

## **WHY I REGARD JEWISH EVANGELISM AS IMPORTANT**

November 15, 2019 <sup>1</sup>

Good evening.

Mitch asked me to speak tonight about why I regard Jewish Evangelism as important. I have both biblical and personal reasons for doing so.

I will begin in the Bible, which I regard as the inerrant Word of God. In Deuteronomy, we learn that, when God established the nations of this world, he set aside the Jews to be “the apple of his eye.”<sup>2</sup> Then in Zechariah, we learn that God warned that they who plunder Israel “...toucheth the apple of his eye.”<sup>3</sup> Moreover, God told Abraham how he would treat Gentiles: “I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curseth thee....”<sup>4</sup> Since God does not change his mind<sup>5</sup> and “...scripture cannot be broken,”<sup>6</sup> I believe that the Jewish people must still be “the apple of his eye.”

I'm also struck by the following: All the books of the Tanakh were written by Jews. The Messianic Seed was carried by the Jewish people, and Jesus was born a Jew. All of His apostles and most of His disciples were Jews. All the books of the New Covenant Scriptures were written by Jews.<sup>7</sup> Nearly all the bishops, elders, pastors, deacons, and laymen of the early church were Jews. The foregoing indicates to me, at least, that, at its birth, Christianity was Jewish.

In addition, God made Christianity's Jewishness explicit. Jeremiah records that God established the New Covenant<sup>8</sup> with the Jews – *not* the Gentiles. Then, when Jesus came in fulfillment of that covenant, He said, “...salvation is of the Jews,”<sup>9</sup> and He ministered almost exclusively to the Jewish people. He also instructed His disciples to do likewise, saying “Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”<sup>10</sup>

The apostle Paul also stressed Christianity's Jewishness. Upon arriving in a city, he took the Gospel first to the local synagogue and then elsewhere. In addition, he wrote, “...I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone

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<sup>1</sup> I delivered this talk on November 15, 2019 at a banquet in celebration of Chosen People Ministries' 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

<sup>2</sup> KJV Deuteronomy 32:10.

<sup>3</sup> KJV Zechariah 2:8.

<sup>4</sup> KJV Genesis 12:3.

<sup>5</sup> Malachi 3:6.

<sup>6</sup> John 10:35.

<sup>7</sup> I don't accept the theory that Luke was a Gentile.

<sup>8</sup> Jeremiah 31:31-34.

<sup>9</sup> KJ21 John 4:22.

<sup>10</sup> KJ21 Matthew 10:5-6.

who believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, using the metaphors of a cultivated olive tree for the Jews and a wild olive tree for the Gentiles, he went on to say that Jewish unbelievers are pruned from the cultivated tree, and that Gentile believers are removed from the wild tree and grafted into the cultivated tree.<sup>12</sup> Clearly, believing Jews, the remaining natural branches in the cultivated tree, constitute the Faithful Remnant of Israel, and believing Gentiles, the transplanted branches, join the Faithful Remnant in the cultivated tree, thereby becoming Jews by adoption.

Where does this leave unbelieving Jews? Well, Paul said that someday, God will open their eyes and unstop their ears so that they will see and hear that Yeshua is their Promised Messiah, the Holy One of Israel. He wrote, “...they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more shall these, which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?”<sup>13</sup> I pray daily for that day.

Then, Paul added something extraordinary: “For I, brethren, would not have you ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits: that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles come in. And so all Israel shall be saved...”<sup>14</sup> In other words, God blinded the Jewish people for a time solely to give me and other Gentiles the opportunity to turn to Him, that we might spend eternity in His presence. That alone is reason enough for me to make Jewish Evangelism a priority.

In addition to the foregoing, I have some personal reasons for regarding Jewish Evangelism as important. First, I have seven, partly Jewish persons in my immediate family: my brother's wife, my sister's husband and two sons, and my daughter's husband and two sons. Also, I have many Jewish friends from college and work. I want all of them to know their Messiah.

Now, I'm out of time. I will close with a prayer: “Holy Father, for 125 years, you have used this ministry to spread the Gospel of our Lord to Jewish people throughout Israel and the Diaspora. We beg you to continue doing so. May the Holy Spirit breathe new vigor into our efforts, that the harvest in future years be even greater than those in past years. In the name of your Son and our Lord Yeshua, we pray. *Amen.*”

Goodnight...and *Shalom!*

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<sup>11</sup> KJ21 Romans 1:16.

<sup>12</sup> Romans 11:17.

<sup>13</sup> KJ21 Romans 11:23-24.

<sup>14</sup> KJ21 Romans 11:53-26.