

Bible Study: Romans

(Part 2-Chapters 8-11)

by Gary T. Panell

In part one of Romans we were talking about "salvation" first, then we were discussing "sanctification," and we finished in chapter 8:13. Now we want to resume at this same verse. We want to remind Christians what God said about what we should feed our minds and souls on: "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of **good report**, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy-meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8).

Someone has said, "You can't help it if a bird lands on your head, but you can keep it from building a nest in your hair." All of this has to do with living a sanctified life. We need to put to death the deeds of the body. You may have heard a juicy piece of gossip, you think about it, and you pass it on. No, ask God to help you forget it, and don't pass it on. You hear some words and language you shouldn't have heard, you need to forget it, get it out of your mind, and go on to other things. Maybe you have seen things you shouldn't have, you will need to put these out of your mind and not dwell on them.

Chapter 8: 14

(14-17) We find that we have been adopted into the family of God. We are no longer Satan's slaves; however, he still has many others. The slave trade still goes on. We, though, don't have to be slaves to sin doing such things as drinking, smoking, using bad language, and having other bad habits that are not becoming to Christians. We have God's Spirit in us that tells us these things are wrong. If you don't feel guilty when you sin, you better question whether or not you are a son or daughter of God.

Those who are truly saved are led by the Spirit of God. "But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, **kindness**, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another." (Galatians 5: 18-26)

As you may have noticed, Paul had much the same message in both Romans and Galatians. Now we come to verses 15-16 in this section on sanctification. "Abba, Father," is the Aramaic word for Father, but it was an endearing way to address your father. It would be like a small child calling for his "daddy" in English, other places in English it might be "papa" or some other term. I encouraged my children to pray this way sometimes, it is probably not a bad idea because it is very scriptural.

We know inside ourselves by God's Spirit whether or not we are truly saved. This is not so much a feeling, however there is nothing wrong with feelings, but there is a knowing that our desires have changed. Everything that is Christ's now belongs to us. Yes, the whole universe is ours!

(17-19) If we suffer with him, God will reward us with His Son who suffered. We, who are the children of God, have a wonderful future in store for us as well as a wonderful life with Christ in the present, even if His will involves suffering for us. Really the very reason God created us was so we could have fellowship with Him and to bring glory to His name. One might say, "Well can't we bring glory to God now and have fellowship with Him now?" Yes, we can, but it will be so much better when everyone is together on the other side with the LORD, redeemed forever!

We are anxiously waiting, and the whole universe for that matter is waiting for the time we will be God's, and He will be ours! The number is not yet complete: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

(20-22) The creation itself is waiting for God's command for it to be restored. Since Adam and Eve sinned, thorns began to grow, bugs began to bug mankind, and animals began eating one another, sickness and disease resulted. People robbed, people raped, lied, cheated and even killed their fellow men. The physical earth and universe itself is groaning under sin, in other words everything is dying at this point. The earth has serious problems such as earth quakes, hurricanes, title waves, volcanic eruptions, etc. and all of this is as a result of the sin of Adam and Eve. One day this will all be ended when sin and Satan is judged and finally cast into the lake of fire which is the second death.

There will be a partial restoration of the earth during the millennial reign of Christ, but a completely new heaven and new earth will not come about until sin and Satan are totally out of the picture (Revelation 20:4; 2 Peter 3:9-13).

Just like a woman has pain in child birth, so too as a result of the fall of man into sin, creation is having pain or trouble, but just like a woman has this pain, it is for a reason. The reason the earth is subjected to this pain is for the purpose of calling out of a people that will be God's very own. They know this world is passing away, but they chose to go to another that will not fade away. They chose to be with the one they love, the LORD Jesus Christ!

(23) Not only creation is waiting for perfection, but we as the children of God are looking forward to the time we will be taken out of the very presence of sin. When will this happen? When we are promoted to heaven or when Jesus returns to take us home. The first fruits that we looked at in Galatians 5:22 such as love, joy, peace, etc. we now experience as a result of our salvation, but this is only a little taste of heaven. 1 Corinthians 2:9 says, "But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

(24, 25) We have this hope, but some day our hope will be changed into glorious sight as we walk around the streets of heaven. We can't even start to imagine what it will be like to be with our Savior throughout eternity. We get a little taste of this in church when the Spirit of the Lord is being poured out through our singing and worship, but again this is only a taste! To think this will last for eternity! Aren't you glad you are saved by the blood of the Lamb! There is that song Amazing Grace, and part of it goes

"when we've been there 10,000 years," I like to sing that "when we've been there 10 trillion years we've just begun!" In the "mean" time we wait in patience to see our loved ones that have gone on before.

