

Romans 11

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Tape #8130
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Romans chapter 11. At the end of chapter 10, Paul has been sharing Scriptures from the Old Testament that speak of God's reaching out with the gospel to the Gentiles. And being embraced by the Gentiles as their God. But concerning Israel, God declared, all day long I have stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and a gain saying people. So, where the nation of Israel rejected their Messiah, He was embraced by the Gentiles.

So Paul declares, *I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.* If you think that God has been stretching out His hand, they are not responding. They are disobedient. Does that mean that God has cut them off? That they are cut off from salvation and the blessings of God? And Paul declares, certainly not or God forbid! For he himself is a descendant from Abraham, according to the flesh, from the tribe of Benjamin.

²*God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, ³"LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"?* You remember the story in the Old Testament, how that Elijah had the contest with the four hundred prophets of Baal there on Mount Carmel. And how they set up the alters. The deal was, the prophets were to pray to Baal to light the fire on their alter. Elijah was to pray to Jehovah to light the fire on his alter. And that the god who answers by fire be acknowledged as the true and the living God. And we remember the story how the prophets of Baal prayed all day with no results. Towards evening at the time of sacrifice, Elijah just to sort of rub it in, told them to pour water all over the sacrifice. Then to ask God to send the fire which did consume the sacrifice and the alter and the water in the trenches round about. And Jehovah was acknowledged as God. Elijah took the four hundred prophets of Baal down to the brook and killed them. And how that when Jezebel, the wicked queen, heard of what Elijah had done, she said, God, do so to me also if by tomorrow, I don't have the head of the prophet. And so Elijah fled from the presence of Jezebel. And he went all the way down to the Sinai. There he hid in a cave. The Lord came to him there and said Elijah, what are you doing here? And that's when Elijah answered the Lord and said, I've been zealous for God. They have killed all of Your prophets. And they seek my life. And that was repeated three times.

After the third time, 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."* The Lord said, I have reserved unto me seven thousand men in Israel who have not bowed their knee to Baal. Now, that's not very many. When you consider that the population was probably over a million men in Israel at that time, for only seven thousand to have remained true to the worship of Jehovah, is a very small percentage and a very small amount, less than one percent. So that even though God had a remnant, it was a very small remnant that God had reserved in Israel. You might say, for the most part, the nation at that time was apostate. A very small remnant that God had reserved unto Himself.

When we look at Europe today, you observe a post Christian era. Christianity has lost its influence, its power. There are, they say, more witches in England than there are churches. There are more mosques in England than there are churches. You are in a post Christian era. The United States is rapidly moving in that direction.

Now here at Calvary Chapel, you don't really get the pulse of the nation. I mean here we are and we all love the Lord. We're all zealous for God. And God is doing a marvelous work here. But we are not representative of the whole community. We are just a small part of this community. And this is a phenomenal work of God that we are seeing here, but you are a part of that small faithful remnant that God has today, but not of the Jews but of the Gentiles. But God, among the Jews, has always had His faithful remnant.

Now Paul declares that God hasn't cast away the Jews. I'm a Jew. And when Elijah felt that he was the only one left. They have killed all of Your prophets and now they are seeking to kill me. The Lord said, I have seven thousand. God's faithful remnant who have not bowed their knee to Baal. And so we represent a small remnant but really when you look at our nation as a whole, where at one time it might have been sort of classified as a Christian nation, it is so far from that today. There has been a deliberate, willful, determined effort to really

destroy the influence of Christianity in our nation. It has been quite effective. In the school systems, they have done a very thorough job of trying to even rewrite history in order to leave out all of the Christian influences among the Pilgrim fathers. They are talking in the schools today, let's not call it Thanksgiving Day. Why? Because that gives thanks to whom? And thus the school teachers are sort of instructed not to call it Christmas, not to call it Thanksgiving. It's winter vacation. This is sort of a fall vacation kind of a thing. But they are trying to get away even from terms that would indicate anything concerning God. Sad indeed! And a denial of the historic basis of our nation. The revisionists have taken over the textbooks and rewritten them, leaving God out.

