

God, Israel, The Messiah, and the Gospel of Christ – part 5

Romans 11:1-15 - 08/23/2015

NEW LIFE FELLOWSHIP

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Let's Recap what we've learn in that Last few weeks: ...

1. God has Compassion and Love toward Israel, and **so should we**... we should pray for them to come to their Messiah and be saved ... see Romans 9:1-5 & Romans 10:1-4
2. God is Sovereign in His Election/Choosing of Israel to be His Chosen People.
God is the owner of the Universe, it is His Universe, He is the King
His purpose of choosing Israel was so that the Gentile Nations can be saved through Israel, really, through their Messiah (the Christ → Jesus Christ)
3. Gentiles were being saved while a **majority of Israel was not being saved. Why?**
The Gentiles were receiving the Gospel of Jesus Christ by Faith, whereas Israel was sticking to its traditions, its rituals, **its own way** of establishing her own righteousness instead of submitting to God's Righteousness fully revealed in Christ Jesus

Romans 9:30-33: ³⁰What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; ³¹but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. ³²Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. ³³As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame (not be disappointed)."

Romans 10:1-4: Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God **for Israel** is that they may be **saved**. ²For I bear them witness that **they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge**. ³For they being ignorant of **God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God**. ⁴For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

4. There are a few overarching Principles that God is following in regards to the relationship of Israel to the Gospel of Christ:
 - a. **God keeps His Promises**, His Covenant, and He is Faithful.
God is **NOT** Capricious or Arbitrary
He deals with Israel based upon His Covenant(s), based upon His Revealed Word
 - b. **God Opposes the Proud, but Gives Grace to the Humble** (James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5 and other passages that describe this same principle in the O.T.)
 - c. **God punishes sinners after they commit the crime, not before**
(as in the case of Pharaoh and of Israel, etc...)
 - d. **God's Goal is Salvation of the lost, lost Israelis and Gentiles, both.**
God does not want to send anyone to the Lake of Fire (to hell) ...
He will send unrepentant sinners to hell, only because He is Just, Holy, and Righteous
But, His Love was the Motivation of sending Jesus Christ, the Messiah as Savior
 - e. **Humans are not unthinking Robots** ... we are sinners in need of salvation that God has categories for ... such as "the Wicked" and "the Elect", etc.

Let's start with last week's few last verses

ROMANS 10:19-21 (speaking of the coming New Covenant, the Gospel ...)

But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says:

"I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation."

²⁰ But Isaiah is very bold and says:

"I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me."

²¹ But to Israel he says:

"**ALL DAY LONG** I have **STRETCHED OUT** My hands to a **DISOBEDIENT** and contrary people."

There is **NO** Hint that God has abandoned Israel, but Israel, the majority of Israelis have been "partially hardened" by God **BECAUSE** they were "disobedient and contrary" in their relationship to the Gospel of Christ ... their "national" rejection of Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah ... meant partial hardness of heart for them ... but **NO** hint that God has abandoned them. Paul makes this clear in Romans 11. Paul wants the whole of Israel to be saved, and so does God. But, understand this, God has to deal with real people who can make choices, they are **NOT** robots. God does know how to deal with us and He does know how to only allow rebellion to go so far and is able to stop it before it consumes all of Israel ... He continues to do so. **Remember**, the first Disciples of Christ were Israelis... so God is faithful.

ROMANS 11:1-15

I say then, has God cast away (i.e. abandoned) His people? **CERTAINLY NOT!** For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. ² God has **NOT** cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, ³ "LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"? ⁴ But what does the divine response say to him? "I have **RESERVED** for Myself seven thousand men who have **NOT** bowed the knee to Baal." ⁵ Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant **ACCORDING TO THE ELECTION OF GRACE**. ⁶ And if by grace, then it is **no longer of works**; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. ⁷ What then? Israel has **NOT** obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

Why does Paul contrast "works" with "election" and "grace"?

