

Epistle of Romans XXIII

(Chapters 10-11)

Israel's Standing in the World vs the Church

Fred R. Coulter

This section is used by Protestants to show that it's all right to do away with the laws of God. They claim that it's all right for them to go ahead and pick and choose which laws they will and will not do based upon how they feel about it. There are very important principles that are important for us to realize:

- If you judge the law you are no longer a doer of the law, but a judge!
- If you keep the law, yet break it in one point, you have broken all of the law! (James)

So, here's the thing that happens, and here's the difficulty that occurs.

Romans 10:4 (KJV): "For Christ *is* the end of the law..." So they—the Protestants—say Christ ended the Law. This is where they get the theology that the laws of God were nailed to the cross. They go from here and then they go to Col. 2; let's see how they think. That is the error in their thinking because they assume certain things not knowing what the Scriptures really say. Take the first part of Rom. 10:4, where it says that "...Christ *is* the end of the Law..." *IF you don't know the Scriptures*, you could say, 'Yeah, Christ is the end of the Law.'

Then they come over to Colossians 2:13 (KJV): "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has He quickened [made alive] together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses... [through the sacrifice and crucifixion of Jesus Christ] ...blotting out the handwriting of ordinances..." (vs 13-14).

They claim that this means blotting out all the ordinances that were in the Old Testament, but the real wording here means *blotting out the note of debt*, which means each one of our individual sins—if they were written down as a note of debt to God.

"...that was against us, which was contrary to us... [Is sin against us? *Yes!* Is sin contrary to us? *Yes!*] ...and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross" (v 14).

He nailed what to the cross? *Sin! In the person of His body, because He was the sin sacrifice!* That what was nailed to the cross was Jesus Christ and one sign: 'King of the Jews!'—in three languages: Hebrew, Greek and Latin.

Let's see what this phrase really means. We saw last time that Israel was seeking their righteousness by *works of law*. We said that a *work of law* is a law that is created for someone to do, which is contrary to the Scriptures that God has given. That creates a *work of law* and *legalism*. There is a proper *work of law* that God has given in the way of animal sacrifices for the Old Covenant. But since Christ is the sacrifice, all those animal sacrifices no longer apply. So, Christ **ended all of the work of law of sacrifices**. He also **ended the works of law for righteousness**.

That's why I translated Romans 10:4: "For Christ *is* **the end of works of law** for righteousness..." Righteousness now comes in a different way. Righteousness does not just come from an exterior thing that you are doing. Righteousness now comes from the *inside*, ***based upon faith and belief***, which then is stronger, is greater, and has more meaning.

"...to everyone who **believes**" (v 4). That is a present tense participle, showing that it is an ongoing thing that you are doing; to the one who *is believing*, and that's a constant thing.

Verse 5: "For Moses wrote *concerning* the righteousness that *comes through* the Law..." There is a righteousness derived from the Law of God, an *exterior* righteousness.

"...The man who has practiced those things shall live by them" (v 5). That is what Israel did not do. What did Israel try and do? *Being ignorant of the righteousness of God, they set out to establish their own righteousness*. For the Jews, it's keeping the Sabbath the way *they* do. For the Protestants and Catholics, it's keeping Sunday the way that *they* do. Those are all *works of law*, legalisms, which they have created for their own religion. Hence, they have made a great mistake. They have *left the way of God* and have *created a religion*.

Another thing that is important to remember: Nowhere in the New Testament does it say that those who follow Christ belong to the Christian religion. Everywhere it is ***the way of the Lord***. It's not a religion. Keep in mind, when you have *works of law* you create a religion. However, even with the Law of Moses, even if you were going to have the

righteousness of the Law, which is from Moses, then you shall live by them.

Verse 6: “But the righteousness *that comes* through faith speaks after this manner... [totally different thing] ...‘ Do not say in your heart, “Who shall ascend up to heaven?”’ (that is, to bring Christ down).... [He was very broad in his quotation of this, but nevertheless, it applies.] ...‘ Or, “Who shall descend into the abyss?”’ (that is to bring Christ up from among *the* dead). But what does it say? ‘The Word is near to you, in your mouth and in your heart.’ This is the Word of faith that we are proclaiming” (vs 6-8).

Let's see where this quote originally came from. Let's understand that almost every pagan religion had something to do with the ascending into heaven and get God and righteousness and bring it back down, or descending into the abyss to bring God up. So it applies to everybody. This is kind of a universal application of the verse.

Deuteronomy 30:11: “For this commandment which I command you today *is* not hidden from you, neither is it far off. It *is* not in heaven *that you should* say, ‘Who shall go up to heaven for us, and bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’” (vs 11-12).