But God has His faithful remnant always. And among the Jews God has always had a faithful remnant. And there are today among the Jews, a faithful remnant still, who believe in Jesus as the Messiah. Even as did Paul. And God has always had His faithful remnant there whom He foreknew.

⁵*Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant (His faithful remnant) according to the election of grace.* (God has related through grace to His faithful remnant.) ⁶*And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.* In other words the faithful remnant that God has elected are saved through the grace of God, not by the works of the law. They have been called by God to receive His grace. And saved by grace and not by works. Now, He shows that works and grace are mutually exclusive. If it's of grace then it can't be of works because then grace is not grace. If we are saved by works, then it's not of grace because then works are not works. They are mutually exclusive. You are either saved by your faith in Jesus Christ in receiving the grace of God through Him or you are saved by the works of the law. It can't be both! In Paul's time there was a strong Jewish influence in the church. And they preached an admixture of faith plus works. And so a mixture of grace and works. But Paul said, no, that doesn't work. If it is of grace then it can't be of works because grace isn't grace and the other way around.

⁷*What then?* (Paul says) *Israel has not obtained what it seeks;* What was it seeking? A righteous standing before God. Back in chapter 9, the end of chapter 9, verse 31, "but Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness has not attained to the law of righteousness. Why? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were, by works of the law. For they stumbled at the stumbling stone, which was Jesus, Behold I lay in Zion a stumbling stone, a rock of offense. Whosoever believes on Him will not be ashamed." So they stumbled over Jesus. Why? Because they were looking for their Messiah to establish a world governing body and take over the world. And they stumbled at the fact that Jesus was crucified. And thus, Paul said, they didn't attain the righteousness because they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

Then in chapter 10, verse 3, "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, going about to establish their own righteousness, they've not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." So Israel has not attained that which what it was seeking because they sought it by works rather than by grace and by faith, believing in Jesus Christ. You see, God says, look, because you believe in Jesus Christ, I account you righteous. And that is the basis for my righteous standing before God.

I do not have a righteous standing before God because I preach three times on Sunday morning and teach on Sunday evening and spend the majority of my life doing work for the Lord. That doesn't make me righteous at all. That doesn't give me a righteous standing before God. I have a righteous standing before God, tonight, because of my faith and trust in Jesus Christ. I trust Him fully and completely for my standing before God. Because of trust which is in Jesus, God accounts me righteous. Now if you have put your trust in Jesus, God accounts you righteous. And you are just as righteous as I am. And I am just as righteous as you are, because we all have the same righteousness which comes through faith in Jesus Christ. Righteousness which God has imputed to us. So there is no such thing as "less righteous" or "more righteous". We need to remember that. We are all accounted righteous through faith in Jesus Christ, not as a result of our works.

Now as we have been studying James, by design, as we were going to come to Romans. As we have been studying in James, he describes the kind of faith that God imputes as righteousness. And it is a faith that does works. But the works don't make me righteous. The faith makes me righteous. But the faith is verified by the works that I do. I say that I believe that Jesus is Lord! I manifest that belief by submitting myself to His lordship. Now if I say that Jesus is Lord and yet I live a self centered, do it my way, kind of a life, then by my

life I am indicating that Jesus isn't Lord. Faith without works is dead. But the works don't save. The works do not give me a righteous standing before God. They only verify the validity of the faith that I profess.

So Israel has not obtained what it seeks *but the elect* (That is this small remnant. The election of grace.) *have obtained it, and the rest* (of Israel) *were blinded*. So Paul declares that only a small part of the Jews have really obtained the righteousness that they were seeking after. And that was those who were elected by the grace of God. The rest of the Jews, blinded.

⁸*Just as it is written:* (Have you noticed that Paul, in these three chapters, is really addressing the issue of Israel rejecting their Messiah and the Gentiles being brought in and the sovereignty of God in this? Paul is emphasizing over and over again the Old Testament Scriptures. He quotes some eighty different passages of Scriptures in these three chapters. Showing that, number one, he was well versed in the Scriptures. And thus using the Scriptures, proving the things that he is saying. This is what God has said. This is what God has now done. We can see that God has done the things He said.)

