

## ROMANS.

**Preface.** In the early nineteen fifties, I had the privilege of attending the Kenley Bible School, and I was taught by men who knew God, walked with God, and loved His Word. I am very grateful for the tuition that I received from George Newsholme and Donald Gee, who were in charge of the Bible School while I was there, and for the special insight into the Scriptures that I received from Elisha Thompson and C. L. Parker. C. L. Parker had been a lecturer at Oxford University, and a minister in the Anglican Church. He was involved in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit early in this century in the Anglican Church at Sunderland, and in the Pentecostal movement. He was a fine Christian gentleman and an outstanding theologian and scholar, with a spiritual perception and prophetic insight which is only given to a few people.

I owe an incalculable debt of gratitude to C. L. Parker for the foundation of Christian doctrine that he gave to me. I am particularly thankful for the revelation that he gave to me of the gentle kindness and immense sacrificial love of God for His creation. This revelation of the wonderful character of God has been a continual source of joy, comfort and blessing, both to myself and others. C. L. Parker also inspired me to seek for a powerful manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This booklet is based on C.L. Parker's notes on Romans with considerable additions of my own in some places. I trust these notes will be as great a blessing and enlightenment to others, as the original teaching and notes of C.L. Parker were to me. W.H. Turner. Dec. 8th. 1998. (I accidentally omitted or erased C. L. Parker's chapter 5 in former editions, so when this was pointed out to me, I added this chapter with sizeable additions of my own. Nov. 23rd. 2002.)

**Introduction.** The New Testament does not record how the Church in Rome came into being, however, it had undoubtedly been in existence for some considerable time when Paul wrote to them. Paul wrote his epistle to Romans in the Spring of A.D. 58 during his last visit to Corinth, it could have been written from the house of Gaius, where Paul had been a guest for three months in A.D. 54., about four years before. Acts.20v3. Rom.16v23. From Paul's salutations in Rom.16., we can see that Paul had met some of the Church members at Rome in his travels, and knew them well. After his arrest at Jerusalem, later in A.D. 58., Paul is kept in custody for two years at Caesarea by Felix. Acts.24v10,27. In the autumn of A.D. 60, Paul is sent by Festus to Rome by sea, and Luke and Aristarchus accompany him. Acts.27v1. After the events of the storm and shipwreck they winter at Malta, and after three months they set sail on a ship that had also wintered at Malta, and arrive in Rome in the Spring of A.D. 61, three years after writing his epistle to them.

The purpose for this epistle seems to be to prepare the way for a personal visit, which Paul feels was laid upon him by the Lord. Acts.19v21. 23v11. Paul had long desired to go to Rome, but his plans had been hindered and frustrated. It is also very possible that God could have forbidden Paul to go to Rome earlier, for "koluo," in Rom.1v13., is rendered in various translations as "let," "prevented," or "hindered," is used in Acts.16v6. to speak of Paul and his helpers being "forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the Word in Asia." Paul, like the Lord Jesus, was under heavenly orders from God the Father. Acts.16v6,7. with Jn.5v19,30. We also read in Acts.16v7., that the Spirit of Jesus did not permit ("eiasen," the first aorist active of "eao," to allow) Paul and his helpers to go into Bithynia.

The word "koluo," means "to hamper, hinder, prevent, restrain and forbid," it is often translated as "forbid" and "forbidding" in the Authorised Version. "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not." Mk.10v14. Mt.19v14. See also Mk.9v38,39., "and we forbade him, But Jesus said, Forbid him not." Paul tells us in 1Cor.14v39., "forbid not to speak with tongues," and in 1Tim.4v3., he says that forbidding to marry is a doctrine of demons. See 1Thes.2v16., "Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles." The Jews in Luke.23v2. falsely accused Jesus of "Forbidding to give tribute to Caesar." In Luke.11v52. the Lord Jesus accuses the Jewish theologians, "You have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not go in yourselves, and you hindered and prevented those who were entering. Peter says in Acts.11v17., "Who was I that I could withstand, hinder, or forbid God." In Acts.27v43. the soldiers are prevented from killing Paul. ("Koluo" occurs 23 times in the New Testament, 12 of them in Luke's Gospel and Acts.) If God forbids us to do something, let us recognise it, He knows the right time to open doors, it is far better to let Him open them, than to try to force them open ourselves, Paul got into real trouble when he tried to force open a door to the Jews at Jerusalem that the Lord had closed. Acts.22v17-22.

Paul states in Rom.15v20-22., that the pressure of his evangelistic work, and the desire to obtain fruit for Christ elsewhere, had hindered him from visiting the Romans. Paul explains that he preferred to preach the Gospel where Christ's name was not known. "Hindered" in Rom.15v22. is "enekoptomen", the imperfect passive of "enkopto", "to cut in, to cut off, to interrupt, to hinder;" in the papyri it is used of a road being rendered impassable. The use of "enkopto" here suggests the pain he felt in being "cut off" from ministry to the Romans. The use of "enkopto" in Rom.15v22., is in sharp contrast to its use in 1Thes.2v18., where "hindered," "enekopsen," the first aorist active indicative of "enkopto;" is used by Paul to state that Satan had hindered him from visiting the Thessalonians. Paul uses "enkopto" in Gal.5v7., to ask the Galatians who it was who had impeded and hindered their spiritual progress and set them in the wrong direction, by insisting that they should be circumcised. In Gal.5v12., Paul uses "apokopto," "to cut off," to declare that these agitating Judaizers who had insisted on circumcision for these Gentiles should be "cut off." See Acts.27v32. In 1Pet.3v7., Peter uses "enkoptesthai," the present infinitive passive of "enkopto," to warn husbands that their prayers will be permanently cut off and hindered if they don't treat their wives in a correct and thoughtful way.

Paul makes definite plans to go to Rome, after he had taken the funds for the poor to Jerusalem, and from Rome to Spain. Rom.15v24,26,28. Paul sends this epistle to introduce himself to the Christians there, and to clarify his teaching, probably to remove doubts about his ministry from the conflicting reports going through the Church about him. Rom.1v15. 2v16. We can be thankful for this desire, for without it we would have been deprived of Paul's greatest theological treatise. Paul states that his doctrine was not received from men, nor taught him by men, but through revelation directly from the Lord Jesus, even as Jesus got His doctrine from the Father. Gal.1v11,12. Jn.7v15-18. N.B. v16. 14v10. Paul's doctrine is Christ's truth for His Church.

### **SKELETON OUTLINE OF ROMANS.**

- 1. Paul's Personal Greetings. 1v1-15.**
  - 2. Paul's Doctrine of Sin and Judgement. 1v16 to 3v23.**
    - a. Among the Gentiles. 1v16 to 2v16. b. Among the Jews. 2v17 to 3v23.**
  - 3. Paul's Doctrine of Salvation from the Legal Punishment of Sin through Christ Jesus. 3v21 to 5v21. Jn.3v16.**
  - 4. Paul's Doctrine of Christians being saved from the Power of Sin by the Law of the Spirit and life in Christ. 6v1 to 8v11. Jn.8v32-36.**
  - 5. Paul's Doctrine of God's Heavenly Family. 8v11-39. Jn.1v11.**
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  - 7. Practical Details Arising from these Doctrines. 12v1 to 15v13.**
  - 8. Paul's Personal Greetings, Remarks and Farewells. 15v14 to 16v27.**
- Appendix. Paul. The prisoner of Jesus for the Gentiles. Eph.3v1. 4v1.**

### **1. PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS. Rom.1v1-15.**

#### **a. Paul's statement of his divine commission to preach God's good news to all nations.**

This good news was the fulfilment of the promises made by God through the prophets about His Son, who though essentially and eternally God, became man, and was made of the seed of David according to His flesh, in order to save mankind. Rom.8v3. Phil.2v6,7.

#### **b. Paul's statement of his long frustrated desire to be a blessing to the church at Rome.**

As an apostle sent by Christ to the Gentiles, Paul feels a debtor, obligated and favoured to preach the magnificent message God had entrusted to him. Paul desired to impart (metadidomai) something more than the teaching he was giving by letter, he desired to impart and share with them some spiritual gift, "metado charisma umin pneumatikon," in order that they might be strengthened and established in God, through experiencing the strength that God gives through His gifts. "Sterichthenai," is the aorist passive infinitive of "sterizo," "to strengthen," the passive indicates that it is God who will strengthen, and the infinitive with the preposition expresses the purpose. Spiritual gifts operate in the purpose and will of God to strengthen Christians. Woe to those who deny these gifts are for today, who "take away the key of knowledge" and hinder Christians from receiving God's good gifts by their doctrine and practice. In Lk.11v32. our Lord uses the strongest words possible to condemn the blind religious leaders who hide away the keys of truth, and with a vigorous continuous determination obstruct the entry of those who are trying to find a deeper experience of God and His truth, "gnoseos." "Hindered" is "ekolusate," the aorist active of "koluo," to hinder. The wilful permanent opposition to truth is seen by the present participle "tous eiserchomenous," "those who are trying to enter," being used with "ekolusate."

### **2. PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SIN AND JUDGEMENT. Rom.1v16 to 3v20.**

Paul states the two major reasons why the whole adult world is guilty before God, and His anger and judgement is revealed against all sin and unrighteousness. Rom.3v19. 1v18. Mankind can help sinning, and God tells them to repent for their sins. Augustine taught that mankind was born incapable of living righteously, he was probably trying to make up an excuse for the evil life that he lived before he became a Christian. Paul's doctrine directly contradicts this teaching of Augustine, and if we follow this teaching of Augustine we reject the divinely given doctrine of Paul.

### **A. MANKIND HAS WILFULLY SUPPRESSED CREATION'S TESTIMONY TO GOD.**

Mankind has wilfully suppressed creation's irrefutable testimony to god's eternal power and deity. Adult mankind has been intellectually dishonest and degraded their intelligence. Love of evil has caused mankind to deliberately suppress and deny the knowledge of God, which He has given to everyone through His creation. The determination of mankind to be intellectually dishonest about the existence and character of God has resulted in mankind sinking, stage by stage, into the greatest follies of idolatry and the vilest excesses of immorality, and finally to the approval and applause of the worst kinds of evil and evil doers, even though they know in their hearts of God's certain judgement on this evil.

