

Israel: Her Present & Future Role

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[0 : 00] We are this morning going to examine two of three of the chapters that have to deal with an explanation of God's dealings with the human race, and they do so in a way that no other portion of Scripture and all of the Word of God does.

It is safe to say that these three chapters, of which we shall consider two, serve to give us a more concise, more detailed, more rational explanation of all of God's dealings with mankind and all of the history past, as well as that which lies in the future more than any other portion.

And therefore they are of extreme significance and importance. And I am talking about two of those three chapters being Romans chapter 10 and chapter 11. We have been over this material.

We have taken approximately ten congregational hours in examining these passages in a verse-by-verse way. Now we are going to reduce all ten of those hours into just one session, and that is this morning.

I hope that it will help you to see this in a comprehensiveness and a cohesiveness that otherwise would not be possible. We have done the same thing, of course, with the preceding chapters in the book of Romans, and we'll continue to do so.

[1 : 15] We've already taken chapter 9 and reviewed it by itself, so we now want to embark upon 10 and 11. I would like to remind you once again that Romans 9 deals with the sovereign God and Israel in the past.

Romans 10 deals with the sovereign God and Israel in the present. Romans 11 deals with the sovereign God and Israel in the future.

In a certain sense, these three chapters are parenthetical, in that Paul does somewhat digress from the content that he is dealing with as he closes out chapter 8. In another sense, however, they are not parenthetical at all because the apostle has dealt with the subject of there being no separation in Christ.

Then he goes on to deal with Israel on a national basis because it appears that they are separated. And it seems almost as though there is a contradiction in the apostle's thinking.

And he goes on to clarify the fact that even though Israel as a nation is separated from God in their covenant relationship, even though they are set aside, they are rejected, the thing that he wishes to emphasize and does so very emphatically is that it is a temporary rejection.

[2 : 27] There is yet a future for Israel. Now, upon that particular statement, there is much of the hub of all of future or of all things to come or eschatology or whatever you want to call it.

Christendom has been divided for many, many years over the state of the nation Israel. That is, whether God has written them off and is finished with them forever at the people, or whether they will one day again be resurrected.

We take the latter point of view. We are convinced that, biblically speaking, Israel will once again not only be a political entity, but they will once again enjoy the covenant relationship and fulfillment with their God in a way that they never knew before.

It is reminiscent of the vision of the valley of dry bones that Ezekiel records. When God gives him this vision and he looks upon this immense valley of dry bones, they are dry, sun-bleached skeletons just lying out in the desert.

And God says, Son of man, what do you see? And he says, I see a vision of valley of dry bones. And he says, Son of man, can these bones live?

[3 : 39] Is there any resurrection, any future for these bones? And Ezekiel says, you're the only one that knows the answer to that. Thou knowest, O God. I don't know, Ezekiel says.

I look at the bones and they look like just a heap of dry bones. No hope there. But on the other hand, if you have anything to do with it, you can do whatever you want with those bones. And as he continued watching, the bones began to join themselves together in sinew and flesh and all the rest of it, which, by the way, gave rise for that novel Negro Spiritual about the knee bone connected to the thigh bone and the thigh bone connected to the hip bone and all the rest of it.

Comes out of that in Ezekiel. The whole of it deals with the fact that Israel as a nation will one day be restored. God is not finished with them because he has made certain promises, unconditional in nature, to the fathers of Israel, to the patriarchs, which he has never made good on.

And God's reputation, his integrity is at stake. He must fulfill what he has promised to Jacob. And he is going to do so. There are some who place a great deal of significance upon Israel being reborn as a nation in 1947.

I'm sure that has something to do with it. How much, I do not know. I'm not interested in setting dates or anything of the kind, but the scripture does make it abundantly clear that God is not finished with Israel.

[5 : 04] And as chapter 10 opens, it does so somewhat like 9. It opens with an expression of apostolic concern from the heart of Paul for his countrymen.

He has related this in chapter 9, the early verses. Now in chapter 10, he says, Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them, and that is for Israel, as the remaining verses of chapter 9 makes clear.

My prayer to God for them is for their salvation. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. That means that zeal and sincerity are no guarantee for truth.

Many people think they are. Many people are persuaded that whatever you believe doesn't really matter as long as you believe it sincerely.

That's all God wants. That is not what God wants. Sincerity is part of the package. And we cannot be insincere in our belief, but we've got to be right. Paul says their zeal and their sincerity is there, but it isn't according to knowledge.

[6 : 12] And it doesn't make any difference how zealous you are and how sincere you are if you've got wrong information. It's going to take you to the wrong destination. And this is Paul's concern over his countrymen.

He is not about to buy this idea that zeal and sincerity and whatever you believe is all right. Consequently, they are seeking to establish their own righteousness because in their ignorance they do not know God's righteousness.

