

**ROMANS 11:11-15**

Dr. Walter Wilson wrote:

"Salvation is always through two Jews; the one who wrote the story in the Scriptures, and the One to whom the story directs the seeker. Paul the Jew points the seeking soul to Jesus the Jew. Peter the Jew directs the hearts of his hearers to Christ the Jew. Salvation comes through hearing what one Jew in the Bible says about the other Jew on the cross and on the throne. There may be religions without the Jews, but these will have no salvation and never will join the blood-washed throng in Glory. There may be beautiful thoughts, kind acts and deeds, much of beneficence and bounty without the Jews, but there can be no redemption, no forgiveness, and no salvation apart from Israel; for salvation is of the Jews. Those who reject the Jews, hate them, despise them, and persecute them, shut the door of salvation for themselves and seal their own doom. This poor, sinsick, suffering, sorrowing earth will have no salvation in a national way until the Jews come into their own. When the Jews have their land again, and that greatest of all, the peerless Jew, the Lord Jesus Christ, is upon His throne in Jerusalem, then the earth will be saved from its throes and its woes; sighing will cease, and songs of praise will surge through the soul. Tears will be wiped away, and trials and troubles will be no more. This salvation is 'of the Jews.'"

Joseph Cohn, Beginning at Jerusalem, p. 125-26, comments of Dr. Walter M. Wilson from an article in the *Advent Witness*

These verses of Romans 11 brings to a pinnacle the reason why "...salvation is of the Jews," John 4:22.

Why the gospel is to be "to the Jew first" [Romans 1:16]:

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

Why the nation of Israel's unbelief doesn't thwart God's plan [Romans 3:3-4]:

"For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."

Why Paul was willing to be accursed for Israel [Romans 9:3]:

"For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

Why Paul's great desire was for Jewish people to be saved [Romans 10:1]:

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."

Why, in these verses, he implores Gentile believers to bring the gospel to Jewish people [Romans 11:12-15].

**11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.**

Once again, Paul wants to clear up any misconception of Israel's stumbling at Jesus being Messiah.

Isaiah 8:13 Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.  
14 And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Romans 9:31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.  
32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;  
33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Paul emphatically states "God forbid!" "It can't happen!" Israel's stumbling at Jesus being the Messiah ABSOLUTELY DOES NOT remove them from God's promises and plan for them. Two thoughts follow:

1. Salvation would come to the Gentiles

God always intended for the "tent" of salvation to include the Gentile world.

"And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:3.

"I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles." Isaiah 42:6.

"Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.

Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes;  
For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited," Isaiah 54:1-3.

"**In that day will I raise up** the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old:

**That they may possess the remnant of Edom**, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this," Amos 9:11-12.

Acts 15:13-18

- 13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:  
14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.  
15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,  
16 **After this I will return**, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:  
17 **That the residue of men might seek after the Lord**, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.  
18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world

Notice the difference in James' quotes in verses 16 and 17 from the quotes in Amos 9:11-12.

<b>Translated from Hebrew</b>	<b>Translated from the Septuagint</b>	<b>Luke's Account of James's Citation</b>
In that day that they may possess <b>the remnant of Edom</b> and all the nations who are called by My name	On that day in order that those <b>remaining of humans</b> and all nations upon whom my name has been called might seek out me	After these things I will return, so that <b>the rest of mankind</b> may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name

"The Hebrew consonants for "Edom" (אדום) and for "Adam" (אדם) are identical (אדמ). And the original Hebrew texts was written without vowels which were added much later. The confusion in the vowels ("A" or "E" were added much later) is easy to understand. Some ancient scribes who supplied vowel markings for the Hebrew text upon which our English translations of the Old Testament rest apparently understood the text as "remnant of Edom," while others, including the Septuagint translators and James, understood it as "remnant of mankind." www.preceptaustin.org

What are we to understand from the differences in the way James quotes Amos?

1. Acts 15 (see vs 1-12) is to show that Gentiles are saved without becoming Jews (part of Judaism), i.e. they are saved by grace.
2. Acts 15:13-14, James now refers to Peter saying Gentiles will be saved.
3. Acts 15:15, notice that James refers to this agreeing with "the words of the prophets."
4. Acts 15:16-17, he references Amos from the Septuagint but changes the opening words to "After this I will return" most likely refers to the coming millennial kingdom (see Amos 9:11-15) where in Amos it says "In that day" which refers to the millennial kingdom. "After this I will return" speaks of God's judgment (Amos 9:13-14) and then God returning (i.e. end of the Tribulation period).
5. Verse 18 reminds us that God had planned that Gentiles would be saved from the beginning.
6. "All the interpretive problems aside, the bottom line is that James was using Scripture to support Peter's argument, that salvation for all people, Jew or Gentile, is by God's grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. The quote from Amos and James' concluding comment support what Peter emphasized in verse 7, that the salvation of the Gentiles originated with God, not with man. It was not something that Peter or Paul and Barnabas dreamed up. God purposed to do it from eternity, and He revealed it through His prophets centuries before."  
www.preceptaustin.org/acts-15-commentary#15:13

2. Gentiles who come to the Lord are to provoke Jewish people to jealousy.

God planned from the beginning of creation that His plan of salvation would include Jew and Gentile. Because of this, God desires that Gentile believers "provoke Jews to jealousy." Why?

