

**THRU THE BIBLE SYNTHESIS**  
**"Part XLVII: Romans - A Call To Ethnic Humility Due To God's Grace"**

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

There are deep differences between various ethnic groups in today's world, differences that have led to much suffering:

(a) Genesis 9:22-27 records a sin performed by Ham, a son of Noah, and for that sin, some believe **Ham** was divinely cursed to be a servant to the other descendants of Noah. Consequently, groups in even **Christendom** in today's America believe that since the black race has often been subjected to slavery, he is the **divinely cursed** descendant of Ham!

(b) On the other hand, Scripture teaches that the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob are God's chosen people, favored above the rest of men, cf. Deut. 7:6. Consequently, some believe that when a **Jew** believes in Christ, he is more **favored** by God than are **Gentile** believers!

(c) The Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 5:21 teaches that a certain group of people were judged by God to have darkened skin because their hearts were hardened. This darkened skin was given, and we quote the reason given there as follows: "that they might not be enticing unto my people the Lord God did cause a skin of blackness to come upon them." (2 Nephi 5:21 as quoted by Salem Kirban, Mormonism, p. 12) These people were American Indians of a darker skin color than Americans with European ancestry. Thus, this religious group believes that American Indians are less favored than Americans of European ancestry who belong to the Mormon Church, Ibid.

**Well, are the Hebrew people more favored by God than other races or ethnic groups? Are people gradually less-favored by the Lord the darker becomes their skin? What if one has a mixture of racial blood or ethnic heritage, does God have mixed feelings about him? When a Caucasian becomes sunburned, is he less acceptable to God?! How can we tell, and what difference does it make in this life and in the life to come?!**

(We turn to the "Need" section . . .)

**Need: "The Old Testament notes that the Jews are God's CHOSEN people! On the other hand, some claim that blacks descended from the cursed race of Canaan in Genesis 9:25-27! Well, are Jewish Christians favored by God and black Christians less-favored with Whites and Orientals somewhere in between?! I need to KNOW!"**

- I. **Due to man's apostasies and God's responses to counter them by alternately using different ethnic groups to disciple, these groups came to RIVAL each other destructively as God's "favorites"!**
  - A. Though God created the world and set up man as His deputy, sin deposed him, and Satan became ruler on earth, Gn. 1-5; 2 Cor. 4:4.
  - B. God renewed human history by the Noahic Flood, Gen. 6:1-9:7.
  - C. Yet, Noah's descendant, Nimrod, began an apostasy opposing God's rule on earth, Gen. 10:8-10; 11:1-9; Rev. 12:1-3.
  - D. God thus chose Abraham to start a nation to check his sin, Gn. 12:1-3.
  - E. Yet, the Old Testament records that nation, Israel's repeated failure to curb Nimrod's error and even to be corrupted by it, Gn. 12:4-Malachi.
  - F. When God sent Jesus, Israel's long-awaited Messiah, apostate Israel rejected Him, so God postponed the Kingdom's installation and carried on its recruitment program through the Church, the Gospels and Acts.
  - G. Upon Israel's Kingdom postponement, Roman and Jewish converts to Christ began **divisively** competing with one another in considering themselves to be God's respective **favored** peoples!
    1. Romans understandably viewed non-Romans in their empire as inferior: by 139 B.C. the Jews were expelled from Rome, The Cambridge Ancient His., v. X, p. 491! Thus, when Romans became Christians, they tended to view Jewish Christians as inferior!
    2. On the other hand, Hebrew Christians saw Christ as the **Hebrew** Messiah, and Gentiles as **scarcely** justified by God, Acts 11, 15.
    3. Thus, unifying tension arose between the Roman and Jewish segments in Rome's Church as both groups viewed themselves as God's favorites, (Bib. Know. Com., N. T., p. 437.)
- II. **God used Paul to write Romans to REVIEW God's forming and using ethnic differences in history to set the record straight and produce humility among all believers, REGARDLESS of ethnicity!**
  - A. In his introduction, Paul notes the **Hebrew roots** of Christ (1:1-4) along with the **Gentile application** of His Gospel (1:5-7).
  - B. In view of this **universality** of Christianity, he announced his desire to minister in Rome's Jewish-Roman church environment, Rom. 1:8-15.
  - C. Paul then declared the **GOSPEL** he sought to give at Rome to be God's **GRACIOUS, universal solution** for **all** men, 1:16-11:36:

