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25 January 2014

## Romans 9-11 - Times of the Gentiles

Romans 9:1-7: 1. I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,  
2. That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. 3. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:  
4. Who are Israelites (L); to whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; 5. Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. 6. Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel (S), which are of Israel (L): 7. Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. In the first five verses Paul expresses concern for fellow Jews according to the flesh (i.e. literal Jews). But, what does he mean in verses 6 & 7 - They are not all Israel, which are of Israel... In Isaac shall thy seed be called? The explanation is in Romans 2:28-29: 28. For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly (L); neither is that circumcision (L), which is outward in the flesh: 29. But he is a Jew (S), which is one inwardly (S); and circumcision (S) is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. Paul is saying a Jew represents something inward, of the heart, or spiritual; and the spiritual lineage is represented as being through Isaac. He was the only son of Abraham that was by promise (Genesis 15:4, Hebrews 11:11, Abraham had a total of 8 sons). So, as the scriptures are covered, literal Israel/Jews/descendants (L) will be distinguished from the spiritual (S), by the letters indicated so as to know which is in view.

Romans 9:22-26: 22. What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23. And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, 24. Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews (L) only, but also of the Gentiles (L)? 25. As he saith also in Hosea, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. 26. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God. 27. Isaiah also cried concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel (L) be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved (Isaiah 10:20-22). There was a literal remnant (small number) of Jews who accepted Jesus as the Messiah, and those, along with the Gentiles accepting Jesus, became spiritual Jews. Everyone accepting the true gospel today, also become spiritual Jews. (The true gospel contains the correct understanding of the Father & Son)

Romans 9:30-33: 30. What shall we say then? That the Gentiles which followed not (after) righteousness have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is [from] faith. 31. But Israel (L), which followed (after the) law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. 32. [Why]? Because they sought it not [from] faith, but as it were [from] works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone; 33. As it is written, Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed (Isaiah 8:14; 28:16). What does it mean that the law of righteousness comes from faith? Paul came to know that the law of righteousness comes by being found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is [from] the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is [from] God by faith (Philippeans 3:9, KJV only). The Messiah did not appear in the manner as the leaders, who also taught the people, expected him to come. Therefore, the majority of the Jews remained with their traditions, under the law; and even to this day they are still looking for Messiah. What are the majority of Christians expecting today? I have been told by some, that the Jews are already accepting Jesus as the Messiah. Unfortunately, the Jews are accepting the same false Messiah as taught by the vast majority of Christians today. And no wonder, the Christians teach that the "great falling away" is still future, because they do not see themselves as being in apostasy.

Romans 10:1-4: 1. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel (L) is, that they might be saved. 2. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4. For Christ is the end (objective) of the law for righteousness to every one believing. Consider that God's righteousness is His character based on how He thinks (cf Isaiah 55:7-9), being far different from that of mankind. Just like the majority of Jews then, Christians today base God's righteousness on their own knowledge, using the Bible to support it according to their own understanding.

Romans 10:16-18: 16. But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? 17. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word (4487) of God. 18. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. Paul quotes Isaiah 53:1: Who hath believed our report (H8052)? The root of H8052 is H8085, and means to hear intelligently, which intelligence comes only from God. Therefore faith comes by hearing God speak/impress your heart. Only a remnant of the Jews ever obeyed the Gospel. Through out Israel's history God raised up prophets to benefit the people. But, more often than not, the prophets of God were rejected and false prophets set up (cf Jeremiah 23:9-32). Today, in principle, these same things are being repeated by all churches. Also, faith is not by hearing someone preach the word or read the Bible. It comes when the Lord interprets for you what is taught, and you receive into the heart that with which the Lord impresses upon you - For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness (verse 10).

Then, the question is asked: Romans 11:1-4: 1. ...then, Has God cast away his people?

[May it not be]. For I also am an Israelite (L), of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. [Perceive] you not what the scripture says of Elijah? how he made intercession to God against Israel, saying, 3. Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and dug down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life (1Kings 19:10). 4. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand (S) men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal (1Kings 19:18). Paul indicates that the number 7000 is a figure for a remnant of Jews in Elijah's day, as well as in his day and the future. He goes on to say, that ...if the casting away of them (literal Jews) be the reconciling of the world (non-Jews), what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead (verse 15) - not as in a resurrection, but the obtaining of spiritual life and being delivered out of spiritual death, and which makes those who do, spiritual Jews. Romans 11:5: Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

Then Paul explains what is happening, and will happen: Romans 11:25-27: 25. For I desire not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery (G3466), lest ye might be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel (L), until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26. And so all Israel (S) shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. The Greek word *mysterion* (G3466) means hidden thing, a thing not obvious to the understanding. Paul uses metaphors to explain the fulness of the Gentiles, and how they were grafted into the good olive tree (Romans 11:16-24, summarized below).

