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Romans 9

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Bible
at Home**

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Romans 9.

Topics.

- Paul anguishes over his Jewish brothers.
- Not all who descended from Abraham are Abraham's offspring.
- Jacob, I loved, but Esau I hated.
- I will have mercy on who I will, and have compassion on who I will.
- The potter and the clay.
- Vessels fit for mercy and vessels fit for destruction.
- Though Israel is as the sand of the sea, only a remnant will be saved.
- The Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay.
- Righteousness through faith, contrasted to pursuing it by the law.

The previous chapter: in the previous chapter Paul spoke about setting the mind on the flesh and setting the mind on the Spirit; God doing what the law could never do; walking according to the Spirit; all of creation eagerly waiting for the revealing of the Sons of God; the Spirit helping in times of weakness and answered two questions, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" and "Who is able to separate us from the love of God in Christ's Jesus?"

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

ROMANS 9:1-5

Paul anguishes over his Jewish Brothers.

- **Romans 9:1-5:** I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—²that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen (the Jews) according to the flesh (birthright). ⁴They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. ⁵To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.
- Remember this is a letter Paul is writing to the Christian brothers in Rome.

Paul's words, "I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit," means that Paul has a clear conscience before God in saying that he has great sorrow and unceasing anguish in his heart for the people of his nation Israel. It means that before God he knows he is telling the truth. The following show that Israel has always been God's special and unique people. God said:

- Israel was his son who he called out of Egypt and he loved them when they were a child (Hosea 11:1).
- He gave birth to Israel and carried them from the womb even to their old age (Isaiah 46:3-4).
- Israel is his allotted heritage (Deut. 32:9) and the apple of his eye (Deut. 32:10).

- Israel is a people holy to him (Deut. 7:6) and his treasured possession (Deut. 14:2).

The LORD has not spoken this way with any other nation, but God has not only spoken of Israel differently, but always dealt with them differently to any other nation:

- To Israel God gave the Ten Commandments and showed his great power.
- To Israel God declared his word, statutes and his rules.
- To Israel God gave the prophets, the worship and the promises.
- To Israel belonged the covenant, the adoption, the patriarchs and the glory.
- To Israel the oracles of God were entrusted.
- The people of Israel are the offspring of Abraham the father of faith.
- From Israel's race came the Christ the Saviour of the World.
- The LORD has not given any other nations such great privileges.

Anathema: in the King James Bible the word is anathema is translated accursed anathema it comes from the Greek word (anathernia). When used biblically it refers to a religious ban and carries the idea of excommunicating a person from religious services and fellowship.

Following are the two most likely thoughts of what Paul meant when he said, "I could wish that I was accursed (anathema) from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen.

1. Paul so greatly loved the nation of Israel and his kinsmen who he had grown up with that upon seeing how far they had fallen from God was so troubled and hurt in his spirit to see his own people and kinsman separated from God that If it were possible he would gladly excommunicate himself from Christ if laying aside his own salvation meant the nation of Israel could be saved.

Some might think Paul was boldly saying this because he knew it was impossible to do since everyone has to make their own individual decision, but Paul had previously stated that before God he has a clear conscience in expressing his deep sorrow and declaring his love for Israel. Perhaps to help understand the sincerity of Paul's words one only has to look at the enormous persecution, beatings, imprisonments etc., he suffered at the hand of the Jews in his continued attempts to proclaim to them the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Paul loved his nation Israel and his Kinsmen so much he almost wished he could be excommunicated from Christ to be in unity with them. Much like a brother or sister becoming a Christian, but all their family who they have grown up with and greatly love is totally against their faith and therefore the warm unity of love and fellowship they once had is ruined. Because of the great love in the heart of the brother or sister in Christ for their own family it would be perfectly natural for them to wish that they could be severed from Christ so as to be bonded once again in the warm fellowship they once had with their own family members.

This of course is an impossibility for those who know the love of Christ since his love surpasses all other love so even though there might be the heartfelt desire for the fellowship the brother or sister once had with their own family members it can never be while their family is aggressively against the Lord Jesus Christ as the religious leaders of the nation of Israel were. Though Paul loved his nation and his kinsmen the love of God dwelling in his heart was so much greater that it was impossible for him to compromise his faith to accommodate those he loved, but were antagonistic toward the Lord Jesus Christ.

