



Jewish Believers and Christians working together for Israel's salvation since 1963



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Shalom my friend! Last month we began our look at Romans 9, 10 and 11, beginning with Romans 9:1-5. We saw how Paul was deeply grieved over his unsaved Jewish people, and wished himself “accursed” if it would somehow mean their salvation. He then recovered from his lament to list the unique history and characteristics of

the Jewish people, as evidence of their worthiness to receive special attention for the sake of salvation. Paul’s list was anchored by the concept that the Jewish people and the Messiah Himself both descend from the same physical lineage. Therefore, if the Messiah of Israel does not forget nor forsake His own Jewish family, how much more should all believers in Yeshua—who are brothers and family members with the Jewish people through the Messiah—be burdened by, and seek the restoration of the salvation of all Israel?

Children of the Promise

Continuing on in verses 6 through 9, however, Paul begins to put forth his warnings to the Jewish people about being complacent with their pedigree.

But it is not possible that the word of God has failed, for not all these who are of **יִשְׂרָאֵל**, Yis’rael are **יִשְׂרָאֵל**, Yis’rael—nor because they are seed of **אַבְרָהָם**, Av’raham are they all his children, but “in **יִצְחָק**, Yitz’chaq will a seed be called to you.” That is, the children of the flesh—these are not children of God. Rather, the children of the promise are counted as seed. For the word of promise is this: “According to this time will I come—and there will be to **שָׂרָה**, Sarah a son.” (MJLT)

Paul begins his stark warning with a splash of cold water to his fellow Jews: “not all these who are of **יִשְׂרָאֵל**, Yis’rael are **יִשְׂרָאֵל**, Yis’rael.” As he begins to develop this somewhat cryp-

tic concept, what we ultimately see emerge are two Israels—the Israel of the flesh (the physical descendants of Israel), and the Israel of the promise (the physical descendants of Israel who receive God’s promise). What Paul entirely means here is unclear at this stage of his discussion; however, one thing is blatantly obvious: for the Jewish people, physical ancestry is insufficient for salvation. In other words, the Jewish people should not be complacent with their lineage, believing falsely that it alone will save them.

The Sovereignty of God’s Calling

In verse 10 through 13, then, Paul begins to develop the concept of “calling” by referring to **רִבְקָה**, Riv’qah, and demonstrating that the calling of her children was not based on any action they had done—whether good or

bad—but on God’s choice alone. This puts the children of Israel in a somewhat precarious position: while there is a birth-right that has been established for the Jewish people, God still chooses, and His choice can be favorable, or not. Paul succinctly illustrates this by quoting the famously troublesome line, “**יָאֲדָוֹן** I loved, but **עֵשָׂו**, Esav I hated” (Romans 9:13).

Although the Jewish people are God’s chosen people, that national identity cannot be relied upon as a source for individual salvation. It is only by humbly coming to Yeshua that the Jewish people can truly live out their identity as the children of God’s promises.



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At this point, Paul pivots to show that God’s choice is not a matter of fickleness, then, but of sovereignty.

What, then, will we say? Is unrighteousness with God? Let it not be! For to **מֹשֶׁה**, Mosheh He says, “I will do loving-kindness to whom I do loving-kindness, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” So, then, it is not of him who is willing, nor of him who is running, but of God who is doing loving-kindness. For the Scripture says to **פַּרְעֹה**, Par’oh [Pharaoh], “I raised you up for this very thing, so that I would prove My power

in you, and that My Name would be publicized in all the earth." So, then—to whom He wants, He does loving-kindness, and to whom He wants, He hardens. (Romans 9:14-18, MJLT)

Potter and Clay

God is neither fickle, nor unrighteous—rather, He is sovereign, and just. This truth is not meant to demoralize, but to humble, and to hammer home Paul's point that all calling, promises and selection come from God alone. And yet, for those who would object to Paul's line of reasoning, he has a stern reply.

You will say to me, then, "Why does He still find fault? for who has resisted His will?" No. Rather, O man, who are you that are answering back to God? Will the formed thing say to Him who formed it, "Why did you make me this way?" Has not the potter authority over the clay, to make out of the same lump the one thing for honor, and the other one for dishonor? (Romans 9:19-21, MJLT)

To his headstrong, Jewish hearer, Paul is saying, "You are nothing but a clump of wet dirt—and dirt doesn't judge God!" In composing this section for his Jewish hearers, Paul is chipping away at the Jewish heart of pride—the greatest source of resistance to following the Messiah. (I say this, myself being a Jew!) This is a vital truth that we must grasp if we are to successfully reach our Jewish brothers and sisters for the Messiah: that along with the singular birthright of the Jew—being set apart from all the nations—comes a matchless pride that keeps the Jew from humbly seeing and receiving his calling as the Israel of God. We need to realize that a Jewish person's first response to God's authority will always be to try to subvert it. The beginning of the solution, then, is for him to see himself through the sovereign eyes of God, and to realize that before his Maker, he is merely clay.

My friend, it is this understanding of the hard heart of the Jew that should soften ours toward their need for Yeshua, and this is why MJMI exists: to tirelessly proclaim the Good News of Yeshua to the Jewish people. We greatly need not only your prayers, but also your financial assistance, so that we can do our part to participate in the salvation of all Israel. Your donation of **\$10, \$25, \$100 or more**

Update from Israel



A couple of months ago, we shared about a large outreach event facilitated by some of our ministry friends in Israel. Another of our friends who you help support was also involved in that event, and shared with me about the opportunities he had, saying, "During the event, 600 people heard the Good News of Yeshua, many people prayed to the Lord for the first time in their life, and many were also healed. My role was to be a group leader

in one of the buses—35 people, plus a guide—as we visited historical sites. I used the opportunity to connect the people



(many of them were just newcomers and were on such a trip for first time) with the biblical land, which now is their new home. My point was to show that the Jewish history has been closely related to the Bible, and that God has brought them to the Holy Land in order to let them know Him personally, and that they can do that through the Bible. At the end of the day, we

invited the people to join us for future projects and follow-up, and many responded. I think it was a good job for one day, and please keep these people in your prayers!



will help us accomplish our mission and vision to see all Israel come to know their Messiah. You can use the enclosed card and envelope, or visit www.mjmi.org to send your much-needed donation today. And if you aren't already, please consider becoming a ministry partner, so that I will know we can count on your support each month.

We will continue our Romans discussion next month. Until then, thank you for your prayers and support!

For the sake of the Messiah,



Kevin Geoffrey, President, MJMI