So according as it is written, *"God has given them a spirit of stupor, Eyes that they should not see And ears that they should not hear, To this very day."* As Paul was writing to the Romans, up until this time, blinded to the truth of Jesus. Blinded to the fact that Jesus is their Messiah that God had promised to them. And that remains true up until the present day. As we said, there is a remnant today. There are those Jews who have embraced Jesus as their Messiah. And they are great witnesses for the Lord. They usually are quite zealous for the Lord, but the rest are blinded. For those that have come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, how glorious it is. That God has elected them by His grace that they should receive the light and the understanding that Jesus is the Messiah. But the rest are blinded still.

⁹*And David says* (He quotes first from Isaiah. Then he says, and David says): *"Let their table become a snare and a trap, A stumbling block and a recompense to them."* ¹⁰*Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see, And bow down their back always."*

¹¹*I say then* (Paul said.), *have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.* Now, God has poured out His Spirit upon the Gentile nations. And God is drawing out from among the Gentile nations, a people unto Himself, the church of Jesus Christ, the bride of Christ. In the Old Testament, we have of course some very beautiful types and shadows. We find Abraham commissioning his servant, Eliezer, to go into far country to chose a bride for his son, Isaac. To bring a Gentile bride. And how that he went. He was a type of the Holy Spirit. Bearing gifts, meeting Rebecca and telling her of all of the glory of his master. His wealth and the blessing of God upon him. Asking her to come and to be a bride. Her father said, do you want to go? And she said yes. So representing the Gentile bride of Christ, drawn by the Holy Spirit. You have those beautiful pictures in the Old Testament. So through the fall of Israel, through their stumbling, over the truth of Jesus, the gospel was opened to the Gentiles. The purpose of God is to provoke the Jews to jealousy when they see how we are blessed of God because of our following after Jesus Christ.

¹²*Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!* If in their falling from this position, if it has brought such blessings upon the world, what kind of blessings do you suppose it will bring when they again receive the fullness of God when they are restored? I mean if they are, you know, if Paul has brought such rich blessings. What will it be? Well, I'll tell you what it's going to be. It's going to be the kingdom of God established on the earth. Jesus will come. And God's kingdom will be established. And it'll be a kingdom of righteousness. It'll be a kingdom of peace. It'll be a kingdom of joy. It will be a kingdom of blessing. It'll be heaven on earth when God restores again His favors upon the nation of Israel.

Paul said, ¹³*For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry,* I guess that is only sort of natural that a man sort of magnifies that particular office that God has given him in the church. You feel the office that God has given you is one of the most important offices and you should! Whatever position, whatever place, God has put you within the body. You should have that feeling, this is an important part of the body of Christ. Even if the place that you have is not one that does bring you much notice. Now we are so prone to put an emphasis upon those places in the body of Christ that put a person before people

and people take note, but really here in Calvary Chapel, some of the most important ministries here in the church are those who are engaged in intercessory prayer. And whatever it is, those that are engaged in personal witnessing. I have a place in the body, but Paul said the whole body isn't a mouth. And so we can be thankful. But, each of us have our place in the body. And none of us are a total unit within ourselves. There is an interdependency within the body and the need each of us have for each other within the body of Christ. So Paul magnifies his office. I'm really the apostle to the Gentiles. And I magnify the office.

¹⁴*if by any means (he said) I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them.* Now really Paul got into a lot of trouble with his fellow Jews because of his ministry to the Gentiles. He wanted to provoke them. He wanted to bring God's blessings to the Gentiles, but in his heart he was hoping that by their seeing what God was doing among the Gentiles, that the Jews would also embrace Jesus Christ. And he was wanting to see them saved as he mentioned back in chapter 9. His heart's desire and prayer for Israel was they should be saved.

¹⁵*For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?* This is it! It will be the resurrection life when God receives them again.

¹⁶*For if the firstfruit is holy (That is Abraham and Isaac and the early fathers.), the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.* The stock from which they came. God had blessed them. And so they were reaping the benefits of that.