God's righteousness is set forth in Jesus Christ. May I say that that is the only righteousness that God is interested in. That's all he's impressed with. That's all he cares about. For all our righteousnesses, says Isaiah 64, 6, are as filthy rags.

And whatever would God want with a bundle of filthy rags? He only wants and is impressed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Now, if you overlook that, then you'll keep to establish your own righteousness.

You can run off someplace and join a church and get in this organization and give your money, roll up your sleeves and cook dinners and serve on committees and have bazaars and all the rest of it and try to impress God with your righteousness. But God is not impressed.

- [7 : 18] He's impressed only with the righteousness of Christ. And you become a possessor of that when you possess Jesus Christ. The most glorious thing in the world is to be in Christ, the absolute confidence of eternal glory.

When you are in Christ, you have the righteousness of Christ. You have the peace of Christ, the love of Christ. All the rest of Christ has to give. He gives to you in his person. He who has the Son has life.

Paul says it's a matter of the will. They did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. You see, in order to subject yourself to the righteousness of God, you first of all have to repudiate your own righteousness.

Not many people want to do that. A lot of people look at their own righteousness and they say, well, it isn't as good as it can be, but it's all I've got and I'm going to hang on to it. And as long as we are hanging on to our own righteousness, we will not subject ourselves to God's righteousness.

And consequently, we will not be accepted. We cannot. For Christ is the end of law for righteousness to everyone who believes. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

- [8 : 32] Precisely what that means may be one of three things. I think it is a third principally. It may mean that Christ is the end to which the law brings us. Galatians 3.28 The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

I do not deny that. It's certainly biblical, but I question whether this verse actually means that. Or it may mean that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the law, and he is that too. For he came not to destroy, but to fulfill the law.

But I think principally what it does mean is that Christ is the end of the sphere of the law for Jew and Gentile alike. Colossians 2.

Galatians 3.10-29. Romans 6.14 We are not under law, but under grace. And then Romans 7.4-6. We cannot take time to look at all of those. They present a very, very profound concept.

It is so difficult for people to believe that in Christ you are not under the law. Matter of fact, as Gentiles, you never were under the law. That is the Mosaic law.

- [9 : 36] We have the law of God written in our hearts, Romans chapter 2, that either accuses or excuses. It condemns or absolves us. And that is the law that God has placed in the heart of every man, every human being.

He has a sensibility toward right and wrong. Call it conscience or God consciousness or whatever you will. But the tragic thing is, as Paul states in Romans 2, that man doesn't even live up to that.

We do not even measure up to our own standards, much less to God's. Therefore, we are condemned by that law, if not by the Mosaic law. We are not under law, but under grace.

And we have revealed in numerous times in the past the purposes of the law, and I will just give you some of them. The law, and I am thinking principally of the Old Testament now, the law reveals the moral perfection of God and the immorality of man.

The law is a reflection of God's holiness and God's character. For the law is holy and just and good. That is a big problem. Because we are not.

- [10 : 41] So there is a conflict. We've got an impossible demand that is made upon us by a holy law that unholy beings cannot measure up to. The law was added because of transgressions.

Galatians chapter 3. The law could not impart life nor regenerate. Hebrews 7, 18 and 8, 13. It's important to realize that. There is no dynamic in the law.

The law cannot do anything to make you spiritual. The law cannot do anything to redeem you. All the law can do is point out the need. The law says, look at me.

Look at me. And when we look at the law and what it demands, our only honest response can be, woe is me. I'm sunk.

I'm an unclean man living in the generation of an unclean people. I'm a man with unclean lips, Isaiah says. So we see in the law the mirror of God's holiness.

[11 : 40] We see how painfully short we fall of it. The law served as a tutor to bring us to Christ. Galatians 3. The law provides the definition and the knowledge of sin.

Romans 3.20. So the law condemns. The law is bad news. The law is not good for you. It condemns you. And yet there are throngs of people who run to the law looking for justification there.

And Paul says, we are not under law. We are under grace. Keeping with that, there are two grossly wrong ideas that persist even today. And you know, these things pervaded the established church of the reformers' time, and they still pervade the church today.

They are all pervasive, I think, through churches of all denominations. They are found in plenty of churches that are non-denominational. They are grossly misunderstood concepts that people still hang on to tenaciously regarding the law.

And the first one is that people in the Old Testament were saved by keeping the law. And that is totally wrong. For Romans chapter 4 makes it clear that Abraham our father was justified by faith before the law was ever given.

[12 : 55] In fact, Paul devotes the entirety of the fourth of Romans to debunking the idea that man has ever been saved anyway apart from the grace of God. And the second, and this is such a tremendous misconception, that Christians are saved in order that they might keep the law, and particularly the law of Moses.

That God saved you so that you would have the power to keep the law, which you couldn't keep before. That is utter nonsense. Utter nonsense. Utter nonsense. We have never been under the law.