The minds which love evil and reject logical thinking about God, in the end become almost incapable of correct judgement about spiritual realities, that is they are reprobate. The delicate machinery of the mind and spirit is easily damaged by evil. Phil.4v8. 2Cor.10v5. The tragic choice to intellectually dispose of God, has resulted in God giving people up to their uncleanness, their vile affections, and to a reprobate mind. Rom.1v24,26,28. "Unto a reprobate mind," is "eis adokim noun," they had tested God, like you would a coin, for "dokimizo" is used of the testing of coins, and had rejected Him and had turned away from Him, "kai kathos ouk edokimason," so God

rejected their mental attitudes and gave them over to their intellectual folly. See 2Thess.3v2. "Unreasonable and evil men," men whose minds won't work right and are out of place, "autopton;" "evil," is "poneron," active evil. The mind is a delicate instrument and is easily damaged, but some people deliberately sear their conscience with a red hot iron, to make sure that it does not disturb them. 1Tim.4v2. Phil.4v8. 2Cor.10v5. Those who do violence to their mind and reject and hold down the truth will find that the end of evil is truly terrible, the Lord Jesus warns that love of evil and the reprobate mind result in an eternal gnawing worm of evil within the soul. Mark.9v44,46,48. Majority text. Mk.3v28-30.

Christians can have a mind that rejects truth and becomes reprobate on certain issues, just as the apostles refused to accept the Christ's prophecies about His death and resurrection, and suffered greatly for it. Paul said that false doctrine can eat and spread like gangrene or cancer and can destroy faith, like the false doctrine about the second coming of Christ, which was preached by Hymenaeus, Alexander and Philetus, whose doctrine had not only made shipwreck of their faith, but had also overthrown the faith of other Christians. Paul committed these false teachers for judgement, he delivered them to Satan, so that they might learn not to blaspheme. Though the aim of Paul's discipline was to bring these false teachers to repentance, there is no record that they did repent. 1Tim.1v19,20. 2Tim.2v16-18.

We should love every bit of truth and welcome it, never seeking our own opinion, but always the truth. We must have open hearts and malleable minds, our attitude must not be to prove our argument, but to find out what God says. "Oh send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me: Let them bring me into Thy holy hill." Ps.43v3. Once we reject truth, light cannot come in on that line. Prejudice, is a determination to make the facts fit our prior conclusions, it means to pre-judge, and make up our minds before the evidence is given. If we accept the theology of denominations, churches or preachers in order to be accepted, it can blind us to the truth that God has for us. Peter warns us that we usually have to be delivered from the traditions delivered to us by our spiritual fathers. 1Pet.1v18,19. "Patroparadotos," means "that which is passed on from fathers, or learned by the side of our spiritual fathers." The traditions of the elders often make void the Word and commandment of God. Mt.15v1-9. Mk.7v1-13. Christ is the living truth for the soul, not the traditions of men. Col.2v8,9.

#### **N.B.1. AGNOSTICISM IS COMPLETE FOLLY IN THE PRESENCE OF CREATION.**

There cannot be a creation of such incredible complexity and beauty without an all-powerful and all-wise Creator. Even a child is known by his works. Prov.20v11. The creation declares God's eternal power and deity. Rom.1v20. Ps.19v1-4. David was awed at God's foreknowledge, and His providential care and love manifested in Creation, he said, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made: wonderful are Thy works; And that my soul knoweth right well." Ps.139v14.

#### **N.B. 2. IDOLATRY HAS SPRUNG OUT OF A DESIRE AND LOVE FOR EVIL.**

Mankind has desired an object of worship that will allow them to do evil without check or hindrance. This has led to the utter folly of worshipping cows and bulls in India, the ibis and beetles in Egypt, stocks and stones in Africa, demons in China, emperors in Rome, and in our day, political and religious leaders, and stars of films, sport and entertainment. Paul stresses that because men have free will, God is obliged to give them up to evil if they insist on going into it. Rom.1v24,26,28. There are no more terrible words than, "God gave them up."

#### **B. MANKIND HAS SUPPRESSED THEIR CONSCIENCE AND BEEN MORALLY CORRUPT. Rom.2**

Conscience is not the voice of God, for as in Paul's case, he thought it was correct to persecute Christians, and his conscience certainly conflicted with God's Law and desires. Acts.26v9. with 23v1. Indeed, Rom.14v5. tells us that people's consciences can vary. Our conscience is formed by the necessity of passing moral judgements. The law of conscience is that law of conduct, which a person expects their neighbour to behave by in relation to them. Every person will be judged by the standard which they lay down for their neighbour. The people who judge and condemn their neighbour can also judge and condemn their own actions, particularly when, as Paul says here, they condemn in others the things that they are doing. Those who expect others to keep the law, and treat others correctly and in love, are expected so to behave. It is worthy of note that mankind expects others to keep, and believes they are able of keeping, the law of conscience and the Law of God. It is a matter of experience that the moral law is forced out of our own hearts by our automatic and natural reaction to the acts of others; it is involuntary and cannot be stopped; for example, the victim of robbery cannot help saying to the thief, "Thou shalt not steal." Most of the ten commandments of God, are the also the involuntary reactions, protestations and commandments of men to those who break the moral law.

The moral law is intended to protect society from wrongdoing. The validity of the moral law rests upon the deepest of natural desires, i.e. to remain in a state of happiness; and obedience to the moral law is the means whereby the happiness joy and peace of society can be preserved. "The work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever." Is.32v1,17. Peace will reign when the Prince of peace and the other sons of God reign in righteousness. The whole creation groans and waits for the manifestation and righteous rule of the sons of God. Rom.8v19-21. God Himself has ordained that holiness and happiness are the end of life, and He will allow nothing that defiles that purity and happiness to enter His eternal kingdom. Rev.21v3-8,27. The happiness of Heaven will be preserved for ever by the eternal total dedicated love of the inhabitants of that kingdom for each other and God. Only by loving God and his neighbour can a man or a society live happily. God is the only one who can help us to run this complex universe in a way that produces

happiness. The chaos and pain in the world is the result of mankind forsaking God and going on their own selfish sinful way.

In other words, the moral law is not an end, but the means, and only means, to the end of a happy life. True happiness, then, springs out of promoting the happiness of others. The fruits of the Spirit, joy and peace, are based on a life lived to promote the welfare and happiness of others. The wicked seek their own happiness regardless of the pain and distress that it may cause others. Selfish and wicked people end up in destroying their own peace and happiness, there is no peace to the wicked.

#### **A. THE JUDGEMENT BY GOD OF THE GENTILES. Rom.2v1-6.**

Paul tells us that the Gentiles, who have not known the Law of God, will be judged by the law of their conscience, their conscience is the standard which they expect others to treat them by, and by which they have judged their neighbour; this standard is plainly revealed by the interplay of their own thoughts about their neighbour and about themselves. Conscience, then, is a razor to shave ourselves with, not to cut our neighbour's throat, as it is so often used to do. Mt.7v1-6. Every time you criticise others, you lay a standard by which you will be judged, and if you do the things that you condemn in others, you will lay yourself open to the righteous judgement of God.

#### **B. THE JUDGEMENT BY GOD OF THE JEWS. Rom.2v17 to 3v9.**

Paul warns the Jews who boasted that they were God's chosen people, to whom God had entrusted the Law of Moses, that they will not be acquitted by the possession of that Law, but only by obedience to it. Paul warns the Jews who used the possession of the Law to point out to the Gentiles their inferiority, that a Gentile who does not know the Law, but though being ignorant of it, he keeps it, is better off than a Jew who knowingly breaks it. Paul states that it is a fact of history that the lives of disobedient Jews have bought dishonour to the name of God. Our Lord condemned the Jews who boasted in the Law of God, but did not keep it, and told them that the Law that they prided themselves in, accused them if they did not keep it. Mt.23v3. Lk.11v42,52. Jn.5v45. Deut.31v26. Likewise the Christian Gospel condemns bad living and disobedient Christians who do not live by its truths. Mt.7v13-29. Jn.13v17. In Galatians, Paul stated that the most valuable thing that the Law could do, was to bring us with humbled broken spirits to Christ to ask for mercy. Gal.2v16 to 3v29. N.B. 2v16. 3v19,24.

#### **N.B. THE TRUE ADVANTAGE OF THE JEW. Rom.3v1-8.**

Paul strongly asserts, as did also our Lord, that the true advantage of the Jew was not the Law of Moses, which brought condemnation, but the promise given to Abraham which brought justification. Jn.7v19. God's motive in giving the Law of Moses was not to justify Israel, but to make them conscious of sin, so that they would be thankful for a Saviour. The Jews turned what should have been an humbling blessing into a veritable curse by their pride in the possession of the Law. cf. Gal.3v13 to 4v7. As Pentecostal Christians we have to be very careful that we don't follow their example by thinking that we are superior to others, and we have to take heed that we live up to our privileges and humbly thank God for His undeserved kindness to us.

#### **C. THE JUDGEMENT OF GOD FINDS ALL THE WORLD GUILTY. Rom.3v9-23.**

##### **a. The Gentiles are guilty of breaking their own standards, the law of conscience.**

##### **b. The Jews are guilty of breaking the Law of God given to Moses.**

##### **c. Mankind was not born as unregenerate sinners, but voluntarily went into sin.**

Paul quotes several Scriptures from the Old Testament to show that all mankind has individually and collectively departed from God and the truth, and gone into evil. No one has understood and sought out God, instead they have ALL GONE OUT OF THE WAY, and have BECOME unprofitable, and no one does good, no not one. Ps.14v1-3. 53v1-3. Eccles.7v20. Their throat carries the stench of an open tomb, and their tongues are filled with deceit, Ps.5v9.; they bite like asps, Ps.140v3.; and their mouths are filled with cursing and bitterness. Ps.10v7. They run hot-foot to kill, murderers, who wherever they go cause ruin, misery and destruction; and the way of peace they have not known. Is.59v7,8. They care nothing about God, and do not fear or reverence Him. Ps.36v1. Paul concludes his argument by saying that all the world is guilty before God, "For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." v19,22,23.