¹⁷*And if some of the branches (Now notice Paul doesn't say, all of the branches) were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree,* So now he is describing us Gentiles. Here is this glorious tree. The roots in the early Jewish fathers. We, wild olive trees, outside of the covenant that God made with Abraham. Outside of the covenant that God made with David. Outside of the covenant and the promises of blessing that God has made has made to this nation if they would serve Him. Here we have been grafted in that we might partake of the promises of God and the blessings of God. And what a beautiful position that we have.

We used to sing a chorus that every promise in the Book is mine! Now there are those that try to dispensationalize to the place that, you know, that they would exclude you from some of the promises. They don't exclude me. I read them and I say yes! I accept that! And I take it as a promise unto me. So we have been grafted in that we might partake of the root and the fatness of the olive tree.

But, ¹⁸*do not boast against the branches.* What should be our attitude towards the Jews? It should be exactly the attitude that Paul had. Our hearts prayer and desire for Israel is that they might be saved. That the day will come when there will no more be a blindness as regards to their Messiah. But that they will recognize that Jesus is indeed the Messiah. And there will be a national conversion of Israel as they receive and accept Jesus as their Messiah!

Now the Old Testament prophets tell us of such a day. When they will look on Him whom they have pierced. And how that they will weep over the folly of following their religious leaders who were blind. Jesus said, if the blind lead the blind, they're both going to fall in a ditch. And because the Pharisees of those days rejected Jesus as the Messiah, the Jews today are still following the blindness of the Pharisees of the times of Christ. And they are still rejecting the fact that Jesus is God's promised Messiah. Though when you look at the prophecies that He fulfilled, it's very, very clear that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah. But they seem to be blind to that. As Paul said, there is sort of a veil over their faces when they read the Word of God. They don't see, though they pour over it. Jesus said, you do search the Scriptures because in them you think you have life, but actually they testify of Me, but you won't come to me that you might have life. And that is true to the present day.

But Paul is telling us that the day is going to come when the blindness will be removed. And what will that mean? But glory! And life from the dead! That's going to be a whole new ball game when the work of God is wrought among the Jews. So we are to love them. We are to pray for them and just look forward to that day when God works once more among them.

You remember in the book of Daniel, in the ninth chapter, he tells how that he was studying the prophecies of Jeremiah. And from the prophecies of Jeremiah, he realized that their captivity in Babylon was to be seventy years in duration. And he had been there almost seventy years. So he realized that their captivity was soon to be

over. And recognizing that we're almost, you know, going to be set free and all. Because of the high position that he had in government, he did not know but that God might use him as an instrument in a part of the repatriation of the nation. So he sought by fasting and prayer, waiting upon God, really for the purpose of making himself available if God should desire to use him in the repatriation of the people.

As he was fasting and praying, the angel, Gabriel, came to him. He told him that there were seventy sevens that were determined upon the nation of Israel. In which God would complete His whole program. And know and understand, he said, from the time of the going forth of the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, there will be seven sevens and sixty-two sevens. And the walls will be build again in troubled times. But after these sixty-two sevens the Messiah would come, but He would be cut off not receiving for Himself the kingdom. The Jews would be dispersed.

Now, we do know from the time the commandment went forth by Artaxerxes to Nehemiah to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of Jesus was the four hundred and eighty three years, the sixty-nine sevens. The seventieth, seven year cycle, of which God is going to deal with the nation of Israel, will bring into completion of all of the prophecies, anoint the most holy place and all. That is yet future. There is a time gap between the sixty-ninth and the final seventieth, seven year cycle for the nation of Israel.

In this gap we have the church age. We have the times of the Gentiles. The Gentile rule over the world. But there is the seven year period which God is going to once again deal with the nation of Israel. He will remove the blindness. During this period of time many of the Jews will become great evangelists and there will be a tremendous movement towards Jesus by the Jews during this seven year period as a result of their faith in Jesus Christ, while others will live through the great tribulation, being preserved by God to enter into the glorious kingdom age when Jesus returns. For it is after this final seventieth, seven year period, that Jesus will return to establish God's kingdom upon the earth. So the gathering together again, life from the dead.