(26, 27) Now that the Spirit of God dwells within us He helps us even when we pray. Have you ever wanted to pray for things and just didn't know how to express it? The Spirit is also praying for us according to the perfect will of God. He is praying with passion for us as only God can do! This is why we are given the injunction to pray in the Holy Spirit as Jude 20, "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit."

No doubt, He says at times, "God you know he doesn't need that new car it will only take him farther away from You." Or, He might say, "You know he has waited long enough for that car he wants and needs, he is ready now to use it for you."

(28) If we love God, and keep His commandments (His Word), as it says in another place, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15), then we know that every last thing that happens to us will be for our good and God's glory. As we saw earlier, God can even turn our sin around for His glory, but this involves punishment for us, and probably leading us into God's second best for our lives and not His best.

So if we are serving Him in love with our whole heart, and not living in known sin, then we know that all things will work out to our good, and His glory. Every believer is called according to His purpose, that is, that we are to be conformed to the image of Jesus.

(29) In other words every person is called by God, but not everyone answers the phone "so to speak." He wrote His love for us in the stars and sun sets, so man is without excuse if they don't believe in Him. But He also has the gospel message He wants to get to every person on the face of the earth. He has decided to use human instruments; they are his telephone wires and telephones he uses to call people.

He could have used angels, but they didn't have a need to be redeemed like us. That is not to say, God may use angels sometime in the future as the book of Revelation talks about. My guess would be He doesn't use them because they can't relate to other human beings like we can. Now God already knows, this is what it means when it says "foreknew," He knew from eternity those who would hear the Gospel and those who would receive it.

God always knows everything; there is nothing He doesn't already know. He knows those who will answer the call to salvation, or the phone call of God. This phone rings as we see the stars, as we hear the Word of God, as we look at a flower, and as the Holy Spirit speaks to us. We have a choice, we can answer the phone or ignore it and let it ring, but it will ring until we pass away, unless we become hardened to the truth and no longer want to hear it.

We are the human instruments God uses to show his love to others. We will see this more in chapter ten. The ones God knew would hear the message and would answer the phone, and receive Him, will be saved! They say, "Yes God, I repent of my sin, and God I receive your son Jesus Christ," these He has already predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son.

In heaven we will be like Jesus, but right now also, His will for us is to become more like Jesus every day. God wants many children like Jesus to fellowship with throughout eternity, so He is just the first one or

firstborn. He didn't create robots, but people who of their own free choice choose Jesus as their God. These He makes sure they will be like His Son Jesus Christ.

(30, 31) Not only did God plan (predestined) in eternity past, God caused it to happen just like He planned it. Because He is God He can cause His plans to happen just like He planned. God calls by using His Creation, His Word, His Holy Spirit, His people, and many other methods to reach people for Himself. The ones whom He foreknew would receive Him. These He justified, which we know means, "just as if I had never sinned, with the righteousness of Christ added to us." Also as Ephesians teaches God sees us already seated with God in heaven or glorified! What assurance of salvation should we have knowing God is for us!

(32-34) God went to all the trouble to plan our salvation, and made it sure. He also carried it out as Jesus actually died; do you think He will hold anything back from us?! Who can say to us your not saved. God is the one who planned the way of salvation, we received it, and now the universe would explode if God did not keep His Word!

(35-39) There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God! He has a love for us that cannot be compared to anything else in this world. So now He wants us to go out and be conquerors. We are to spread this Good News to the whole world; nothing is to stop us, not disowning by family and friends, lack of food and clothes, imprisonment, torture, or death itself!

Beloved we have passed through three great sections of this book. At first we looked at (I) "Sin and the Need of Salvation" (Romans 1-3:23). Next, we saw, (II) "The Way of Salvation (Romans 3:23-5:21). Last, we have covered chapters 6-8, (III) "Sanctification".

It is time for us to climb up a mountain and look at God's salvation from the past, "Israel's Past" (Chapter 9). Then we want to look at "Israel' Present" (Chapter 10). Last, but not least, "Israel's Future" (Chapter 11). This section (IV), we will call: "The Scope of Salvation." The reason we want to consider this section from the stand point of Israel's past, present, and future is because God brought salvation through the Jews.