This reason is elaborated on in verses 12-15, but for now it will be sufficient to say that seeing Jewish people saved is to the benefit of the Gentile world.

How can a Gentile "provoke a Jewish person to jealousy?"

- 1) You have a personal relationship with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- 2) You know the Jewish Messiah, personally.
- 3) You have forgiveness of sins and know your name is written in the (eternal) book of life.

**12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?**

Fall is *παράπτωμα* - par-ap'-to-mah; a side-slip (lapse or deviation), i.e. (unintentional) error or (wilful) transgression:--fall, fault, offence, sin, trespass.

The result of Israel not accepting Jesus as Messiah was riches for the world.

The diminishing of Israel speaks to their increasing lack of influence (primarily spiritually) upon the world.

Both of these led to "the riches of the Gentiles." The context is speaking of salvation and many Gentiles being saved.

We now have a contrast, "the fall and diminishing" of Israel led to the "riches of the Gentiles" - the focus and emphasis here is on salvation. The theme of salvation for Jew and Gentile goes back to the end of chapter 9.

"God's being magnified in the earth is contingent upon the conversion of Israel...God's glory, as far as this earth is concerned, is wrapped up with the Jewish people. This being a fact, we can understand why He is so very greatly interested in them and in bringing them back to Himself."

David L. Cooper, *Preparing for the World-Wide Revival*, (Los Angeles: Biblical Research Society, 1938) page 8.

"The mission of the Church is to evangelize the world with a view to the gathering in of individuals out of all nations into its fold, but it is reserved for restored and converted Israel as a nation to bring the nations to a knowledge of their glorious Messiah and King, and bring universal blessing to the world."

David Baron, *Israel in the Plan of God*, (Grand Rapids: Kregels Publ., 1983), page 283

**13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:**

Paul wants to communicate one basic thought to Gentile believers in this verse - what he is teaching Gentile believers has NOTHING to do with his Jewishness and EVERYTHING to do with his calling as the apostle to the Gentiles.

**14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.**

Why this emphasis on Jewish people being saved in the present?

Consider:

1. "by any means" - Do whatever is necessary that Jewish people might be saved.
2. "provoke to emulation" (jealousy) - Paul once again says that Gentile believers need to provoke Jewish people to jealousy so they might come to the Lord.
3. "might save some of them" - We need to see some Jewish people saved.
4. The emphasis here is on the present. Not some theological truth that is in the distant future (i.e. the nation of Israel saved at the end of the Tribulation period bringing in world-wide blessing).
5. The emphasis on seeing Jewish people saved now is because of the intrinsic blessing tied in with Jewish evangelism and Gentile evangelism (Genesis 12:3).

"And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

**15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?**

Paul now restates what he said in verse 12 in different language but here the correlation is to the previous verse where in verse 12 it is likely primarily speaking about the world-wide blessing when Israel come to the Lord at the end of the Tribulation (but the inference being it is always true when Jews come to the Lord more Gentiles come to the Lord).

The "casting away" (setting aside temporarily) brought the "reconciling of the world" (potentially everyone can be saved) "what shall the receiving of them" (Jewish people being saved - referring back to verse 14), "but life from the dead" (many Gentiles coming to the Lord).

The parallel is:

Casting away = Reconciling of the world (potentially everyone can be saved)

Receiving of them = Life from the dead (the actual result will be many Gentiles receiving eternal life)

"It belongs to God's strategy for world mission that the Gospel should be taken to the Jew first and then to the Gentile. This is not because Jews are more important or more loved by God than Gentiles. It is not because in itself mission to the Jews is more important than mission to the Gentiles. It is because, when the Jews come to faith in Christ, as Paul anticipated that they will do, in large numbers, mission to the whole of humankind will develop and prosper in a new and marvellous way."

David M. Torrance & George Taylor, *Israel God's Servant: God's Key to the Redemption of the World*, Paternoster, 2007, page 8

"The 'no' of the Jews; the 'yes' of some Gentiles; the 'yes' of the Jews; and then the 'yes' of many more Gentiles." Johannes Munck, Danish scholar, quoted in David Larsen, *Jews, Gentiles & the Church*, page 53

"Now it is only reasonable to expect that just as national Israel, when restored to God, will bring blessings to the entire Gentile world, so when individual Jews are brought into the Church, blessings will redound to those who bring them in. That is, we have a right to expect that individual Jewish conversions now must bring individual blessings to the Gentiles in the Church. With convincing recurrence, this is exactly what has happened throughout the history of the Church, and is still happening. This is also what Scripture teaches; for Paul tells us, in speaking of the possibilities of Jewish conversion, in Romans 11:15, 'What shall their receiving (conversion) be, but life from the dead?'...Abundant proof of the argument here presented is to be found in even a superficial glance over the pages of Church history."

Joseph Hoffman Cohn, *Beginning at Jerusalem*, page 251