In the meantime you are not to boast against the branches. Why? *But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.* You don't support the root. The root supports you. You are sustained by God. You are not sustaining God. And you are just grafted in. Sort of wild by nature. But God has grafted you in. And you are not bearing the root. The root is supporting or bearing you.

¹⁹*You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."* (And Paul's answer is.) ²⁰*Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.* Our position now is one of faith. I stand in Christ, by faith. I've been grafted in to partake of the blessings of God's kingdom. The blessings of fellowship with God, knowing God. Having this relationship with God. But that is a position of faith. God cut them off because of unbelief. We are in because of our faith.

²¹*For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.* So the Gentiles who had their time. The visitation of God's Spirit. The gathering by the Spirit of God, the body of Christ. We had our time in which we believed and were received by God, but the general unbelief that is sweeping the world, bodes for evil days ahead. It means that the times of the Gentiles is just about over! We have been grafted in. We have abided by faith, but beware lest by unbelief the Gentiles be removed.

Now I do believe that God is going to remove His church before the seven year cycle, the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy, begins. And then God will again pour out His Spirit on the nation of Israel. But we stand by faith and thus it isn't because God saw any goodness in us or righteousness or whatever, He in His love chose us to wash and cleanse us from our sin and to make us a part of His family.

²²*Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity* (What a terrible thing to be cutoff!); *but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.* (I think that this is a very solemn warning of God. And one that we need to take heed and note of. We stand by faith. If God cut off the natural branches and grafted in us, unnatural, our position is one of faith in which we abide. Jesus said, if a man abides not in Me, he is cut off like a branch is withered. Men gather them together and put them in the fire. They are burned.

So Paul declares, if you continue in His goodness, otherwise you will be cut off. I think that it is wrong for man to presume upon the grace of God. Paul warns over and over again, concerning those who would live after the flesh and follow after the deeds of the flesh. Paul's warning is that you will not inherit the kingdom of God. And as Paul gives a list of the fleshly practices, he said for this cause the wrath of God came upon the children of

disobedience. He is writing to the church. Warning those of the church not to be living after the flesh. Not to be governed or to be ruled by your flesh.

In three different places, 1 Corinthians 6, Ephesians 5 and in Galatians 5, he warns about living after the flesh and doing the works of the flesh. And in each warning, he said, and we know that they that do such things, will not inherit the kingdom of heaven.

So people ask me, do you believe in eternal security? And I answer by saying, yes. I believe that I am eternally secure as long as I abide in Jesus Christ. As long as I walk after Spirit. And you say, well, what if you don't? I don't even consider that because I have no intention not to do anything else. But if I find a person who says, well, sure I'm a Christian. I went forward in a Billy Graham crusade. And yet they are living in adultery. And they are living after the things of the world. Believe me, I'll rattle their cage. I will take them Scriptures, (James 4:4), Know you not that friendship with the world is enmity against God? And he that would be a friend of the world, is an enemy of God. (1 John 2:15), Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, for he that has the love of the world in his heart, has not the love of the Father.

And take them to Galatians and Ephesians and Corinthians. Show them that they which do these things will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. You see, I don't want to comfort any of you into hell. To give you assurance and comfort. And when you stand before God at that great white throne. I don't want you turning to me, saying hey, preacher, why didn't you tell us? I am going to tell you straight that God requires that we walk after the Spirit, not after the flesh.

The goodness and the severity of God. Oh how good, God is! He's saved us! He's redeemed us! He's washed us from our sins! He's made us His children! He's put His Spirit within us, the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry out, Abba, Father. But we stand in faith.

Now Paul said, ²³*And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.* If they don't remain in that position of unbelief, God will graft them in again.

²⁴*For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?* So ours is sort of an unnatural position. By the grace of God, He has brought us in. The wild olive tree, grafted into the good tree, that it might receive the nourishment and the blessings. But the natural branches, God is able to graft in again.

²⁵*For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part* (Now go back to verse seven, "Israel has not attained what it seeks, but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.") But there is that remnant.