What is the fulness of the Gentiles? The NIV and some others interpret it until the full number of the Gentiles has come in; The ISV adds to faith and the NirV adds of non-Jews enter God's kingdom. Most Bible commentaries focus on the literal destruction of Jerusalem by connecting Luke 21:24. They make it literal based primarily on Romans 11:12: 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? They take fulness to be numbers instead of God's love as a result of spiritual understanding. However, God is dealing with hearts and not numbers. Of Jesus, John the Baptist said: And of his fulness have all we received... (John 1:16). THIS is the fulness about which Paul is writing, and explains in another of his letters: Ephesians 3:17-19: 17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18. May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19. And to know the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. The riches mentioned in Romans 11:12 is the knowledge of God's fulness of love, not how many people come into the church. When the Gentiles reach the fulness of God's love, then will the good news of it be received by many literal Jews. Luke associates time with the fulness.

Luke 21:24: And they shall fall by the edge (literally = mouth) of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Yes, Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70, and at least half of it is still under control of Gentiles. This is secondary, and a type for the

spiritual. The Jerusalem was destroyed because the Jews were trampling the spiritual city, or the spiritual understanding of the scriptures. Luke speaks of an unspecified time of the negative fullness, while Paul speaks of the positive side (cp Romans 11:25-26 to Luke 21:24). John also, contributes more information in the Revelation.

Revelation 11:1-2: 1. And there was given me a reed (message) like unto a rod (correction): and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. 2. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. Most take 42 to be literal time. So, literally it is 1260 days or 3.5 years. If it is translated as a day for a year, as do some, it would be 1260 years. It has been almost 2000 years since Jerusalem was destroyed. So, literal time does not work out, and others invent different ways to apply the prophecy. However, the number is spiritual:  $6 \times 7 =$  man's own fullness. The cycle of the moon determines a Jewish month, and the moon rules the darkness (Genesis 1:16). John's prophecy focuses on the unbelieving Gentiles, or non-spiritual Jews, who are governed by law and come to a fulness (7) of man's (6) wickedness. Paul focuses on the Gentiles, or spiritual Jews who come to the fulness of God's love. God did not give us a time prophecy as to when the fulness is complete, and only He knows. We only know it will be in the last generation (discussed below).

Romans 11:30-32: 30. For as you in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: 31. Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. 32. For God hath concluded (them) all (Jews) in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all (who have ears to hear). The mercy was mentioned in verse 25 above, when Paul quoted Hosea 2:23: ... I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God. In the last generation, the Gentiles having the gospel will show mercy to the literal Jew by giving them the good news of the love God has for them. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him (Romans 10:12).

Romans 11:22-24: 22. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. 23. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. 24. For if thou were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? Oil from the olive tree was used for the lamps on the candlestick, to anoint the high priests and kings. Jesus is called both a king and a high Priest. The oil is a symbol of the holy spirit, or character of God with which Jesus was anointed without measure (John 3:34). Zechariah 4:1-4, 12-14: 1. And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep. 2. And said unto me, What do you see? And I said, I have looked, And behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to

the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: 3. And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.... 12. And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? 13. And he answered me and said, Know you not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. 14. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth. The phrase the two anointed ones is literally the sons of oil (see KJ margin). The two olive trees represent two messages concerning the Son of God before He became a man, and as the Son of man. This representation also appears in the two piles of bread (6 each) on the table of show bread and the two gold angels on the mercy seat, the covering of the ark.

Revelation 11:3-4: 3. And I will give (authority) unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore (1260) days, clothed in sackcloth. 4. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. The seven churches (Revelation 1:20) are candlesticks. God gives people authority when He gives them an understanding of truth. Notice that the time element is the same length as when the Gentiles tread down the holy city, only it is given in days.  $(3 \times 10)(7 \times 6) =$  A day is determined by the sun, a metaphor for the light coming from a person, in this case the Son of God (Malachi 4:2). The two witnesses are a metaphor of the two major understandings of the Son of God. The two candlesticks is that same understanding many of the literal Jews in the last generation accept, and therefore become spiritual Jews. How we know that they are Jews is explained below.

