

and purposes of God for Israel and the world comes from the root. It has been wisely said that Christianity without roots is more like a Christmas tree than an olive tree, all baubles and frills but no real depth. All believers need to embrace their roots! God never meant the Church of Jesus Christ to be cut off from its Jewish root. He is in the process of restoring that root today. We thank Him for giving us a small part in that restoration. We also praise the Lord for the privilege of being used to help the Jewish branches be grafted back into their own olive tree.

## ISRAEL'S CALLING IS IRREVOCABLE

(Romans 11:25-29)

*"Concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable."* vs. 28-29

Rabbi Sha'ul warns Gentile believers once again against acting arrogantly towards Israel. Israel has become God's enemy so that the Gentiles might be included in His kingdom. This inclusion will culminate in the Gentile world entering into its fullness, a period in which the Gentiles become faithful to Yeshua, provoke the Jewish people to jealousy, and thus all Israel (the Jewish people as a nation, but not necessarily including every individual Jew) will be saved. Will the Gentile world enter its "fullness" if it divorces itself from its Jewish root? We don't think so. Fullness (pleroma in Greek) indicates "completion" or "wholeness."

Fullness includes a Jewish Messiah who said: *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."* (Matt. 5:17)

Israel's election remains sure because of God's promise to their forefathers that He would multiply them and make out of them a great nation in which all the nations of the world would be blessed. (Gen. 12:1-3, 15:5, 17:1-8, 22:17-18, 26:4, Ex. 32:13)

God still loves the Jewish people. He will not annul His promise nor recall the heritage which He has given to Israel. His promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David stand forever because God always keeps His word.

## FROM DISOBEDIENCE TO MERCY

(Romans 11:30-32)

*"Just as you yourselves were disobedient to God before but have received mercy **now** because of Israel's disobedience; so also Israel has been disobedient **now**, so that by your showing them the same mercy that God has shown you, they too may **now** receive God's mercy."* (vs. 30-31 JNT)

God showed mercy in grafting into the natural root a people who were once called "Gentiles" and "not-My-people" (Hebrew: "lo-ami"). Now these same people are called by God to show mercy to Israel. They are to stand by Israel, the nation and the people. They have a responsibility before God to see that the Good News is proclaimed to the House of Israel. The non-Jewish followers of Yeshua are also called

to "comfort Zion." (Isaiah 40:1) The word "**now**" is used in Romans 11:30-31 three times to let us know that **now** is the time to favor Zion! This is the year to show God's mercy to Israel. The salvation of Israel depends on this mercy! Now is the time to act.

Chapter 11 ends with praise to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for His wonderful, unsearchable ways, His faithfulness, mercy, wisdom and sovereignty. He is worthy of glory and honor.

Given all that the Lord has spoken to us in Romans chapter 11, and because of the mercies of God referred to in vs. 30-32, we sense that God is speaking a prophetic word to all of us from the first two verses of Romans chapter 12:

*"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God (shown to you and through you to Israel) that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*

Pray now – for God to show you His will concerning Israel, the Jewish people, and what He wants **you** to do about it **now**.

God bless you as you bless Israel!

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A "JEWISH JEWELS" Teaching

# ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH



Neil and Jamie Lash

Chapters nine through eleven of the Book of Romans, written by Rabbi Sha'ul (Paul) to the believers at Rome, contains the New Covenant's most comprehensive discussion of the role of the Jewish people after Messiah's resurrection. In chapter 11, particularly, we can feel the heartbeat of God for His people Israel, His commitment to His people, and His plan for blessing the entire world through them. We also learn about God's plan for the gentiles (non-Jews) and their proper relationship to the Jewish people. Romans 11 has a message for each of us at this prophetic time in world history as God opens the eyes of His ancient people.

