

Are the Israelites God's Chosen People Today?

By Tony Melton

At one time, the Israelites were God's chosen people. Many people today still seem to hold to that belief. What does the Bible say? "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal.3:26-29). Today, in order to please God, one must be "in Christ." Now, the Bible states clearly that "in Christ," Jews do not exist.

Some seem to think that the Israelites have special privileges today and are still God's chosen people. The apostle Paul wrote: ". . . those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed" (Ro. 9:8). This passage teaches that being of the fleshly lineage of Abraham or of any particular race is not what constitutes a child of God.

Someone asks, "Doesn't the Bible say that all Israel will be saved?" It does say, "And so all Israel will be saved" (Ro. 11:26). However, just a few passages prior, the Bible tells how Israel will be saved. It says, "And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again" (Ro. 11:23). Israel will be saved if they will believe in Jesus and obey his words. Israel will be saved, but no differently than anyone else, not in some special way. They, like everyone else, must hear, believe and obey the gospel of Jesus Christ.

On the day of Pentecost, about 3000 Jews found out how they could be saved. When they asked the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:37, 38).