

ROMANS IX

June 22, 2024

Let us recall how Jews served God at first,

But the best, that fall, can turn into the worst.

When the savagery of today's Israelis continues unabated against the Palestinians in their midst, their most savage "mowing of the lawn" yet (that is their own term for it) since the founding of Israel in 1948, it is an opportune moment to consider the nature of the Jews and where they are coming from, as seen by their Creator Himself in the text of His own Word. For in no less than three full Chapters of St Paul's greatest Epistle, Romans IX to XI, the Apostle to the Gentiles strives to explain to them how the mass of Jews, truly the Chosen Race for 2000 years from Abraham to Christ, could, when their own Messiah at last appeared, have crucified Him and become not converts to His Church but its worst persecutors.

St Paul must have known how the Jews of his time, as of ours, would utterly dismiss him as a "Jew-hater" or "antisemite," because he begins the three Chapters with his "sorrow and anguish" at not being able to bring to Christ his fellow-Jews (v.2), because as Israelites they enjoyed a little litany of incomparable privileges from God. To this day, if Jews are dominant in so many different fields, it is only because God has not taken away from them the natural gifts of intelligence and understanding which they would need, to provide the Messiah with His human cradle for the benefit of all mankind.

Nor does the failure of the gifted Jews to follow up from the Old Testament to the New mean any failure on the part of Almighty God (v.6), because it was by His own choice, preceding any human choices, to allow the Jews to fall away from Him while He would have mercy on the Gentiles. Thus all Jews by race are the Israel of the flesh, represented by Agar

and Ishmael, and Esau, while all Catholics by faith in Jesus Christ, Jew or Gentile, are the spiritual Israel, represented by Sarah and Isaac, and Jacob, merely fore-shadowed by the Israel of the flesh. The entire Old Testament only existed for the New Testament.

Objection: but if God's choice precedes all choices of men, then it is God's fault if the Jews reject Christ.

Reply: No, God is sovereignly free to choose on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will allow to harden their own hearts by their own free choice of evil, in order to show forth His own power and justice (v.14–16). Thus for nearly 2000 years, ever since the Crucifixion, the special persecution of the Church by Jews has served to highlight the mercy of God towards all Catholics by faith in Christ, Jew or Gentile by race. That God would in fact throw open His New Testament to Gentiles as well as to Jews was prophesied in many places in the Old Testament (v.24–29) – St Paul lists four such quotations in Romans XV, 9–12.

In conclusion, while Gentiles are justified by their faith in Jesus Christ (v.30), all the Jews who stumble over Jesus Christ by putting their trust in their own good works instead, are not justified but condemned

(v.31–33). They may still belong to Israel of the flesh, that Israel of the Old Testament and of the Law, but ever since Jesus Christ died on the Cross they cannot belong to the true Israel of the spirit unless they have faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord, Redeemer and Messiah.

In fact, the last two millennia since the Crucifixion have shown how the Jews have even fallen away from the true Old Testament, because they preserve in their post-Christian synagogues the original text, no doubt as evidence of their prestigious origins and glorious vocation, but the essential meaning and content of that text they refuse, because every

page of the Old Testament, if one knows how to read it, points to Jesus Christ. Of course. So within a few hundred years the Jews had concocted their own substitute for the Old Testament, namely the Talmud, which mentions Our Lord only to blaspheme against Him. So the Talmud, and not the Old Testament, is the holy text of the Jews of today's synagogues. The distinction is most important. Talmudic Jews continue the false Israel. Jews Catholic by faith belong to the spiritual Israel, which is the Catholic Church.

Kyrie eleison.