We are under the law of the spirit motivated by love in Romans chapter 8, the first few verses. The Christians serve a higher law. It is the law of liberty in Christ Jesus that has made us free from the law of sin and death.

We are not to love one another because God has passed legislation that we do so. We are to love one another with a pure heart fervently. The example I've used in the past is that a man is faithful to his wife because he loves his wife, not because there is a law against infidelity.

Is he suggesting that the only reason he's faithful to his wife is because there is a commandment that says, Thou shalt not commit adultery. And boy, if there were some way that I could get that law erased, then I would be eager to run out and commit adultery.

[14 : 16] But the Christian lives on a higher plane and he looks at that law, Thou shalt not commit adultery, and he says, That's no problem to me. I don't want to anyway. I'm not subject to that law.

I'm operating on a higher law. That is the position of the redeemed in Christ. We are marching to a different drumbeat. We have a higher law. A new commandment, said Jesus, that I give you.

That you love one another. Now the law does not provide you with the ability to do that. It just doesn't. Never did. But the love of Christ constrains us.

It is the love of God, set abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, that provides us with a divine dynamic and a divine capacity to love those in a way that we never could otherwise.

That is the love of God, set abroad in our hearts. Non-Christians, however, are yet under law and are judged by it.

[15 : 14] Now this is where I think there is a lot of confusion that comes in. Someone says, is there nobody under law? There sure is. Everybody who is not under grace is under law.

And only the redeemed are under grace, operating in that sphere. If you are a Jew, you are still under, so far as I can determine, you are under the law of Moses insofar as your judgment and your condemnation is concerned.

If you are a Gentile, you are under the law of God written in your heart, Romans chapter 2, and both are going to be judged and evaluated on the basis of those laws. And the verdict is already in.

Guilty! Guilty! Guilty! So in order to get out from under the condemnation of the law, which only does you in, you flee to Christ.

And in Christ you find refuge from the condemnation of the law and the penalty of sin. For the law says, the soul that's in there shall surely die. You've got to get out from under that.

[16 : 17] It is strictly bad news. And that's why the gospel is good news. The hymn writer said, Free from the law, O happy condition, Jesus hath bled, and there is remission.

Cursed by the fall. Condemned by the law. Christ has redeemed us once for all. And he who would be delivered from the law must flee to Christ.

And there he finds forgiveness and refuge and safety and pardon. And those who will not come to Christ and submit themselves to the righteousness of God will be judged by this law. And the verdict is guilty.

Guilty. So, man can go whichever way he chooses. For you see, in 10.5, the apostle develops the theme that Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.

What he's saying, what Paul is saying that Moses says is this. You want to be justified by the law? Okay. Fine. Fine. If you want to go the law route, that's entirely up to you.

[17 : 24] You want to be justified by the law? You can be. All you have to do is keep the whole law perfectly all the time.

Now, theoretically, those who do will not be condemned by the law. But those who slip just once, just once, in word, thought, or deed, he who would keep the whole law is guilty of all.

And you've had it. And that's what Paul is saying. Do you realize the stringent demands that are placed upon you who would keep the law? You've got to live in that law 24 hours a day, and don't you miss once.

Because you do. It is your undoing. Is there any consolation to a man who is hanging by a 10-link chain over a precipice, hanging on for his life if only one of the links breaks?

Just one of the links. The end result is still disaster, and on his way down, he's not going to find much consolation in the fact that only one broke. Only one broke. He's still just as dead.

[18 : 35] So he who would keep the whole law and offend in one point is guilty of all. So we don't want to go that route. We say, get us out from under the law. Where can we find refuge from the law?

And Christ is our refuge. Then he talks about how available he is. But, verse 6, the righteousness based on faith speaks thus.

Do not say in your heart who will ascend into heaven, that is, to bring Christ down, or who will descend into the abyss, that is, to bring Christ up from the dead. But what does it say? The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.

That is the word of faith which we are preaching. Now, these are Old Testament quotes, and we've looked at them before. We'll not take time to do so again. But what Paul is saying here is that righteousness by faith is completely available.

Where is the answer? It's right here, in your mouth. It is found in confessing Christ as your Savior, believing on him in your heart. You don't have to go way out to the reaches or way down to the depths.

[19 : 34] Don't make this thing difficult. The mouth God has made it nigh. It is right there. It is within your person. It is as close and as near as your will. That's how easy it is.

That the Savior is available. He's a ready, present help. That's what Paul is saying. He's not remote, aloof, reluctant to save.

He's ever available. The answer is right within your own will, within your own bosom, within your own person, exercising faith within the finished work of Christ. And then these monumental verses 9 and 10, which 9 states, viewing it from man's point of view and 10 states viewing it from God's point of view.

If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, the mouth is the principal organ of declaration. The mouth is the principal organ that tells people where you are and what you believe and where you're coming from and all the rest.