The beauty, majestic and stunning wonder of God: Israel was God's chosen people, so much so that from them came the Christ we all love with overwhelming devotion and glory. Yet the nation that was chosen to be exalted above all nations rejected their promised King and Messiah, which resulted in God (through the apostles, especially Paul) turning His eternal favour toward the Gentiles (everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew) and is now building a totally new nation made up of Jews and Gentiles in Christ. This new nation is also called a new creation, the Kingdom of God, the church and the body of Christ.

To understand God's eternal promises made thousands of years ago it is important to know that the promised seed of the woman in (Genesis 3:14-15), the promised seed of Abraham and the promised seed of David is Christ and that all the eternal promises God made to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ and are therefore no longer limited to Israel only, but extend and embrace all those who belong to Christ. This is because God is now creating one new nation in Christ made up of both Jew and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew).

Jews and Gentiles become one new nation in Christ: the apostle Paul said:

- Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands—¹²remember that you (Gentiles) were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the *COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL* and *STRANGERS* to the *COVENANTS* of *PROMISE*, having no hope and without God in the world.¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ.¹⁴ For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us both *ONE* and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself *ONE NEW MAN* (or Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace,¹⁶ and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in *ONE BODY* through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles).¹⁷ And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews).¹⁸ For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in *ONE SPIRIT* to the Father.¹⁹ So then you (Gentiles) are *NO LONGER* strangers and aliens, but you are *FELLOW CITIZENS* with the *SAINTS* (the Jews) and members of the *HOUSEHOLD* of God,²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone²¹ in whom the *WHOLE STRUCTURE* being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord.²² In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a *DWELLING PLACE* for *GOD* by the Spirit (Ephes. 2:11-22).

Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the, Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this new nation and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God because in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout all nations of the world.

The practical application: if you belong to Christ, all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel also apply to you. The book of Revelation states:

- When Christ returns in glory every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth (Rev. 1:7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and he has made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

ROMANS 9:6-16

Not all who descended from Abraham are Abraham's Offspring.

- **Romans 9:6-16:** But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel⁷ and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."⁸ This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring.⁹ For this is what the promise said: "About this time next year I will return and Sarah shall have a son."¹⁰ And not only so, but also when Rebecca had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac,¹¹ though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of his call—¹² she was told, "The older (Esau) will serve the younger (Jacob)."¹³ As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."¹⁴ What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means!¹⁵ For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."¹⁶ So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.

Election: means a divine selection it can refer to a person making a choice or of one being selected and chosen.

Call: means to call incite and urge a person forward by a command or an order.

The promise: Paul refers to is the following promise God made to Abraham:

- As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her." Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" (Gen. 17:15-17).

Abraham and Sarah gave birth to Isaac, he took Rebecca as his wife and they gave birth to Esau and Jacob. Esau was the firstborn but sold his birthright to Jacob who gave birth to twelve sons who became known as the twelve Tribes of Israel and whose descendants are the nation of Israel. Paul is saying not all who descended from Jacob belong to Israel. Abraham's wife Sarah gave birth to Ishmael and Isaac and then later died after her death Abraham took Keturah as a wife and had more children (Gen. 25:1). Paul is saying only those who came through Isaac are counted as Abraham's descendants (offspring). It is not the children of the flesh, (meaning children born from Abraham naturally contrasted to the miraculous birth of Isaac) who are the children of God, but the children of the promise who are counted as offspring (i.e. those born of Isaac).

Sarah was ninety when she gave birth to Isaac and Abraham was one-hundred, Isaac was the result of a promise God made to Abraham and he came by a miracle birth that is why those from his bloodline are counted as Abraham's offspring. Ishmael and his children and the children of Keturah were of the flesh, meaning born of a natural birth and are not counted as children of the promise

Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated: prior to the birth of Esau and Jacob Rebecca was told that:

- The older son Esau will serve Jacob the younger son (v12).

And then long after Esau's death Malachi penned the words:

- I have loved you" (the Jewish priests) says the LORD. But you say, "How have you loved us?" "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved Jacob but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his (Esau) hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert" (Mal 1:2-3).