#### **N.B. Mankind has gone astray, not was born astray.**

Augustine wrongly taught that mankind was born astray. In Rom.3v9-23., Paul states that mankind has gone astray, as does Is.53v6.. Paul says in Rom.7v9., that he was born alive to God and went astray when he gave way to temptation, James confirms this theology. James.1v13-15.. Jesus is the light that gives light to every person who comes into the world. Jn.1v9. Jesus said that children's angels always behold the face of God in Heaven, and said, "of such is the kingdom of Heaven." Mt.18v1-5,10. Mk.10v13-16. Children are certainly not bound for Hell as Augustine taught, his main text for this awful doctrine was an incorrect interpretation of Ps.51v5., "Behold, I was shapen, ("chuwI," brought forth in labour) in iniquity, And in sin did my mother conceive me." Augustine's teaching that David was saying that he was born a sinner, is a total perversion of this text, as the whole verse is talking about the morality of David's mother. Was David excusing his sin on the grounds of being born into a sinful environment? Or was there a question about David's parentage? Jesse did not bring David in with the rest of his sons even when Samuel asked for them all to be brought before him, a strange disobedience in the light of the fact that he and all Bethlehem trembled in fear at Samuel's visit to

Bethlehem. 1Sam.16v3-5,11-13. The fact that God tells mankind to repent of the evil they have done shows that mankind could have avoided sinning if they had so wished. God does not tell people to repent of things they could not avoid doing. Lk.3v3,8. 24v47-49. Mk.1v5,14. Acts.2v38. 3v19. 17v30,31. 26v20. 2Pet.3v9.

#### **d. The Interval Between God's Sentence and His execution of that Sentence. Rom.2v4-10.**

This delay is designed by God to produce repentance and so avert punishment. Man, however, instead of being broken by the mercy and longsuffering of God, has misused this period of space for repentance, to quieten, hold down, and dismiss their fear of the justice and judgement of God. Because sentence upon their evil works is not executed speedily, the hearts of the sons of men is thoroughly set in them to do evil. Eccles.8v11. They deceive themselves that there will be no wages of sin, they sear their consciences with a red hot iron, and continue in sin without any fear or apprehension of divine judgement. Psalm.10v4-11. Is.26v10. Consider Pharaoh, whose heart was hardened more and more by God's miracles, kindness and mercy, until he had no fear of the justice and judgement of God.

#### **e. The day of judgement.**

Though delayed, the judgement of God will come, and God's justice will be vindicated. The righteous will be delivered and rewarded; the wicked will be taken and punished. The fearsome words of Rom.2v9., "crushing pressure and torturing confinement, on every soul of man who does evil." "Thlipsis kai stenochoria." "Stenochoria," which is translated as "anguish" in the A.V., literally means "confined space, or torturing confinement," Christ told us that eternal confinement in God's prison is a thing to be feared. Mt.10v28. Lk.12v5. Mk.9v42-48.

#### **N.B. 1. GOD'S ANGER ARISES FROM HIS POSITION AS CREATOR AND JUDGE.**

**a. As a loving Creator.** God's wonderful plans have been continually frustrated by angels and men, who for their own selfish ends were willing to tear both Heaven and Earth to pieces rather than pay regard to God's Law. They defied and hated God because He was just and no respecter of persons, and insisted upon His position being recognised. God's love and justice manifested their unrighteousness, and failing to repent, they could only see and hate God. John.15v22-26.

**b. As a just Judge.** God is obliged to champion those who suffer injustice, and to avenge those who are wronged. His eyes look continually upon all events in the world, and those who wrong the righteous and oppress the weak will receive the justice and judgement that they deserve. The cries of the afflicted and persecuted continually rise up to His ears. One day God will indeed release His pent up anguish at the suffering of the righteous and innocent, and will deal with and destroy both wicked angels and men in blazing anger and judgement. Is.34v1-8. N.B. v5 "My sword shall be bathed in heaven." Is.42v13-17. 63v1-6. Amos.2v6-16. Rev.6v17. 16v5-7. 19v11-21. 20v1-3. Mt.13v36-43,47-50. 25v41,46. 2Thes.1v4-10. 2v8.

God's anger is not the bad temper of a despot, but the reasoned righteous anger and indignation of a loving judge. It is aroused, not by His own sufferings, but by the sufferings of others. See our Lord's anger at the Scribes and Pharisees. Mt.23v1-39. especially v4,14,23,30,34,35., and His anger and judgement on the wickedness of the Antichrist. Rev.6v17.

In essence there is no difference between God's problem and that of any ruler. Rulers have to preserve the peace and happiness of society, they have to face the opposition of those who would try to defeat this purpose, and in the end they have to liquidate malicious and malignant enemies. God has to confine eternally to Hell those who oppose His loving purposes, for with the selfish unrepentant wicked at large there would only be pain and distress, and happiness would be quite impossible. The only response that God can make to eternal sin is eternal confinement, otherwise happiness would be impossible for rest of creation. Mt.12v31,32. Mk.3v28-30. In Mk.3v29. the correct reading is "eternal judgement," not "eternal sin:" the vast majority of manuscripts read "kriseos," "judgement," which occurs in A, C, K, Pi, the massive Byzantine manuscript evidence, the Lectionaries, the Syrian Peshitta and Harclean and others; whereas the reading of "eternal sin," "hamartematos," only occurs in a small number of manuscripts, Aleph, B, L, Delta, and Theta, 28, 33, and 565.

#### **N.B. 2. GOD'S ANGER AND WRATH SPRING FROM HIS LOVE.**

The wrath and punishment of God mentioned in Rom.2v5-11., spring from His love of the righteous, and His determination to provide eternal happiness for them. The wicked are eternally confined to Hell to prevent them from eternally wrecking the peace and happiness of kingdom of Heaven. The wages of sin is death, because the sinner is too dangerous to be left at large. Since all have sinned, the justice of God would compel Him to judge and execute all sinners, but this would result in the destruction of all mankind and leave the Creation a complete wreck. To leave sinners alive would mean a continuance of the sufferings caused by man's inhumanity to man, to slay them all, would similarly make happiness impossible, so the whole plan of Creation was threatened by sin. God therefore, made the plan of redemption before the foundation of the world, He Himself paying the price of sin for those who repent, the Creator dying for the creature. Unrepentant eternal sin can never be paid for, that demands eternal judgement.

Like the wicked angels, the sinner in the end becomes a total sadist who only finds pleasure in causing pain and suffering to others, and inflicting upon them the most awful depths of sadistic torment, oppression and torture. Hitler's extermination and torture camps show how malign and evil the human heart can become. The only

answer to unrepentant evil like this, is eternal confinement in God's totally secure prison, Hell. The torment of Hell is not only caused by the confinement and isolation of everlasting chains of darkness, 1Sam.2v9. 2Pet.2v4,17. Jude.v13., it is caused by the gnawing worm of evil in the soul. The mind that embraces evil is in the end tormented and destroyed by evil. The evil that the wicked embrace, torments, twists and destroys their mind and personality; our Lord said that evil was a ghastly gnawing worm that would devour and torture the soul and mind of the wicked. In Mk.9v44,46,48., "where the gnawing worm dieth not," occurs in all three texts in the Majority Text. God is not thrashing or tormenting the wicked in Hell, for there is no hope of changing the incorrigible wicked; chastening the wicked would do no good, those in Hell love evil so much, and have so hardened their hearts, that it is impossible to bring them to repentance. Heb.6v4-6.

**N.B. 3.** The Hedonist, who teaches that happiness is the highest good, and the Utilitarian, who makes the basis of moral distinctions in the utility of actions, by their fitness to produce happiness, both say that happiness is the end of life. However, happiness to the Hedonist means pleasure; and to the Utilitarian, it means the seeking of one's own happiness. Pleasure seeking often leads to the worst kind of unhappiness, for example, drunkenness, immorality, and sadism; there are the pleasures of sin all of which spring from selfishness. One of the signs of the last days is that men will be "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." 2Tim.3v4.

The true pursuit of happiness involves the pursuit of the happiness of others as well as the happiness of oneself. True happiness is a by-product of the love for other people; pursue happiness and it eludes you, pursue the happiness and good of others, and you find real happiness. The pursuit of one's own happiness, makes one indifferent to the happiness of others; the pursuit of other people's happiness brings as a by-product one's own happiness and satisfaction. If everyone seek their own happiness regardless of others, the result is universal misery. God's plan is that everyone will seek other people's happiness, so everyone would have millions of people trying to make you happy, instead of just one person, yourself.

**N.B. 4.** The Law was given by God to show the way of life to those who desired to know it, and needed it. Rom.7v10-12. Gal.3v12. When once the Law was broken, however, it brought a knowledge of sin and death, Rom.7v12,13., for when a person sinned and was dead in trespasses and sins, the Law could not give him life, or offer him any help. Rom.8v2-4. Gal.3v21. The Law could guide a man who was alive to God, but it could not give life to, or revive, a dead one.

The Jews relied on self-justification through keeping the Law of Moses to obtain salvation and justify themselves, so Jesus tried to get them to believe in Him and rely on the promises of God for justification and to live the life of faith; for those who want to be justified by works must keep the whole Law perfectly, and none have, except Christ Jesus.

### **3. THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION FROM THE LEGAL PUNISHMENT OF SIN. 3v21 to 5v21.**

#### **1. The Cross of Christ Establishes the Law of God. Rom.3v21-31.**

Since the moral Law provides the only means whereby people can live in happiness together; those who break it must suffer the penalty of death, since their continued existence threatens the happiness of the whole Creation. Paul answers the questions that spring to the mind from the statement of these facts. How was God able to forgive Old Testament and New Testament sinners and accept them as redeemed saints, instead of executing them as the Law demanded? Ezek.18v4,20. "The soul who sins shall die." Did not forgiveness of the sinner undermine the majesty of the Law, and encourage lawbreakers to hope for immunity and discourage those who look to the Law of God for protection? (Uriah's family had every right to ask how God could forgive David, for his immorality and murder.) Paul's answer, given by revelation personally from Christ, Gal.1v11,12., is, that, before the sinner could be forgiven, the majesty of the Law had to be established, and ITS JUST CLAIMS ACKNOWLEDGED, and the penalty of the broken law paid for; this God did by the public execution of His Son and His imprisonment in Hades as a sinner. Is.53v5-12. v10. "Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin." v12. "He hath poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bare the sin of many." Heb.2v9. "That He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." "Tasting death," meant going to Hades, not just dying on the cross. The Creature could not be forgiven until the Creator had been killed in their place. This cost was counted, accepted and predestined before Creation, so forgiveness was possible in the light of Christ's future atonement. Titus.1v2. Rev.13v8. 17v8. Rom.16v25-27.

Through the death of Christ God proclaimed to both angels and men, the following tremendously important facts.

- a. Christ's death proclaims that the wages of sin is death, and no one can escape the consequences of sinning.
- b. Christ's death proclaims that the sinner had no possible escape from judgement, unless someone else paid his debt to the Law, as the sinner was never able to pay the penalty of his sin.
- c. Christ's death proclaims to all the amazing fact of the astonishing love of the Trinity for totally undeserving sinners, and causes us to marvel at their total sacrificial love and dedicated goodness.
- d. Christ's death makes it possible for all who repent of their sins, and believe that He is the promised redeeming Lord, and accept His atonement for sin on their behalf, to be forgiven their sins. The sinner could be forgiven without the Law be flouted, and God could be just and yet justify the sinner who believed in Jesus. Rom.3v26.