And the heart is the chief organ of volition and of will, of activity. This is the biblical heart, by the way, not the blood pump heart that Paul was talking about. If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved.

[20 : 44] Now here, the apostle tells us that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is absolutely germane. It is critical. There is no Christian faith apart from the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

If Christ be not resurrected, your faith is vain. Our preaching is vain. You are yet in your sins. We are of all men most miserable. There is no Christianity. If Christ be not risen, it is central to our faith.

And I should like to point out again that believing in your heart is not a way of feeling. It is a way of thinking.

Don't muddle this up with emotion. Emotion may be present, but it is not the chief factor. It is an act of the will. It is a way of thinking, not a way of feeling.

And that is so very critical. Some people are still waiting to be zapped by some kind of feeling. They don't understand it. They can't explain it. They say things like, when it hits me, I'll know it.

[21 : 47] You know, it's kind of like when boy meets girl and they fall in love and bells ring and sparks fly. And when I'm ready to come to Christ, why, I'll know it. There'll be some sensation, some emotion, some feeling.

That's all nonsense. Don't put your stock in that. You may be old and tripping over your beard and never experience that feeling. It is an act of the will. It is when a person comes to the place in their life when they say, this life is not that over which I have the right to rule.

My life is not my own. My life belongs to my creator. And the only way I can find fulfillment and satisfaction and direction in my life is to submit myself to the lordship of this creator who loved me and gave himself for me.

He alone has the right to dictate the affairs of my life. He is my Lord, and I acknowledge him as my Lord. I receive Christ as my sin bearer, as my substitute.

This is an act of the will. It has nothing to do with feeling, nothing to do with emotion. Then Paul goes on to state the rationale for missions.

- [22 : 52] Does this all begin in believing? Well, in verse 10, with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness. With the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. And some say, what about a man who believes in his heart but doesn't confess with his mouth?

I would say that is proof positive that the belief in the heart is not genuine. Unless you've got a very isolated situation whereby someone is on the deathbed, and they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not have the ability or opportunity to confess him with the mouth, God reads the heart.

I don't think there's any question about that. Some people have a lot of trouble with that, because they do not believe that anyone can become a new creature in Christ in a matter of moments. But, my dear friend, it isn't a matter of moments.

It is instantaneous. When you become a believer in Jesus Christ, there is a precise moment in which you pass from spiritual death into spiritual life. You may not be able to determine exactly when that happened in your life, but God can.

And if it never happened in your life, then you simply are not redeemed. Coming into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is not an educational process.

- [24 : 02] It is not a gradual process. It is a dynamic process. It is a crisis act. Being born again is as much a crisis as being born physically, and dying physically.

It's like saying, Is the man dead or is he alive? Well, he isn't either one. He's kind of somewhere in between. Well, there is no such position. You're dead or you're alive, physically.

And spiritually, you're dead or you're alive. No one is almost a Christian. And no one is almost lost. We are one or we are the other. God doesn't deal with an in-between.

So it is on the basis with the heart that we believe, and that results in righteousness, and that is not our righteousness. It is the righteousness of Christ. If our righteousness would suffice, there wouldn't be any point in believing in Christ, but it doesn't.

And with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed. That is, will never be let down, and will never be embarrassed. Now, I like that.

- [25 : 07] Because Jesus Christ delivers. He will not leave you hanging out to dry, as it were. He will not embarrass you. He will not fail you.

He will not forsake you. He's incapable of doing that. If you put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, you'll never regret it. Never, never, never regret it. Never regret having done that. I heard a brother say, I've met some sorry Christians in my life, but I've never met a Christian who was sorry, and who is a Christian.

I think we can probably all testify to that, can't we? Whoever believes will not be disappointed, for there is no distinction between you and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon him.

God has got more than enough of whatever you need when you call upon him. But here comes that rationale for missions that I mentioned. For whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. How then shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed?

And how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things.

- [26 : 21] That's a beautiful thing. Beautiful feet. I remember discussing that with you just briefly, and we talked about it. There are a lot of men who will say, I sure have seen a pair of good-looking legs.

I've never seen a pair of good-looking feet. Something about feet that just aren't all that pretty. They are kind of like our uncomely parts, you know? I haven't seen a pretty pair of feet, except, you know, for majesty.

She has beautiful feet. But what Paul is talking about here is, listen, the evangel, the one who brings the message of glad tidings, the one who brings the message of life, the one who brings salvation, has beautiful feet.

They are beautiful to the ones who receive the message. They may be number 12s or whatever. They may have corns or bunions on them. It makes no difference. If they are bringing to you the message of eternal life and they impart the gospel to you, they are beautiful feet.

They are the most beautiful feet you'll ever see. There are plenty of people the world over who can testify to the fact that the missionaries who brought them the gospel have beautiful feet.

[27 : 38] even when they're clothed in jungle boots, they're beautiful feet, aren't they? The calling is contingent upon believing. Believing is contingent upon hearing.