God did not hate Esau before he was even born, but in His eternal foreknowledge God did know the wicked path Esau would take. Esau's history shows that he did not have the same passion for God as Jacob did. Esau placed no value on the inheritance that was due to him being the firstborn, but instead sold it for a plate of food, nor did he value the promise of God, neither did he fear or show God honour and he took two Hittite women for wives contrary to the will of God.

Birthright and God's favour: in Malachi God loved the Priests because they were descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but at the time of Malachi the Priest like Esau despised God's name and did not fear or show him honour (Mal. 1:6). God is comparing the Priests of Israel to Jacob and Esau. Esau was Jacob's older brother (the firstborn) and had the right to the inheritance and the promises, yet God rejected Esau and chose Jacob. God is saying to the Priests, just because they are born of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob does not guarantee God's favour. He is warning them that just as God rejected Esau who had the rights to the inheritance, God will also reject them if they do not give God the honour, He is due. In Romans Paul is applying the same principle to the unbelieving Jews, he is simply telling them that being descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, does not guarantee God's favour, if they do not accept Jesus, God will reject them as he did Esau and the priest of Malachi's day. The same principal applies today, just because a person is born into a Christian family, a church or religious organisation does not guarantee them salvation.

I will have mercy on who I will and have compassion on who I will: Paul perceiving what his readers might be thinking raises the question, "What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part?" (v14) referring to God's statement, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion" (v15).

Mercy: means to show compassion and tender pity by word or deed (especially by divine grace). God is simply stating that His mercy is not bound by a person's birthright, meaning that just because a person is born a descendant of Abraham does not guaranteed they will be granted God's mercy or delivered from His wrath. God is saying that He will choose who He shows mercy and compassion to, since God would without question be proven unjust if He did show mercy and compassion on a person regardless of their rebellious behaviour or wicked actions simply because they were lucky enough to be born into the right family.

The Bible states that God shows mercy to thousands who:

- Love Him (Exod. 20:6) (Deut. 5:10).
- Keep His covenant and commandments (Deut. 7:9) (Neh. 1:5).
- Listen to His rules and keeps them (Deut. 7:12).
- Are faithful, in righteousness and in uprightness of heart (1 Kings 3:6).
- Walk before Him with all their heart (1 Kings 8:23 2) (2 Chron. 6:14).
- Fear Him (Luke 1:50) and are obedient to Him (Rom. 11:30).

But God does not show mercy to those who:

- Are guilty (i.e., are in deliberate rebellion or sin) (Exod. 34:7) (Numbers. 14:18).
- Do not fear the LORD and turn from His way (Isa. 63:17).
- Do not show mercy to others (James 2:13).

God has Mercy on who He will, and Hardens who He Will.

- **Romans 9:17-23:** For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." ¹⁸So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills. ¹⁹You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?" ²⁰But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is moulded say to its moulder, "Why have you made me like this?" ²¹Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honoured use and another for dishonourable use? ²²What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory

Hardens: in this context means to render stubborn and carries the idea of being heartless, harsh severe, fierce or cold of heart. The Bible states that God hardens the heart of those who turn from His way (Isa. 63:17) and that people who are prideful, speak evil of God or His message, live a lifestyle of sin and do not accept or listen to God or His law harden their own hearts (Neh. 9:29) (Jer. 7:26) (Dan. 5:20) (Heb. 3:13). The result of a stubborn or hardened heart is unbelief, lack of perception and understanding (Acts 19:9) (Mark 8:17) (Mark 6:52).

The Bible says: Pharaoh hardened his heart four times.

- (Exod. 8:15) (Exod. 8:32) (Exod. 9:34 1) (Sam. 6:6).

And that the LORD hardened Pharaohs heart six times.

- (Exod. 9:12) (Exod. 10:1) (Exod. 10:20) (Exod. 10:27) (Exod. 11:10) (Exod. 14:8).

