

**WHO DO THEY SAY THAT HE IS?**  
**#10: Why the Jewish People Need Jesus**  
**August 26-28, 2006**

“Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they did not know the righteousness of God, and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.” *Romans 10:1-4 TNIV*

**I. WHAT THE JEWISH PEOPLE BELIEVE**

**A. Prayer:** At the heart of the Jewish religion is the idea that God listens to prayer. The Sh’ma is the most important Jewish prayer: in a religion noticeably devoid of statements of creed, and a religion that has no catechism, the Sh’ma is as close as you can come to a Jewish statement of essential faith: “Sh’ma yisrael Adonoi Elheinu Adonai akhad: Hear, O Israel, The Lord is our God, the Lord is one.”

**B. The 613 Mizvot:** Mitzvot literally means “commandment,” although it has come to mean “good deed” colloquially. There are 613 commandments given by God in the Torah – 365 negative, 248 positive.

**C. The People of the Book** – The Jews are often called the “the People of the Book” – the Bible. Jews often call their Bible the *Tanakh*, an acronym derived from the Hebrew initials of each of its three parts, as Jews divide the book: **T**orah, **N**evi’im/the Prophets, and **K**etuvim/the Writings. The Talmud, authored by the Pharisees made infamous in the New Testament, is the book that supplements the Jewish Bible: the first part of the Talmud is an analysis, in Hebrew, of Biblical law and the Mitzvoth; the second part is Gemara, rabbinic commentaries, mostly in Aramic, that attempt to elucidate that earlier work.

**D. The Jewish People Reject Jesus as the Messiah Because they are God’s “Chosen People”** Deut. 7. This has not changed for 2000 years. In Matthew 22:41, Jesus asked the Pharisees “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?” “The son of David,” they replied. Trying to show them that their answer was incomplete, Jesus asked why David called the Messiah “Lord,” which can only mean that the Messiah would be both human and divine.

**But how did Jesus Prove that the Pharisees Were Wrong?** Six different ways: (1) he had power over disease and sickness; (2) he had power over the forces of nature (cursed a fig tree/walked on water/calmed sea during a storm); (3) power over demonic forces (Luke 11); (4) power over time and space (knew which disciple would betray him; he knew about the woman at the well; and saw Nathaniel miles away in John 1); (5) he didn’t commit human sin (John 8:46 – which of you can

convict me of any sin, and no one could bring anything up); and (6) authenticated that he was God by his resurrection from the dead – God’s assurance/proof positive that Jesus was the son of God (Romans 1:3).

**II. DO THE JEWISH PEOPLE NEED JESUS?**

Jewish People believe they do not need Jesus because they are God’s “Chosen People” (Romans 9:4) – in other words, they have a special covenant with God that controls their destiny.

**A. But what does it mean to be God’s Chosen People?:** (1) God chose the Jewish people to receive the word of God; (2) God chose Israel to reveal his promises and Glory; and (3) to give humans the Messiah – trace human ancestry of Jesus Christ to Israel. But this never meant automatic salvation just by being descended from Abraham [Jesus told Nicodemus that you must be “born again”; Jesus told the Jewish disciples that “I am the way, the truth and the life.” (John 14:6)].

**B. God sees Jews and Gentiles alike:** Romans 3:23; Romans 10. We all have the same problem and the same means to salvation.

**C. Paul knew that the Jewish people need Jesus and wanted to save them.** In Romans 9:2-3, Paul says he has “anguish in his heart” and offers to be cursed just to save his own Jewish people [“For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to my own flesh.”]. In Romans 10:1, Paul agonizes that the Jewish people will not be saved unless they accept Jesus. He recognizes their “zeal” for God, but laments that they misunderstand that righteousness and relationship with God is not obtained through human effort.

**III. WHY IT MATTERS – BECAUSE GOD IS NOT FINISHED WITH THE JEWISH PEOPLE.** The Jewish people are still part of God’s plan. Luke 21 – the three signs of Jesus’ return:

- (1) **Return of the Jewish People to their Homeland:** God promised Jerusalem would belong to the Jewish people. In May 1948, after 1900 yrs. of Gentile rule of Jerusalem, Israel became Jewish state.
- (2) **Rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem:** when we see the abomination of desolation in the Temple (Matthew 24:15).
- (3) **Jewish People Coming to Christ in Unprecedented Numbers:** Romans 11:7 - Paul talks about the partial spiritual hardening that God put on the Jews, that will last until the time of the Gentiles comes to an end – and then the Bible says that God will lift the spiritual hardening.

**IV. CONCLUSION: Jesus is the Jewish Messiah**