That's kind of an impossible thing. And many times with the arguments of people concerning religion, you end up with impossible arguments. ‘Well, for someone to go to heaven and bring Him back down, I'll do it.’ Now we have astronauts that go up into the heavens. They haven't brought anything back down except a few stones from the moon. I think an astronaut was up there and said he didn't see God.

Another one is, v 13: “Neither *is* it beyond the sea *that you should* say... [Paul does not quote that] ...‘Who shall go over the sea for us to bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’.... [Paul said ‘ascend into the abyss’] ...But the Word *is* very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, so that you may do it. Behold, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil” (vs 13-15).

So, in quoting this, he brings the application to Christ. What is one of the names of Christ? ‘In the beginning was *the Word!*’ That's why Paul used Christ instead of *the Word*. He is using Christ as the whole personification of *the Word*. What comes from God?

Ascending:

John 3:11—Jesus said, “Truly, truly I say to

you, We speak that which We know, and We testify of that which We have seen; but you do not receive Our testimony. If I have told you earthly things, and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?” (vs 11-12). What is up there in heaven is so great and marvelous that it would be virtually impossible for a human being to comprehend it. It would have to be a spirit being in order to do it.

Verse 13: “And no one has ascended into heaven, except He Who came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man, Who is in heaven.” That verse is a parenthetical statement written in by John into the narration to make it absolutely clear that at the time John was writing this, Christ was the only One Who has ascended into heaven. No other man has ascended into heaven!

John 6:62: “What if you shall see the Son of man ascending up where He was before?” That didn't happen with the apostles. They went out and they stood on the Mt. of Olives and they watched Christ ascend up into the heavens. You know the rest of the story. The angels came and said, ‘you men of Galilee, why do you stand here gawking up into the heavens? This same Jesus Whom you have seen go up shall return in a like manner. But go to Jerusalem as He said.’

Descending:

Paul talks about ascending and descending and it all has to do with the same thing here.

Ephesians 4:8: “For this *very* reason, He says *that* after ascending on high, He **led captivity captive**, and gave gifts to men”—a way of saying that there is no sin, no problem, no difficulty that Christ did not overcome. Satan the devil no longer has any hold. If people choose to do that, then that's their choice. But if they repent and flee from that then they will not be taken captive. Whereas, if they are not relying on Christ, Satan comes around and takes them captive ‘whomever he will’ (1-Peter 5)—those who are not following God? staying close to God. So, “...He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.”

Verse 9: “Now He Who ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?”—to experience death. That's the hardest thing for people to grasp. That's why He made us in His image. We could be made in His image—spiritually—so that He could be made in the image of man to be the sacrifice. Had to be because it says that Christ was ‘sacrificed from the foundation of the world’! He experienced death!

Verse 10: "He Who descended is the same One Who also ascended above all the heavens... [that men can see] ...so that He might fulfill all things."

Let's see what He told John. These things are to give us the faith and the hope, brethren, that we know that *through Christ we have life*. That's what's important.

Revelation 1:18: Christ said, "[I am] even the One Who is living; for I was dead..." Let's go back and see how He is in His glorified form. The point I want to make is that the One Who was in brilliant glory—Jesus Christ—said He was dead.

Verse 13: "And in *the* midst of the seven lampstands *One* like *the* Son of man, clothed in a *garment* reaching to the feet, and girded about the chest with a golden breastplate. And His head and hair *were* like white wool, white as snow; and His eyes *were* like a flame of fire" (vs 13-14).

This gives you a vision of what we will look like as glorified spirit beings. Every time I read that I think, boy, that's something. Can you imagine what it would be like what God has out there.

Verse 15: "And His feet *were* like fine brass, as if *they* glowed in a furnace... [just like glowing brass in the smelting furnace] ...and His voice *was* like *the* sound of many waters. And in His right hand He had seven stars, and a sharp two-edged sword... [the Word of God] ...went out of His mouth, and His countenance *was* as the sun shining in its *full* power" (vs 15-16).

Looking out the window that is beautiful, but if you look straight into the sun, you could go blind if you go directly into it. The kind of existence Christ is giving us, through the salvation He is encouraging.

Verse 17: "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as if dead... [John was just petrified after seeing that; you have no thought of anything] ...but He laid His right hand upon me, saying to me, 'Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last, even the One Who is living; for I was dead, and behold, I am alive into the ages of eternity. Amen. And I have the keys of *the* grave and of death'" (vs 17-18).

Christ is the One Who is going to unlock the grave and raise the dead. Christ is the One Who has ascended; He is the One Who has descended; ***everything is complete in Christ!*** We don't need to have this saying here *who's going to go into heaven, who's going to go to the abyss, or whatever*.

Romans 10:8: "But what does it say? 'The

Word is near to you, in your mouth and in your heart.'...." I believe that that was a prophecy back in Deut. 30, that God would provide His Word in a language that you would understand.