The potter and the clay: Paul, perceives the question all humanity will ask, then asks the question himself "Why does God still find fault for who can resist his will?" Paul does not really give an answer to the question, instead he says, what is man that he should answer back to God or question God? We are often tempted to ask questions about God's justice that aren't appropriate, we will only be concerned about them if we have failed to accept our low status and Bible teaching that we all come from Adam and Adam was made from the dust so all humans come from the same dust or clay, if we accept this all our questions let alone implied criticisms of God are inappropriate. It's like a small child insisting that their father explain the workings of a car to them, but even if it was explained they wouldn't understand since the concepts are far beyond them. Nevertheless it should be noted that Paul does not say God is making or predestining one human for honour and another for dishonour but rather that God being the creator of all mankind does have the right to do this and that God is with longsuffering enduring prideful and wicked people whose outward actions clearly show that are only fit for destruction.

Vessels fit for mercy and vessels fit for destruction: it is not the vessels of mercy God has predestined beforehand (Rom. 9:23), but the riches of His glory which He will make known to the vessels of mercy, referring to those who accept His ways and show mercy to others whereas those who deny God and His way and show no mercy to others become vessels fit for wrath.

A potter and his clay: when a potter is making a jar and the clay falters because there is a flaw in the clay, he destroys the jar because of the fault in the clay and then begins from the beginning making an entirely new jar. God is saying to Israel, "why can't I do the same as the potter does with his clay and start from the beginning?" Which the LORD in the Old

Testament did by using Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon to destroy Israel and bring them into captivity for seventy-years during which time God began to rebuild the nation of Israel and transformed the divided and rebellious nation into something that it should always have been. The divided people of Israel who constantly turned to idols and other gods were during this seventy-year exile transformed into a people of one faith. They returned to God and rebuilt the city of Jerusalem and have never again turned to idol's or pagan gods and to this day continue to worship the one God, the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob (howbeit denying their promised Messiah the Christ).

The only reason a potter will destroy his work is because it has a flaw in it or something has gone radically wrong in the making of it (i.e., Israel's constant rebellion).

Reasons God hardens people's hearts: in the Old Testament the Scripture states that God did not give Israel the land of Canaan because of their righteousness, but because of the wickedness of the people of Canaan (Deut. 9:5) we are told it was because of the wickedness of the people of Canaan that the LORD hardened their hearts so that they would come against Israel in battle and be destroyed (Joshua 11:19-20). In the New Testament John cites the words of Isaiah against the chief priest and Pharisees stating God has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart because they were full of pride and constantly plotted to kill Jesus (John 12:37-43) showing that God confirms people in their own attitudes and positions which they themselves choose from their own freewill, but if these same people repent of their pride and wicked hearts their eyes will be opened to God's ways and his truth.

An example of man's free will working within God's sovereign will: the following is an example that can help in showing how man's free will works within God's sovereign will (howbeit certainly not perfect or an all-encompassing example). Take a large jar (representing God's sovereign will) and half fill it with cardboard pieces (representing individual humans). Shake the jar and every cardboard piece will move in different directions within the space inside the jar, but they are still within the Jar, showing that somehow man's free will works within God's sovereign will.

ROMANS 9:24-26

God has called Jews and Gentiles.

- **Romans 9:24-26:** even us (Apostles and the Lord's disciples) whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? ²⁵As indeed he says in Hosea, "Those who were *not my people* I will call 'my people,' and her who was *not beloved* I will call 'beloved.'" ²⁶"And in the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' there they will be called 'sons of the living God.'

Paul is saying the apostles and the Lord's disciples are called from the Jews and the Gentiles. The words:

- Not my people and not beloved.

Immediately take the mind of the ardent Bible Student to the book of Hosea and his prophetic words. Paul firstly cites Hosea words of judgment in chapter one.

- The LORD said, "Call his (Hosea's second son) name *not my people* for you (Israel) are not my people, and I am not your God" (Hosea 1:9).

And secondly Paul cites Hosea's words of blessing in chapter two

- I will establish Israel for myself in the land. And I will have mercy on *no mercy* and I will say to *not my people* 'You are my people' and he *not my people* shall say, 'You are my God.' (Hosea 2:23).