We know that a person must Trust in, have Faith in Christ, alone for his/her salvation. **Trusting In Christ** for one's salvation is an **Informed, yet supernatural decision**. It is an act of human will, nonetheless. Otherwise, people being saved are just robots that cannot think, respond, under some "mind control", cannot make decisions, etc. Yet, Paul uses "Election of Grace" as the operation of God's Divine Sovereignty in this passage in regards to Israel for a Remnant to be Saved ... in contrast to "works" (meaning "works of righteousness" ... working one's way to heaven by doing good works... seeking to obey the "law" of God and the traditions of the "elders", etc.) So, how can that be contrasted. Elsewhere before this, in Romans 2 thru 5 ... "works" are contrasted with "righteousness based upon faith" no matter who it is. Why here is he saying this in regards to "election"?

I think it is clear, based upon all the teachings Paul gave in chapters 1 thru 8 ... that God has **ELECTED** Grace (Salvation by Grace, Received through Faith – Ephesian 2:8-9) as the Means

by which Sinners are convicted of their sins, brought to humble repentance and come to Faith in Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior. God has elected this means ... this method of His Grace. The Principle of “God Opposes the Proud, but Gives Grace to the Humble” is loud and clear here.

Question: why did God only reserve 7000 that did not bow their kneed to Baal? Why not 20,000? → It seems in some very extreme circumstances God does go out of His way, out of Normal Operations and does intervene in **some extraordinary ways** to preserve a Remnant for Israel. I am not sure He always does this for all Gentile nations/people groups, but we do see Him do this for Israel. One my wonder why only 7000, why not 20,000?

Me thinks that is about as many as He could find, at the time that He could work with to be His true followers at the time of Elijah in the Northern 10 Tribes region of Israel (Samaria).

We have NO patterns of God in the Bible intervening with those that hate God in which He then puts them under some sort of “spell” and then snaps His fingers and then they magically become His close God-followers (like God Zombies). **God Opposes the Proud, but Gives Grace to the Humble.** We do see God humbling some folks with some events in which people then will follow God ... **folks have to be humbled, brought to humility and humbly respond and trust in God.**

We do see that Proclamation of God’s Word happens and people are then allowed to choose (think of Jonah to Nineveh ... that great city REPENTED in sackcloth and ashes before God)

God’s Grace is in direct Opposition to Human Self-Righteousness ... (that is anti-humility)

Israel, on a national level, at the time of Jesus Christ, would not submit to God’s way of receiving His Righteousness through the New Covenant of the Messiah, but they **sought to Establish their Own Righteousness**, in their own way, with their own efforts ... with the aim of earning their right to be righteous before a Holy and Righteous God, the God of Israel.

God’s verdict is that they are a Failure and His Response to them is giving them partial hardness of heart, partial blindness, partial deafness, and stupor (staggering / weakness)

⁸ Just as it is written: “God has given them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear, to this very day.”

⁹ And David says: “Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a recompense to them. ¹⁰ Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see, and bow down their back always.” ¹¹ I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? **CERTAINLY NOT!** But through **THEIR FALL**, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. ¹² Now if their **FALL** is riches for the world, and their **FAILURE** riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!

¹³ For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, ¹⁴ if by any means I may **PROVOKE TO JEALOUSY** those who are my flesh and **SAVE SOME OF THEM.** ¹⁵ For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but **LIFE FROM THE DEAD?**

Notice Paul’s heart in verses 13-15. He is reflecting God’s heart for Israel. **Salvation in the AIM.** As Gentiles are being **Saved** and **Trusting In** and **Following** the **God of Israel** through Israel’s Messiah, God will use that to provoke some Israelis to jealousy which will lead them to repentance. God has NOT Rejected nor abandoned Israel, as those who hold to Replacement Theology. God still has His Sovereign Plan for Israel and will use Israel in the future during the tribulation and beyond. God will use Gentiles witness of their Messiah as a part of God’s Salvation plan for Israel and thru Israel.