"...This is the Word of faith that we are proclaiming... [here's another one that the Protestants use]: ...that if you confess with your mouth *the* Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from *the* dead, you shall be saved" (vs 8-9). The Protestants say, 'Just profess Jesus.' What does it mean to profess Jesus? What does it mean to believe Jesus? Is it just, 'Oh yes, I believe.' What kind of belief? *Belief that is in the innermost part of your being; with your heart*. That's very important because 'as a man thinks in his heart, so he is.'

Verse 10: "For with *the* heart one believes unto righteousness, and with *the* mouth one confesses unto salvation, because the Scripture says, 'Everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed'" (vs 10-11). We'll find out what kind of belief this is, what it means. Reading the verses that follow helps us understand more about believing.

John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life." What kind of belief are we talking about? Let's take our *Special Word Study from the Greek*. We have our problems; we have the world; we have circumstances all involved in it and it becomes very difficult.

To Believe: True belief in (into)...

The Greek means it's a *relationship belief*—out from your heart to Christ, from Christ back to you.

...is the basic fundamental building block of true Christianity. Such a belief means that one believes that Jesus Christ is the Savior of mankind, the Son of God born of the virgin Mary, that He died for the sins of the world...

Notice what we are to believe; it entails more than just 'yes, I believe Jesus existed as a man.' It entails all of these things.

...and each human being, that through His blood we have the forgiveness of sin, that he was raised from the dead by the power of God the Father and that He is at the right hand of the God the Father as our High Priest.

Now then, there are some interesting things that happen, that the Greek tells us are very important.

1) The verb form in the Greek is 'pisteuoo.' [It] literally means to faithize, to believe, be persuaded, to rely upon, to trust and to put your trust in.

This is the kind of belief we're talking about; a total reliance upon Jesus Christ.

The spiritual meaning in the New Testament is: [1] a fully convinced acknowledgement. [2] a self-surrendering fellowship with God the Father And Jesus Christ.

That's what that kind of belief means!

[3] a fully assured and unswerving confidence.

A) with the Greek word 'eis'—means unto or into, implying direction toward or into the object of faith, to give up one's self to.

When it's talking about 'whosoever is believing *into* Jesus Christ' this is the kind of faith that it's talking about. Complete total faith which comes from God's Spirit.

Now, let's see what this is to do for us; see how we are to behave after we have this belief. You just can't take the statement in Rom. 10^[transcriber's correction]—if you believe and you confess and so forth—and just say the words and that's it. Unlike the Protestants, you must not only believe the fact of Who He is and what He is, you must believe Him, otherwise you end up like the scientists.

There was a poll that was just recently put out that 60% of scientists say—who are mostly evolutionists—'we can find room for God in our beliefs.' That's a very condescending, 'Well, we can accommodate God.'

John 3:17: "For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world..." You can do that at the drop of a hat. The world is worthy of condemnation because of sin at all times. That's not why He came.

"...but that the world might be saved through Him.... [redeemed through the condemnation] ...The one who believes in Him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment: that the Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the Light because their works were evil" (vs 17-19).

That's why Christmas is so appealing to the world. They can keep their evil, they can keep their

lies. But, they can *feel good* about their doing things, because they're doing 'good' for people.

"...but men loved darkness rather than the Light..." (v 19). Jesus is the Light of the world! Men love the darkness of the world, rather than the Light Who is Christ.

"...because their works were evil. For everyone who practices evil hates the Light..." (vs 19-20). It comes out this way: 'Well, I don't know about that.' It's kind of like the Mormons saying, 'We believe in the Bible inasmuch as it's translated directly.' That sounds like a good and intelligent statement. But who determines that? *God!* If you try and tell them that that's wrong, they can get hateful. You try and tell someone they're doing wrong, they get hateful. They hate the light.

"...and does not come to the Light..." (v 20).

For those of us who are Christians, we are to be coming to the Light. We are to be progressively coming to the Christ in everything that we do while we are:

- believing
- confessing
- walking in the way of the Lord

We are to be coming to the Light, "...so that his works may not be exposed... [so they're not doing that] ...but **the one who practices the Truth** comes to the Light..." (vs 20-21). What is Truth?

- Your Word is Truth
- Your commandments are Truth
- Your laws are Truth
- Your statutes are true
- all Your precepts concerning all things are right and true altogether

Truth is coming to the Light! "...so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*" (v 21). All of this is part of *believing!*

- you're walking in God's way
- you're going to Him
- you're walking toward the Light

Another peculiar thing happens, and we've seen this. People were walking toward the light. Then somewhere along the line they became stagnated and stopped. The light is still shining on you, so you think everything is still pretty good. Then some realized what was happening and got up and started moving toward the light again. Others didn't realize what was happening and they moved

away from the light. That can become very deceptive. If you have the light shining and you turn your back on it and you're walking away from it, it's still gives you the feeling that you're in the light, because you can see the affects of it out ahead of you.

