

SUBJECT: PAUL'S PRAYER FOR ISRAEL  
TEXT: ROMANS 10:1

*Brethren, my heart's and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.*

Introduction:

1. This may be the shortest prayer found in God's Word.
2. I don't know about you but I have really been enjoying looking at the prayers from both the Old and New Testament.
3. When we see the amazing answers from God concerning the prayers of His children, it ought to encourage us all to continue to call upon Him for our every need.
4. For just a moment, let us consider this very short prayer of Paul's for Israel.

I. IT IS SIMPLY A PRAYER FOR THE NATIONAL SALVATION OF THE JEWS.

- A. To begin to understand the need for Israel to be saved, we need to go back to the very beginning of the formation of the nation and its people. **Genesis 12:1-7\*\*\***
- B. Abram, or Abraham as we know him, was born in the land of Ur, which was in, what today is known as Iraq. He was a Chaldean by birth but as he travelled to Shechem, God made a change in him.
- C. God chose Abraham to become the father of the nation of Israel and to teach them that to obey God is to be blessed by God.
- D. God could have chosen any person or any people to be His special people, but He chose for Himself a people He could use to accomplish His will for the entire world.  
**Deuteronomy 7:7** *The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples...*

II. THERE WAS A PROBLEM THOUGH. ISRAEL, DOWN THROUGH THEIR HISTORY, HAS NOT BEEN OBEDIENT TO GOD. **Deuteronomy 32:15-18** *But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked; You grew fat, you grew thick, you are obese! Then he forsook God who made him, and scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign gods; with abominations they provoked Him to anger. They sacrificed to demons, not to God, to gods they did not know, to new gods, new arrivals that your fathers did not fear. Of the Rock who begot you, you are unmindful, and have forgotten the God who fathered you.*

- A. "Jeshurun" is a pet name for Israel, implying affection and endearment. The metaphor is derived from a pampered animal which, in spite of rich and plentiful feeding, becomes mischievous and vicious.
- B. God foretold what would happen because of their unfaithfulness. **vv. 19-21** *And when the LORD saw it, He spurned them, because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters. And He said: 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end will be, for they are a perverse generation, children in whom is no faith. They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God; they have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation.*
- C. Therefore, God would go to another people and use them to reach the world.
- D. God would use the Apostle Paul to preach to the Gentile nations after Paul had been rejected by the Jews. **Acts 13:46-48** *Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, 'It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us: 'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth. Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.*

III. THIS BRINGS US BACK TO PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS AND HIS REBUKE OF ISRAEL. **Romans 9:30-33** *What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."*

- A. The Jews thought that because they were God's chosen people, that alone would be enough to assure them a place in His kingdom. The problem was that they tried to do it by keeping the Law, which they never did.
- B. Not only that, but their rejection of Jesus as their Messiah assured them that they would never attain eternal life nor national salvation.
- C. It would be the Gentiles who would attain their righteousness by faith in Jesus.
- D. Paul understood that Israel had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. **10:2** *For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.*
- E. But, like many today, they have tried to establish their own righteousness apart from Jesus. **10:3-4** *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*

IV. IS IT ANY WONDER THAT PAUL, BEING HALF JEWISH, WOULD HAVE HEAVINESS IN HIS HEART FOR HIS BRETHREN TO BE SAVED? **Romans 9:1-4** *I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises...*

- A. This is the kind of deep burden we must have for those who continue to reject Jesus and try to attain their own righteousness.
- B. We all have family, friends, co-workers and acquaintances who need Jesus. How will they ever hear unless we tell them the Good News?
- C. Get serious with God and start praying for their salvation. God still hears prayers.
- D. **Romans 10:9-13\*\*\***

Conclusion:

1. Now, lest you think there is no hope for Paul's prayer for Israel, let's look at God's conclusion. **Romans 11:25-27** *For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And 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.*
2. When Jesus returns to this earth at the close of the Tribulation Period, and the last Gentiles are saved, Israel will turn to Jesus, and those Jews who are on the earth at that time will repent and be saved, and thus, all Israel will be saved.