Hearing is contingent upon preaching. Preaching is contingent upon being sent. And this does not necessarily mean ordained clergy as such. It means anyone who is a bearer of that message.

Then Paul comes to verse 16 as though he is trying to justify Israel in their unbelief. and he is kind of arguing for them. However, they did not all heed the glad tidings.

No, they certainly didn't. For Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed our report? We delivered this message. We brought the vital information and we gave it to them.

Who believed it? Not many. Not many. Not many do today. So it hasn't changed. Human nature hasn't changed. So faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ.

[28 : 43] You've got to know the right things before you can believe the right things. You've got to hear the right information before you can act on that information. That's what makes it so critical to get the gospel out.

You see, that's the whole rationale for the missionary endeavor. You have to take the message to those who've never heard. I don't mind telling you I've done a great deal of weighing over the last several months over the fact that we have something like 80% of our missionaries and missionary activity sent to something like 20% of the population of the world.

That suggests to me that there's an imbalance. There is a need for some radical restructuring in the whole philosophy and concept of missions. And maybe if nothing else will drive us to restructuring and rethinking the missionary enterprise, maybe economics will.

It seems to be about the only thing that moves us is when the dollars are cut off. And missionaries right now are taking some new fast and hard looks at the whole missionary enterprise.

And there are going to be some radical changes brought about, perhaps, by the world economic condition as it relates to missions. And perhaps it is about time. So he says in verse 18, perhaps the fact is found, the reason is found in the fact that they have never heard.

[30 : 06] Maybe Israel has never heard. But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Oh, you can't use that argument. Indeed they have. Their voice has gone out into all the earth and their words to the ends of the world.

Paul, in the book of Acts, says that by the space of two years, all that lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. Paul certainly contributed his fair share.

He disseminated the gospel wherever he went, and he was not alone. There were others doing likewise. Every time he had an opportunity to preach to his own countrymen, the Jewish people, he never passed it up. And he generally paid for it.

But they've heard. Paul says, oh, they can't use that excuse. Well, maybe they heard, but they didn't understand. Maybe that's the problem. So he says. But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they?

At the first, Moses says, I will make you jealous by that which is not a nation. By a nation without understanding will I anger you. And Isaiah is very bold and says, I was found by those who sought me not.

[31 : 11] Who are those? Gentiles. Gentiles were not interested in, nor were they speaking in, any relationship with the God of Israel.

They had their own deities. They were all phony. They were good enough for them. They weren't seeking after the true God. But he was found by them, and I became manifest of those who did not ask for me.

On what basis? On the basis of chapter 9. Election. Election. They weren't seeking after God. God was seeking after them.

Repugnant concept to the minds of a lot of people, but Romans chapter 9 is absolutely undeniable, and we spent some time in dealing with that earlier. So what's the real problem?

If Israel has heard, and if Israel as a nation, as a corporate people, if they have heard, and if they have understood, then what caused the process to break down?

[32 : 11] Why didn't they follow on through with what they heard and understood? The answer is in verse 21. As for Israel, he says, all the day long, and that doesn't mean 24 hours.

It means day after day, and week after week, and month after month, all the day long, throughout the day of Israel, I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.

The problem with Israel as a nation is the same problem as it is with individuals. Obstinence and stubbornness.

Why do not people believe? It is because they choose not to believe. They don't want to believe. And that was Israel's problem. And Paul is elaborating upon it.

Now, that being the case, they are stubborn and rebellious people. They have rejected the Messiah. Then God, consequently, is going to reject them.

[33 : 17] Yes, he is, Paul says, but not permanently, temporarily. Notice how chapter 11 takes up. I say then, by way of conclusion, God has not rejected his people, has he?

And as I read that, I ask myself the question, why would anyone think that he had? And the reason is because of verse 21. Doesn't God reject people on the basis of stubbornness and obstinacy and rebellion?

Indeed he does. But there are yet unfulfilled promises that cause him to take these people up again. He has to do that. He has not rejected his people. For I too am in this for life, the descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin, God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.

Or do you not know what the scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? Lord, they have killed thy prophets, they have torn down thine altars, and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life.

The population of prophets is sinning out, Lord. You send in graciousness and mercy, you send your prophets and your messengers to these people to warn them to flee from the wrath to come, and what do they get for it?

[34 : 30] It costs them their life. They kill them, murder them, stone them, stop their ears against them, say, we don't want to hear it, we don't want to hear it, go away with that message. Elijah says, getting rough, I'm the only one left.

This is the Elijah complex. I'm the only one that is standing true for the faith. I'm the only one. And the Lord says to Elijah, come off of Elijah.

You're not all alone. It just seems like it sometimes. I've got 7,000 men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. They are loyal to me. I don't want to insert something in the text that isn't there, but I will suggest that it had to have been in the mind of Elijah when God said, I've got 7,000 that have not bowed the knee to Baal.

