

The Apostle Paul's Heart Concerning his People, the Jews

To begin, Paul would be willing to give up his salvation for his people, the Jews.

- “I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel.”

Paul instructs his readers that God chose the Jews for His purposes.

- “Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship, and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised.”

Paul reminds us that the “true” children of God are not the Jews. Instead, those who are God’s “true” children are those who have obtained a relationship with God by faith.

- “For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Nor because they are his descendants are, they all Abraham’s children. On the contrary, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.” In other words, it is not the natural children who are God’s children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham’s offspring.”

Paul explains the truth of who God’s children are by reminding them of His promise to Abraham and Sarah that they will have a son. Paul reiterates a Scripture that we looked at earlier concerning his LOVE for Israel, “Jacob, I loved, but Esau, I hated.”

- “For this was how the promise was stated: “At the appointed time, I will return, and Sarah will have a son.” Not only that, but Rebekah’s children had one and the same father, our father, Isaac. Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God’s purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls—she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” Just as it is written: **“Jacob, I loved, but Esau, I hated.”**

God’s love, grace, and mercy depend on God’s effort and not on man's effort.

- “What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. It does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: “I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” Therefore, God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. One of you will say to me: “Then why does God still blame us? For who resists his will?” But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? “Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’” Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use? What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction? What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory— even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles? As he says in Hosea: “I will call them ‘my people’ who are not my people; and I will call her ‘my loved one’ who is not my loved one,” and, “It will happen that in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’”

Being a Jew doesn’t earn God’s salvation. Instead, “Righteousness” (that leads to salvation” is received by faith. The Gentiles understand this truth and receive “salvation.” Whereas, only a remnant (few) Jews understand this spiritual truth and the reason why only a few Jews have obtained salvation and a right (righteous) standing with God.

- “Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea, only the remnant will be saved. For the Lord will carry out his sentence on earth with speed and finality.” It is just as Isaiah said previously: “Unless the Lord Almighty had left us, descendants, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah.” What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the “stumbling stone.” As it is written: “See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame...”

Paul expounds on the truths we just reviewed.

- “Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes... That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved...”

God gives salvation ONLY to those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ. And this can only happen if a person hears God’s WORD.

- “But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” **Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ...**at the present time, there is a remnant chosen by grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace. What then? What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did.”

“Israel” can still receive salvation. Therefore, when you meet a Hebrew Christian, you are seeing one of God’s miracle.

- “Again, I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring...Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so, all Israel will be saved... “The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.” Romans 11:1–36

Summary of Reaching Out to Jewish Friends

The following can also apply to your Gentile friends.

1. LOVE God, His Word, His Church, and His People.

God’s people (believers) must be part of a “Local” Church under the authority of a Pastor(s) who teach and preach from God’s Word. God’s people also LOVE others because they are “in” God’s Word and read and study God’s Word for themselves. The following three points are also essential.

- a) Understand that the 8th Covenant, “New Covenant,” replaced the 5th “Old Covenant.” This Truth is the building block for understanding the Bible and the reason why the Messiah came to earth the first time. It is also the central message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- b) Understand “God’s Seven Feasts.” They contain “pictures” of what Jesus did and is going to do. The first four Feasts provide an understanding of Jesus’ death, burial, resurrection, and sending of the Holy Spirit. The final three Feasts give an understanding of the future.
- c) Understand the book of Daniel. Daniel contains the theological bedrock for understanding “Past Events” which were fulfilled and “Future Events” to come. The 9th chapter is the most important as it reveals God’s “set times” and what He has in store for Israel’s future.

2. WALK in God’s Economy.

There is a lot we should be thankful for because of the Jewish People. We owe the Jewish People a debt of gratitude for many “spiritual things.” God used the Jewish people to author His Word, and of the 66 books in the Bible, 64 of them were written by Jewish authors. We also “**owe our salvation**” to Jesus, the Jewish Rabbi, and Messiah, who said, “*Salvation is of the Jews*” (John 4:22). We also owe our Jewish and Gentile friends an explanation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul (a Hebrew Christian) and author of most of the New Testament said, “*I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.*” We also owe the Jewish People a debt of gratitude for many of the things we have and enjoy, which originated from the “minds” of Jewish inventors, artists, scientists, musicians, philanthropists, and businesspeople.

Jews:

- ✓ Confer God’s favor and protection out loud or in your heart to the Gentiles.
- ✓ Provide or contribute an advantage, benefit, or help to the Gentiles.
- ✓ Conversely, do not curse the Gentiles:

Gentiles:

- ✓ Confer God’s favor and protection out loud or in your heart to the Jews.
- ✓ Provide or contribute an advantage, benefit, or help to the Jews.
- ✓ Conversely, do not curse the Jews.

3. ASK God to put Jewish and Gentile people in your life.

- a) Develop a relationship with them. Do “LIFE” Together. Boldly invite yourself to their “Community Activities, I.E., Church, Synagogue, Holidays, special occasions such as graduations, Bar or Bat Mitzvah, weddings, funerals, etc.
- b) Wait on God to put “situations,” which cause your Jewish and Gentile friends to seek God out or question His existence and purposes.
- c) Pray for your Jewish and Gentile friends. Remember, you cannot impose “Belief” on anyone. Nor can you open anyone’s spiritual eyes or hearts. It’s all God’s doing. But what you can do is be willing and available to God. So, ask Him how He wants you to love, bless, and serve your Jewish and Gentile friends.