Chapter 9

(1) Paul conveys to us in very strong language that he cares very much about what happens to the Jews, his own brethren in the flesh. He says he has great sorrow for them, as the Holy Spirit is his witness. (2) One might think that since Paul had been mistreated so much by the Jews that he could have held a grudge against them.

(3) But this is not the case because he goes on to say in verse three that he would go to hell if it meant all the Jews could be saved. How could he say this, is he out of his mind? No, he is still sane, but the love of Christ is burning in his heart for the Jews. (4, 5) He had every right to be proud of the fact that he was a Jew, even if they, for the most part, mistreated him. The Jews were the original ones that were given many opportunities to come to God.

They had the covenants God had made with them. They had the "Law, the temple service, and promises. But most of all Christ was born of a Jewish mother, Mary, and his step father Joseph. According to the "flesh" Jesus was a Jew. (6) Even though the majority of the Jews did not receive Christ when He came

the first time. "He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him" (John 1:11). There will be those who do receive Him, and one day they as a nation will receive Him.

The Jews who are Jews by physical birth, but reject Christ, are not truly spiritual Jews. In other words, God chose the Jews to be His, but if they as individuals reject God they are not truly God's chosen ones. (7) Now Paul uses an illustration: Abraham had two boys one was Ishmael the other Isaac. Both of these were children of Abraham, but only one was chosen for a special purpose. (8) So there are two types of Jews today, those that are chosen and those who are not. It is more than whether or not you are born a Jew physically. You must be born from above; you must be children of "promise."

(9) So you see Ishmael was born out of the sin of Abraham, born of unbelief. Isaac was born after Abraham and Sarah were too old to have children, so Isaac was born as a result of a miracle. So if a Jew is born a Jew the natural way this is not good enough to save him or her. However, if a Jew is born again then this is a supernatural birth. "Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

(10-12) As if this is not enough proof to the Jews that what Paul is saying is from God, he reminds them of another time God was pointing this out to the Jews by a picture illustration. Remember Rebecca and Isaac had twins, before they were ever born God told Rebecca, "The older shall serve the younger." What does this mean? Well it means that naturally speaking Esau should have been the one to receive the birthright, but God said no Jacob will get it.

(13) "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated." (14) Does this mean God doesn't care about what choices we make in our life?" No, it means God has the right to choose someone to be the forefather of a nation even before they are born, and He has the right to choose us in Christ. He foresaw what Esau would be like, and He has foreseen what choice we will make about Christ. It also does not just depend on us whether or not we chose to be saved. If God were not merciful we would all perish.

God has made a way of salvation, and it is in Christ as Ephesians 1 teaches. Think of it as a circle with a cross in it. God knows in advance who will get into the circle of salvation before they are even born. He has predestined all those who get into that circle to be adopted as sons and to be saved. Does He force us to make this choice, no, but He does make the way of salvation. There is so much involved here, but the rest of the story is given in Ephesians and in other letters of Paul. It is like someone has said; salvation is like a gate on the outside that says, and "Whosoever will, may come." Once a person has entered that gate it says, "Chosen from before the foundation of the world."

(17) Take another example of this very thing, Paul says; before Pharaoh was born God knew what he would be like, God knows everything. So God said this is the man I will use to demonstrate my power through. God knew Pharaoh would be extremely stubborn, and would not let the Israelites go. If you look at the account in Exodus, Pharaoh hardened his heart first, then God, it says, hardened his heart (Exodus 6:13, 14, 22; 8:15, 19).

Then in chapter 9, in verse 12 it says, "The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh." So, yes, God will harden people's hearts, but it is after they have first hardened their hearts. (18) God chose to do this of His own will.

(19) People think, "Well this means, 'whatever we will be, we will be.'" They think we are a kind of robot that God programmed beforehand, and everything is happening just like God made it happen. Some call it "fate." So they think it's not their fault what happens to them. Wrong, we are responsible for our actions, we can make choices, and we will be held accountable for these choices!

No, we are not robots or puppets, but we have no right to judge the reasoning behind anything God does. Here I don't mean good questions or wondering why, but someone who says God is wrong in what He does. No, He is always right. The clay belongs to the potter. We belong to God, if God foresees that we will not believe in Him, He can go ahead and make a Pharaoh out of us.

Again we believe this is according to God's foreknowledge of what we will do. (22) Also God can wait patiently for people to be saved even though He already knows they will never receive Him. He knows the end from the beginning. We don't know who will be saved, so we share it with everyone.