He's thinking, where in the world are they? They're really camouflaged. They're hidden neatly. I can't find any of them. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.

And the hills are quiet. Nobody's stirring. And Elijah stands there all alone. And God told him he still has 7,000. who's not bowed the knee.

[35 : 42] In the same way, then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God's gracious choice. Do you see that? See on the basis of what the remnant is?

God's gracious choice. Not their choosing God, but God choosing them. And this is on the basis of grace. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works.

Otherwise, grace is no longer grace. Well, what do we say then? Well, what we say is this. Is it that which Israel is seeking for? That's the righteousness of Romans 10, 3.

It has not obtained. Israel, seeking to establish their own righteousness, didn't make it. They did not obtain it.

They did not arrive at it. They fell short of that righteousness that they were seeking. But those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened. This is mystifying.

[36 : 39] It is staggering. For what Paul is saying is that those who were really trying, God rejected, and those who weren't trying at all, God received.

that is totally, totally, totally, contrary to human reason. I was sought for, I was found by those who were not seeking for me, and those who were seeking for me did not find me.

And God says here that those who were searching and diligently looking did not arrive at the righteousness that they were seeking after, and those who weren't even seeking after it had it poured upon them.

That's the Gentile. And there is no basis upon which that can be humanly explained. You must attribute it to the sovereign choice of God. God did it. Gentiles were not flocking in to hear the gospel.

The gospel was brought to them, and they embraced it when they heard, and God graciously called them. It's an absolutely fascinating thing. God gave them the spirit of stoop, verse 8.

[37 : 51] Eyes to see not, and ears to hear not, that is Israel. These are the rest who are hardened, verse 7. The rest who are hardened, that's porosis. Down to this very day, David says, let their table become a snare and a trap and a stumbling block and a retribution to them.

Let their eyes be darkened to see not and bend their backs forever. This is the kind of curse that is pronounced upon a disobedient and obstinate people. Well then, by way of conclusion, what is the sum of it all?

Paul says, I say then, verse 11. They did not stumble so as to fall, did they? Was there some purpose in the nation of Israel stumbling other than that they just fall?

Was there some other purpose that served? Is God interested in accomplishing something else other than just putting down Israel? And the apostle makes it very clear, may it never be, this is the strongest kind of adversity in the Greek, it's meganoito.

No, they did not stumble so as their final end would be a fall. They stumbled so as to be cast down, but temporarily, for God in the future is going to do something for them and through them and with them when he removes ungodliness from Jacob later in this chapter.

[39 : 07] And in the meanwhile, here's what he's doing. But by their transgression, that is, by Israel's transgression as a nation, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make them jealous.

They weren't eager to share their God with the Gentiles at all. The Jew in the Old Testament looked upon their God as a private commodity. We have a corner on God and we aren't going to share him with anyone.

You go on and worship your old heathen deities and your false idols. Jehovah is our God and we're going to keep him for ourselves. And those who were selfish with their God caused their people nationally to be set aside in that covenant relationship.

And consequently, by their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make them jealous. And this is a tremendous passage that follows on. I would just like to read it, follow along closely.

Now, if their transgression, that is, Israel's transgression, be richest for the world and Israel's failure, be richest for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be?

[40 : 14] That is, Israel's fulfillment. He's saying, listen, if the Gentiles are being blessed through Israel's disobedience, think of how greatly the whole Gentile world and community will be blessed through Israel's obedience.

But they're not obedient now. Oh, says Paul, I know that, but they will be. They will be. When God removes that stony heart from them and gives them a heart of flesh, when they lift up their eyes and look upon the one whom they pierced and mourn for him as one mourns for their firstborn son, then they will, then they will be obedient.

And then all the nations will be blessed. And that's the millennial thing that he's talking about. And then in verse 13, Paul says, I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. And he makes it clear that that is his primary audience throughout the balance of this.

Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my office. Paul says he had a specially chosen designation given to him from God to be the apostle to the Gentiles.

And because that's true, Paul says, I pull out all the stops and magnify my office. I give myself tirelessly and effortlessly to this. And I am willing to labor above and beyond the call of duty to spend and be spent in order to reach these people, the Gentiles.

[41 : 37] I make much of my office if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. For if their rejection, Israel's rejection, be the reconciliation of the world, the Gentiles, what will their acceptance be, Israel's acceptance, but life from the dead.

It will be even more dramatic. And if the first piece of dough be holy, the lump is also. And the root be holy, the branches are too. I take it that this has reference to the patriarchs, to Abraham, and Abraham being the first lump of dough, and Abraham being the root, and the branches are the seed of Abraham, and so on.

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you being a wild olive were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not, you Gentiles, do not be arrogant toward the branches.

But if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in. Quite right. They were broken off for their unbelief.

