



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



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Shalom my friend! Last month I told you about a vital new resource I am working on, the *Messianic Jewish Literal Translation (MJLT) of the New Covenant Scriptures (Matthew through Revelation)*. It is an especially exciting project, given that the founder of MJMI, Manny Brotman, held a deep desire

“to see that every Jewish person in the world has a copy of the Jewish Scriptures.” It is my sincere hope that the complete MJLT will one day help to fulfill Manny’s sweeping vision for the salvation of Israel.

I also mentioned last month my own desire to also write articles, essays, and perhaps even commentaries based on the MJLT version, to help people grasp the depth and truth of God’s life-giving Word. Therefore, in support of the purposes of MJMI, I would like to share some of this teaching with you, beginning with the quintessential passages of Scripture that deal with the special calling of Messianic Jewish believers, and their role as Israel in relationship to the larger Body of Messiah. Let us, then, begin our discussion of Romans 9, 10 and 11.

Paul’s Lament for Israel

When Paul wrote his monumental treatise of the book of Romans, he was addressing the growing hostility between the Jewish and Gentile believers in Rome. In the first half of his letter, Paul covers a wide range of topics that affect all believers in Yeshua, not just Messianic Jews, and he does this to illustrate to both sides of the divide how the truth of Messiah applies equally to both, whether Jew or Gentile. By the time Paul reaches chapter nine, however, he is prepared to defend to the Gentile members of his audience the impor-

tance and uniqueness of the Jew—that is, of Israel. The opening verses express Paul’s deep-seated feelings for the Jewish people.

“I say the truth in Messiah—I do not lie; my conscience bearing testimony with me in the רוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ, Ruach HaQodesh—that I have both great grief and unceasing pain in my heart. For I was praying to be accursed—I myself—from the Messiah for the sake of my brothers, my relatives according to the flesh, who are יִשְׂרָאֵלִים, Yis’raeliym [Israelites]—whose is the adoption of sons, and the glory, and the בְּרִיתוֹת, b’riyot [covenants], and the תּוֹרָה, Torah-giving, and the עֲבֹדָה, ’avodah [(Temple) service], and the promises; also whose are the fathers; and of whom, according to the flesh, is the Messiah—who is over all, God blessed to the ages—אָמֵן, amen!”
(Romans 9:1-5, MJLT)

Paul begins this section by lamenting the condition of the people of Israel, his unsaved “brothers, [his] relatives according to the flesh.” As a fellow Jew, he deeply grieves and experiences “unceasing pain in [his] heart” on behalf of those whom, he implies, are “accursed” without Messiah—a position he would gladly exchange with them for the sake of their souls.

Through such testimony and prayer, Paul puts himself in the place of the unsaved Jewish people, fully grasping their lost

state, and crying out to the Messiah with a Messianic heart: like Yeshua Himself, he would willfully welcome his own death, if it meant life to his people.

Just as Paul was deeply grieved for his Jewish brothers, so we too — as brothers and family members with the Jewish people through the Messiah Yeshua — should be burdened by and seek the restoration of the salvation of all Israel!



The Special Place of Jews

But as Paul recovers from his lament, in verse 3, he begins 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. He begins by saying that “the adoption of sons” belongs to Israel. This declares the Jewish people’s special familial relationship to God through the Messiah, who is *the Son*. (Is “the adoption of sons” accredited only to the Jewish people? It all depends on the additional context of Romans 8:15, 8:23, Galatians 4:5 and Ephesians 1:5!) Paul goes on to speak of “the glory” that belongs to Israel, presumably because of Israel’s historic encounter with the glory of God (for example, see Exodus 16:7 and 24:16ff). Next come the *בְּרִיתוֹת*, *b’riyot*—the covenants—and the Torah, which were made and given explicitly and exclusively to the Jewish people (through whom the sojourning Gentile participates). Furthermore, Paul states that the *עֲבֹדָה*, *avodah*—the Temple service—belongs, again, exclusively to Israel, since only the descendants of Levi are permitted to perform it. And, finally, Paul points to the result of all the other attributes: the promises, upon which the future and God-given purposes of Israel rest.

Paul concludes his list of Israel’s special qualities with the anchoring concept that the Jewish people and the Messiah Himself both descend from the same physical lineage. Like Paul, Yeshua is a brother and a relative of the Jewish people—He is one of their own, and as such, He looks out for His own family in a special and treasured way. Before all others, the Messiah of Israel will not forget nor forsake His own Jewish family.

Caring for Our Brothers

My friend, if this is the way Paul felt and cared about the Jewish people—His people—because of the Messiah, 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?

This is the purpose of MJMI: to tirelessly proclaim the Good News of Yeshua to the Jewish people. We greatly need not only your prayers, but also your financial assis-

Update from Israel

I recently received an update from our ministry friend Aviel, who has been sharing the Good News in the Land of Israel. He wrote: “Recently, I have been visiting a woman named Zinaida. Her life story is incredible. During the Second World War, she was 4 years old. She lived with her parents in Belarus, her dad was sent to the frontline, and the Germans entered her village and began killing the Jews. Her mom took her and her big sister and ran into the woods, and they lived there through the whole war. Zinaida told me that she always used to pray to God to ask Him to keep her and her family safe, and that many miracles had happened in her life.

“In 1998, she decided to move to Israel, where she got very sick and couldn’t walk anymore. She prayed for God to surround her with good people, and since then, Christians have constantly visited her house. She told me that she had never received such love and caring.

I told her why Christians love Jews and what the Good News is all about. She told me, ‘Yeshua is certainly the Savior of all people, and I believe in it!’ Then I offered for her to pray and receive Yeshua as her Savior, and she did it with a great joy. It is amazing how God is using all the Christians who have visited her and thus answering her prayers and preparing her for repentance.”

tance, so that we can do our part to participate in the salvation of all Israel. Your donation of **\$10, \$25, \$100 or more** 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 look at Romans next month, but in the meantime, let us all strive to display the same unlimited sympathy toward the Jewish people as Paul. Otherwise, how else can we truly accept the burden of seeing Paul’s and Yeshua’s relatives saved?

For the sake of the Messiah,



Kevin Geoffrey, President, MJMI