Since the LIFE of the Creator had been given for the LIVES of His creatures, the majesty of the Law had been magnified and established FOR EVER, and all hope of breaking it had been taken away. The way of faith does not make the law void, it establishes the Law. Rom.3v31.

## **2. Justification By Faith. Rom.4v1-8.**

Just as a criminal who has "done his time," is no longer a criminal, but "justified," and legally untouchable; so in the New Testament, "justification," does not mean that the redeemed sinner has a good character, but that they are free from condemnation under the Law. Christians, like any person who is found guilty in a court of Law, can walk out free because someone else has paid the fine and debt to the Law. The Law "owed" justification to Christ Jesus, and pronounced Him "righteous" and "justified," because He had not transgressed the Law; but David was pronounced justified after committing the atrocious crimes of adultery, murder, lying and deception. Rom.4v6-8. Abraham was justified because he believed the promise that God gave to him of being the father of a family that was to be like the stars of heaven in number. Gen.15v1-6. 17v4,15-19. 18v1-15. with Rom.4v3-5. Both David and Abraham were allowed a walk with God on the basis of their faith and the future atonement of Jesus; they did not deserve to be justified, but found it given them as an act of grace. Grace, grace, grace. Zech.4v7. However, Christ's future atonement did not deliver the Old Testament saints from Hades, when they died they had to go to Hades to await Christ's atonement, at which time He took them out of Hades into the kingdom of Heaven. Lk.9v31. "Exodus." Eph.4v8. Heb.2v15. This resulted in the Old Testament saints being in bondage through fear of death, and so they dreaded dying. Job.10v20-22. In Gen.37v35. 42v38. 44v29., "grave," is "Sheol." Is.38v1-3. Hezekiah Heb.2v15.

## **3. Justification By Faith is Independent of Any Preceding Moral Action. Rom.4v9-12.**

Jews and Gentiles were on an equality with each other when it came to justification by faith, for Abraham was justified before circumcision, which was only an outward sign of the righteousness he already possessed through faith. Gen.15v6. 17v10. So, also, water baptism does not regenerate, but is an outward sign of regeneration by faith. The Jew was justified, not by the Law of Moses," but "by the faith of Abraham." Gal.3v10-12. 2v16.

## **4. The Security of Justification. Rom.4v13-16.**

Only through the Divine provision of mercy being received by faith could the promise be secure, for if it depended upon perfect Law keeping, it could at any moment be lost forever by sinning. So we see the perfection of the divine plan of redemption, for by it mercy is available, not only to the sinner, but also to the broken and needy and sinning saint. This mercy is completely "legal," because of the atonement of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God our Father.

## **5. The Test of Faith. Rom.4v17-22.**

Our Faith is tested by God, and is given sufficient strength to stand the test. Abraham and Sarah were visited by the Lord and angels, in order to strengthen their faith and overcome their unbelief and failure in the past. Gen.17v18. 18v12-15. See Rom.4v20., "was strengthened in faith:" Abraham's faith was strengthened by these visits, and the unveiling of the Divine presence and purposes. It seems that an increase of faith is always due to something that God does; either through the deposit of a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the soul and spirit, or through an open revelation of the Divine person and presence, or through angelic revelation, or through some other act and manifestation of Divine power. These divine encouragements transforms our faith to a living faith. James.2v21-26. This is a great consolation and leads to peaceful trust in God, instead of fretful striving. Let us cling fast to our heavenly Father's unveiling of His presence and purposes, and thank God for His angels, and cherish their help, and even more the Lord who sends them.

## **6. The Justification of the Christian. Rom.4v23 to 5v2.**

Paul states that we can have righteousness imputed to us if we believe in God the Father and His great grace. Rom.4v24. We receive not only peace with God through our Lord Jesus, but access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. Paul bursts into a theological poem of praise and highest commendation on the love of God, who gave His Son to die for sinners, and who will withhold nothing from His children. The amazing love of God that saves His enemies, at immeasurable cost to Himself, and then goes on to spend eternity keeping them in safety and happiness. Rom.5v3-11. John.3v16.

## **7. The Contrast Between Adam and Christ in Their Effect Upon Humanity. Rom.5v12-21.**

Some interpret these verses in Romans to mean that men are forced into sin, and they cannot help sinning, because of the sin of Adam. Those who insist that these verses teach that all mankind is forced into evil by Adam's sin, must accept that this would make these verses teach ultimate reconciliation for all mankind. The key verses are verses 17,18, and 19; Adam's sin did not force men to be sinners, no more than Christ's atonement forces men to be justified; in both cases the free will of man is the determining factor. Rom.5v12,17. The result of following Adam is spiritual death, the result of following Christ is justification and spiritual life. Is.53v6.

Paul compares the severity of God in condemning Adam after one sin, with God's mercy to the Christian after a multitude of sins. Rom.5v16. James.5v19,20. Adam's first sin, the first step away from God, was the beginning of many steps away from God. God dealt immediately with Adam's sin, both for Adam's and the Creation's sake, lest he continued to live for ever by partaking continually of the tree of life. Notice the kind and gentle attempts to make Adam and Eve confess their sin, and the thoughtful provision of God, even after their rebellion. The physical death which fell upon the human race after Adam's sin, is not the result of any person's sin, for children

still die who have not sinned, Rom.5v14., physical death is the result of the withdrawal of the tree of life. Had not this been done, Adam would have lived forever in sin. Gen.3v22-24.

**8. The Role of the Law. Rom.5v20.** God gave His Law through Moses, not as a means of justification, but to produce conviction of sin and a realisation that without God's mercy there was no hope of salvation, it was intended to produce a willingness to repent and accept forgiveness and mercy by faith. Gal.3v19-24.

**9. The Abundance of Grace. Rom.5v17,20,21.** The abundance of grace has more than restored what mankind has lost by sin; by God's great grace, even sin has been turned to man's advantage; God has managed to bring something lovely out of man's sinfulness, sinners have become sons of God, and joint heirs with Christ Jesus. Rom.8v14-17. However, this does not mean that we are to sin that grace may abound, indeed we are to avoid sin, for sin is a killer and it works eternal death. Rom.6v1,2. If sin is persisted in, it hardens the heart beyond any hope of repentance. Rom.8v6,13. Heb.6v1-8. 10v26.

#### **4. THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION FROM THE POWER OF SIN FOR CHRISTIANS. 6v1-8v13.**

**1. Sin is a Killer. Rom.6v1-12.** The abundance of grace that comes to us through the death of the Lord Jesus, is not intended to enable us to sin without fear of the consequences, it is intended to make us frightened of ever sinning again. Sin is always a killer and demands its wages. Rom.8v13. 6v23. We had sold ourselves under sin, Rom.7v14. Is.50v1. 52v3., and baptism in water shows us in a picture that Christ had to pay these wages of sin and die and be buried before we could be redeemed. Sin the killer, will always be a killer, and will never give life. If we are to live, we must be set free from sin. By walking in the Spirit with the risen Lord, the Law of the Spirit and life will operate and the Christian can walk in victory over the desires of the flesh. Christ, in this way, sets His brethren free from the power of sin in the flesh, and they are no longer under the old compulsion to sin. Gal.5v16. Rom.8v1-4.

**2. Sin Must Therefore Be Resisted. Rom.6v12-23.** Christ's redeeming death has set us free and broken sin's dominion over us, but it is up to us to take full advantage of this freedom and no longer allow sin to master the soul again. If we fail to do this and again become a slave to sin, we will come to the same end as before, spiritual death and shame, and a fearful waiting for judgement. Heb.10v26-30. 2Pet.2v19-22. The advantage of Grace over Law is, not that it enables us to live in sin without paying the penalty, but that it enables us to live in communion with Christ and serve Him, because He has broken the grip which sin had upon us, by paying its wages, and by giving us life in our spirits. Christian freedom does not allow us to break God's Law with impunity, nor does it give us the liberty to sin without reaping the penalty of our sin. Christ gives us freedom from the old thralldom and bondage to sin, and gives us the ability to keep the moral Law of God. Rom.8v4.

**3. The Two Husbands. Rev.7v1-6.** When the soul yields to the allurements of the flesh, it finds, too late, that it has married a tyrannous husband from whom there is no escape. The children of this marriage result in a series of actions which plunge the soul into death. It was only when the death of Christ's body paid the penalty for our deeds, and was counted as the death of our bodies and souls, was the soul free to contract another marriage, this time with Christ our spirits. The children of this marriage are acts of faith pleasing to God, which elevate the soul to the kingdom of God.

#### **4. Paul's Description of His Marriages to the Flesh and the Spirit. Rom.7v7 to 8v4.**

Paul gives a description of His soul's first wooing, and the unhappy marriage to the flesh that followed; and then goes on to describe his marvellous rescue by Jesus, and his happy second marriage to the spirit. Paul pictures himself as a young ignorant girl, with two suitors for her hand in marriage, then she realises that one of the suitors is good and the other bad. The foolish girl yields to the deceptive promises of the alluring bad suitor and marries him. Too late she realises she has made a ghastly mistake, and has been trapped into an appalling marriage, she is now forced against her will to share the life of her husband, whose power and domination she can not break. Her will is free, but alas, not her actions. Then the good suitor, who she had previously rejected in favour of the bad suitor, much to her great delight comes again, and he slays the evil suitor, who became the first husband, and he is now free to marry her whom he had always loved. Now her actions as well as her will is free, under the Law of the Spirit and life in Christ, so she never need again live the old life of sin and shame, but can live a life which is pleasing to her new spouse.

**5. Fleshly and Spiritual Life Contrasted. Rom.8v5-13.** The vital importance of the New Birth of the person's own spirit is stressed, for without this spiritual rebirth, the soul is dead to God; but though dead to God, the spirit is not annihilated, and is dominated by, and capable of, contacting other evil spirits. Eph.2v1-10. The spirit is quickened at the New Birth, and is said to be "born again." Eph.2v1. Jn.3v3,7,8. It is the obedient Holy Spirit led believers who are the true sons of God. Rom.8v14.