### **ISRAEL CAST AWAY? NO!** **(Romans 11:1-6)**

*"...Has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away His people which He foreknew..."* (Romans 11:1-2)

From earliest church history there have been non-Jewish believers in Yeshua who taught that God was through with the Jewish people because they disobeyed Him, rebelled against Him and didn't receive their Messiah when He was sent to them. The apostle Paul (Rabbi Sha'ul) responded to this teaching in the strongest of terms. We could paraphrase his response as: *"Absolutely not! I'm a Jew and He hasn't rejected me. He hasn't cast away the rest of us either. In fact, He never will because God chose us a long time ago and made promises to our forefathers which He intends to keep. We may have been faithless, but God remains Faithful."*

### **ISRAEL HAS STUMBLED** **(Romans 11:7-10)**

*"...Israel has not attained the goal for which she is striving. The ones chosen have obtained it, but the rest have been made stonelike..."* (Romans 11:7 JNT version)

What goal? Righteousness. Israel will never be able to attain righteousness through legalistic works. The "ones chosen," the Messianic Jews, have obtained righteousness through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Yeshua. Messianic Jews are the "remnant" chosen by grace mentioned in 11:5. Their hearts have become "hearts of flesh," while the majority of Israel has been made stonelike, an allusion to Ezekiel 36:26 where God says of Israel: "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh."

### **A PERMANENT FALLING AWAY?** **NO! (Romans 11:11)**

*"...Have they (Israel) stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles."*

While it is true that much of Israel stumbled over the "cornerstone," Yeshua, and did not arrive at the "goal" of the Torah which is God's righteousness in Him, God has not rejected His people in favor of the Gentiles. Israel has not been replaced by the Gentiles as God's people. God has never stopped holding out his hands to his disobedient people (Romans 10:21). Israel's falling away is temporary and the means by which God has drawn the non-Jews to Himself. Israel is destined to return to the God of Abraham, Isaac

and Jacob through the Messiah Yeshua, being provoked to jealousy by the same Gentiles who found the Messiah due to Israel's stumbling. What a high calling for the Church of Jesus Christ! And what an indictment of that Church which has provoked so few Jews to jealousy in the last 1,900 years!

### **ISRAEL'S STUMBLING: A BLESSING TO THE GENTILES** **(Romans 11:12-15)**

*"Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness."* (Romans 11:12)

The Book of Acts documents the deliverance that was originally meant for Israel but subsequently offered to the Gentiles when Israel as a nation failed to receive it. All that non-Jewish believers have in the Messiah (the riches) came to us **through** Israel and **because of Israel's stumbling**. What riches? The riches of his glory (Rom. 9:23), the riches of his grace (Eph. 1:7), the "unsearchable riches of Messiah" (Eph. 3:8), including deliverance, salvation, the gift of eternal life, abundant life now, healing, freedom, love, peace, joy and more. Can it get any better? Apparently so! Restoration riches promise to be even greater for non-Jews than the riches received up until now. When Israel receives her Messiah on a larger scale, the blessings will increase substantially. (A good reason for non-Jews to pray for and be a part of Israel's salvation!!!) Rabbi Sha'ul uses a dramatic analogy in describing Israel's acceptance of Yeshua as Messiah: *"For if their being cast aside means reconcili-*

*ation for the world, what will their acceptance mean? It will be life from the dead!"* Rom. 11:15 Expect miracles as Israel returns to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob through Yeshua! Expect great blessings for all mankind as Israel is spiritually resurrected! Look forward to a literal resurrection as well.

### **A WILD OLIVE: GRAFTED IN** **(Romans 11:16-24)**

*"...if the root is holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you."* (Romans 11:16-18)

The olive tree is a biblical symbol for the nation of Israel. The Jewish people are the natural branches. Verses 16-24 paint a picture of unbelieving Israel as a cultivated olive tree from which some of the branches have been broken off through unbelief. Some of the branches are still in place (the Messianic Jews). Other branches, from a wild olive (Gentiles), have been grafted in among them because of faith in Yeshua, and have become equal sharers in the rich root of the olive tree. This passage of Scripture places special emphasis on the "root." It is "holy," "rich" and gives "support." The root is valuable. Christians, believers in the Jewish Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) have "Jewish roots." An appreciation of a Holy God comes from the root, a special anointing (richness, fatness) also comes from the root, and a knowledge of the eternal plan