You see the lights of a car and then you see something and you're walking out in front of it. Soon, in their journey in walking away from the light, they go so far that they go back into darkness. For the brethren that are getting close to that, we need to pray that they don't do that.

John 8:12: "Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, 'I am the Light of the world... [this is the Light you need to be walking toward and walking in] ...the one who follows Me shall never walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life.'" That's all a part of the belief.

Verse 23—talking to the Jews: "And He said to them, 'You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. That is why I said to you that you shall die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I AM... [that has great significance there: believe that He was the Son of man; believe that He was God before He became a human being] ...you shall die in your sins'" (vs 23-24).

John 10:25: "Jesus answered them, 'I have told you, but you do not believe. The works that I am doing in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me. But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.... [that's why it's so important that you follow Christ] ... And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; and no one shall take them out of My hand. My Father, Who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one has the power to seize *them* from My Father's hand. I and the Father are one'" (vs 25-30).

Then the Jews said, 'We believe.' NO! Verse 31: "Then the Jews again picked up stones so that they might stone Him. Jesus answered them, 'Many good works I have showed you from My Father. For which of them are you about to stone Me?' The Jews answered Him, saying, 'We will not stone You for a good work, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, are making Yourself God'" (vs 31-33).

Verse 34: "Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your law, "I said, 'You are gods'"? If He called them gods, to whom the Word of God came (and the Scriptures cannot be broken), *why* do you say *of Him* Whom the Father has sanctified and sent

into the world, "You are blaspheming," because I said, "I am *the* Son of God"? If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me. But if I do, even if you do not believe Me, believe the works; so that you may perceive and may believe that the Father *is* in Me, and I in Him'" (vs 34-38).

So, there's a little extra credibility that Christ gave, the works that He did: the healings, raising of the dead, feeding of the 4,000, feeding of the 5,000, and all of those works testified of Him. It's not a matter of that you have room in your mind that God exists. That's not it, but you have a complete belief unto salvation.

This is the so-called 'faith chapter,' but there's one verse that I believe is the most important verse here, Hebrews 11:6: "Now **without faith**..."—separate and apart from faith. *Faith* is the noun, *believe* is the verb. In the Greek they are the same root. In English they are spelled differently.

"...**it is impossible to please God**..." (v 6). That's what's important to really understand. That's why the example of the man who brought his son to the disciples and he had this demon possessed son who threw him into the water and the disciples couldn't cast it out. The man said, 'Yes, Lord, but help my unbelief.' Since we're human beings we can't say we can have perfect faith, perfect belief. We have to grow in it.

"...*it is impossible to please God*.... [if you don't believe Him] ...For it is mandatory... [obligatory, absolutely essential that you believe] ...*for* the one who comes to God to believe that He exists, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (v 6).

The ultimate reward is here and now. *NO!* The ultimate reward is *eternal life in the Kingdom of God!* This is what it means to believe in the way that Paul was writing about here:

Romans 10:10: "For with *the* heart one believes unto righteousness..." When you have that kind of righteousness, God is going to impute the righteousness of Jesus Christ to you.

- *if* you really believe Christ
- *if* you really believe His words
- *if* you really believe what He has said
- *if* you really believe that He is our Savior

Do you desire to sin? *No!* Can you have a greater righteousness than works of law? Works of law is you can do it in the letter, but your heart could be almost anything. Now you have to have your heart cured by salvation through Christ, so that you

believe with the heart and it comes from the innermost part of your being; part of the way that you are, the way that you live.

“...and with *the* mouth one confesses unto salvation, because the Scripture says, ‘Everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed.’.... [note 1-Cor. 13:8—love never fails, faith never makes you ashamed; the two go hand-in-hand] ...For there is no difference between Jew and Greek, because the same Lord of all *is* rich toward all who call upon Him. For everyone who calls on the name of *the* Lord shall be saved” (vs 10-13).

When is this going to happen in the greatest display of salvation that the world has ever seen? That means calling on Him with faith and belief from the heart (Rev. 7). What do we have here? *We have all these terrible things going on with the Tribulation occurring*, death on every hand, one-quarter of all men killed, the earth in upheaval, earthquakes, fightings, warrings, everything going on. And then we have the 144,000 of Israel who are saved. I imagine what they did was just get on their knees and say, ‘O God, save us!’ They would have to. Then the great innumerable multitude, they are saved. What happens when they see all of these catastrophes going on? They get on their knees and cry out to God, ‘O God, save me!’ What is God going to do? *He’s going to save them!* This is the last day harvest of the 50-days of Pentecost.