If the spirit is dead, that is, cut off from God, the soul is cut off to all but earthly, worldly and fleshly thoughts and desires, and looks upon this material world as the only reality, for the natural man is unable to perceive the things of the Spirit of God. 1Cor.2v14. In such a condition the flesh dominated soul cannot obey a God of whose existence it has no experience, and cannot please Him, in whom it has no faith. Such a person lives in bondage to their desires, being controlled by them. The revelation of God in Creation has been "held down," by the



majority of mankind, to enable them to continue in sin. Faith in God is, therefore, resisted in spite of all the evidence of His reality in Creation, or by His miraculous acts.

The New Birth, however, opens up such a new world, that the old dead experience gives place to a peaceful and hopeful life, which effects even the mortal body with its vitality, the Spirit quickens our mortal body. Rom.8v11. The Christian has to live in all the new truths revealed to him by the Spirit, and only so will he be able to put off the old life, and put an end to its old way of living. Any Christian who reverts to their old way of living, will again begin to die, and finally will end up with a dead spirit again.

## **5. THE DOCTRINE OF GOD'S HEAVENLY FAMILY. Rom8v14-39.**

### **1. Sonship is a prelude to inheritance. Rom.8v14-17.**

Our Divine sonship is witnessed to, both by our own spirit, which believes the Word of God, and also by the Holy Spirit Himself. The inheritance, however, must be won in the same way that Christ won His position in the kingdom, by obedience which entails suffering. Phil.2v5-13. We have, "the spirit of adoption," "pneuma" 4151, "hiothesias" 5206, see Gal.4v5. "Crying, Abba, Father," note the double use of "Father" to emphasise our privilege of sonship, "Abba ho Pater." The very words that Jesus himself used in the Garden of Gethsemane. Mk.14v36. "Abba," is the Aramaic child's word for "daddy," "Pater," the Greek word for "father." "Crying," is "krazon," which basically means "to croak or cry out, or cry aloud, like a raven." Robertson says, "any inarticulate cry like "the unuttered groanings" of Rom.8v26., which God understands." End of quote. This cry comes from the Holy Spirit within us. Rom.8v16. "The Spirit Himself bears witness, "summarturei," with our spirit, that we are children of God:" See 1Jn.5v10. If we suffer for Jesus then we shall be joint heirs with Jesus and be glorified with Him. Rom.8v17. Paul uses "sun," "with," in compounds three times in this verse, "bears witness with," "if we suffer with", we are "glorified with."

### **2. The inheritance of the Sons of God is the universe. Rom.8v18-27. cf. 1Cor.3v21-23. Mt.24v45-47.**

The universe is a groaning wreck through the mismanagement of the those appointed to rule it. Only the transfer of the rule of the universe to God's own family will put an end to this negligence. Meanwhile all the times are out of joint, and all, including the Sons of God, groan with a sense of frustration, which is only compensated by patient hope, and the intercession of the Holy Spirit. We read in Rom.8v18. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward." The radiant glory and inheritance, which we will share with Jesus at His second coming will dispel all the shadows and sufferings of our earthly pilgrimage.

**Rom.8v18. "time" "kairos." 2540. "a Divine epoch." Lk.21v24.** "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

**Eph1v10.** That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." In **Acts.3v21.**, "the times of restitution of all things," "times" is "chronos," which here speaks of a divine epoch in the world's affairs. The word "restitution," "apokatastaseos" 605, is derived from "apo" 575, "from," and "kathistanein," 2525, to establish or settle anything, in a good state. When the preposition "apo" is added to it, then it implies that the good state, which it is established, is preceded by a bad state, which is transformed to a good one. So in Acts.1v6., when the disciples asked Jesus, "Will you at this time restore again, ("apokathistaneis" 600) the kingdom to Israel? They meant, "Will you take our Jewish kingdom from the bad rule of the Romans, and start a new era of good Jewish rule?" However, God's Word declares, that it is only Christ's return to rule the world with His brethren, that can deliver the world from all the disorders, destruction, and ruin caused by the domination of evil angels and the rule of fallen evil men. Is.32v1,2,17.

### **3. The secret of Paul's prayer life.**

#### **a. The Holy Spirit always makes His unlimited aid available to us when we pray.**

Paul states, in Rom.8v26., "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (NKJ) "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought," "katho dei," "as it is necessary." Rom.8v26. After about 25 years of Christian experience, Paul states that it was only the Holy Spirit's aid, inspiration and intercession that prevented him from making many mistakes over what to pray for, and how to pray. Please note Jn.14v16,17,26. 15v26,27. Jn.16v6,16,17. In the light of this intercession by the Holy Spirit, we can well understand why Paul thanked God in 1Cor.14v18., that he spoke in tongues more than any of the verbose tongue speaking Corinthians. Praying in tongues releases the Holy Spirit's power gifts, and prayer for the saints according to the will and desires of God. We do not know how to pray "as we ought," "katho dei," "as it is necessary," but the Holy Spirit, "maketh intercession for us," "huperentungchanei," 5241, which only occurs here in the New Testament. It is derived from the verb "entungchano," 1793, which means "to light upon or fall in with; to go to meet," and signifies to intercede or negotiate for another. A. T. Robertson says "It is a picturesque word of rescue by one who "happens on," "entungchanei" 1793, one who is in trouble and "in his behalf," "huper," 5228, pleads "with unuttered groanings" (instrumental case) or with "sighs that baffle words" (Denney)." End of quote. Compare Acts.25v24. Rom.8v34. 11v2. Heb.7v25.

**Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit is always available to us, to take hold with us against our infirmities, weakness, and limitations.** "Helps," poorly expresses the thought here in "sunantilambanetai," 4878, the **present** indicative middle of "sunantilambanomai," "to lend a hand together with, at the same time with one." It is a compound of "sun," 4862, "with," or "together," and "anti," 473, "against," and "lambanomai," 2983. "to take and get hold of," and so, "to actively support and help." The Holy Spirit comes to enable us to pray and mightily supplements our weakness and limitations with His infinite abilities, grace and love. "Sunantilambanomai," only occurs here and in Lk.10v40., of Martha's request for help. However, "lambanetai," 2983, "taketh," is, "Precisely the same verb in precisely the same phrase, which is translated `took our infirmities," in Mt.8v17." (Bushnell). In his atoning death Jesus took hold of, and carried away, our infirmities and sicknesses. Jesus and the Holy Spirit come to help us bear the burdens on our heart, and we mutually bear the same load together. They also come to reveal the burdens on their hearts for the children of God, that they desire to share with us. They impart their strength and abilities to us and enable us to minister their almighty power and love to Christians in need as we pray for them.

Strong says that "infirmities" "astheneia," 769, (from 772 "asthenes," "strengthless,") is feebleness and frailty (of mind or body), and is translated in the King James Version as, disease, infirmity, sickness, and weakness. Paul writes, in 2Cor.12v9,10., that Jesus said to him about his thorn in the flesh, probably his determined and evil persecutors, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness, "astheneia." Paul's reaction to this was, "Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, "astheneiais," that the power of Christ may rest ("episkenoō," pitch itself like a tent) upon me. v10. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities "astheneiais," in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak ("astheneo," to be weak, feeble, and powerless), then I am strong." God's strength and Christ's abiding presence is bestowed on, and revealed to, those who feel their need and weakness. Mt.11v25. Lk.10v21-24. 1Cor.1v26-31.

#### **b. Effectual prayer comes out of a heart constrained by the "more excellent way" of "agape" love. 1Cor.12v31.**

It is not fluency in prayer, but Holy Spirit guided earnest prayers, out of a heart constrained by "agape" love, that God listens to and answers. Though we may not even know what the groans, sighs, tears, and burden upon us is about, or may not understand what our intercession in other tongues is for, but the Father, Son and Spirit are one in will and desire and they know what these unutterable groans and sighs of our hearts are about and answer them. It is marvellous, wonderful, and humbling to think that God Himself intercedes through us in this way. The "more excellent way" of "agape" love is the true pathway and pattern of prayer, and the supreme example of this is the prayer life of Jesus our Lord. However, we see from Lk.19v41-44., that even His matchless mighty ministry, unparalleled praying, and heartbroken and loving groans, sighs and intercessions could not bring Israel to repentance, or save them from the results of their sin and folly, and we need to remember this when we pray for rebellious people, or we can be badly discouraged. Even Divine love and power cannot change some people.

#### **c. The Holy Spirit's best and greatest prayers through us are often groans and sighs.**

Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit's best and most effective prayers through us are "groanings which cannot be uttered," or "sighs too deep for words," the outflow of concerned love and anguished heart pain. "Which cannot be uttered", is "alaleetois," unutterable sighs or groans, the burdens of a loving heart for others. Some needs and desires are too great to be expressed in words, only the unutterable groans and sighs inspired by the Holy Spirit can express them. This wordless language of the Holy Spirit is vast and immeasurable in meaning and accomplishment. Such intercession is according to the will of God, "kata Theon," and ministers to the needs of God's saints. Rom.8v27. God searches our hearts, and will always answer such heartfelt prayers, for they are always pleasing to God. The Holy Spirit pleads God's cause with us, and through us, and our cause to God, and He, like Jesus, is our "Paraclete" and Advocate with the Father. Jn.14v16. 1Jn.2v1. The gift of tongues is given to us for prayer, as well as praise and worship. It is Jesus and God the Spirit praying through us to God the Father. God praying to God, sometimes in wordless groans and sighs. This divine life-long intervention and intercession in our prayer life by the Trinity is what makes "all things work together, "panta sunergei," for good, "eis agathon," to those who love God, who are the called according to His purpose," "kata" 2596, "prothesin," 4286. Acts.27v13. Rom.3v11,24, 9v11. 2Tim.1v9. Nothing can separate us from the love and purposes of God in Jesus our Lord. Let us exceedingly rejoice and be greatly encouraged by this wonderful fact.

#### **4. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Rom.8v28.**

Those who experience all things working for good to them, are those who love God, and, as a result obey Him. It does not say that all things **shall** work for good, but that they work **now** "sunergei," 4903, for good for those, who love God **now**, "agapoosin," **both verbs are in the present tense.** God's providence and the Holy Spirit are **now** working for us, in all the events of our lives, if we love and serve God. Paul has obviously in mind the great difficulties and things mentioned in Rom.8v31-39. God uses the persecutions, difficulties, trials, and afflictions of life to conform us into the image of Christ. God uses even the evil things of life that attack His children, and presses them into His service, and makes them work for the good of those who love and obey Him. God can even use our failures to humble and improve us, just as He did in the case of Peter. However, it is the worst kind of blasphemous heresy, to say that God tempts us to do evil, and that our sin glorifies God, and works to us for our good. We read in James.1v13-15., that God never tempts us to do evil, and in Rom.6v1-23., Paul strongly denounces the evil antinomian doctrine that states that we glorify God's grace if we practice sin.

