

## The Israel Story

### Chapter 10 – Salvation

“In Romans 11:25, we read about two blindnesses: the blindness of the Jewish people to Yeshua being their Messiah and the blindness of the followers of Yeshua (the Church) to God’s plan and purpose to save the Jewish people. Followers of Yeshua are warned not to be prideful and arrogant toward the Jews, who do not yet share their faith. Why? Because their faith is rooted in and supported by God’s interaction and cultivation of the Jewish people for thousands of years, and their Messiah and Savior Himself is a Jew.” (Myers)

Romans 11:25-27 says, “<sup>25</sup> *I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in,* <sup>26</sup> *and in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written:*

*“The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.* <sup>27</sup> *And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”*

1. Paul wants all believers to understand God’s plan of salvation. He uses the Greek word ‘agnoeō’ which means ‘ignorant’ or ‘not understand’ or ‘uninformed’. It is the same word that he used in 1 Thessalonians 4:13 where he didn’t want them and us to not understand what happens to the dead at the time of the Rapture. Paul wants us to understand that God has not forgotten or tossed aside the Jews (Jacob). Salvation through Jesus is for all people. There has been no replacing God’s love for His chosen people.
2. There has been a remnant of the Jews that believe that Jesus is the Christ or the Messiah but there will come a time when the veil is lifted from the eyes of the Jews and they will see Jesus as the Messiah. When will that be? When “*the full number of the Gentiles has come in*”
3. In verses 26b and 27, he is quoting Isaiah 59:20-21. My Bible has footnotes to Isaiah 59:20-21 but it also includes Isaiah 27:9 and Jeremiah 31:34-35. Isaiah 27:9 says, “*Therefore through this Jacob’s iniquity will be forgiven; And this will be the full price of the pardoning of his sin: When he makes all the altar stones like pulverized chalk stones; When Asherim and incense altars will not*

*stand.*” The reference to Jacob is all Jews or Israel. This verse in Isaiah 27 says that the sin of the Jews will be forgiven. All of their idols will be destroyed and they shall only worship one God.

4. Jeremiah 31:33-34 says, “*33 This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,*” declares the Lord. “*I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 34 No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,*” declares the Lord. “*For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.*” Verse 33 should sound familiar. God said it to John as recorded in Revelation 21:3, “*Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.*”
5. Verse 34 says that God will forgive their sins, just as He does our sins. God’s faithfulness has always included forgiveness. My mind goes to 2 Chronicles 7:14 which says, “*If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*” This is what God told King Solomon.
6. 2 Peter 3:9 says, “*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*” Does this verse say that God is patient with all Gentiles or all Jews? God says everyone, even the Jews.
7. When we started this lesson, the quote from Myers said that there are “two blindnesses”. The first one was the veil preventing the Jews from recognizing that Jesus as the Messiah. So what is the second one? So far we have only touched on it. In a previous chapter, we said that the veil was only temporary.
8. Romans 11:25 says it a little more clearly. It says, “*I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited.*” So Paul is warning those believing Jews and Gentiles not to

become conceited or “*think more highly than you ought*” (Romans 12:3).

Regarding this phrase, David Guzik says, “Paul does not tell the believer to take an attitude that finds pleasure in humiliation or degradation. Rather, the idea is that we should see the truth about ourselves and live in light of it. When we see ourselves as we really are, it is impossible to be given over to pride.”

9. When we look at the Jewish people, then we should not take any pride in what we have done. I have said numerous times through this study, “Why didn’t God just start over and dump the Jewish people for their failings?” Why didn’t he? As Paul said it in Romans 3:23, “*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*” Because if we would have been in their shoes, we would have most likely behaved the same way. The Jewish people are humans.
10. God’s plan of salvation was for all people. The Jews didn’t get that the Messiah would come for all people, not just the Jews. Then when the Jews failed God and salvation was open to the Gentiles, the Gentiles don’t seem to understand that the Jews are God’s chosen people even today. Those that believe replacement theology believe that the Church has replaced the Jews as God’s chosen people. This is not true. God’s covenant with the Jews is forever.
11. Acts 1:8 says, “*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*” Jerusalem and Judea point to the Jews. Samaria and the ends of the earth point to the Gentiles or everyone else.
12. Let’s look at Acts 10. Cornelius, a Roman centurion, is visited by an angel. He and his family “*were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly*”. None the less they were Gentiles. God wanted to get Peter and Cornelius together as a teaching moment for Peter and a blessing to Cornelius and his family.
13. Both men have visions about their meeting. In Peter’s vision, God tells Peter to eat of “*all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds*”. To the Jews many of these animals were considered unclean to eat. God tells