But blindness in part, not in total, but in part *has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.* Now in Luke 21, Jesus talked of the times of the Gentiles. That is different from the fullness of the Gentiles. The times of the Gentiles actually began when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem. And from that time they have not had a reigning king. They have a government in Israel today but no king. And thus we are still living in the times of the Gentiles. But the signs of the Gentiles is almost complete. For there in Luke 21, Jesus speaking prophetically of the times of His coming, said, "Jerusalem will be trodden underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

So in 1968, the city of Jerusalem was conquered by Israel. The Jordanians were pushed back across the Jordan River. So that from 1968, the Jews have controlled Jerusalem, which according to the prophecies of Jesus, would indicate that the times of the Gentiles have come to a close.

We are living, I believe, in just a short little space gap in this intermediate stage from the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled when Jerusalem was again occupied by Israel and God's pouring out His Spirit again upon the nation of Israel. Now blindness has happened to Israel in part until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

God is omniscient. He knows every Gentile who will receive Jesus Christ. God has ordained and chosen which ones will believe in Jesus Christ, according to His foreknowledge. When that number is complete, when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then, I believe, the Lord will rapture the church. He will begin His seventieth, seven year cycle on the nation of Israel, as He deals with them and pours out His Spirit and reveals Jesus as His Messiah. Then, the blindness is removed.

It is quite possible that at any moment the fullness of the Gentiles will be fulfilled. I get excited every time there is an invitation, an alter call. I wonder, is the last one here that the Lord is drawing in to the family of God? And I do believe that we are that close. And so there is that fullness of the body of Christ that we are waiting for now that will bring the culmination of the times of the Gentiles and will bring again God's work among the Jews.

So Paul said, ²⁶*And so all Israel will be saved* (God is going to work in a very powerful way among them again), *as it is written:*

"The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; (God will deal with the nation of Israel. They will be saved.)

²⁷*For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins."* So God has made a covenant. When that day comes when God takes away the blindness and all. Then there will be this general conversion of the Jews as they weep over the fact that they were so foolish and so blind in rejecting Jesus as their Messiah. They shall mourn as one who mourns over an only son. They shall say to him, what a the meaning of these wounds in Your hands? (Zech. 13:6) And He shall say these are the wounds that I received in the house of My friends. And that glorious recognition that Jesus is indeed the Messiah.

²⁸*Concerning the gospel they are enemies* (The Jews were the great enemies to the early church. They followed Paul. They dogged him. They brought all kinds of persecution against the early church, concerning the gospel they are enemies)

for your sake (enemies now of God. But it for your sakes. Enemies now of God. But it is for your sake. It's because of their rejection that God opened the door wide to the Gentiles.

So they are enemies for your sake), *but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.*

²⁹*For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.* God is not a man that He should repent. Has He not said it and shall He not make it good? And God has made His promises to Abraham. God has made His promises to the fathers. And God will keep His promises to them. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable!

³⁰*For as you were once disobedient to God* (talking now to the Gentiles. In times past, you didn't believe in God. They believed in, you know, all of the gods of the Greeks and the Romans. They were pantheists.),

yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, The fact that they rejected, opened the door, and now you have obtained the mercy of God through their disobedience or unbelief.

³¹*even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy.* In other words, they have to come now just like we come, as sinners to receive the grace of God and salvation through Jesus Christ. There is no special dispensation for them at this point.

³²*For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.* So this glorious plan of God, allowing the blindness to happen to Israel in part, that He might open the door to the Gentiles. Draw in from the Gentile nations a people after Him. When that number is complete, then once again, going back to Israel and opening the doors once again, wide for them. But we all come now the same way through the mercies of God unto this place of salvation. For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

