

# BIBLE & BAGEL

## Romans – Our Common Faith

22 February 2016

Have you ever known someone of whom you thought “they could never be saved”? Well apparently the Jews in Rome thought that about the Gentiles and thought that they were righteous because of the Torah. Apostle Paul had a different opinion about that; see what he says..

### *Romans 9:21-24*

*21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? 22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? NKJV*

Taking a step back, Apostle Paul uses the analogy of the potter and the clay; God being the potter and us, humans the clay and says that the potter has the right to fashion whatever he wants out of the clay, the clay has no right to argue with the potter, the clay can only submit. So he says what if God in His desire to show His glory, kept those who were meant for destruction up to the time when His glory could be seen by the world so that people could come to faith in Him, both Jews and Gentiles.

People sometimes ask “if God is good why is there evil in the world?” well part of the answer is this; that sometimes God allows evil to go on for a time so that His glory could shown. One perfect example is that of the children of Israel enslaved for four hundred years in Egypt, it took four hundred years for God to answer their cries for help. Imagine, in those four hundred years how many generations of Israelites had died in slavery.

Even though God allows evil in the world so that His glory can be displayed, God takes no pleasure in it, Apostle Paul says that God “endured with long suffering”. So do not think that God enjoys seeing people suffer but to bring about good and display His goodness sometimes suffering must be allowed. How would we know that God is good if we don't experience difficulty and then see God's hand in saving us? How do we know God as a provider if we never experience lack? How do we know God is a healer if we never get sick? If everything is given to us on a plate then we would become spiritual spoiled brats and God does not want His children to be spoiled brats. We need to understand and submit to God's sovereignty if we are to grow up to be matured children of God.

### *Romans 9:25-33*

*25 As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, And her beloved, who was not beloved." 26 "And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, ' You are not My people,' There they shall be called sons of the living God."*

*27 Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel:\* "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, The remnant will be saved. 28 For He will finish the*



*work and cut it short in righteousness, Because the LORD will make a short work upon the earth." 29 And as Isaiah said before: "Unless the LORD of Sabaoth had left us a seed, We would have become like Sodom, And we would have been made like Gomorrah."*

*30 What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; 31 but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.\* 32 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. 33 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."\**  
NKJV

Apostle Paul now speaks to the Jews including Jewish believers who thought that the Gentiles had no place in the Kingdom of God He reminds them of the prophecies of Hosea wherein God said that He would make sons out of people who were not originally His.

Quoting Isaiah he says that even the people of Israel are numerous, only a remnant would be saved and these are saved by faith, and they are those that preserve the nation of Israel.

Of Israel he says that whereas the Gentiles found salvation by faith, they tried to find salvation in their good works of keeping Torah, which they were unable to do. He quotes Isaiah who wrote that God had laid a stone in Zion (people of Israel) and it was a stone of stumbling. This stone that the Apostle was speaking of was the Torah, Israel stumbled over it because they tried to gain salvation by keeping the laws and ordinances in their human ability, they failed miserably.

The Apostle was emphasizing here that salvation is by faith for both Jew and Gentile. It is interesting to note that Hosea does not stop at saying that Gentiles would come to know the Lord but he carries on to say that eventually the people of Israel will return to seek their God and their king, David<sup>i</sup>. This prophesy is being fulfilled in our day as we see the people Israel returning to the land from all over the world and many now seeking the King of the Jews, Yeshua.

So while in this passage God was speaking to the Jews in Rome and telling them that Gentiles belong in the Kingdom, we Gentiles must take note that God is also saving Jewish people today. We must not accept the theology that says that God is finished with the Jews and He no longer loves them, this is a lie. We must co-operate with God in praying for Jews to come to know their Messiah, the Son of David, King Yeshua.

---

<sup>i</sup> Hosea 3:4-5

