

Salvation of Israel

A. Introduction

1. The nation of Israel is the apple of God's eye (Deu. 32:10, Zec. 2:8). Despite her current state of rebellion and harlotry, God's desire is for all Israel to be saved (Rom. 11:26).
2. Romans 11:26 — *'So all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "the Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins"'*
 - a. There are different phases of salvation that the Jewish people will go through.
 - i. Some are saved: This is happening now, but only to a fraction of the Jewish people today. In 2012 there were reportedly 145,000 to 250,000 Messianic Jews in the United States, and an estimated 350,000 worldwide¹.
 - ii. Many will be saved: There will be a great harvest before Yeshua Hamashiach (i.e. Jesus Christ) returns. This will happen when the Gospel has been preached to all nations, when the Spirit is poured out on all flesh, there will be a national revival in Israel.
 - iii. All of Israel will be saved (Rom. 11:26) — This will happen at the End of the Age after two-thirds of the Jewish people have been killed (Zech. 13:8–9). Then those who remain will see their Deliverer and their King Yeshua fighting for them.

Three things will happen at this time:

 - Fullness of salvation (Zech. 13:9)
 - Fullness of deliverance from enemies (Isa. 26)
 - Fullness of cleansing and removal of sin (Isa. 27; 59; Zech. 13:1–6)
3. The way of salvation for individual Jewish people is no different from that for non-Jewish people. Each must repent of their sins and call upon Yeshua as the Messiah.
4. However, salvation for Israel as a nation means that God will deliver the entire nation from Gentile dominance and establish her in her national calling to be a great nation and a blessing to nations (Gen. 12:1–3). This will happen when the entire nation,

¹ Sarah Posner, "Israel's Best Friends or Jews' Mortal Enemies?"

especially her governmental and religious leaders, turning to Yeshua and acknowledging Him as the rightful Messiah and King of Israel.

- a. A prevalent theological misconception is that Israel has been replaced, also known as 'Replacement Theology' or 'Supersessionism'.
 - i. It teaches that the Church has replaced Israel's role in God's storyline and will be the vessel through which God will fulfil his promises to Abraham.
 - ii. However, God's gifts and calling for Israel are irrevocable (Rom. 11:29), His plan has always been for Israel to return to Him and be restored to her destiny (Rom. 11:26–27).

B. Israel's Salvation in Yeshua

1. Salvation for Israel is only through Yeshua Hamashiach.
 - a. There is no exception to this truth. Salvation for the Jewish people, as individuals, is by grace through faith in Yeshua Hamashiach, and not by good works (Eph. 2:8-9), lineage (Rom. 9:7) or the old system of sacrifice (Rom. 10:12–13).
 - b. Yeshua is the only Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Him (Jn. 14:6).
 - c. For the Jewish people to be saved, there must first be a conviction of their sins which must lead to true repentance and them calling on Yeshua as their Messiah.
 - i. They must also acknowledge and confess their idolatrous ways.
 - ii. The confession of sin must precede the forgiveness of sin (1 Jn. 1:9).
 - iii. They must confess that Yeshua is their Messiah and the only way to righteousness (Rom. 9:31–10:33).
 2. Salvation is an issue of justice: God must judge sin and the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).
 - a. The yearly sacrifice of the Passover lamb (Korban Pesach) serves as a reminder to the Jewish people that the current system of sacrifice cannot fully pay for the wages of sin, nor can it fully deliver them from the bondage of sin.
 - b. In these yearly sacrifices there is a regular reminder of sin, but in Yeshua's sacrifice as the perfect Passover Lamb, one will be truly sanctified and redeemed from destruction.
 - c. True freedom from the bondage of sin comes only when the price of sin is paid for and only Yeshua's blood alone can pay the full price of sin.
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3. The Mosaic Law was unable to save those who lived by it for righteousness because no one could live it out perfectly, except Yeshua. However, many Orthodox Jewish people are still seeking righteousness apart from Yeshua.
 - i. They must see that Yeshua Hamashiach is the perfect and final Passover Lamb (Zech. 12:10)
 - ii. They must repent and call upon the name of Yeshua for salvation (Rom. 10:1 – 11:21).
 - iii. They must accept Him as the Righteousness of God. The only way to attain righteousness is not through the Law but through the New Covenant made through the blood of Yeshua.