Verse 14: “How then shall they call on *Him* in Whom they have not believed?... [that’s a logical question] ...And how shall they believe in *Him* of Whom they have not heard?...”

I want you to think of this as a prophecy for the end-time. Not only just back then, but continuous. At the end-time, I think God is going to unfold this where there is going to be a tremendous witness that is going to be given. How that’s going to happen, who all is going to be involved, we don’t know. It might even be beyond the lifetime of some of us; we don’t know. We’ll just have to wait and see.

“...And how shall they hear without *one* who is preaching? And how shall they preach, unless they be sent?...” (vs 14-15). They have to be sent.

- God is the One Who has to do it
- God is the One Who has to raise up
- God is the One Who has to call
- God is the One Who has to educate
- God is the One Who has to send

Not knowing how God is going to do it, one of the things we’re trying to do here is to educate, to

teach, to equip and to follow the example that Jesus said, ‘***It is sufficient that the disciple become as the teacher.***’ We don’t know what God may have down the road for any of us. When things just fall apart everywhere, then it’s going to be neighbor-to-neighbor and person-to-person. I’m not thinking anything in the way of a media-type thing that we’ve been familiar with in the past. That’s why we want to be prepared and know as much as we can.

“...And how shall they hear without preaching? And how shall they preach, unless they be sent? Accordingly, it is written, ‘How beautiful *are* the feet of those who announce the Gospel of Peace, and those who announce the good news of good things!’.... [the coming Kingdom of God] ... But all have not obeyed the Gospel because as Isaiah said, ‘Lord, who has believed our report?’ So then, ***faith comes by hearing, and hearing through the Word of God***” (vs 14-17). That answers the question of how faith comes:

- that’s why God gave the Sabbath
- that’s why there’s preaching on the Sabbath
- that’s why God gave His Word

What happens when you read? *You hear yourself think!* So, you’re still hearing—correct? These people who think they can really learn a lot by speed-reading. I’ve seen them just take a page and just kind of wishy-wash their finger back and forth across the page like a snake traveling 60-miles a second and flipping the pages and say ‘I’ve read this whole book.’ Well, what did you learn?

If I did that, I’d have to say I didn’t learn anything. I’m kind of a plotter when it comes to reading. When you read, you’re speaking to yourself. So, you’re hearing the inspiration is in the word which comes right off the page. What do we have? *We have 26 letters in the English alphabet.* We have the words assembled and put together on paper so we have a black and white. What is the value of it? I mean, we could have another book, any other book—say the *Encyclopedia Britannica*—why doesn’t that bring faith? It has the same 26-letter alphabet, many of the same words.

The Word of God is special, and the Word of God has an affect upon people because it is the Word of God, that nothing else does. Nothing else can do that, because nothing else in the world is written and inspired by God like the Bible. The Bible was written just to communicate not just words, but to communicate God’s thoughts. It was written for the heart as well as for the mind.

John 6:63: “It is the Spirit that gives life...” It is the Spirit that inspired the Word of God. That’s

why the Word of God gives life.

"...the flesh profits nothing...." (v 63). Just letters themselves, the physical things, mean nothing. It is what happens when it is read.

"...The words that I speak to you, *they* are Spirit and *they* are Life" (v 63). That's what's important with the Word of God. It conveys a spiritual meaning. No other book can do that. That's why Paul was saying that hearing comes through the Word of God.

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This is what I think was not only done then, but it's a prophecy for our day, today; Romans 10:18 "But I say, did they not hear?...." What constitutes hearing? *They didn't have radio, television or the printing press!*

"...Yes, indeed, *for it is written*, 'Their voices went out into all the earth ; their words went out even to the ends of the habitable world.'.... [the apostles and disciples preached everywhere] ...Nevertheless, I say, did not Israel know? First, Moses said, 'I will provoke you to jealousy through *those who are not a people*. I will anger you through a people without understanding.' Then Isaiah was very bold and said, 'I was found by those who were not seeking Me, *and I was revealed to those who were not inquiring after Me*'" (vs 18-20).

That's because God reached down and called. The whole proposition is entirely different. That's quite a prophecy. This prophecy was given by Isaiah. Isn't that always the way. We can see that even in human nature. Parents work hard to provide for their children: provide them a house, room, clothing, food, everything. Then the children grow up to be snot-nosed brats! ***That's the way Israel has treated God!*** God has provided everything for them and then they grow up to be snot-nosed brats!