Introduction to the book of Hosea: Hosea has been called, "The Death-bed prophet of Israel" because he was the last to prophesy before the Northern Kingdom fell to Assyria (about 722 B.C.). The story of Hosea shows the depth of God's love for his people, a love that tolerates no rivals. Hosea's ministry followed a golden age in the Northern Kingdom, with a peace and prosperity not seen since the days of Solomon, but unfortunately this prosperity led to moral decay, and Israel forsook God to worship idols. When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said:

- Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD (Hosea 1:2).

The unfaithfulness of Hosea's wife (Gomer) was to serve as an example of Israel's unfaithfulness to God. Hosea then explained God's complaint against Israel and warned of the punishment that would come unless the people returned to the LORD and remained faithful to him. Hosea's wife (Gomer) gave birth to two sons and one daughter. The LORD told Hosea to name the first son *Jezreel* (meaning God will punish the house of Jehu) and the second son *not my people* (meaning Israel is not God's people, and the LORD is not their God) because Israel had forsaken the LORD. The LORD told Hosea to name the daughter *no mercy* because the LORD will no longer have mercy on the house of Israel.

THE STORY: Israel is represented by Gomer who has forsaken her true husband the LORD and turned to worship false idols of Egypt, thus the LORD is telling Israel they are not His People and unless they repent and turn to the LORD, God will have no mercy on them, but instead will punish them. Nevertheless, after warning Israel of impending judgment (unless they repent) the LORD through Hosea gives Israel the following future promise of blessing:

- The children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head. And they shall go up from the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel (Hosea 1:11).

The very place refers to the land of Israel, because that is where Israel will be gathered together under one head (the Lord Jesus Christ) and the future promise and blessing refers to the following words of God:

- I will betroth you (Israel) to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD. "And in that day I will answer, declares the LORD, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth, and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer Jezreel (symbol of Israel) and I will establish her for myself in the land. And I will have mercy on *no mercy* and I will say to *not my people* you are my people; and he (not my people) shall say, you are my God." (Hosea 2:19-23).

Paul is applying the prophetic words of Hosea not only to the Apostles and faithful Jews but also to the Gentiles who accept Christ since they were also called, *not God's people*. The story of Hosea and Gomer shows that God's mercy is always available to a humbled and repentant heart. Paul is saying that God will establish those who were called *not my people* referring to the Jews and the Gentiles in the land of Israel the place where God through the prophet Hosea said, "*you are not my people.*" See the title: Jews and Gentiles become One New Nation in Christ (following Romans 9:1-5).

ROMANS 9:27-29

Though Israel is as the Sand, only a Remnant will be Saved.

- **Romans 9:27-29:** And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved,²⁸ for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay."²⁹ And as Isaiah predicted, "If the Lord of hosts had not left us offspring, we would have been like Sodom and become like Gomorrah" (cited from Isaiah 1:9) and (Isaiah 10:22-23).

This is why Paul at the beginning of this chapter said his heart was full of great sorrow and unceasing anguish for his nation Israel, he knows that even though the descendants of Israel are likened to the sand of the sea in number when the Lord Jesus Christ returns as King of kings and Lord of lords to carry out God's sentence upon the earth (v28) only those who have attained righteousness by faith will be counted worthy to enter his eternal Kingdom, nevertheless there will be a remnant of Jews who do accept Christ and who will enter God's everlasting Kingdom otherwise as Paul states the nation of Israel would be as Sodom and Gomorrah (meaning cease to exist).

The words without delay: (v28) do not always mean that God is going to judge at the time the prophets' words are spoken. In this context without delay carries the idea that when God does intervene again in the history of mankind as He did with Noah and the flood, Moses and the Exodus and Sodom and Gomorrah the Lord's judgment will be very quick, overwhelming, fearful and dramatic events will unfold in rapid succession throwing the world into chaos and panic in a very short period of time.

The Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth: the prophetic words of Isaiah, "The Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth" (v28) in the context that Paul is applying them to refer to the Lord's return in spectacular and awesome power and glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy city Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God. The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15).

Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second or Great White Throne Judgment.

ROMANS 9:30-33

Righteousness by Faith, contrasted to pursuing it by the Law.

- **Romans 9:30-33:** What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. ³²Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone ³³as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame" (cited from Isaiah 8:14).