 4. As a nation, they must recognise that their main issue is not the nations around them attacking them, but that they have turned away from their God and committed harlotry with idols (Isa. 59:1–3, Zech. 12:10–14).
 - a. The leaders have led the nation to idolatry and God uses the nations to judge her for the purpose of bringing them back to Him.

 - b. The leaders must repent of their harlotry and return to Him and lead the people in His righteous ways.

C. Understanding Israel's Rejection of Yeshua during His First Coming (Rom. 9:30–33)

1. During His First Coming, Israel failed to recognise Yeshua as her Messiah and rejected Him.

2. Many of the Jewish people at the time had specific expectations of what their promised Messiah would look like.
 - a. They had anticipated that their Messiah would come as a powerful, victorious King who would liberate them from Roman occupation and restore the kingdom of Israel.

 - b. Their expectation was for an immediate, earthly liberation and an earthly kingdom being established. But Yeshua spoke of a spiritual kingdom and an eternal salvation and deliverance.

 - c. They also had misguided interpretations of the Old Testament prophecies about their Messiah and did not see Yeshua as their fulfilment.
 - i. Many of the Jewish people focused on other Messianic prophecies that emphasised the Messiah's glory and reign – passages such as Isaiah 11 and

Zechariah 14, which describes their Messiah as a triumphant and powerful leader.

- ii. The commonly accepted (and wrong) interpretation of the “suffering servant” in Isaiah 53 is that it refers to Israel as a nation, as they believe that their Messiah will not suffer, cannot be pierced or go to the cross. Others interpret it as referring to a specific righteous sufferer that was not the Messiah, as this passage was not widely recognised as being Messianic in nature.
 - iii. In Daniel 7:18, where Daniel saw a vision of a man approaching God on His throne, they interpret the man to be a representation of Israel as a people and not their Messiah.
 - d. In His First Coming, Yeshua came as a humble servant, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 53. He did not overthrow the Roman empire and re-establish the Jewish kingdom as the Jewish people had expected of their Messiah, but they failed to comprehend the far greater victory that He obtained — over sin and death. The final restoration and establishment of the kingdom of Israel will happen at the end of the age with Yeshua as the King.
3. The Jewish religious leaders (Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes) saw Yeshua as a threat to their authority and religious traditions.
- a. Yeshua’s teachings, which emphasised mercy, justice, and the spirit of the law over strict adherence to traditional interpretations, often challenged the interpretations of the Law.
 - i. The teachings were seen as radical and undermining established religious practices. They were perceived as a challenge to the authority of the Jewish religious leaders over the people.
 - ii. Yeshua was also reaching out to sinners, tax collectors, Samaritans and Gentiles. This conflicted with the prevailing attitudes of Jewish purity and separation in those times.
4. Furthermore, Yeshua’s claims to divinity were seen as blasphemous by many of the Jewish religious leaders. His assertion of being the Son of God and the Messiah was considered a direct challenge to the monotheistic core of Judaism.

D. Understanding Israel’s Current Blindness

1. In Romans 10, Apostles Paul states the reasons for Israel’s blindness:
 - a. Israel did not see a need for salvation (Rom. 10:1). They believed that they had salvation because of their lineage from Abraham.
 - b. Israel’s misguided zeal for God (Rom. 10:2).
 - c. Israel’s pride and self-righteousness (Rom. 10:3).

2. In part, Israel's blindness to the Gospel is due to its own rebellion and rejection of God. Her blindness is also pre-ordained by God (Rom. 11:7–10, 25).
 - a. Blindness that has come to Israel in part is due to the divine and sovereign purpose of God.
 - b. Because of Israel's rejection of the Gospel, it then went out to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:7–12).
 - c. Today, Israel as a nation is secular. It largely follows the ways of the world in its value system.