Revelation 11:6-8: 6. These (two witnesses) have [authority] to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. 7. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the [abyss] shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. 8. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. The idea of heaven being shut (no spiritual understanding) that it rain not during days the two witnesses prophecy shows that it is the Elijah message (cf 1Ki 17:1; James 5:17), or the spirit of Elijah promised to Israel. Malachi 3:1 was fulfilled by John the Baptist (Matthew 11:12-14), and Malachi 4:5-6 will be fulfilled to the Jews in the last generation.

Jesus was crucified in Jerusalem, spiritually called Sodom, that city where Lot was delivered and which was destroyed by fire; and Israel was delivered from Egypt by plagues. Waters being turned to blood is a metaphor of the message, a plague to those not willing to accept it, which reveals that the understanding they have carried is that of man, and not from God. The dead bodies, or the messages of the two witnesses, lie dead in the streets of old Jerusalem, that old mind-set of the Jews (cf Galatians 4:21-26). Where the word abyss (G12) is substituted in verse 7, the K. J. has bottomless pit, which is normally two Greek words and only appear in Revelation 9:1 & 2. Everywhere else it is only abyss. The phrase should read pit of the abyss. The abyss is defined as the waters of the sea (Isa 51:10 deep). Christ literally dried the waters of

the sea to allow Israel to escape from Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Waters of the sea are a spiritual symbol of worldly thought. A pit/grave is earthly thinking (Proverbs 1:10-12) of the spiritually dead: Proverbs 23:27: For a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit. The city of Babylon, man's religious mind-set of confusion, is called a whore and mother of harlots (Revelation 17:1, 5).

Revelation 11:9-12: 9. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. 10. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts (what they consider as truth) one to another (but not from God); because these two prophets tormented (plagued by two truths) them that dwelt on the earth. 11. And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. 12. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. Why 3 ½ days? The creation days began with darkness and ended with light. The sun and moon were put in place on day 4. At day 3 ½, the sun is risen, i.e. spiritually a person sees the truth of the Son of God, and enters into an abiding relationship (ascends into the heavens - spiritual understanding), - the light of the Sun of righteousness enters into the temple of the heart. The 3 ½ days represent the time from when the Jews rejected the Messiah, until the last generation when many will accept the truth of God's love as manifested in His only Son brought forth (not created) in eternity and sent to humanity to demonstrate that love, a truth that will be held by only a remnant. Current Messianic Jews today are entering the same apostasy as the Christian Church.

Revelation 11:13: And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The slain are those who die to self. There will be a great shaking among the Jews concerning Messiah, and which results in the fall of Babylon (Jeremiah 23:7-8; 25:9), or in their confused thinking. Romans 11:15: For if their rejection brought reconciliation to the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead (NIV)? John uses the same symbol of 7000, a figure of the remnant of literal Jews (as told Elijah, 1 Kings 19:18). The Gentile believers in the last generation are those who are giving the message of the two witnesses. When they see the orthodox Jew accepting the truth and becoming spiritual Jews, they tremble because they know that the people of the earth are in their final hours, and the last message is about to be given to the world by the Jews. The world's rejection of the final message will bring the end and the return of Christ.

Without going into detail, here is an overview of some of the last events: Revelation 11:14-15: 14. The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. 15. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. The three last trumpets are called woes (Revelation 8:13). Trumpets 5 & 6 concern those that come against the truth of the two witnesses. The

Jews accept the truth during the sixth trumpet (2nd woe), and they sound the seventh trumpet (3rd woe). The messages they give are called the seven last plagues. Revelation 16:17: And the seventh angel poured out his vial (cup) into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. The idea that the last message (cup) is poured into the air indicates that no one is receiving it.

Zechariah 4:10: For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet (stone of tin) in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord (Zechariah 3:9), which run to and fro through the whole earth. Narrow is the gate and few there be that enter (Matthew 7:14). A plum line is used to keep a wall straight (Isaiah 60:18); eyes are a symbol of understanding. It is the spirit (Revelation 5:6) of the Lord that will keep straight those who will walk in the light of truth. While the wicked are filled with their own ways (Proverbs 14:14), the spiritually hungry will be filled (Luke 6:21) with God's love. Amen.

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