Isaiah 65:1: "I revealed Myself to those who asked not for Me..." Keep in mind that God did not deal with any of the Gentile nations until beginning with Peter in Acts 10. God just left them all on their own. Israel was given God's laws. Israel was given the temple. They had the priesthood. What did they do? *They became stiff-necked, rebellious; so God had to cut them off!* God said, 'All those people out there that you don't even think are people, you call them *goyeem*. ***I'm going to call them!*** They weren't seeking Me. They were out after their other gods.'

But: "**...I am found by those who did not seek Me....** [God just twists it around the other way] ...I said, 'Behold Me, behold Me,' to **a nation** not called by My name.... [That was Church that was not yet formed.] ...I have spread out My hands all

the day to a rebellious people who walk in the way that is not good, *even* after their own thoughts; a people *who* without ceasing **provoke Me to My face...**" (vs 1-3).

Don't they do that? ***They provoke God continually!*** 'Oh well, the Sabbath is not important; the Holy Days are not important; if we have good thoughts in our heart—we're fine.' **NO!** 'Well, since, this a nice little practice that the Baalites have over here; that's cute and nice, let's do that. That's interesting—isn't it? They have fun doing it; let's have fun with them.' They had the privilege of having God's Word given to them, yet, they provoke God to anger continually! Not only that:

"...who sacrifice in gardens, and burn incense upon the bricks; *a people* who sit among the graves, and spend the night in the tombs, who eat swine's flesh, and broth of vile *things* in their vessels..." (vs 3-4).

Raw oysters and all the other abominations that they have: how about a little snake? How about little rat? How about tender little mice?—the bones are soft and you can just crunch them down, they have good calcium. That's the way people would reason. 'Who is God to say that this pork isn't any good? I know what I'll do, I'll clone a pig that chews cud, now what are you going to do?' They won't follow God! Anything but follow God!

Verse 5: "Who say, 'Keep to yourself, do not come near me... [good Pharisee] ...for I am holier than you.'...." *Don't you dare, you nation or people that are not a people, don't you dare even step in my room, because I'm holy.*

"...**These are a smoke in My nostrils, a fire that burns all the day.** Behold, *it is written* before Me; I will not be silent, except I will repay; yea, I will repay into their bosom your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together,' says the LORD, '*they* that burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed Me upon the hills. And I will measure their former work into their bosom.' Thus says the LORD, 'As the new wine is found in the cluster, and *one* says, "Do not destroy it, for a blessing *is* in it," so I will do for My servants, that I may not destroy them all'" (vs 5-8). God says He's not going to destroy them all.

Verse 9: "And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah one who inherits My mountains; and My elect will inherit it, and My servants will dwell there."

That, brethren, is a prophecy of the Church. This is what Paul is talking about: Israel and the

Jews:

- rejected God
- rejected the Word
- rejected Christ

So, He's going out, literally, into the highways and byways of the world and bringing those that He's going to bring.

Romans 10:21: "However, to Israel he said, 'All day long I have stretched out My hands to a people who are disobeying and contradicting.'" Just will not! "...disobeying and contradicting..." is kind of like cemented rebellion, there is no movement at all! Isn't that true, especially when you look at it with the Jews and what they have done. In spite of that, God still has some promises that He has to fulfill to Israel and the Jews. And to whom did He give these promises? *He gave them to Abraham! Yes, He did!*

Now, that's the whole basis for Romans 11: 1: "Now then, I say, did God Himself repudiate His people? MAY IT NEVER BE!.... [He hasn't cast them off entirely] ...For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God did not repudiate His people whom He foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in *the account of Elijah*? How he was pleading with God against Israel, saying, 'Lord, they have killed your prophets, and they have torn down your altars; and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life'" (vs 1-3).

Sometimes you may feel that way in your obedience to God; there's no one else around! Don't worry, there are others! Don't know who they are or where they are, but they're there; God will reveal it in due time.

I got a call from a man very similar to that. He said he's tried every spin-off group under the sun, and his wife was ready to give up, and he said, 'No, somewhere, God is doing something somewhere. I don't know where, but God will lead us to it.' Someone gave him some of our tapes, and he got a care package, and that really helped him a lot. It's the same way with us, all the troubles we've gone through and all the people we know, just remember this: ***It is not over until it's over!*** If God can call them out of Catholicism and Protestantism, He can call them out of an apostate Church of God just as well. They have repenting to do, that is true. But, if we can help provide the spiritual tools for them to do that, then that's what God would want us to do.

Verse 4: "But what did the answer from God say to him? 'But what did the answer from God say to him? 'I have reserved for Myself seven thousand

men who have not bowed a knee to Baal.' Now then, in the same way, at the present time also there is a remnant according to *the* election... [selection] ...of grace.... [God selected. So there is a remnant that God has selected] ...But if *the election is by grace, it is* no longer by works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace..." (vs 4-6). He has left the 'religion' of the *works of law* and has done it by *grace*.