(23) He did this to show us His great glory in that He even lets people live when He knows they will never receive His Son. Someday we will see the whole picture. I love the illustration of the tapestry; the backside of the tapestry is meaningless. There are threads that seem to go nowhere, there are knots, and no rhyme or reason for what you see. The other side has a beautiful picture; this is what it will be like in heaven. God will explain to us there, or it will make sense to us why God did things the way He did them. We are looking at the back side of the tapestry here on this earth, much of what we see doesn't make sense, but God has the answer on the other side!

(24-29) There will be both Jews and Gentiles saved. The number of Jews that are truly saved is few in comparison with how many will not be saved. "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." Matthew 7:14 "Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: 'Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved'" (Romans 9:27).

(30-33) Salvation is received by faith alone, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8, 9). Salvation is "not" by keeping of the law, as we have seen earlier in the book. No one can keep the law perfectly. This has been a brief look at Israel's past.

Chapter 10

In chapter 10 we see the sovereignty of God and His work in Israel's present, or Israel's present during Paul's time of writing. So in this chapter we want to talk about salvation as it relates to both Jews and Gentiles. Paul wants his brethren the Jews to be saved; we saw in the last chapter he would be willing to go to hell if they could all be saved. (2) He says they want to worship and serve God, but they don't know what they are doing. We have people like this today that are not Jews, don't we?

There are those who are trying to work their way to heaven, when the righteousness of Christ is theirs if they would accept Him as their substitute. (4) Christ fulfilled the law, if we believe in Him, He fulfills the law for us and we don't have to. (5) If we could keep all the law and were perfect from birth, we would not be judged by God. But no one has ever lived a perfect life; neither will there be anyone like this, except Christ. "...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

So Jesus Christ alone can give us His righteousness, since He has fulfilled the law. (6) Some might be saying, "Then if we can't be saved by keeping the law what's the use, no one will make it to heaven." Stop just a minute, faith reminds us Jesus arose and went to heaven, are you saying he didn't? Then you are saying His body is still around on earth somewhere.

(7) Or some might say, "I don't believe we have a spirit that goes anywhere when we die, you are just dead." Wait a minute again; Paul says in so many words, are you saying Christ did not die? Are you saying He didn't die and rise again? (8) Scripture agrees with our faith when it says you can believe there is a heaven and there is something past life, when our spirit passes to be with the LORD. You can believe this if you will!

(9) You need to believe Jesus is God, and you need to use the faith God has given you to believe that God the Father has raised Jesus from the dead, and then you will be saved!! (10) That's why God gave you a heart, so you will believe with it. That's why He gave you a mouth so you can confess to God you believe in His Son. This confession here is to God.

If you do this you will be saved! You might say, "What about a person who cannot speak, does this mean they can't be saved?" No, God knows our condition physically, He also knows our heart, and if it is in the right place, that is what matters. I do believe though, if a person is truly saved, they will want to confess to men that they believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. This confession may come in the form of words or actions. The main way we confess that we have believed in the LORD is with the act of baptism.

(11) If we believe on Him, the Lord Jesus, we will not be disappointed or put to shame. We will stand before the Lord with our heads held high and those around us will see the glory of the Lord shining through us. (12) Brothers and sisters, both Jews and Gentiles are saved by Christ, who when He is received by faith, becomes our God.

(13) In the last chapter, we had God calling us, now we see that we have to answer His call in order to be saved. Many are called, but few are chosen, yes, only those who answer the call. It is like a phone ringing, you have a choice to answer it or not to answer it. This is what the calling of God for salvation is like, we have a choice. The reason we have a choice is because Jesus made a way of salvation for us through His death on the cross.

(14) Paul goes on to the next most important subject in the whole of the New Testament, we have to share this message with others so they can believe in Christ and be saved too! As they believe in Christ's shed blood alone to save them, they move from death to life. So this is where your part and mine comes in, we must tell them the Gospel.

If a person has not heard about Jesus how can they believe on Him? I have heard of exceptions, where Jesus did reveal Himself to someone, but Jesus made it very clear before He went back to heaven that it is our responsibility to get the Gospel out! "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things

that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" Amen (Matthew 28:19, 20). "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15).

(15) You might say, "I'm not sent," but just look at Matthew 28:19, 20. You are sent if you are a Christian. What if the one who brought the Good News about salvation to you had not brought it to you because they were too lazy or just didn't care? Think about it, and then don't keep the faith, share it!!!

(16) Not everyone will believe what you are saying is true. "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me: "When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul (Ezekiel 3:17-19).