1. Christ's Gospel saves Jew and Gentile alike, for **both** groups are justified by **faith** "from first to last," implying that salvation is by God's grace, **not** by race or ethnic heritage, Rom. 1:16-17 NIV.
2. Paul noted how **all** men stand **condemned** before God, 1:18-3:20!
3. Likewise, God's righteousness substitutionally applied justifies all men **apart from** human merit or ethnic heritage, Rom. 3:21-5:21!
4. In similar fashion, even the **BELIEVER** cannot **LIVE** uprightly or make it to heaven's **glorification** due to his earthly sin nature apart from the **Holy Spirit** living Christ's life through him, and graciously preparing him for the eternal state, Rom. 6:1-8:39.
5. Thus, ethnic origin is of **no** account before God regarding salvation:
  - a. God's choice to save men by faith and not by race is sovereignly settled regardless of any Jewish objection to the contrary, 9:1-33
  - b. However, though God has sidelined Israel for rejecting Messiah, Jesus (10:1-21), Roman Christians must yet view themselves as **graciously** put into God's place of blessing, Rom. 11:1-24.
  - c. After all, Israel's sidelined status is **temporal**, for God will yet fulfill His promises to **install** her **world empire**, 11:25-36; 15:12

D. Thus, since God's blessings to Roman AND Jewish believers is based on GRACE through FAITH, such manifold mercy demands **HUMBLE LIVING** by **BOTH** ethnic groups, 12:1-3a; 12:3b-15:13!

1. **Both** must **humbly** serve others in the **church** body, 12:1-3a, 3b-8.
2. **Both** must **humbly** relate to **society**, 12:1-3a; 12:9-13:14.
3. **Both** must **humbly** relate to **weaker believers**, 12:1-3; 14:1-23.
4. **Both** must **humbly** help **each other**, 12:1-3a; chs. 15-16!

III. Romans adds to the "thread of redemption" by revealing that one is **UNCONDITIONALLY, FULLY FAVORED** by GOD through Christ **REGARDLESS** of ETHNIC ORIGINS, Rom. 1:16-17!

***Application:** If tensed at feeling "inferior" or "superior" to others over different ethnic origins, realize that such tension springs from lost man's spiritual poverty and become divinely blessed by (1) faith in man's only Savior, Jesus Christ, Jn. 3:16. (2) As a believer, recall that we are SAVED and LIVE by GRACE apart from ethnic origins, and live HUMBLY before others because of God's GRACE!*

***Lesson:** Ethnic differences with their varying "advantages" were but temporal historical arrangements where God used fallen man's envy of His blessings via such arrangements to win him to faith in CHRIST!*

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the message . . .)

(1) The curse of servitude in Genesis 9:22-27 was **not** upon Ham, but upon **one** of his sons, **Canaan**! There also exists no evidence that the Canaanites were black skinned! The table of nations in Genesis 10 indicates that the black race probably came through **other** descendants of Ham (Cush or Put), Unger, Archaeology and the O.T., p. 83-95. Thus, it is **very** errant to say that black skinned people have served other races due to a curse on Ham -- there exists no basis for the claim!

(2) Now, regarding the curse on **Canaan**, and how even **that curse** cannot thwart God's accepting a person, one really need look no further than the joint ancestry of Israel's king David and the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 1:1-16:

(b) Matthew 1:3 states that king David and Jesus came through Phares, the product of a union between Judah and Tamar. This union occurred in Genesis 38:6-30 as Tamar, a **divinely cursed Canaanite** daughter-in-law to Judah covertly seduced Judah to raise up children unto Judah's deceased son. Thus, Jesus, along with Israel's king David had the genes of a **divinely cursed Canaanite** in them, and yet David is God's chosen king, and Jesus is the **Beloved Son of God** according to God the Father's own words in Matthew 17:5.

(c) Matthew 1:5 shows Rahab at Jericho was married into Messiah's line, cf. Bib. Know. Com., N.T., p. 18. Rahab, the harlot was of **Canaanite** heritage, so **another divinely cursed Canaanite** contributed to the gene pool of Israel's king David and the Lord Jesus!

(c) Matthew 1:5 tells us that the great grandmother of king David was Ruth, a **Moabitess**, Ibid. The Moabites were related to Abraham through Lot, his nephew, by way of an incestuous union between an intoxicated Lot and his daughter, Gen. 19:36-37. As such, Ruth was an **Arab**, so both Israel's king David and Jesus Christ also have **Arab** genes in them! Yet, both are beloved by Almighty God!

**Ethnic heritage, whether genetic or cultural, whether legitimate or illegitimate is ultimately unimportant to God's capacity to save and accept ANYONE! God has used man's jealousy of His favors to select people as a spiritual "carrot" to motivate man to want His blessings so that they will believe in His Beloved Son, Christ. In so doing, ALL men can be saved and FULLY "accepted in the Beloved," Ephesians 1:6!**