"...But if *it is* of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. What then? What Israel was seeking *through works*, this it did not obtain. But the election obtained... [he was talking of those who were the 7,000] ...*it through grace*, and the **rest [of Israel] were hardened**... [God just gave them over to unbelief] ...(according as it is written, 'God gave them a spirit of slumber, eyes that are not able to see, and ears that are not able to hear,') unto this day" (vs 6-8).

Here's a great principle we need to understand: God wants those to who are converted to be *hot*. If you're going to be converted, *be hot and zealous*. So, he tells the Laodiceans, 'be zealous, therefore, and repent.' He doesn't like it lukewarm. He said, 'I would rather have you cold than lukewarm, but since you're lukewarm, and I've called you, now let's get on the ball and turn up the heat and get hot.' *That's what God wants!*

The people in the world cannot hear and understand because God has closed their minds. That's why our calling is so important. Maybe we ought to value what God has given us in the way of understanding of His Word far more in importance and thankfulness because of what He's done. It's a tremendous thing! It is absolutely marvelous! God has done it. Have you ever tried to talk with someone who knows nothing about God and you mention something about God and it's kind of just like talking to a wall? It's almost like you look in their eyes and it's sort of a glass over their eyes. That is given over to a *spirit of slumber*.

Verse 9: "David also says, 'Let their table be for a snare and for a trap, and for a stumbling block, and for a recompense to them; let their eyes be darkened so that they are not able to see, and bow down their backs continually.' Therefore I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? MAY IT NEVER BE!.... [it's only temporary] ...But by their transgression, salvation *has come* to the Gentiles for the purpose of provoking them to jealousy" (vs 9-11).

However it happened that only a *few* were provoked to jealousy. The others got mad and angry, and every time Paul went into a synagogue they had

a riot. That's why the calling of God is a tremendous, absolute marvelous miracle: to have your mind and heart opened and to know the Word of God! That is something! You have to know that God Himself has done it. How would you like to have the Apostle Paul's job? We cover some of this in *Scripturalism vs Judaism*.

He comes into the synagogue, Acts 13:14: "Now, after passing through from Perga, they came to Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath Day and sat down.... [his mission was *to the Jews first, then to the Greek*] ...And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue said to them, 'Men, brethren, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, speak.' Then Paul stood up and, after beckoning with his hand, said, 'Men, Israelites, and those who fear God, listen *to me*' (vs 14-16).

Then he gives a whole dissertation of what happened with Moses and David and then John the Baptist, and so forth. Then he starts bringing in the strong meat:

Verse 38: "Therefore, be it known to you, men *and* brethren, that through this Man *the* remission of sins is preached to you. And in Him **everyone who believes is justified from all things**, from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses.... [when he said that, he had to give the warning]: ...Take heed, therefore, lest that which is spoken in the Prophets come upon you: "Behold, you despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work that you will in no way believe, *even* if one declares it to you.'" And when the Jews had gone out of the synagogue... [they got up and left] ...the Gentiles entreated *him* that these words might be spoken to them on the next Sabbath" (vs 38-42). Then the whole thing just really turned out to be quite a thing the next Sabbath.

Verse 44: "And on the coming Sabbath, almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the Word of God. But when they saw the multitude, the Jews were filled with envy; and they spoke against the things proclaimed by Paul, *and* were contradicting and blaspheming. But Paul and Barnabas spoke boldly, saying, 'It was necessary for the Word of God to be spoken to you first; but since you reject it and do not judge yourselves worthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles; for so the Lord has enjoined *upon* us: "I have set You for a light of *the* Gentiles that You should be for salvation unto *the* uttermost parts of the earth.'" And when the Gentiles heard *this*, they rejoiced..." (vs 44-48).

They were happy, but it created a lot of strife and trouble. But even though they were in that

condition, God did not cast them off because He promised. *He still promised to Abraham!* "...and they glorified the Word of the Lord, and believed, as many as were appointed to eternal life" (v 48).

Romans 11:11: "Therefore I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? MAY IT NEVER BE! But by their transgression, salvation *has come* to the Gentiles for the purpose of provoking them to jealousy. Now, if their transgression *be the* riches of *the* world, and their failure *be the* wealth of *the* Gentiles, how much more *will* their fullness *be*?" (vs 11-12). He's projecting forward to the Millennium, the Kingdom of God being on the earth.

Verse 13: "I am speaking to you, *the* Gentiles, inasmuch as I am an apostle of *the* Gentiles—I magnify my service, if by any means I might provoke to jealousy *those of* my flesh, and might save some among them. For if their casting away *be the* reconciliation of *the* world, what *shall* the receiving of *them be*, except life from *the* dead?" (vs 13-15).