(17) I think probably 99% of those we will see in heaven will have been saved as a result of hearing the Bible preached, read, sung or in some way heard. Over two hundred years ago now, a shoemaker by the name of William Carey went to a ministers meeting. The leader asked, "Is there anything we should discuss?" William stood up straight and tall and said something like this: "Sir, Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15). Let's talk about these words of His. Don't you think He was telling His disciples and us to preach the Gospel in every country?"

The leader of the meeting was not pleased. He said sternly, "Sit down, young man, sit down. If God wants to convert the heathen, He will do it without our help!" Later William Carey went as a missionary to India, and translated the Bible into the language of the people.

(18) Maybe a few might look at nature and turn from their sin and worship the God of the universe. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" (Psalm 19:1-4).

You may have heard stories of such, I have, but by far the vast majority of those who are being saved, are those who hear the spoken Word, or read the written Word of God. Satan knows this too, that is the reason he does everything he can to keep God's Word away from people. The only thing is the light of God's Word will continue to go forward, and light always is stronger than darkness! Light puts out the darkness. We must spread God's Word at any cost. Many have died or suffered much for this very reason.

(19) Maybe the Jews didn't realize God's plan of salvation was bigger than just their nation. They should have known, Moses told them, "They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God; they have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation" (Deuteronomy 32:21).

God made it very clear to the Jewish nation that Gentiles are being saved all throughout their history. Jesus reminded the Jews of several Gentiles that had faith in the Old Testament times. We know there

were many from Egypt, Babylon, India, Africa, and all the countries of the world that were saved before Jesus ministry.

(20) But now, many Gentiles are being saved in the Church Age, not because they are looking for God, but God went out looking for Gentiles. The Jews were invited, but most did not respond. "And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 'For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper'" (Luke 14:22-24). Gentiles are willing to receive the Lord.

(21) To this present day the Jews are still not turning to God as a nation. We praise the LORD for individuals who are being saved, and we hope that more Christians will witness to Jews and not think they are hopeless. But to this time of writing, the nation as a whole still is rejecting Christ as their Messiah. In the next chapter we will see how in the future they will turn to Christ as a nation.

Chapter 11

God's salvation, as it relates to the Jews and Gentiles in the "Future," is found in this chapter. We will only survey this chapter and future events.

(1) One might start thinking along the lines that since the Jews have failed; maybe God has rejected them forever. Some hold to this, and see no future for the Jews. They would look at every reference to Israel in prophecy as a reference to the Church, as spiritual Israel. There is a future for Israel as a nation, Paul was very proud to be part of the Jewish nation even giving his tribe.

(2) No, God foreknew that all these things would happen to His people. Take for example Elijah's prayer.

(3) "LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"?

(4) But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." Things looked bleak to him, but God tells him there are still 7,000 you don't know about who are my worshippers! Things look bad for Israel now, but God will fulfill His promises for them.

(5) Even though the Jews as a nation have rejected Christ at this time, there are those who have and are accepting Him as their Messiah. They are "Jews for Jesus."

(6) These even in this present day realize salvation is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus 3:5

They know they cannot be saved just because they are Jews, or by keeping the law, but they know that salvation is by grace alone. We don't deserve salvation, if we did, it would be by works that we got to heaven, but the only thing we really deserve is death. There will be no boasting in heaven. Salvation is a free gift.

(7) Israel as a nation was looking for the Messiah; they wanted someone to save their nation. They wanted a king to free them from the Romans, but they were not interested in the Jesus of Nazareth. There were those who were chosen because God had foreseen they would receive Christ when they heard of Him. The others that rejected Jesus Christ were hardened.

We see this over and over again with the religious leaders of Jesus' time. They even went so far as to try and kill the evidence, like when Lazarus was raised from the dead, the Jewish leaders tried to kill him. "Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus" (John 12:9-11).

(8-10) This was written down many years before it took place and this is why Paul quotes Isaiah 29:10, 13; Deuteronomy 29:3, 4; Psalm 69:22, 23, that there are many Jews that will not believe Jesus is the Messiah.

(11) Does this mean there is no future for the Jews? No, it means for a time the Gentiles are being dealt with by God in a special way through the Church Age. This will make the Jews jealous. Ill. You know when you see other Christians prospering; it makes you ask the LORD, "Why aren't you doing this for me?" It is the same way with Israel as a nation, and the Church which now they despise.