Then verse 33 as Paul thinks of this wonderful plan of God. What God has wrought. The redemption for mankind, Jew and Gentile alike. How that God has brought it all to pass! Paul said, ³³*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!* Oh, the wisdom of God in the way He has worked out this plan of redemption! The way He has opened the door to the Gentiles! The way He again deal with His people, the nation of Israel! The wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable are His judgments We can't really understand the judgments of God. They are unsearchable, but they are right. Satan constantly is challenging the fairness of God. He takes advantage of the fact that we have only a limited perspective. We can't really see what the future holds. And often times as God is working in our lives, He uses pain. He uses sorrow to teach us. He uses reversals. And they all for a purpose for the perfecting of our lives. Molding us into the image of Christ, as Peter wrote, if any of you suffer according to the will of God, then just commit the keeping of your soul unto Him as a wise and faithful creator. This business of because you're a Christian, you should never suffer. You should be rich and all, is heresy. We as

Christians oftentimes, have disappointments. We experience sorrows. We do have pain. We shed tears. But God is working in these things. He is working out eternal purposes.

And so how unsearchable are His judgments *and His ways past finding out!* And one of the reasons that Christians are often frustrated is their endeavor to try to figure God out. Why did God allow this to happen. Why didn't God stop that? Why would God? And all of these "whys" that can torment our minds when we are trying figure God out. But as God said to Isaiah. Your ways are not My ways. My ways are beyond your finding out.

³⁴*"For who has known the mind of the LORD?* Who really knows what God is working out in our lives this very moment? If you are going through hardship right now. Who knows? We don't know what God is planning through this. We don't know what blessing God is going to bring forth through this seeming reversal. Sometimes when a person finds out that they have been laid off, they are devastated. How could they do that? Lord, why would you allow that to happen to me? I was so comfortable in this job? I bought all of these things and I'm making payment on them because, you know, I had the security of this job. Lord? But, you see, you'd become stale. You were comfortable. And now God is stirring the nest. He is getting your attention because He has a much better job for you. Better benefits, better pay, but you weren't looking for it. You weren't open. You were comfortable where you were. You had to get the pink slip so you would start looking. So you could find that job that He has for you with better pay, better working conditions. One that you would enjoy much more. But in that transition, oooh, look out! God, where are You? Why? You know, and this turmoil. But who has known the mind of the Lord?

Or who has become His counselor?" God working out His perfect plan in our lives.

³⁵*"Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?"* What Paul is saying is that God will never be a debtor to you. You'll never find God on the debit side. He's always on the plus side. You never give anything to God, but what God doesn't return it to you over and over again. There is a divine principle here. Jesus declared it. Paul quotes Jesus as saying it. We don't have it in the gospels, but it is quoted, that Jesus declared that it is more blessed to give than to receive. But then Jesus said, give and it shall be given, measured out, pressed down, running over, shall men give in your bosom. When Peter said, Lord, we have left all to follow You, Jesus said, Oh nobody has left houses, homes, brothers, family, and so forth for My sake in the kingdom of God but what in this world he won't receive a hundred fold. God won't be a debtor to you. And in the world to come, life everlasting. Who has given to God but what he hasn't been recompensed again? But what God hasn't paid him back?

³⁶*For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen. Amen! Yes! Of Him. By Him. Through Him. All things! It's all wrapped up in Jesus. If you have Him, you have it all! For it is of Him. It is through Him. And it is to Him that we have received all of these blessings! All of these things! The redemption! The hope of eternal life! The promises of God! All wrapped up in Jesus! When you've got Jesus you've got it all! What a wonderful plan. Oh, the depths of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God as He has reached out to us to reveal to us His love, His plan, His purpose. To draw us in. To make us a part of His family that we might be heirs of God, joint heirs through Jesus Christ.*

Father, we thank You for the riches that are ours, through Jesus Christ. The inheritance that we have through Him. Oh, Lord, we thank You that You have grafted us in. That we've been made, Lord, partakers of the richness and of the fullness of the root. That the blessings have come to us. That the blessings of knowing You and fellowshiping together. The blessings of Your watching over us, guarding, guiding. Lord, we are blessed. Lord, it is exciting to live here at the end of the age. To watch things coming together. At the close of this present dispensation. Lord, we wait with eagerness for the fullness of the Gentiles to come in. That You might receive us Lord, and begin that final seven year cycle, culminating in the return of Jesus with His saints, to rule and to reign over the earth in the glorious kingdom age. Oh Lord, we pray Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus' name. Amen.