John tells us in the Greek of 1Jn.3v8., that those who have a present continuous life and habit of sin are of the Devil. See 1Jn.3v4-10. John twice tells us that born again Christians do not live a life of sin. In 1Jn.3.v9,10., "doth not commit sin," is "hamartian ou poiei," the linear present active indicative, "cannot habitually sin." In 1Jn.5v18., "does not sin," "ouch hamartanei," is again the linear present active indicative, "does not keep on sinning," and Satan "cannot lay hold of or grasp him," "haptetai" 680, the present tense of "hapto," it speaks of a grasp, not a superficial touch, as does Jn.20v17. See Jn.6v38. In Mt.7v23., Jesus tells us that on judgement day He will say to wicked people who profess to do miracles in His Name, "Depart from me you who have a life of continuous evil." God's children do not have a life and habit of sinning, they manifest a life of "agape" love. All things cannot help but work together for good to these loving hearts.

## **5. God uses His amazing foreknowledge to conform us to the image of Jesus.**

### **a. God's astounding foreknowledge.**

We read in Rom.8v29. "For whom he foreknew, he also predestinated (foreordained) to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." "Foreknew," is "proegno," 4267, the aorist active indicative of "proginosko," 4267, from "pro" 4253, which means "fore," and "ginosko" 1097, which means "to know," and so "proginosko" means "to know beforehand, to foresee." God had complete foreknowledge of all future events, things, angelic beings, or people, before the creation of the universe, or the creation of either angels or men. All of the past, present, and future are all at the same time seen, known, scrutinized, and present to God. See Eph.1v14. 2Thes.2v14. 2Tim.1v9. Titus.1v2. 1Pet.1v2. Rev.13v8. God's purposes for us are based on His amazing perfect foreknowledge, He does not dominate and override our wills, He, astonishingly, knows all the events of our lives, and what we and everyone else will think and do. As David said in Psalm 139v6., (see also v1-18.) "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me to grasp," but, praise be to God, it is wonderfully true. Nothing can take our wonderful Father by surprise. Blessed be His Name. The Divine purpose and end of our salvation is the conformation of our lives and characters to the image of Jesus Christ our Lord, and God says that He will bring it to pass in us.

In Rom.8v27., "He predestinated," or "He foreordained," is "proorisen," the aorist active indicative of "proorizo," 4309, from "pro" 4253, "fore," and "horizo" 3724, to mark out a boundary ("horizon"), to limit in advance, and so it means to determine and appoint beforehand, to ordain and predestinate. See 1Cor.2v7. "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God **ordained** ("proorizo") before the world ("aionon," "ages) unto our glory." How amazing, "**our** glory." God's purposes, and our redemption, was conceived before creation, it was no afterthought or modification of plan. We read in Acts.4v28. "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel foreordained to be done." "Foreordained," is "proorisen," the aorist active indicative of "proorizo," 4309. God foreknew, foreordained, and used the wickedness of men to crucify Jesus and bring about our salvation. This divine insight and foreknowledge is not pre-election. It is not God pre-electing people to be saved or lost, but God using His foreknowledge to allow the acts of men and angels to fulfil His magnanimous, noble and praiseworthy divine purposes.

### **b. God's amazing purpose is to conform us to the image of Jesus. Rom.8v29.**

In "conformed to the image," "conformed," is "summorphous," 4832, an adjective derived from "sun" 4862, and "morphe" 3444. "Morphe," only occurs in three places in the New Testament, and in the KJV it is translated as "form." Mk.16v12. Phil.2v6,7. In Phil.2v6, "morphe," here speaks of more than the external appearance, or the form by which a person or thing strikes the vision.

**Robertson** writes that, "in the form of God" in Phil.2v6., "**means the essential attributes as shown in the form.** In his preincarnate state Christ possessed the attributes of God and so appeared to those in heaven who saw him. Here is a clear statement by Paul of the deity of Christ." End of quote. Compare Rom.2v20., "the form of knowledge," and 2Tim.3v5., "a form of godliness;" where "form," is "morphosis," the pencilled outline of the "morphe," without the reality and substance of the "morphe."

"**Bengel** writes, "As "the form of a servant" (Phil.2v7.), which is in contrasted opposition to it, takes for granted the existence of His human nature. so "the form of God" takes for granted His divine nature."

**Lightfoot** writes, "though 'morphe' is not the same as 'phusis' (i.e. nature) or 'ousia' (i.e. substance), yet the possession of the 'morphe' involves participation in the 'ousia' also; for 'morphe' implies not the external accidents but the essential attributes."

Orthodox interpreters say that in Phil.2v6., "morphe," "form," speaks of the essential divine nature of the preincarnate Jesus, and not just His splendour, majesty and glory. Jesus has never been a shadowy image, vague resemblance, or outline sketch, "skia," Heb.10v1., of the Father. He is the exact image, "eikon," Col.1v15, and exact resemblance, "charakter," Heb.1v3., of the Father. N.B. Jn.14v9. In Phil.2v6., Paul emphatically states that in His pre-incarnate state Jesus was existing in the essential form of God in the fullest possible sense. Jn.17v5. The use of "morphe" in Rom.8v29., confirms that God will transform us to a real inward conformity to Christ's image, not merely an outward superficial conformity to His image. In 2Cor.4v4., and Col.1v15., "eikon," 1504, is used to describe Jesus as the very image of the Father. In Rom.8v29., both "morphe" and "eikon" are used to describe how God is going to transfigure us into Christ's image. N.B. Rom.12v1,2. 2Cor.3v18. "And whom he foreordained, them he also called "kaleo" 2564, and whom he called, them he also justified, "dikaio"

1344.; and whom he justified, them he also glorified, "doxazo."" 1392. Rom.8v30. Called, justified, glorified, God's purposeful steps to our conformity to Christ's image.

**c. "That He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Rom.8v29.**

"Firstborn," "prototokos 4416," except when referring to Jesus being Mary's firstborn son, (Mk.3v21. "His family." Mk.3v31-35. 6v3.) .is used of Jesus in the sense of Him being first in rank, authority, position, and honour, and not in the sense of first in time. The Eldest Brother in God's family of Sons. "Prototokos," occurs in the following Scriptures. Jesus was **Mary's firstborn son.** Lk.2v7. **"The firstborn among many brethren.** Rom.8v29. **The firstborn of all creation."** Col.1v15. **"The firstborn from the dead;** that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." Col.1v18. "When he bringeth in **the first begotten** into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. "He kept the Passover,--- lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them." Heb.11v28. "To the general assembly and **church of the firstborn,** who are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Heb.12v23. "Christ, who is the faithful witness, and **the first begotten of the dead,** and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Rev.1v5.

**d. God's Royal Family was conceived before creation. Eph.1v4,5,10,11. Titus.1v2.**

God has a plan which He will not perfect and complete until Christ has many brethren like Himself to share the government of the universe. Rev.10v7.14v1-5.

**6.. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Rom.8v30.**

Rom.8v32. "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Paul affirms the certainty of the final victory and sanctification, and glorification of the sons of God. The climax of his theology in Romans. Nobody can successfully challenge the purposes of God for His children.

**7. Another Panegyric (a heartfelt and profound poem of praise) on the love of God. Rom.8v31-39.**

God, who has begotten us, and justified us will never allow us to be snatch out of His hand, no matter how great the trials of our faith through which we have to go. John.10v27,28. It is an amazing fact that we are loved like Jesus. John.17v23. 15v9.

**In Rom.8v37., "We are more than conquerors,"** is "hupernikomen" 5245, (it only occurs here in the New Testament.) It is a powerful emphatic expression. We gain an overwhelming victory through Him who loved us. God is faithful and He has promised to empower, uphold, protect, and defend us, and make us "more than conquerors," and give us complete victory over all our foes, and every experience of life. Our foes cannot subdue and overcome us, they cannot alienate us from the God we love, or destroy our faith in Him. We gain complete victory over their lies and opposition. Our faith and love are not diminished, they are rather increased by the opposition that we experience. Far from separating us from Christ's love, this opposition expands and develops our love for Christ. God draws near to us, and enlarges our vision of Him, and increases our faith and spiritual strength. We are victorious "through him," not by our own strength or power, but by the love and the power of our Father and Saviour. Phil.4v13. " I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." N.B. 2Cor.4v8-18. Much of the Church has known, like their Saviour, what it is actually like to be slaughtered like sheep, but, like their Saviour, they have faced this vicious persecution with lion-like courage by the grace of God. Is.53v7. Acts.7v54-60. 8v32.1Cor.15v10. 2Cor.1v12. Heb.2v9.

**"For I am persuaded,"** "pepeismai gar," the perfect passive participle of "peitho" 3982, "I remain completely convinced." Paul affirms, that no threat of life or death, no evil supernatural powers, nothing above or below, nor any creature, can separate us from God's love in Jesus. God's love in Jesus gives us complete victory over all impending foes. Paul has arrived at the mountain top of Christian theology. He has come to the climax and zenith of his arguments about God's purpose in creation and redemption. All that now remains is a discussion of the problem of God's earthly nation, Israel, and some practical problems.

**6. PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF GOD'S EARTHLY NATION. Rom.9 to 11.**

**A. PAUL'S SORROW AND GRIEF AT ISRAEL'S REJECTION OF CHRIST. Rom.9v1-5.**

Paul was broken-hearted when he saw his own beloved nation, the very nation to whom Messiah was sent, rebel against God, reject their Messiah, and lose their birthright. The descendants of Israel, to whom belonged the adoption as sons, the glory, the covenants, the law, the service of God, the promises and the patriarchs, had rejected their longed for Messiah and fallen into unbelief, in spite of seeing the greatest manifestation of God's power and love, through His mercy power gifts, that had ever been seen. The Lord Jesus Christ was grief-stricken over Israel's unbelief and the future destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, but He knew that the unbelief of the Jews made these events inevitable. Our Lord's heart-broken sobbing over Jerusalem shows the great sorrow that the Trinity feels, when people reject the truth and insist on going their own way. Lk.19v41-44. However, if people harden their hearts and despise the mercy of God and insist on going into evil, God allows them to reap the consequences of that choice for evil. Rom.2v1-4. Is.26v9. Israel had rejected God's mercy, and they were going to reap the inevitable fruit of their own ways. The Romans were totally merciless in their suppression of Israel's rebellion against their rule. Rome was the sixth head of the beast of Rev.17v3-11., and it

was dominated by Satan, and he was the spiritual source of Rome's malice against Israel and the carnage that followed. Rev.13v1,2. 18v24.