E. Other Barriers that Stand in the Way of Israel's Salvation

1. A barrier to their salvation is the fear of persecution or of being ostracised by their family and friends.
2. The Orthodox Jewish people are very vocal and demonstrative of their hatred against Messianic Jewish believers.
3. These challenges can be both personal and communal, and stem from cultural, religious, and social factors.
 - a. Resentment against Christians.
 - i. Throughout history, different groups of Christians persecuted and killed the Jewish people: the Crusaders, the leaders of the Spanish Inquisition and some groups within the Church during World War 2. As a result, there could be hatred and resentment against Christians and the Christian faith.
 - ii. Even for those who harbour no hatred or resentment towards Christians, to accept the beliefs of Christians could seem unfilial as this would mean having the faith of the same people who had killed their ancestors.
 - iii. Christians need to repent for what they have done to the Jewish people in the past. Concurrently, the Jewish people need to release forgiveness to Christians. God has to bring healing to this relationship.
 - b. Rejection by Jewish communities:
 - i. Many in mainstream Jewish communities view belief in Yeshua as being incompatible with the Jewish identity, leading to exclusion or rejection from traditional Jewish circles, synagogues, and communal events. Some may even be discriminated against and lose opportunities in school or in the corporate world.

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- ii. The reality of facing social ostracism from friends, neighbours and communities, which breed feelings of isolation and loneliness, is a challenge for many.
 - iii. In some families, a Jewish person who accepts Yeshua may lose financial support or an inheritance as a form of punishment or disapproval.
 - iv. Messianic Jewish believers seeking to immigrate and return to Israel under the Law of Return² have faced legal battles, as they are often penalised for their belief in Yeshua.
- c. Different sects within Israel have different issues when it comes to their salvation in Yeshua:
- i. Hiloni: Known as secular Jews, they observe very little of the Jewish traditional practices and consider them as a cultural practice rather than a religious one. Most of them do not believe in God and subscribe to a variety of religions or even atheism.
 - ii. Masorti: Known as traditional Jews, they observe most of the traditional practices but may not conform to religious practices fully. They live between the boundaries of Orthodox and secular teaching and are considered non-adherents in the eyes of the ultra-orthodox.
 - iii. Dati: Modern orthodox group that observes the religious practices of the Torah but are very much integrated in modern society. They value their career and success.
 - iv. Haredi — Ultra-orthodox group of Jews who strictly follow the Torah. They avoid any interaction with secular society and media. They strongly reject the divinity of Yeshua. Righteousness is strictly through the Law.
- d. But the truth is that the Messiah is talked about in the Torah and that faith in Yeshua should be a natural step for them. The god of this age has blinded the eyes of many, including the eyes of the Jewish people (2 Cor. 4:4). We have to pray that God will remove the veil that covers their eyes.
4. Jewish people believe that Jesus cannot be the Messiah, because their great rabbis and wise men have taught them so. They hold the teachings of their leaders and rabbis in high regard.
- a. Ironically, the Torah and the prophets talk about the Messiah being the one that the builders would reject. Ironically, the fact that He was rejected confirms that He is their Messiah.

² Every Jew has the right to come to Israel as an "oleh". "Aliya" means immigration of Jews. For the purpose of this Law, "Jew" means a person who was born of a Jewish mother or has become converted to Judaism and who is not a member of another religion.

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- b. In Luke 20:17, Jesus quoted Psalm 118:22, “the stone which the builders rejected will be the chief cornerstone.” When the religious leaders heard this, they knew He was talking about them.
 5. They believed that they had salvation because they were the descendants of Abraham.
 - a. However, salvation, even for them, is not by physical descent but only by calling on the name of Yeshua.
 - b. He alone is the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can go to the Father except through Yeshua (Jn. 14:6).
 6. They believe they can earn their salvation by their own righteousness (Rom. 10:3). This is not true as salvation is by grace by faith in Yeshua alone.

