

## **Romans 11-2**

### **August 6, 2012**

Romans 11:25-29

Paul is writing this with a glad heart, this assurance that God is going to restore Israel. Remember this is the one who told us he would gladly give up his own place in heaven if that is what it would take to restore the Jewish people. But the spotless Lamb of God has already paid the debt for the sin of rejecting God for those would accept it by faith.

Remember in the Romans 9 Paul told us that the Jewish people had been an object of special grace and mercy of God but they stumbled over their Messiah. Then Paul reminded us that while the Nation of Israel has rejected their Messiah, there is still salvation for any individual Jew who accepts Jesus as their Messiah. Now Paul has reminded us here in chapter 11 that a Jew has made possible Gentile salvation, Jesus was a Jew. Also the stumbling of the Jews brought great blessing to the Gentiles. And now we are to keep in mind that there is a remnant of Jews who will be saved. All Israel will be delivered is a better translation.

The question is when? Paul says here that the blindness affecting Israel will continue until the fullness of the Gentiles come in. We can all see that the state of Israel is a state of spiritual blindness. The time of the "fullness of the Gentiles" is often discussed but it is on God's timetable and no one knows when that time will come. There is some very interesting reading on this subject, the fullness of the Gentiles. Suffice it to say that God knows who will be willing to accept His wonderful gift of salvation and who will not. When the last Gentile has been saved, God's promises to Gentiles on earth will be complete, and then the scripture will be fulfilled. I do believe there will be a great increase in people coming to salvation in Christ before the end of time. There is plenty of scripture revealing that people will be saved during the tribulation, they are pretty much promised martyrdom, and they are called "tribulation saints".

God is working out man's spiritual destiny through the redeemed of the LORD. The times of the fullness of the Gentiles" is described in Daniel, chapter 11, which describes the course of Gentile history as it relates to Israel and the Holy Land. The climax of history is that time called the great tribulation, a 7 year period in the future where the hatred of God by the Gentiles will be judged by God and He will deliver Israel. Here's how Paul says its going to happen; the Messiah will come, the Deliverer for whom Israel waits. He will not be meek and lowly Lamb, no, He will be a roaring, raging Lion of the Tribe of Judah. As He judges the Gentiles, He will turn ungodliness from Israel.

The bible clearly states that at a given time in eternity, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is LORD. If you wait until then to bow your knee to Him, it will be too late, you will spend eternity separated from Him. If you will bow your knee today to Him and confess Him as your LORD and Savior, then He will hear you, forgive your sins, remove your guilt and you will walk in newness of life now and eternally with Him, where He is.

How will all this happen? There is already a plan in place, turn to Jeremiah 31:31 and 32. This is the discussion of the two covenants or promises that God made with Israel. The first one also found in Exodus 19:5,6 was conditional, that is, the blessings promised by God were dependent on the obedience of the Jews and you all know how that turned out. The second covenant, which will be made with Israel in the future, is unconditional; it is an act of God's grace.

We don't have to confuse God's grace to believers now and God's grace in the future to Israel. If you have come to Christ in faith and experienced the new birth you are well aware of the fact that walking in newness of life is a progressive state, that is as we study God's Word and pray we are slowly being transformed. I get quite frustrated with myself at the slowness of my transformation, how about you? However, these promises to Israel tell us that when God finalizes His second covenant with Israel, they will be immediately sanctified, a finished product, with God's Word written on their hearts, yes they will be fully restored.

And notice the verses in Jeremiah 31:34. This new covenant God will make with Israel will cause all of them to know Him and they will never depart of Him again. All this is the working out of God's Sovereign grace among the Jewish people. He has promised it, He will do it. Do not make the mistake of thinking that since God is here promising to save Israel in the future we do not have to worry about telling them the gospel now. This is still the day of God dealing with individual sinners, Jews, Gentiles, rich, poor, any nationality. We need to witness to all people, everyone needs to know their Savior.

Friends, God is a God of mercy, He expresses this all throughout history, in preserving His Word the bible, in His dealings with Israel, in His sending His Son for our salvation, in the daily sharing of the gospel by which we can come to the knowledge of truth of Jesus Christ. God will continue being merciful into the future as He restores His people to fellowship with Him.

Romans 11:30-31

The word mercy is used 3 times here; Paul speaks of mercy to us, mercy to individual Jews and mercy to be extended to Israel as a nation.

What is mercy? Mercy is compassion, cleansing and forgiveness. It can refer to giving alms or forgiveness. Mercy is God's great gift. Look at Ephesians 2:4,5; But God being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. Someone has said "grace" is getting something we do not deserve and "mercy" is not getting what we do deserve. Never take God's mercy for granted, lets never forget that it cost the LORD Jesus Christ everything to give us mercy, it is His death that guarantees God's daily provision for us. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

Romans 8:32.

From Paul's time on the Israel has been disobedient to God because of their refusal to accept salvation by faith in Christ. They did begin long ago with a great advantage

because of God's gracious choice of them as His people but because of their disobedience they proved to need His mercy as well as anyone. Israel will receive mercy as soon as all the Gentile have come to God, then God will again direct His mercy toward the nation of Israel.