Peter, “*Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.*” God was talking about more than just food here, God is talking about people too. Three times God tells Peter that He not to call anything unclean.

14. Guzik says, “Peter was saved, Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit, and Peter had been greatly used by God. At the same time, Peter was still Peter. God didn’t use him because he was perfect, but because he was in the right direction and he was available. We often fall into the trap of thinking that we must be perfected until God can really use us.” The Jews have always believed that they had salvation because they were born Jewish but God wants Him to realize that salvation is for all.
15. On the flip side, God wants us to realize that the veil preventing the Jews from seeing Jesus as the Messiah is just temporary. Don’t behave like Peter who needed to be reminded that Jesus came for all. Salvation is a gift through grace. We can’t earn it. We are not better than the Jews. Their time will come. This is the second blindness. Because they failed and were punished by God, He isn’t done with them. They are part of God’s plan of salvation.
16. Verses 34 and 35 of Acts 10 says, “*Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35 but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.”* That is every nation. Remember what it says in 2 Peter 3:9 God “*is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*” Not just the ones that we select but EVERYONE.

“Also included in this letter, is a warning of the serious consequence if believers fail to understand God’s heart and plan for Israel’s salvation. That consequence is being “wise in your own opinion,” which speaks of pride and arrogance, specifically in this context, the pride and arrogance of believers in Yeshua toward Jews, who do not yet share their faith. This expression of pride and arrogance is written about earlier in the same chapter. Before we look at those verses, I just want to say that our opinions don’t really matter that much. I’m not saying that we shouldn’t have them. It’s just that we are not the ultimate judges of what is true. That right and privilege belongs to God alone.” (Myers)

17. When I think about the difference the Christianity that God wants and the religion that man has created, it comes down to our opinions. True Christianity says salvation has come to all men. Religion says, “In my opinion, you must do . . . to be saved.” Consider in Acts 15:29 which lists the prohibitions for early Christians: abstain from food offered to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals, and from sexual immorality. These were added because the Christian Counsel didn’t believe that salvation could come just by faith in Jews, or man’s opinion.
18. Look at how many denominations there are today and each one has added their own spin to faith in Jesus. Each one believing that they are doing it correctly. Google AI says that there are 45,000 different denominations of Christianity depending on how you define the word “denomination”. You could fill a book with descriptions of what has been added to grace through faith Christianity. Some putting other things ahead of faith in Jesus as the Messiah.
19. Each one thinking that they have it right. But when it comes down to it, your pride and arrogance or your opinion will not get you into Heaven but it may keep you out.
20. Romans 11:17-18 says, *“17 If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, 18 do not consider yourself to be superior to those other branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you.”* Paul reminds us (Gentiles) that we are the wild olive shoot grafted onto the olive tree. The root of the olive tree is Israel/Jews. We are only grafted in by the grace of God and not by our own doing.

“When an old olive tree had lost its vigor, it seems that one remedy in antiquity was to cut away the failing branches and graft in some wild olive shoots. The result was said to be the invigoration of the failing tree.” (Morris)

21. Romans 11:24 says, “*After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!*” The idea that Paul is trying to make is that we were the wild olive trees and we can be grafted into God’s olive tree (become children of Abraham) then how much easier would it be to graft in a branch that was part of the original tree (non-Messianic Jews).
22. By claiming Jesus as our Savior, Gentiles are grafted onto the Jewish olive tree or we become the children of God. We don’t become biological Jewish but we can have the close personal relationship with God that God wanted for the Jews.
23. God still has a plan for the Jews who have not claimed salvation through Jesus as the Christ. He has not abandoned them.