Gives you an idea of what's going to happen with the return of Christ. It's going to be like 'life from among the dead.'

Verse 16: "Now, if the firstfruit *is* Holy, the lump *is* also *Holy*; and if the root *is* Holy, the branches *are* also *Holy*.... [this goes right back to Abraham, all of this] ...But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree..." (vs 16-17)

He uses an olive tree because olive trees were one of the major crops they had all around the Mediterranean, plus they have wild olive trees. The difference between a cultivated olive tree and a wild olive tree was that the wild olive trees had very little fruit, whereas the cultivated had fruit. That's why he uses this analogy here.

"...were grafted in among them, and you became a fellow partaker of the root and of the fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches; but if you are boasting against *them*, remember that you do not bear the root; rather, the root bears you" (vs 17-18).

In other places he said 'If you're Christ's then you're Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.'

Verse 19: "Will you then say, 'The branches were broken off in order that I might be grafted in'? *That is* true! Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be high-minded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches,

take heed lest He not spare you either. Therefore, behold *the* graciousness and *the* severity of God: upon those who fell, severity; and upon you, graciousness, **if** you continue in *His* graciousness; **otherwise you also will be cut off**" (vs 19-22).

That goes right back to Rom. 2:13: *God is no respecter of persons!*

Verse 23: "And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, shall be grafted in because God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from an olive tree which by nature is wild, and contrary to nature were grafted into a good olive tree, how much more shall those who according to nature *were from the good olive tree* be grafted back into their own olive tree? For I do not wish you to be ignorant of this mystery, brethren, in order that you may not be wise in your own conceits: that a **partial hardening of the heart** has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in" (vs 23-25).

I don't know exactly how that's all going to be with working that all out. It's happened *partially*. That's why we have Protestants today, their partial hardening. But still trying follow God after *their own way? Yes! Yes, indeed!*

Verse 26: "And so all Israel shall be saved..." I don't think Paul really fully understood the second resurrection here, but he did know that all Israel shall be saved.

"...according as it is written: 'Out of Sion shall come the Deliverer, and He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. for this *is* My covenant, which I will make with them when I have taken away their sins.' On the one hand, concerning the Gospel, *they are* enemies for your sakes; but on the other hand, concerning the election, *they are* beloved for the fathers' sakes" (vs 26-28).

In other words, God still loves Israel, though they're rebellious, because of the promises that He gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He still loves them. God is willing to do good to them, if they just wouldn't keep pushing God away. If they just wouldn't keep seeking their own way instead of God's way.

Verse 29: "Because the gifts... [promises to the fathers] ...and **the calling** of God *are* never revoked." Once God made those promises, they were irrevocable.

Verse 30: "For just as you once did not believe God, but have now been shown mercy through their unbelief, in the same way also... [at this time] ...they have not believed at this time in order that through the mercy shown to you, they also

may have mercy shown *to them*. For God has given them all over to unbelief in order that He might show mercy to all.... [that is in the long run in His plan] ... O *the* depth of *the* riches of both *the* wisdom and *the* knowledge of God! How unfathomable *are* His judgments and unsearchable *are* His ways!" (vs 30-33).

That God would work it out this way (Ezek. 37) the second resurrection. That's why when Israel is raised, they said, 'Oh, we've been cut off for our parts. We've been forsaken of God.' He says, 'No, I'm going to put My Spirit in you and you're going to live, and you're going to know Me.'

Verse 34: "For who did know *the* mind of *the* Lord, or who became His counselor? Or who first gave to Him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For from Him, and through Him, and unto Him *are* all things; to Him *be* the glory into the ages of eternity. Amen" (vs 34-36).

So, he ends that whole section there—those three chapters—9-11—have to do with Israel and their standing in the world today vs the Church and having to do with the calling of God and everything that we're confronted with today.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 10:4
- 2) Colossians 2:13-14
- 3) Romans 10:4-8
- 4) Deuteronomy 30:11-15
- 5) John 3:11-13
- 6) John 6:62
- 7) Ephesians 4:8-10
- 8) Revelation 1:18, 13-18
- 9) Romans 10:8-11
- 10) John 3:16-21
- 11) John 8:12, 23-24
- 12) John 10:25-38
- 13) Hebrews 11:6
- 14) Romans 10:10-17
- 15) John 6:63
- 16) Romans 10:18-20
- 17) Isaiah 65:1-9
- 18) Romans 10:21
- 19) Romans 11:1-11
- 20) Acts 13:14-16, 38-42, 44-48
- 21) Romans 11:11-36

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Peter 5
- 1 Corinthians 13:8
- Revelation 7
- Acts 10

- Romans 2:13
- Ezekiel 37

Also referenced: Sermon Series:
Scripturalism vs Judaism

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