Paul saw Israel despise God's mercy and harden their hearts in unbelief against God and the truth, and he knew that the dreadful events which our Lord prophesied about the destruction of Jerusalem would surely come to pass. Israel's unbelief, and its future national disaster, caused Paul terrible grief and sorrow. Rom.9v2. The word for "grief," "lupe," speaks of a grief like the grief and pain a Jew would have at the fall and destruction of Jerusalem. The word for "sorrow", "odune," is a rare word, only used here and in 1Tim.6v10. in the New Testament, it speaks of anguish and consuming grief. These striking words reveal Paul's deep feeling for his own people and his unceasing and consuming pain and grief over Israel's unbelief. It seems that Paul was hoping that there was some way in which Israel could be made to accept the truth and be saved from the consequences of their rejection of Christ. Paul wished that he could be accursed from Christ for his kinsmen according to the flesh. Robertson says of Rom.9v3., "I was on the point of wishing," is the idiomatic imperfect, whereas Alford says it is the imperfect, not in the historical sense, but as a quasi optative, "I was wishing," Alford says, "The sense of the imperfect in such expressions is the proper and strict one: the act is unfinished, an obstacle intervening." Whichever sense is taken, it is clear that Paul had continual pain and grief in his soul over Israel's unbelief, and longed to witness to the Jews in an attempt to win them to Christ. Like Moses, Paul was even willing to be accursed from Christ for their sakes; but only Christ Jesus, the sinless Lamb of God could be accursed and atone for the sin of the world. Exod.32v32,33. John.1v29,35. Gal.3v13.

### **PAUL THE PRISONER OF JESUS FOR THE GENTILES. Eph.3v1. 4v1.**

Paul's consuming pain and sorrowing love for his people continually drove him back to Jerusalem, even against the express warning of Christ that the Jews would not receive Paul's testimony, and against Christ's clear command to leave the Jews and go and preach to the Gentiles. Paul clearly remembered the warning and direction that the Lord gave him, when He appeared to Paul in a wonderful open vision in Jerusalem in A.D. 37, for he refers to this vision when he gave his testimony to the Jews in Jerusalem, in Acts.22v17-22., some 21 years later in A.D. 58. Such a vision was impossible to forget, but Paul hoped that the Jews would listen to him and went to Jerusalem and gave his testimony to them, in spite of Christ's warning that they would not listen to him. Paul's love for his people, and his desire to win them through his own testimony, caused him to neglect the ministry to the Gentiles that God had given him. So Paul ended up in being taken back to his Gentile charges in chains. **See Appendix 1.**

### **B. PAUL'S ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM OF ISRAEL'S ELECTION. Rom.9v6-13.**

In considering the whole subject of election in these chapters, we have to keep in mind the theology that Paul has already taught in Romans. Paul has already shown that the whole world has chosen evil and is guilty before God. Rom.3v19. Paul answers the questions, How can a just and good God bless a world of sinful people? and Why did He choose Abraham's and Jacob's children to be the chosen people to bless mankind? Paul is giving the reasons and principles behind God's choice of Israel, he is certainly not teaching that God chooses some people for eternal salvation and the rest He condemns to eternal judgement. Paul shows how a good God could bless sinful mankind and still be just, and why He chose Israel to fulfil these gracious purposes. Paul also makes the point, that God, as the judge of the whole earth, has the right to make use of righteous people to bestow His blessings, and by His judgements upon unreconcilable evil people, to warn mankind and restrain evil. Let us now consider what Paul teaches about the doctrine of election.

#### **a. God said physical descent from Abraham did not constitute a claim to His covenants, promises and election.**

Ishmael did not inherit with Isaac, for "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Rom.9v7. with Gen.17v15-19. 18v9-15.

#### **b. God chose Jacob and not Esau, to be His channel of blessing to the world.**

Even when both Jacob and Esau were of the chosen race, God still retained the right of choice. He chose Jacob and not Esau, to be His channel of blessing to the world. It is most essential to realise that Paul is speaking of choice for service, not choice for salvation. The birth of Jacob and Esau was prophesied, and they were both named by God before they were born, before their birth God said, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Rom.9v13. with Gen.25v21-26. N.B. v23. Mal.1v1-3.

In Heb.12v16. we see the reason for God's rejection of Esau, God knew that Esau would be immoral and have an unholy contempt for the things of God. "Fornicator" is " pornos," i.e. "immoral," "Profane," "bebelos," means "accessible, lawful to be trodden under foot," when used of places, and so it means, "profane, unhallowed and common," the very opposite of "hagios," i.e. holy and consecrated. "Bebelos" speaks of a contemptuous and irreverent attitude to the things of God, and it shows Esau's contempt for spiritual things and God. cf. 1Tim.1v9.

In contrast, God says in Gen.25v27., that Jacob was a "perfect" man; the Hebrew word "tam," which is translated as "plain" in this verse, is the same word that is used to describe Job as a "perfect" man in Job.1v1,8. and 2v3.. Jacob, like Job, was an upright man, a man of integrity. The word occurs 13 times in the Hebrew Old Testament; in the A.V. it is translated in Ps.37v37. 64v4. Job.8v20. 9v20,21,22. as "perfect;" in Prov.29v10. as "upright;" and Song Sol.5v2. 6v9. as "undefiled."

Though God's choice was not by merit, but by mercy, we can easily see why God preferred Jacob to be the instrument of His blessing. Jacob had faith in God and loved God, whereas Esau was full of contempt for God and spiritual things. The choice was made, however, because of God's compassionate mercy, not because of Jacob's merit. Rom.9v11. "God's purpose of choice, selection and election, which depends not on works, but on Him who calls them." We must also remember Rom.8v28-30., which reveals that God's foreknowledge of people's response to truth decides His purposes for their lives. God foresaw the response of faith in Jacob, and Esau's carnality and unbelief, and so chose accordingly.

**N.B. 1.** Paul says that even though Abraham's children had been born under the covenant promise of God, no one was able to lay claim to God's blessings because of their personal merit. Since all have sinned no one can be blessed by merit, so God made justification and blessing by faith, not merit. This made the promise sure to all who desired to receive it, Rom.4v16., and removed pride from the justified. We can see the wisdom of God in this; merit can produce pride as it had in the boastful Jews, who prided themselves in the keeping of the Law, Lk.18v11.; but the way of faith and mercy produces thankful brokenness. God's loving wisdom keeps pride, the arch enemy that has ruined both heaven and earth, from the justified. Rom.3v21-28.

**N.B. 2.** Paul also says that though God had chosen Israel's children for His purposes, many had failed to receive the promises and blessings through unbelief, disobedience and sin. Paul says that not all who were born as children of Israel were included in the covenant to Jacob, "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." Rom.9v6.

**N.B. 3.** In the light of these considerations, and the past history of Israel, it was not extraordinary that only a small part of the nation had responded to, and accepted their Messiah, and received His grace and blessings. Paul goes on to show how God had used Israel's unbelief to be a blessing to mankind, and to demonstrate, not only His great mercy and grace, but also His unsearchable and unfathomable gentle wisdom.

## **C. PAUL'S EXPLANATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION. Rom.9v13-24.**

### **1. Paul answers the question, Why did God choose Jacob instead of Esau?**

Paul answers the question, "Is God unjust to choose to make His covenant with Jacob, rather than with Esau?" with a very definite, "Certainly not!" "Me genoita!" which means, "May it not be;" for God is a God of mercy and compassion, not injustice. Rom.9v14-16. There are two things we must be clear about in considering these words.

#### **a. God wants to forgive, embrace and welcome all sinners.**

This is clearly seen in the parable of the prodigal son. No one can criticise God when He says, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion," for God welcomes all who want to come to Him, and He is motivated by perfect love. It is essential to remember that God's first name is compassion, Exod.34v6,7., "merciful" is "racham," "full of embracing compassionate love." God is perfect "agape" love and is longing to help everyone, and not willing that any should perish, but wants all to come to repentance. 2Pet.3v9. 1Jn.4v8,16. The Father, Jesus, the Spirit, and Bride give an open invitation to all. Rev.22v17. God wills all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, but men can frustrate God's desire. 1Tim.2v4. "How often I yearned to gather your children around me---but you were unwilling." Mt.23v37. The heart-broken grief of Jesus over Jerusalem shows the frustration of His desire to bless and protect the children of Israel. Luke.19v41-44. The doctrine of the irresistible will of God is untenable in the light of such Scriptures.

#### **b. God chooses the nobodies for His service.**

It has always been true that God decides who He chooses for service on the basis of 1Cor.1v26-31.. God chooses the poor, base and despised nobodies, in order to hide pride from mankind, and so that he who glories, should glory in the Lord. Choice for service does not depend on human willingness or strenuous exertion, but on God having mercy. Rom9v15,16. Exod.33v19. God hid revelation from the wise and prudent and chose babes and sucklings for His service, and sent them out with power, for it was good in His eyes. Lk.10v21,22. Mt.11v25-27. Paul says in 1Cor.12v21-25., that it is a divine principle that God will greatly use the more feeble members of the body of Christ, because God wants to bind the body of Christ in love together, and make Christians depend on each other.

### **2. Paul shows that God's decrees are perfectly just and fair.**

Paul answers the objection that, "If God has decreed a thing, it seems unfair, for who can resist His will?" Paul follows exactly the thought of Jer.18v1-17., and shows that the kind of vessel the divine potter makes depends on the response of the will of the person. Jeremiah told Israel that if they really repented they could be a vessel of honour and blessing; whereas rebellion and love of evil meant that they would be a vessel of dishonour whose end was destruction. Paul also states that in Pharaoh, God used an irreconcilable evil person, who was so wicked that before Moses met him he was already sentenced for execution. God raised this evil man to power, it was no accident, it was part of the will and purpose of God. God also postponed judgement upon Pharaoh to make use of Pharaoh's intractable stubbornness and hardness of heart, so that others could be inspired by, and benefit from, the manifestation of God's power, kindness and judgement upon Pharaoh. God made use of an irreconcilable evil person, who would fight God and truth to the bitter end; and so an evil vessel of wrath was

made a blessing to mankind. There are, on the other hand, people who God has been able to bring to the place where they were willing to accept mercy; these God has been able to call to positions of honour in His kingdom.