(12) If God can bring good in spite of the Jews' sin, what will be the result when they return to the LORD?, think of the impact on the world! It will be earth shaking news! I can see the headlines now: ***"Israel has Returned to the God of Their Fathers, They Have Turned to Christ as Their Messiah!"***

(13) This letter, Paul is writing, is mainly addressed to Gentiles, but we know there is a future for Israel.

(14) Paul also has an ulterior motive for reaching the Gentiles as found in verse 11, that is it makes his brethren the Jews jealous of the Gentile's faith in the "Jew's God!"

(15) Again Paul repeats, in so many words, "Look out Gentiles, when the Jews come back to God, you will need to move over. Look at Ezekiel 37, there is a future for the nation of Israel!"

(16) Since God chose the Jews to be His to begin with, then the Jews or the whole lump, whole tree is His, but (17) for a time they have been cut off. Then the Gentiles in the Church were grafted in among them. Notice Jews are in the Church also, and we really have our roots in Judaism.

(18) Don't be too proud of your position as partakers with the Jews in God's plan and purposes. Don't think you can speak against the Jews, they are the ones who gave us the Old Testament and Christ is a Jew.

(19) Yes, it is true that God has put the Church in place of the Jewish nation.

(20) That's right the believing Church is in place of the nation right now, and they were rejected because they rejected their Messiah, but you need to be respectful still.

(21) Don't let this go to your head and become proud that God has chosen you for awhile, we know from the rest of Scripture, we in the Church will be taken out.

(22) We need to realize God does not play games He is very serious about respect from us. Individual Christians have been taken home before their life was over such as in Acts 5 with Ananias and Sapphira. God is both kind and severe to the nation of Israel. If we are careful as individuals to follow the LORD, he will not judge us, but if we are not careful the same thing could happen to us that happened to them.

1 John 5:16 reminds us, "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death." There are Christians that have gone to heaven sooner than they should have because they have not been careful with their temple.

(23) Watch it, if the Jews do not continue in their unbelief, then they will be grafted back into their rightful position. With God nothing is impossible, even restoring the Jewish nation to its original standing with God.

(24) Listen, one day our old wild olive branches, the Gentiles, are going to have to move over for the Jewish nation. Right now there are some that have gone back to their land, but they are there without belief in Jesus as their Messiah. As God deals with them and restores their nation, Israel will be better than it was before. Most of those that are saved today are Gentiles and not Jews.

(25) Now we get to the "mystery" Paul is revealing to us, and that is, God had planned this from the beginning, that one day Gentiles would be in place of Israel for a time. Someone has said it is like two mountain peaks, you can see them but you don't see the valley in between. The two mountain peaks in prophecy are the Messiah's first coming as Savior of the world, and His second coming as King.

The valley between the two mountain peaks is the Church age where God reaches out to the Gentiles of the world in a special way. A "mystery" is something that has not been fully revealed up to this time, now Paul has revealed this mystery to us. It is in the Old Testament that God would work with Gentiles, but until Paul explained the Church Age to us we were not sure about the extent of God's reaching out to Gentiles.

Now, Paul says, "Don't get proud and forget that Israel is only out for a time, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in." In 70 A.D. the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus and the Jews were scattered, but long before this time Gentiles have been trampling underfoot the Jewish nation. Even at the time of Christ and before this was the case. God knows when this time will be, we do know a lot about it from Daniel 7:8-14; Revelation 20:6; Matthew 25, etc.

(26) This is the time when [all Israel will be saved](#), all those that are left after the seven years of Tribulation. What a day that will be!

(27) God will take away their sins when they say to Jesus Christ, "We want you as our Messiah! We are sorry for what we did to you, please receive us" (Zechariah 12:10)! "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of **grace** and supplication; then they will look on Me

whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn."

(28) We think of the Jews, sometimes, as being opposed to the Church and to Christ, but for their forefather's sake they are loved by God and us. We have received so much through the Jews. For through them came the Old Testament and Christ Himself!

(29) The promises God made to Abraham concerning the land and to his descendants will be fulfilled! God will not go back on His promise that is true for us as well! The promises God made to Abraham are irrevocable even if his descendants disobeyed, they will be punished, but they will still see the promises fulfilled to their children. Look at what God said to Abraham in Genesis 15.

(30-32) Gentiles received God's grace even though they didn't deserve it; the same is true of the Jewish nation.

(33-36) Think about the omniscience (all knowing), and the love of God to think of such a plan and execute it! Praise God for Who He Is, the Great I Am! Amen.

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