

OUR DEBT TO ISRAEL

by Dr. A. W. Tozer



Unreached but not Unreachable

"I am debtor" Romans 1:14. When Paul wrote these words he was not using rhetoric. Master of metaphor he certainly was, and he knew the power of simile and figure of speech, but the whole tone of the context where this testimony occurs shows his meaning to be literal and matter of fact. **He honestly felt himself to be in debt, and it burdened him,** as debt must always burden an honest man.

Driven By A Debt The sure test of a man's professed creed is his conduct. A testimony is only as good as the life of the one who gives it. Very easy it would have been for Paul to have said, "I am debtor," and then to have forgotten it, but he said it and all the rest of his life acted as if he meant it. In this matter of debt Paul was not alone, nor in any sense unique among Christians. Rather, as one of the great representative Christians of the ages he was stating a fact applicable to every believer. **The debt he owed was not a private one, but one incurred by every person who accepts Christ.**

Debt results from receiving benefit from another for which nothing is given in return. Until a full return has been made the recipient is in debt. This fact is too well known to require more than bare statement. **Under this simple definition the whole Church of Christ and every member in particular is found to be in debt to Israel.**

Every time a Christian picks up his Bible he is reminded of his debt to the Jew, for "Unto them were committed the Oracles of God." God chose a receptacle into which He could pour His truth, a medium through which He could communicate His saving knowledge to mankind; that receptacle, that medium was Israel. With all her faults, in spite of all her many sins, she proved true to the trust, and **as a result we have today the written Word, the Holy Scriptures,** "A lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway."

For this great benefit no adequate return has ever been made by the Church. It is an astonishing thing that multitudes of Bible students and lovers of the truth should calmly overlook their obligation to Israel.

Salvation Of The Jews "Salvation is of the Jews" John 4:22. That word spoken by our Lord to the woman of Samaria needs to be heard again by the Gentile Church in this day of her pride and self sufficiency. Many today have openly repudiated their debt to Israel and though professing to be Christians they are denying the very foundation upon which their profession stands. I refer to those who are trying to rob the chosen nation of all its ancient and future glories, even going so far in their blindness as to deny that Paul was a Jew, and what is far more serious, denying the Jewish origin of the Son of God Himself.

"Salvation is of the Jews." Let every Gentile Christian remember this when he kneels to pray. Those prophets "who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you" were lineal descendants of Abraham and children of Israel. So also were the Apostles and so was Christ. The first missionaries who began to preach salvation through faith in Jesus Christ were Jews. Those disciples who "went everywhere preaching the Word" were Jews. Today the learned world knows only that about God which it has learned from the Hebrew revelation.

A Major Tragedy There can be no doubt that every believer from among the Gentiles owes a great debt to the Jew. Any effort we may make to give the light to Israel must be considered, not as charity or "benevolence," but as the attempt to discharge an honest debt. Our debt to Israel is not single, but manifold. **We owe a debt of prayer.** Paul said, "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved." If he felt that way about them then we should stir ourselves to pray after all these years.

Then **we owe them also an unflagging zeal for their salvation.** The lukewarm-ness of the Church toward the evangelization of the Jew is one of the major tragedies of history. We are not responsible for the conduct of those who have lived before us, but we are surely responsible to do all we can in our own generation to pay the debt we owe to Israel.

- **Pray** for the salvation of Israel
Romans 10:1
- **Preach** the gospel to Jewish people Romans 1:16
- **Provoke** Jewish people to jealousy so that they want Messiah Jesus
Romans 11:14

BOTH MADE ONE

Both made one the scriptures say,
The Gentile and the Jew.
Both made one through Jesus' blood,
Such wondrous words and true.
The middle wall was broken down,
When Jesus died that day.
Now all must come to God through him,
There is no other way.

Yet doesn't it seem strange dear friend,
As Christendom we view,
Though Gentiles are quite plentiful,
The Jews are O, so few.
These lost sheep of Israel's house,
Are waiting all around.
So won't you pray and go and give,
That these lost might be found.
--Doris Gruen

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Jesus: Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, Coming King

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