And you stand only by your face. Do not be conceited, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. This is a passage that sometimes is used to deny the security of the believer, and may I say it has nothing to do with the security of the believer at all.

[43 : 01] He's talking about the Gentile community as a whole, as opposed to the Jewish community as a whole, and it is not the salvation aspect that Paul is talking about.

He's talking about a privileged position being occupied by Jew or by Gentile. And we gave you a brief picture of that from the chapter there wherein Paul uses a kind of parable regarding the wild olives and the natural olive tree.

This is a picture of Israel. They are the olive tree, the cultivated olive tree. They enjoy a privileged position. According to Romans 9, 3 and 4, they have the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the law, the temple, the fathers, and of whom came Christ the Messiah who is God over all, blessed forever.

Amen, and so on. That is the privileged position of Israel. They are a cultivated olive tree. They've got everything going for them. This is their covenant relationship. However, after Israel as a nation rejected Jesus Christ as their Messiah when he came to them, we have a part of that olive tree being cut off.

And that which is missing represents unbelieving Israel. They have been cut off and grafted in. Grafted in is the Gentile community so that Jew and Gentile are both depicted as being in this olive tree now.

[44 : 33] they are equally privileged in their position to receive God's grace. There is no longer any distinction. No longer is it a big deal to be a Jew.

A Jew has to come to Christ the same way the Gentile does. He no longer has this privileged covenant position. For ye are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, whether Jew or Gentile.

that is a very, very important concept in Romans chapter 11. It's key, one of the faith's keys to all of the future as regards Israel.

Paul continues on in saying in verse 22, Behold then the kindness and severity of God to those who fell severity, but to you, God's kindness.

If you continue in his kindness, otherwise you also will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, and they won't, they will become believers eventually, they will be grafted in.

[45 : 33] For God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, Israel, how much more shall these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

That is, God can put them back in. They are natural branches. For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery. And a mystery in a biblical sense is that which was previously not revealed, but is now made known.

And it means there is no way you could know it or understand it unless it is revealed. You could never figure it out on your own in a million years. That's a biblical mystery. And here it is.

that a partial hardening, this is porosis again, this is a callousness, a spiritual callousness, porosis, has happened to Israel until, that's a very important word, until, until.

When the until is reached, the process is going to be reversed. Israel will be in unbelief only until the until. And when the until takes place, Israel will trade in their unbelief for belief in their Messiah.

[46 : 47] Until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And thus, all Israel will be saved. That means national Israel, corporate Israel, means the nation as a whole.

Rather than every single Jew, solitarily and singular, it means Israel as a whole will be saved. And the reason they will be saved is because the deliverer will come from Zion. This is the second coming of Jesus Christ.

At the end of the tribulation period, which is precisely Jewish, the 70th week of Daniel, Gentile believers are gone. The rapture has taken them away and Israel is left here to go through the tribulation period.

And at the end of it, the deliverer will come from Zion and he will remove ungodliness from Jacob. Isn't that something? Jacob, of course, is another name for Israel.

And the way that Israel is going to get rid of their ungodliness is not by good work, but by the Messiah who takes... Do you know how you got rid of your ungodliness? Your Savior took it away from you.

[47 : 51] That's the only way. Not because you work it out or give it up, but because Christ takes it upon himself and gives us a position of holiness before the Lord.

He will remove ungodliness from Jacob and this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins. From the standpoint of the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But from the standpoint of God's choice, God's choice, they are beloved for the sake of the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The promises that God made for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. That means God made promises and God pronounced blessings upon Abraham and all his seed.

And Paul says they are irrevocable. God cannot withdraw them. God cannot look at the nation Israel and say you've been stubborn and disobedient and a rebellious people so therefore it's no deal.

The whole thing is off. I take back my promises. I take back my blessings. I'm going to give them to the Gentiles. I'll give them to the church and take them from this. The calling, the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance.

[48 : 59] God has no aftercare. He has no regrets. God doesn't look at Israel and say I wish I'd done it this way or I wish I'd have done it differently. He knew all of that. Therefore he has no regrets.

For just as you once were disobedient to God but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience. Now let me explain that. Verse 30. For just as you Gentiles once were disobedient to God but now have been shown mercy because of their Israel's disobedience so these also now have been disobedient in order that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy.

For God has shut up all in disobedience that he might show mercy to all. And when you realize that God is behind everything that Paul has said orchestrating this whole affair and Paul recognizes that and when he does so he breaks forth into a praise of doxology that says oh the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God how unsearchable are his judgments and unfathomable his ways.

Do you mean to tell me that God has worked all this out deep mechanics? That this is God's scheme and God's plan? This is the way he's going to get it done? That's right Paul. This is the mystery that I'm explaining to you. And when he has when he has shared that mystery with us he just falls down before the Lord and says isn't that fantastic?

