

## **Eternity Daily Bible Study**

### **Romans 9-16 The Implications of Salvation**

**Number:592**

**Verses: Romans 9:27-33**

**Topic: The Holy Remnant**

**Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2006**

**Romans 9:27-33 MKJV** *Isaiah also cries concerning Israel, "Though the number of the sons of Israel is as the sands of the sea, a remnant shall be saved. (28) For He is bringing the matter to an end, and cutting short in righteousness, because the Lord will make a short work on the earth." (29) And as Isaiah said before, "Unless the Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we would have been as Sodom, and would have been like Gomorrah." (30) What shall we say then? That the nations, who did not follow after righteousness have taken on righteousness, but a righteousness of faith. (31) But Israel, who followed after a law of righteousness did not arrive at a law of righteousness. (32) Why? Because it was not of 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 a Rock-of-offense, and everyone believing on Him shall not be put to shame."*

Salvation is neither automatic or universal. The first quote from Isaiah: *"Though the number of the sons of Israel is as the sands of the sea, a remnant shall be saved."* indicates that salvation is not universal, in fact not even close to it. Though the number of Israelites be many millions, even as the sand of the sea (which someone has calculated to be about 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 ! or 10 to the power 22), only a remnant shall be saved.

The second quote: *"Unless the Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we would have been as Sodom, and would have been like Gomorrah."* indicates that unless God is merciful, no one is able to be saved. In fact if God was not merciful we would all suffer the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah. Doom is automatic, but salvation is only by the grace of God!

Now this mercy of God, which is God's own personal initiative, can be offered to anyone. It is not earned in any way or deserved at all, in order that grace may be fully grace, and not a wage of some kind. In fact those who least "deserved it" (the Gentiles) ended up being saved: *What shall we say then? That the nations, who did not follow after righteousness have taken on righteousness, but a righteousness of faith.*

By contrast the comparatively clean-living Jews did not find salvation. Why? Because they thought they could earn it. To try to earn salvation is tantamount to taking from the Lord the honor of deciding who is saved and who is not saved, and instead placing it within reach of one's own human ability. Salvation is always God's work, God's initiative and God's choice. No amount of human religious effort can earn God's love.

However God has appointed a way by which anyone can be saved – through faith in Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior. This is what Paul calls "a righteousness of faith". This righteousness is internal and comes from a conscience that correctly perceives that Jesus is Lord and which then believes in and trusts this as a divine spiritual fact.

God has chosen who will be saved – those who believe in His Son, for he who has the Son, has life and he who does not have the Son, does not have life.

**1 John 5:11-13 MKJV** *And this is the record, that God has given to us everlasting life, and this life is in His Son. (12) He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. (13) I have written these things to you who believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have everlasting life, and that you may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

The remnant are those who do not “stumble over the stumbling stone” - which is Christ, and the cross and its impact on or human pride and our attempts at self-justification. If we try to justify ourselves then we miss out on the justification that comes from God! If we stop trying to justify ourselves and cry out in repentance and faith “God have mercy on me, a sinner” then we are saved! This is aptly illustrated in Jesus' story about the publican and the Pharisee.

**Luke 18:9-14 MKJV** *And He spoke this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, and despised others: (10) Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a tax-collector. (11) The Pharisee stood and prayed within himself in this way: God, I thank You that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector. (12) I fast twice on the Sabbath, I give tithes of all that I possess. (13) And standing afar off, the tax-collector would not even lift up his eyes to Heaven, but struck on his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner! (14) I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself shall be abased, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted.*

The holy remnant = those who repent and believe. Since true repentance is rare and abiding faith is uncommon then the holy remnant, the humble faithful God-dependant saints, will tend to be a minority (the exception being during times of great revival).

Paul's third quote is: *"Behold, I lay in Zion a Stumbling-stone and a Rock-of-offense, and everyone believing on Him shall not be put to shame."* So we see that all who believe in Christ are saved. Yet all who wish to hold onto their own self-esteem, and to who seek their own self-justification, these are the ones who stumble and are lost.

Israel missed out on salvation because it wanted a salvation that could be earned by human effort through adherence to the Law. They got their spiritual “gold stars” for how well they obeyed this Law, and it formed a sort social and religious hierarchy that made them feel important. For them salvation was like climbing a ladder and they were very proud of how many rungs they had attained to.

But Jesus said that there is no such spiritual ladder of attainment. Even lepers and prostitutes and tax-gatherers and the Samaritan woman at the well got into the Kingdom before the High Priests!

The ladder has been replaced by the 'eye of the needle' a narrow portal, a narrow way, that is only found by the meek, the humble, the penitent, the seeking and by those who believe.

Many religious organizations, by their hierarchical nature, tend to give the impression of re-creating the now deposed "ladder of attainment". This tends to kill the spiritual life within them by producing spiritual pride. It is frequently the fringe-dwellers and mavericks within them that do the most significant Christian ministry.

God's holy remnant sometimes equates to those who are on the fringes of the formal ecclesiastical system. Those who are still conscious of their sin, who are humble and meek, who are gentle and kind and gracious and who do not justify themselves or despise others.

Salvation is God's work, not man's achievement. Unless God was merciful no one would be saved. Salvation is not universal, but is for a holy remnant who believe, but all who do believe are saved.

Blessings,

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