

## EXPOSITION OF ROMANS

Message #40

Romans 11:13-25

Paul NEVER wanted the Church of Jesus Christ to forget about or minimize the importance of Israel. Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost observed in his book *Things to Come* that four fifths of the Bible dealt with Israel and one fifth with the Church. Dr. S. Lewis Johnson said one of the problems with the Church is that we do not want to acknowledge the “ethnic future of Israel.”

**THE GENTILE BELIEVER AND GENTILE CHURCH MUST NEVER FORGET .  
ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NATION ISRAEL.**

Paul never wanted the Church to forget about the Jewish people, the Jewish program and the Jewish promises. There are six memories that God wants us to have about Israel:

**MEMORY #1** – Our salvation is for Israel’s benefit . **11:13-14**

One might ask, if Israel is so important, why was Paul, a Jew, taking the Gospel to the Gentiles? 1) Because this was the will of God for his life (Acts 18:5-6; 22:21; 26:17-18); and 2) He wanted to provoke the Jews to jealousy.

One reason God saved us was to provoke the Jews to jealousy so that Jews might want the salvation we have (11:11, 14). In other words, our salvation is to provoke the Jews to jealousy so they might come to God.

Now during the days of Paul, there were two ways He did this - Paul’s message and his life. Paul’s message and ministry were aimed at the Gentiles. But both of these kept Israel in proper view.

Donald Grey Barnhouse made an interesting observation. He said there is not much in our churches to provoke any Jew to jealousy because our religion has become like theirs. It is often stagnant and it is comprised of laws and rituals and buildings.

You and I are to have such an intimate relationship with God and such a vibrant testimony that it provokes other people to become jealous of our relationship with God.

**MEMORY #2** – Our salvation is proof of Israel’s future . **11:15-16**

Paul says in **verse 15** that Israel’s present state of rejection and blindness is so that the salvation message may reach out to the entire world (11:11).

Now Paul further explains what he means in **verse 16**. He uses a concept from Numbers 15:19-20. It is the O.T. offering concept of the dough or bread offering. A Jew would take a piece of lump from the first part of the dough and offer it to God. That dedicated the rest of the bread to God. Obviously, if God accepts the lump, He has to accept the loaf from which the lump came.

Paul’s point is, if Christians are set apart unto God, obviously the Jew must be also, for the root of our salvation is Jewish.

**MEMORY #3** – Our salvation is rooted in Israel’s program . **11:17**

I understand **this verse** to be subordinate to **verse 18**; however, I think it contains a thought worth developing. The real meaning here is that we have no right to boast or be arrogant because our life support system is rooted in a God-ordained system pertaining to Israel.

The illustration comes from the world of horticulture. The “natural branches” are Israel and the “wild olive grafted in branches” represent the church or believing Gentiles.

**What Paul is saying here is that God has grafted us into Israel’s program. Israel was not grafted into our program.**

**MEMORY #4** – Our salvation should boast about Israel not against Israel. **11:18**

We have no right to boast about our salvation at the expense of Israel. Anti-Semitism is anti-godly thinking. No believer should ever think or act arrogantly against the Jew. We can thank God that Israel exists because our salvation is rooted in her. Look at the words of Jesus in John 4:22 who said, “We worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews.”

**MEMORY #5** – Our salvation stems from Israel’s unbelief , not our greatness . **11:19-20**

Paul wanted to make known that God did not stop His program with Israel because He saw this great group of Gentile people who were not Jewish; rather He stopped His program with Israel because of her unbelief.

Now why should we reverence God at this level? Two reasons from **verse 21**:

**Reason #1** - Because unbelief did cause God to cancel Israel’s blessing.

**Reason #2** - Because unbelief can cause God to cancel our blessings.

If we refuse to acknowledge the importance of Israel, God can and will shut down His blessings from us.

**MEMORY #6** – Our blessings can be canceled because of an improper attitude toward Israel. **11:21-24**

Paul says there are two sides to God - kindness and blessings, and severity and judgment. Paul says in **verse 22**, if we continue in His kindness, we get His blessing; if we don’t we will be cut off.

The idea of being “cut off” is not a reference to individual salvation, but to national purposes in the program of God. In other words, God can and will shut the whole Gentile program down when it starts demeaning Israel. In fact, Paul says in **verse 24** that if God grafted us into Israel’s program, He would be much quicker to graft in the original branches again.

I am totally convinced that we are nearing the coming of Jesus Christ, and one key reason why I say this is because in many churches they have lost the significance of Israel. Hardly do you hear preaching that esteems Israel. When most churches go to the Old Testament, they do their very best to forget about Israel and make her promises their promises. We have even allowed songs to subtly replace Israel such as “We are marching to Zion.” We aren’t marching to Zion, Israel is. We are looking for the Rapture of the Church.

There is no question that this is the Age of The Gentiles. Non-Jewish people can get into a right relationship with the God of Israel by faith in Jesus Christ. But we must always remember God is the God of Israel.

Do you personally know the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Have you ever placed your faith in the One born in Bethlehem from the line of David? Will you come to the Jew of Deity? Will you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?