

7.29.18 ~ **John 12:37-50,**  
**“True Israel = Saved Jews + Saved Gentiles.”**

**Read John 12:37-41...** This is one of those times when John inserts important information from outside the chronology of the narrative he has been recording. Here John reminds us of how Jesus had performed many signs before the people and yet, they do not believe in Him.

John cites here (**verses 38, 40**) a prediction from **Isaiah 53:1; 6:10**, saying Israel’s eyes have been blinded and their hearts hardened, so that they can’t see nor understand the things of God, i.e., they will not receive God’s Son, but instead, reject Him in unbelief.

Paul’s exhortation in **Ephesians 4:17-18**, is similar to Isaiah’s prediction, “So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer as the Gentiles [unbelievers] walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart.”

Notice again in **John 12:38** the phrase, “the arm of the LORD,” speaking of the power, plan and purpose of God, fulfilled in and through Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

Notice, John says (**verse 39**) they rejected the Lord (**verse 40**) because their eyes were blinded by their unbelief, and their hearts were hardened; even so, this did not release them from their responsibility to believe in Christ, for it was by their own willful unbelief that they rejected God’s Son as their Savior and Lord.

John says (**verse 41**) that Isaiah was clearly talking about God’s Son, and that those who continually opposed God in the OT, or reject Christ in the NT, bring about the hardening of their own hearts toward God.

Remember Pharaoh, he would not let the Israelites go, even when God brought plagues on Egypt? Ten times it says God hardened Pharaoh’s heart (Exodus 4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17); ten times it says Pharaoh hardened his own heart toward God (Exodus 7:13, 14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 34, 35; 13:15).

If Pharaoh had heeded God’s warnings and obeyed, his heart would not have been hardened, but Pharaoh made it clear that he would not bow to the Hebrew God, and so, Pharaoh hardened his own heart toward God.

Judas, one of the Twelve Disciples, betrayed the Lord, and he is responsible for the hardening of his own heart toward God, as we will see when we study **John 13**.

God often used those who opposed Him, to bring about His own plan and purpose.

**See Acts 2:22-24**, “Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.”

**Read John 12:42-43...** At the time John is writing this account, he is looking back 60 years, to days just before Jesus was arrested and put to death.

John says here that many of the religious rulers “believed” in Jesus; but this was clearly not genuine saving faith; for we are told (**verse 42**) that these rulers who “believed” were not confessing Jesus, i.e., they were not openly confessing belief in and following Christ (cf. **Romans 10:9-10; Mark 1:15, 17**).

Instead of believing in and honoring Christ they feared that the Pharisees would put them out of the Synagogue and they would lose their place of favor among, and power over, the people (**verse 43**) “for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.”

These religious leaders cared more about their own honor and glory than they did God’s, they were self-righteous and self-serving, they didn’t have room for Christ in their religious idolatry, nor did they want or need Him, for they thought themselves to be without sin.

**See Luke 18:9-14**, (Jesus told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt): “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’ I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

**Read John 12:44-50...** This declaration made by Jesus was not spoken at this place in the narrative, but John is providing this information in order to summarize the public ministry of Christ to Israel, which ended when Jesus left the crowd (**John 12:36**).

Jesus had on several other occasions made a similar statement to this one in **verse 44**, “He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me.”

The clear meaning in Jesus’ statement is that you cannot believe in the Father apart from Christ, nor Christ apart from the Father, i.e., **John 5:24; 8:19; 10:38**.

Jesus’ statement (**verse 45**), “He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me,” is clearly put in **John 14:9**, where Jesus says, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”

Jesus taught repeatedly (**verse 46**) that He is the Light of God who has come into the world, and those who believe in Him will not remain in darkness, but will instead become sons and daughters of Light (cf. **John 8:12; 9:5; 12:35-36**).

In **verses 47-48**, Jesus’ declaration moves from the blessings to those who believe in Him, to the condemnation that remains on those who reject Christ; even though, during Jesus’ first advent or coming to the earth, He did not come to judge, He came to save (see **John 3:16-18**).

The eternal destination of all people is determined by the words of Jesus, for He is the Word of God; He speaks on behalf of the Father in heaven, and is equal in nature and authority with the Father, as God the Son, yet He was submissive to the Father during His incarnation [Immanuel] God in human flesh, as the Son of Man.

Israel received many blessings as God's chosen people, Pauls says, in **Romans 9:3-5**, he would sacrifice himself for their sake, to bring them to a knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, for he is a Jew, and they are his brothers and sisters racially, the people of Israel; whom God set apart from all other nations on the earth, allowing them to be blessed by His covenants, see His glory and receive His Law; to them God sent His prophets, and also granted them blood ancestry through which Christ, God's One and Only Son, would come.

But when Christ came, the Jews didn't receive Him, they rejected Him, finally putting Him to death; for they ignored all His warnings and all the demonstrations of His power and equality with the Father, through miracles.

Because Israel did not receive God's Son, Paul writes in **Romans 9:25-28** what God says in Hosea (2:23), "*I will call those who were not My people, 'My people,' and her who was not beloved, 'beloved.'* (1:10) *And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, 'you are not My people,' there they shall be called sons of the living God.*" [Also] Isaiah cries out concerning Israel (10:22-23), "*Though the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved; for the Lord will execute His word on the earth, thoroughly and quickly.*"

Paul writes (**Romans 11:25-26**), "For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that *a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved.*"

Pauls says (**Romans 9:27-28**), *Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "Though the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved"?* **Romans 11:26**, "*all Israel will be saved.*"

Unless you have a good understanding of what both the Old and New Testament teach on this subject, you may not grasp it, but I pray it will be clear to you today.

**First** - There is the nation of Israel, set apart through the blood ancestry of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob [the twelve tribes of Israel]; this nation was given the Law, the Prophets and the Covenants, even so, they rejected God's Messenger, the Messiah, the Savior and Lord, God's One and Only Son, Jesus Christ.

**Second** - There is also another group of people in the Scripture known as the True Israel, made up of people from every tribe, tongue and nation, of which there are some blood descendants of Abraham, but only those who are considered righteous with God; as we read in **Romans 9:27-28**, *Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "Though the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved"?* And in **Romans 11:26**, "*all Israel will be saved.*"

**See Ephesians 2:11-18**, "Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," [that being the Jews] which is performed in the flesh by human hands [first by Abraham, then his descendants] — remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you [Gentiles] who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups [Jew and Gentile] into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity [hostility], which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God [Christ the head, Colossians 1:18; we the body parts, 1Corinthians 12:12-27] through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. And He [Jesus] came and preached peace to you who were far away [Gentiles], and peace to those who were near [Jews]; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father."

**Revelation 5:9**, "[Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God] was slain and purchased for God with His [own] blood - men [women and children of age] from every tribe and tongue and people and nation."

The True Children of God are not those who merely descended from the Twelve Tribes of Israel, under the Law and according to the covenants, ceremonies and sacrifices. The True Children of God are those who belong to Him through Jesus Christ the Lord.

**Galatians 3:26-29**, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise."

Do you see? We are children of God, God's people, not based upon an ancestral blood line through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Judah; that blood line was necessary so that in Jesus', both the legal and blood requirements were fulfilled to be the Messiah-King, Lord and Savior. But it was through Abraham's obedience that he was considered righteous by God, granting him spiritual [eternal] life as God's child; and so it is the spiritual descendants of Abraham who are True Israel, including both Jew and Gentile.

**1Peter 2:9-10**, "But you [*the Church, NT Christians*] are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

Pastor Mike  
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