Moses law was only given to the Hebrew and Jewish people and not the nations outside of Israel, thus the reason the Gentiles did not pursue the law. The law has the potential to lead to righteousness, but the sinful dysfunctions and aberrations which we have all inherited in our human nature from our earthly father Adam makes it futile to attempt to attain to righteousness by keeping the law for the following two reasons:

1. The law states: "You shall not *covet* your neighbour's house; you shall not *covet* your neighbour's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbour's." In modern language this means, "You shall not *covet* any other persons house, their wife or husband, or anyone's very successful business, their riches and wealth, their new car, their beautiful boat or anything that belongs to any other person" (Exod. 20:17).
2. God's Royal law states: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Rom. 13:9).

Jesus said all the commandments regarding mankind are summed up in the words of the Royal law (James 2:8) because the spirit underpinning the Royal law, desires the best for others contrasted to the spirit underlying coveting which is craving and seeking the best for self.

Covet: (covetousness) means; to set the heart upon, to desire, long for or lust after (rightfully or otherwise) it carries the idea of holding onto or desiring more than one has or needs (the practice of greediness) and embraces those who live a lifestyle of unlawful sex, orgies adulteries and sexual immorality to fulfil their own lust and to anyone whose heart is craving after and worshipping and exalting another person as a god (an Idolater).

By implication covet: can refer to those who are not honest and true and who use pressure or coercion to force or entice others to fulfil their own selfish need or ambition and to anyone who intentionally deprives somebody of money or property by dishonest means because they are greedy and eager for gain. The commandment, "You shall not covet" exposes human selfishness, pride, ego, lust, and greed etc. It reveals the sinful dysfunctions and aberrations that are imbedded within our fallen corrupted human nature that hinder us from attaining to the perfection of God's Holy law. It exposes our self-centredness in our desires for more than we need, our excessive avariciousness toward materialism, our overeating of tasty foods the craving to be important or esteemed, our sensual and lustful thoughts, the desire to be rich and have abundantly more than we need etc. The commandments, "You shall not covet" and "Love your neighbour as yourself," shines a spotlight on our self-interest, they highlight our lack of willingness to give to those less fortunate and those in need, they expose our degrading, resentful, bitter and jealous thoughts of others and the list goes on. In summary the command, "You shall not covet" embraces all those attitudes and thoughts that dwell within our members that are contrary to the law of love and the holiness of God which means the entire human race is held guilty before the law and therefore it legally has the right and the power to condemn us all to death which it does without hesitation, compassion or mercy the law

shows no mercy or compassion its demand on those that are under it is strictly official, formal and legal and enforced without compassion or any sense of sorrow toward its condemned victims. The universal demand of the law states; "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23) meaning if anyone fails to keep the law in any aspect. A faithful Bible scholar wrote, "The law is splendid as a guide to an understanding of God's will, but as a means of reunion with God, the God we have sinned against, it is a hopeless failure, but God always knew it would be, not because of a fault in the law but because a flaw in us." These truths shine a brilliant spotlight upon the royal majesty, the wonder and the glory of the following words of the Good News of the Gospel:

- God through Christ has cancelled the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands (the debt being all our trespasses and sins) (Col. 2:13-14).

Clearly it is vain to attempt to earn righteousness that is acceptable to God and leads to eternal life by our own self-effort. This is why the only righteousness that God recognises is that righteousness that comes by faith. Abraham the father of faith though a good and decent man only achieved righteousness by faith and not by works this is evidenced by the fact he was circumcised after he was declared a righteous man (circumcision was a sign of righteousness) and the fact that the law came long after God declared him righteous. Paul is saying Israel's denial of their Messiah the Christ and their futile attempt to attain to righteousness by strictly and legalistically adhering to Moses Law and all its customs failed miserably in attaining to the righteousness of God and by so doing fulfilled the following words of the prophet Isaiah that Paul is citing in this letter, Isaiah prophesied:

- He (Jesus) will become a sanctuary and a stone of offence and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (Isaiah 8:14).

But the Gentile who never attempted to keep the law achieved righteousness by God's abundant grace because of their faith in Israel's Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. This shines a brilliant spotlight on the truth that it is not by strictly adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions that we are made righteous and counted worthy before God, but by our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