F. Israel’s Rejection is Neither Total Nor Final

1. God’s rejection of Israel is not total (Rom. 11:1–2) and not final (Rom. 11:11a). A faithful remnant will be preserved, underscoring the fact that God’s rejection is not total (Rom. 11:1–6) and that God’s relationship with Israel is still very much present and alive.
2. The blindness of Israel is temporary and will eventually be lifted when the fullness of the Gentiles has been fulfilled (Rom. 11:25).
3. Ultimately, God’s calling for Israel is irrevocable (Rom. 11:28–29). Despite her current state, Israel is still the apple of God’s eye. God’s promises, gifts and calling to her are unchanging.
4. There will come a day where all of Israel is saved (Rom. 11:26). Israel will return to her Messiah and step into the fullness of her destiny, leading to the fulfilment of God’s redemption plan for the whole of mankind, the Second Coming of Yeshua, and God’s glory filling the Millennial earth (Rom. 11:11b–15).
5. As Gentile believers, we must not be ignorant about the mystery of Israel which is God’s salvation plan for them and through them (Rom. 11:25).

G. How to Pray for Israel

1. **Pray for the salvation of the Jewish people (Rom. 10:1).**
 - a. Pray for God to pour out the spirit of grace and supplication (Zech. 12:10) on the unbelieving Jewish people, so that they can see the One they pierced, and mourn, as their eyes are opened to see that He is their Messiah (Rom. 10:1; Eph. 1:17–19).
 - b. Pray for the light of God’s truth to pierce the hearts of the Jewish people (2 Cor. 4:6) with the revelation that God’s only Son chose to become man, to redeem mankind of our sins through His sacrifice on the cross. (Eph. 1:17–18)

- c. Pray for the Jewish people to be convicted of their need for Yeshua as Saviour, that it is only by grace by faith in Him that they can be saved (Eph. 1:17–18).
2. **Prayers for salvation for those who believe and embrace Judaism:**
- a. Pray for God to remove the veil of deception, and for the truth from the living Word in the Torah to correct wrong mindsets, that salvation is by grace through faith in Yeshua (Phil. 1:9–11).
 - b. Pray for encounters like Saul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1–19), turning many from being zealous without knowledge to having zeal with faith in a Person (Isa. 63:15).
 - c. Pray for the truth to prevail over the wrong teachings and paradigms (Col. 1:9–11).
 - i. For the revelation that Yeshua is the suffering servant and that He paid the atoning sacrifice for them (Eph. 1:17).
 - ii. For Yeshua to teach them as He taught the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24:1–27), revealing the truth of who He is (Eph. 1:17–18).
 - d. Pray for courage and boldness for those who want to accept Yeshua but are fearful of opposition (Matt. 6:9–10).
 - i. For divine courage, strength, peace in the face of opposition (Col. 1:11).
 - ii. For God's grace to come against obstacles that stand in the way of them accepting that Yeshua is Messiah (Zech. 4:7).
3. **Prayers for salvation for those caught in humanism and secularism:**
They are caught up with the self, humanism or the world and are not interested in God.
- a. Pray for God to remove all false supports/ pillars, such that their hearts and confidence will be directed to Yeshua Hamaschiach (Eph. 1:17–18).
 - b. Pray for the awakening of many, through personal encounters and miracles, that will point them back to the God of Israel (Joel 2:28–32; Eph. 1:17–18).
 - c. Pray for many to be provoked to jealousy (Rom. 11:11–14), by Gentile believers unto them returning to Yahweh and Yeshua as Saviour. (Jn. 17:21–23)
 - i. Through channels of mercy (Isa. 19).
 - ii. Through the greater love expressed by Gentile believers (Jn 15:12–13).
4. **Pray for the national leaders** to be convicted of their sin of harlotry and rejecting Yeshua Hamashiach, so that they will repent and call upon Him as their Lord, Saviour and King (Zech. 12:10–14).
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