I tell you the wisdom of God is just unfathomable. No man would have ever thought of doing anything like that.

[50 : 43] Isn't that amazing? Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or became his counselor? Or who has first given to him that he might put God in his debt and that God would owe him something?

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen. And I want to share with you this very last thing wherein Paul elaborates in verse 30 upon the mechanics of what God is doing.

This is so striking. in verse 30 as the heathen converts to Jesus Christ they were previously the Gentiles they were previously in a state of disobedience.

You see they formerly disobeyed God by their unbelief but God but now now the Gentiles have experienced God's mercy in being converted and the reason they are converted is through the disobedience of Israel which led to the offer of salvation to the heathen.

Paul says seeing you regard yourselves unworthy of eternal life lo I turn to the Gentiles and when he began delivering this message to the Gentiles they bought it they believed they became in a covenant relationship with God based on the new covenant if you will and a glorious glorious saint.

[52 : 05] So where does that leave the Jew then? Well the Jew was on the inside and the Gentile was on the outside now it's kind of reversed. So the unconverted Jews in verse 31 have disobeyed God by rejecting the gospel but in order that they too should experience God's mercy in being converted through the mercy shown to the heathen as in verse 12 which God is going to use to stimulate them and I am persuaded personally that this will take place in the main in the future in the future when God is involved with the nation Israel in the 70th week of Daniel and the Gentile nation the Gentiles who are believers who have received Christ as their Savior after the rapture and there will be many of them there will be many of them will be in such a position as to draw the envy if you will and the jealousy of the Jew and the Jew will be provoked to be released by the Gentile

I think in the main during that great tribulation period and they will as a nation be ripe and ready for their Messiah it will be a in one sense of the word it will be a terrible time and in another sense of the word it will be a glorious time for enough in the white hot heat of persecution Israel will find some of her greatest triumphs as well now I must terminate for questions or comments if you have my we've really rushed through that 50 57 verses in about 57 minutes yes Dick in this last principle that you just expounded in that the Jews will in some way take example some subverted Gentiles how can that mean if all the Christians will be raptured well as best as I can understand it's a very good question as best as I can understand the activity of the 144,000 will get underway shortly after the rapture of the church now this chronology

I'm not super dogmatic about but this is the best I understand it at this time and 144,000 Jews are going to have an immense amount of success there are going to be people who will be coming to Christ during the great tribulation period who were not exposed to the gospel content previous to that time I think 1 Thessalonians or 2 Thessalonians makes it clear that those unbelievers who received not the love of the truth but rejected the revelation of Christ prior to the rapture they are not all at once going to turn to Christ after the rapture they are going to be hardened in their unbelief and God will send them a strong delusion that they should believe the lie so they're going to be sold a bill of good by the antichrist but the unbelievers who will be the principal target of 144,000 are going to be literally swept if you will into the kingdom for that will be the message then it will be the kingdom message repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand and people who repent then in the midst of this tribulation period are going to repent by taking their very lives into their hands and many of them are going to be martyred for their faith in

Christ during that time the enormous persecution time during the great tribulation period yes paul right that's just one more thing that will enable them to come into that position that relationship god is orchestrating a number of these things all of these things in fact but they're not all that obvious to us and he is going to bring the nation Israel to his desired end and that will be a time of blessing someone else yes if the holy spirit is taken out with a rapture then how is this revelation going to be i don't understand i don't understand that i really don't know i do think that the holy spirit will be removed in the sense that the church which is the body of christ of whom individuals are indwelt by the holy spirit will be removed but i take it that the holy spirit will be present and operating in the sense that he was before there was a spiritual body of christ in other words the holy spirit is omnipresent when we say that the holy spirit came on the day of pentecost in acts chapter 2 it doesn't mean that he wasn't here before he was here before he was here in genesis chapter 1 the spirit of god moved upon the face of the waters the spirit of god came upon and empowered the old testament prophets and david and different ones so he was here in a different way than he was when he came on the day of pentecost and i simply do not understand all of that i can't give you a good answer for that yes will jews who have become christians be included in the rapture all jews who are saved today have to be saved the same way as any gentile there is no distinction and if a jew receives christ as his savior today he is as much a member and in the body of christ as any gentile and when the rapture occurs he's going along because he is a member of the body of christ now what the ramifications are in so far as his being a jew physically and the kingdom dispensation and exactly what part he will have then some of that is too vague for me to define i'm not really sure what that will what that will entail but the thing that i would like to impress upon you now is that today in this dispensation the gospel of the grace of god there is no difference there is no distinction there is neither jew nor gentile bond nor free male nor female you are all one in christ and the middle wall of partition that would separate us that separates jew and gentile he has demolished he has broken them down and he has made of the two ephesians says he has made of the two one new man that is neither jew nor gentile but it is amalgamation of both they are in the body of christ they are christian they are no longer jew they are no longer gentile they are christian they are one
hmm