaic law... all were meant to prepare for the arrival of the Savior.

"These things happened to them as an example, and they were written down as a warning for us, upon whom the end of the ages has come."
(1 Corinthians 10:11)

Therefore, **Christianity does not contradict Judaism** but **crowns it**. It is not its denial but its fulfillment. We are not Jews because the promise has already been fulfilled: **Christ has come**.

3. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT THE CHURCH IS THE "NEW ISRAEL"?

From the earliest centuries, the Church Fathers understood that the Church was not God's "Plan B" after many Jews rejected the Messiah, but rather **an integral part of His eternal plan**.

St. Paul is very clear about this. In his Letter to the Galatians, he says:

"Now you, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are children of



promise... Therefore, brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman.”
(Galatians 4:28-31)

The people of God are no longer defined by blood or ethnicity but by **faith in Christ**. The Church is the **spiritual Israel**, the new people of God in which there is neither Jew nor Greek, for all are one in Christ (Gal 3:28).

This concept was fundamental to the expansion of Christianity to the Gentiles. It was no longer necessary to be circumcised or to observe the Mosaic law because **grace had arrived** (Acts 15).

4. WHY DON'T WE KEEP JEWISH FEASTS, THE SABBATH, OR CIRCUMCISION?

The reason is deeply Christological: **because Christ is the true Sabbath, the true Passover, and the true Circumcision**.

- **The Sabbath**, instituted as a day of rest, was a symbol of eternal rest in God. Jesus rose on **Sunday**, the “eighth day,” a sign of the new creation. That’s why Christians have celebrated the Eucharist on Sunday from the very beginning (Rev 1:10; Acts 20:7).
- **The Jewish Passover** commemorated the liberation from Egypt. Our Passover celebrates **liberation from sin and death** through Christ’s cross and resurrection (1 Cor 5:7-8).
- **Circumcision** was the sign of belonging to the people of God. In Baptism, we are “circumcised in Christ,” not by a physical rite but by an inner transformation (Col 2:11-12).

Each ancient rite found its fulfillment in Him. **That is why Catholics are not Jews**: because we have received what they were waiting for. **The Messiah has come**.



5. THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE JEWISH PEOPLE TODAY

The Church does not reject Judaism. On the contrary. As Vatican II reminds us in *Nostra Aetate*:

"The Church... cannot forget that she received the revelation of the Old Testament through the people with whom God, in His inexpressible mercy, concluded the Ancient Covenant."

The Jews remain our "older brothers in the faith" (St. John Paul II), and we pray that they may one day recognize the promised Messiah.

At the same time, we must be clear: **the fullness of Revelation is in Christ**. We cannot dilute the Christian faith in order to be "more Jewish" or revive practices that were surpassed at the Cross.

Our love for the Jewish people must be sincere, but without falling into relativism.

6. HOW TO LIVE THIS TRUTH IN DAILY LIFE

a) **With firm and grateful identity**

Knowing that Christ fulfilled the promise gives us a solid identity: we are part of God's people, without needing to seek roots in ancient practices. Let us be grateful for that heritage but **not go backward**.

b) **By reading the Old Testament with Christian eyes**

The Psalms, the Prophets, the history of Israel... all come alive when read in the light of Christ. Don't neglect them! There lie the foundations of your faith.

c) **By celebrating the full richness of Catholic liturgy**

We don't need to recover Hebrew feasts. We have the richest liturgical calendar in the world! Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter... are echoes and surpassings of the old Jewish feasts, **but elevated by Christ**.



d) **By evangelizing with charity**

If you know someone who believes Christians should “return to Jewish roots,” accompany them with patience and depth. Teach them that **Christ doesn't lead us backward, but forward**, into eternal life.

7. A CONCLUSION TO MEDITATE ON: FAITH IS NOT A RETURN TO THE PAST, BUT A DOOR TO HEAVEN

Jesus was a Jew. He loved His people. He fulfilled the Law. And then **He elevated it in His glorious flesh**. Catholics are not Jews because **we have received the fulfillment of the promise**.

As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches:

*“The Old Testament is an indispensable part of Sacred Scripture. Its books are divinely inspired and retain a permanent value... It bears witness to the whole divine pedagogy of God's saving love.”
(CCC 121-124)*

Christ did not come to establish an ethnic religion, but a **universal Church**, for all peoples, of all nations, in all times. We are Catholic (from the Greek *katholikos*, meaning “universal”) because **salvation is for all**, not just one people.

TO CONCLUDE... A PRAYER:

*Lord Jesus Christ,
You, born of a daughter of Israel, fulfilled the Law and the
Prophets,*



and opened the Kingdom to all nations.

May we never forget our roots,

but always look to the Heaven You opened for us on the Cross.

Grant us the wisdom of faith,

the zeal of the apostles,

and the gratitude of the redeemed.

Amen.

Has this article helped you better understand your Catholic faith? Share it, reflect on it, and keep deepening your understanding. Because the more we know our roots, **the more we love Christ, the root and flower of our faith.**