Paul is showing how Jews and Gentiles benefit from God's mercy. The blessings God has given the Jews have benefited us Gentiles; just think of the LAW, the scriptures and our greatest benefit, the LORD Jesus Christ. Some day, because God's gifts are irrevocable, His mercy will extend to all of them.

Romans 11:32

Friends this is another way of stating Romans 3:23 "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God". All describes everyone, all Jews and all Gentiles. God's mercy toward all mankind who have sinned has been the topic of all the chapters of Romans. How has God shown us mercy? By sending us a Savior through the Jewish people, Jesus our Messiah.

What does it mean to say people are shut up or imprisoned? God did not cause people to disobey, but now God has limited the privileges, made them subject to punishment.

The operative phrase here is "so that" which tells us that the purpose of all human history is for those who love God to be a vehicle for God's mercy. The delay in the fulfillment of the promises to the Jews is so that God can be merciful to Gentiles too.

Romans 11:33

Paul gives us a hymn of praise for the overwhelming goodness, grace and mercy of God.

And not only that but for God's wisdom and knowledge. Paul is giving thanks for the mind of God, which is so unlike our minds.

Romans 11:34-35

These verses quoting Isaiah ask, "how can we know the mind of God"? He has made 2 provisions for us to know Him, the first His coming into the world in the person of Jesus Christ and then He has sent us His Holy Spirit. Upon salvation the Holy Spirit comes to live in us, remember this is a seal of the promise of life eternal in the future. So we can participate in the Divine Nature because of the Presence of the Holy Spirit in us. Also God has given us His Word with an invitation to believe it. All He asks is for you to read the Word, expose your mind to this living truth. If you will submit yourself to His Word His Word will prove itself to you. It will prove itself to be the Word of God and not the Word of man.

Accepting Jesus as God's Son and provision for your salvation with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and reading His Word with the intention to obey, these are the ways to know the mind of God.

Regarding the quotation from Job regarding whether God can owe us anything, the answer is 'no". We owe God everything. God not only displayed His Omnipotence to Job but also we learn that God alone can deal with the forces of evil that would otherwise overwhelm us. We can trust God's judgments and His ways which are higher than our ways.

Romans 11:36

The three main ways God reveals His nature are spoken of here; creation (from Him) revelation (through Him) and redemption (to Him).

Quoting from the LIFE APPLICATION NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY.

Paul began his letter with the statement that God left his imprint on the world He created but that the human beings of that creation had chosen rebellion. In the past 11 chapters, Paul has examined God's marvelous plan for bringing the rebels home. God has chosen to "have mercy on them all" (11:32). Each one of us is one of the "all". What more can any believer; saved by grace, say than, "to Him be the glory forever. Amen". The word Amen is an invitation for you to agree with what has been stated.

We are now moving from the doctrinal part of this letter to the application.

Why is this important? Many people believe that salvation is just about that eternal reward received at death, and that is certainly a part of it. However, we cannot overlook the fact that salvation has to do with the here and now, as well as the hereafter. Not only are we saved but also we are to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. So many believers who lack strength and peace today are ignoring the applications to daily life which are commanded by scripture. Remember Jesus said "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest in your soul" Matthew 11:29 Jesus is saying there is an expectation that we will lay down the yoke or burden of culture and secular life, the one that does not fit us and steals our peace as we pursue the things of the world. Jesus' yoke is easy and well fitting and brings peace and rest for our souls. Why? Because it fulfills us rather than drains us.

We have been taught why we need Jesus, how to come to Him, how to have salvation and eternal life and now we learn to live for Him, that is what does it mean to take His well fitting yoke?

Romans 12:1

Here is that word "therefore" again. What is it there for? In view of all that has been written in the first 11 chapters of Romans, through the mercies or "compassions" of God, we are to live out our salvation. Our salvation is not based on pride in what we can do but entirely on God's mercy.

What are we to do by the grace of God? Offer ourselves, our bodies, which is all we really have to offer or yield to Him. Our bodies include all of us; our minds, our will,

our emotions, thoughts and desires and all our plans. This is to be offered to God in view of all He has done for us.

God wants our "I" will, our surrender will draw us to say "thy will be done".

Let's look for a minute at that word sacrifice and try to think what this command would have meant to the recipients of this letter, especially the Jewish believers.

When the Jews offered a sacrifice it was on an altar. There will be no altar for the new living sacrifice. The Jews were to kill the animal on the altar. The new living sacrifice is living.

The animal on the Jewish altar was burned up, the new living sacrifice serves. The Jewish sacrifice was based on legal obligation; the new living sacrifice, which fulfilled the legal obligation, is based on mercy and gratitude. The old animal sacrifice died, death reigned. The new living sacrifice is resurrected and celebrates eternal life.

God wants us to offer ourselves as living sacrifice—daily laying aside our own desires in order to follow Him, put all our resources and energy at His disposal, trust Him to guide us. The idea of the Greek here is; present your body once and for all. Jesus stated this in a little different way; "Take up your cross daily and follow Me". The cross is a dying place, a place to die to self and become alive to God.