**N.B. 1.** Some interpret the doctrine of "Election" and "Predestination," in such a way as to portray a hard and unjust God. However, God is not unjust, He is perfect "agape" Love, and everything He does springs from this perfect love, so we have nothing to fear from Him, whatever He does. In Rom.9v14,15., Paul emphasises that God is merciful, and Eph.2v4. states that God is rich in mercy and loves us with a great love. Such Scriptures as Exod.1v7-22. 4 to 14. Eccles.8v11. and Rom.2v3-6., show that Pharaoh despised and rejected the mercy of God time and time again and this hardened his heart. The mercy of God was intended to lead him to repentance, but instead he used it as an excuse to grow more arrogant and bold against God, an insane resistance to God drove him on. Pharaoh was an tyrant who became more cruel and evil, every time that he was let off. The evil which God knew to be in his heart was exposed by God's mercy, until it became visible to all generations, and the whole incident has served as a tremendous warning against playing with the forbearance, longsuffering, mercy and great grace of God. So God has used an unreconcilable Pharaoh, and many others, to give tremendous warnings and lessons to the whole of mankind.

**N.B. 2.** The lump of clay in Jer.18v1-11. and Rom.9v21-24. is human nature and the human soul. It is an extraordinary fact that the preaching of the Gospel, which is intended to give life, may in actual fact have the opposite effect, and bring spiritual death. Paul makes the point in 2Cor.2v16., that the Gospel can kill as well as make alive; and Peter tells us in 1Pet.2v6-8., that the Jews stumbled at the ministry of Jesus. The Lord Jesus was directed by prophecy to target the poor and needy with the Gospel and they responded to the truth, Lk.4v18,19.; Paul also tells us in 1Cor.1v18-31., that the Lord has chosen foolish, weak, base and despised people to preach His Gospel. In all cases, with the unconverted or the Christian, it is the free will of the lump that decides what God will make of him.

**N.B. 3.** God makes use of everything and everyone for the very best of reasons, to fulfil His wonderful loving purposes for His Creation. Even the wicked are only allowed such liberty as will in the end bring good to pass. Note well. Job.1v2. 2v6. 2Chron.18v20,21. Lk.4v1. James.1v2-4,12. Ps.76v10. Is.10v5-19. 7v20. The malice of Satan will bring to the throne and kingdom of God, those who resist and overcome him.

**N.B. 4.** The Scripture tells us that the calling, election and predestination of God all depend upon the foreknowledge of God. Rom.8v28-30. 1Pet.1v1,2. The Scripture makes it clear that the foreknowledge of God never violates the free will of man. God makes His foreknowledge the grounds of His actions, but He does not dominate or decide the wills and actions of His creatures by His foreknowledge. In the light of His foreknowledge God decides His will, and works all things according to it. Most of God's foreknowledge is easily explained.

**a.** The Trinity knew from eternity all their future plans and actions. "Known to God from eternity are all His works." Acts.15v18. See 2v23. 3v18. Rev.13v8. 17v8.

**b.** God knows all the plans of Satan, some of which He reveals to the children of God. 2Thes.2v3-12. Acts.13v8-12.

**c.** The wonderful thing is that God completely knows all the actions of His creation BEFORE THEY HAPPEN; even the lives, actions and names of those yet unborn; Josiah 1Kings.13v2.; Cyrus, Is.44v28 to 45v6.; John Baptist. Lk.1v13-17. with Mal.4v5,6.. The fact of the total pre-knowledge of God caused David to marvel and say, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it." Ps.139v1-16. v6. This foreknowledge is stated as a fact, but it is never explained; however, it is explicit in the names of God. God told Moses in Exod.3v14., to tell the Israelites that "I AM WHO I AM," and "I AM," had sent him to them. The name "Jehovah," or "Yahweh," states the fact that God is the "Great I AM," who is not limited by the normal laws of time. Our Lord said in John.8v58., "Most assuredly, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I AM." God dwells outside of the limits of time which apply to the rest of His creation. God states in Is.41v4., 44v6-8. and 48v3,12,18. that He is, "The First and The Last," who knows and declares future events and challenges the false gods of the Heathen to do the same. Our Lord claims this as His title in Rev.1v17. 2v8. and 22v13.. God is not limited in time, but lives in all time and in every age. God is truly amazing in His attributes and abilities as well as His nature and character of perfect love.

The Scriptures make it clear, that in no case are the actions of men, either good or evil, attributed to the foreknowledge of God: and that men are totally responsible for their actions, and do not act under "force majeure." The principle of the free will of men and angels, is one of the two cardinal points of Christian theology, the other being that God is love. Rom.7v15-23. Man is not allowed to rest upon the foreknowledge or election of God; as if this set him free from responsibility: but is on the contrary, urged to make that calling an election secure by determined efforts in a spirit of fear and trembling. 2Pet.1v3-11. Phil.2v12,13.

**N.B. 5.** Paul is not saying in Rom.9v19., that people cannot resist "The Will of God," for it is only in matters of power that God is irresistible. God has made it very plain, that in matters of will and morals, He is resisted every day. Mt.23v37. Lk.19v41-44. 2Chron.36v11-16. God wants to save all, but men's free will stops this. 1Tim.2v4. 2Pet.3v9. God will one day rule the actions, though not the wills, of His whole creation. Phil.2v9-11. The final disposition of the Universe in Rev.20v11 to 21v8., will contain one department, the lake of fire, which was far

from God's original desire, and God has been forced to make this place of eternal confinement, because sinners have refused to repent. God allows the smoke of Hell to rise up eternally in the sight of all, as a permanent warning of the effect and end of evil. Rev.14v10,11. 19v3. and Is.66v13-16,24. with Mk.9v44,46,48. In this way God even uses Hell to contribute to the eternal happiness of the righteous. The smoke of Hell is an eternal warning that sin ends both in destruction of character and personality and in eternal confinement and judgement by God. The examination of the wicked by Christ and the Holy angels in Rev.14v10,11., is necessary to prove to the righteous that all has been done that can be done for the wicked to be saved, and that none of them are crying for mercy with a genuine repentance.

**N.B. 6.** God is not only love, He is all wise, so no action must ever be attributed to Him, which does not spring from love, or is not thought to be wise. There is a sense in which God is not free in His actions, for the only actions which are open to Him are those which are governed by love and wisdom. Any actions which offend against either love or wisdom, are "ipso facto," ruled out, and are impossible to Him. See Heb.6v18. Numb.23v19. 1Sam.15v29. Mal.3v6. Heb.13v8. Titus.1v2. 2Tim.2v13. Therefore, any theory of predestination which includes respect of persons, favouritism, or lack of justice, must be rejected whatever arguments are put forward. Gen.18v25. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

#### **D. FURTHER REMARKS ON THE REJECTION OF ISRAEL.**

1. The whole history of Israel illustrates the fact that only a small proportion ever received the blessings of Jehovah. 2Chron.34v23-28.

2. The reason for the failure of many in Israel to grasp the promises of God, was their arrogance and self-righteousness, and the refusal to humble themselves as the believing Gentiles had. Rom.2v17-29.

3. God had deliberately sent an offer of mercy to Israel through Jesus their Messiah, to stumble those who were too proud to accept it and humble themselves in the dust: for even God cannot save the self-righteous. Lk.18v9-14. 15v21,29. It was this proud self-righteousness and self-justification, and the consequent refusal to repent and accept the mercy of God; that brought about the rejection of Christ, the blindness of Israel, and the judgement of God upon its people, city and Temple. God made this blindness and stubbornness a blessing to the Gentiles.

**N.B.** The statement in Rom.9v30., that the Gentiles have found the righteousness of faith, reminds us of Rom.4v1., where Abraham suddenly found a salvation for which he was not looking. It shows us that God is not willing that any should perish.

#### **E. A FURTHER ELABORATION OF FACTS CONCERNING ISRAEL AND THE GOSPEL. Rom.10v1-21.**

**1. Rom.10v1-3.** Israel's sin was not atheism, they were very religious; but their sin was wilful ignorance of God's character and His means of justification, they were unwilling to accept the revelation of the Gospel truth when it came. Jn.15v22-26.

**2. Rom.10v4,5.** The Jews tried to make themselves acceptable to God through their observation of the Law, but none of them actually kept it, and our Lord was quick to point this out to them, and told them that a broken Law accused and condemned them.. John.7v19. 5v45. Acts.15v10. No one could be justified through the Law once it had been broken. Rom.2v12. 3v20. Justification by faith alone was the only way. Rom.1v17. 3v28. 4v5. 5v1. Gal.2v16.

**3. Rom.10v6-15.** The Gospel, which only required faith for salvation, was well known to the Jews. The way of faith was manifested again and again in the lives of Old Testament saints, and in type and prophecy. It only needed faith in the heart and confession with the mouth to appropriate this salvation. Acts.13v38,39.

**4. Rom.10v16-21.** It was not a case of ignorance, but of refusal to accept God's way of salvation, even though they saw the Gentiles eating the bread that belonged to the children of Israel. Mt.15v26. The Gospel was to be preached "to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Rom.1v16. 2v9,10. Acts.1v8.

**N.B.** In Rom.10v3,6, and 10., "righteousness," "dikaiosune," is to be understood as imputed righteousness and justification by faith. See Rom.4v6,11. 5v1. "Dikaiosune," means "the character or quality of being right or just." It is used in respect to the absolute righteousness of God in Rom.3v5.; and, as we have seen, it is used to speak of the imputed righteousness of the pardoned sinner. In the same way a person can be called "righteous," "dikaios," either by merit as Jesus, the Just One, "Tou Dikaiou;" Acts.7v52. 3v14. 22v14. 1Jn.2v1. 2Tim.4v8. 1Tim.3v16., and a good person, Lk.1v6. 2v25. Acts.10v22. Rom.5v7.; or those who are justified by faith. Rom.5v19.

The words "to justify," are a translation of the verb "dikaioo," which means "to declare or make one righteous." In Rom.5v1. "being justified" is "dikaiouthentes" the aorist passive participle, showing the point of time when justification took place through faith. In Rom.3v24. "being justified" is "dikaioumenoi," the present passive participle of "dikaioo," which shows the constant process of justification. In Rom.3v26. "Justifier" is "dikaiounta," the present active participle of "dikaioo," God is the one who is actively and continually justifying those who



believe in Jesus. This same thought of God being the justifier is also seen in Rom.8v33., where "God is the one justifying," "Ho dikaion," the present participle of "dikaioo,"

The noun "dikaiosis," speaks of the act of pronouncing righteous, justified and acquitted; it occurs twice in the New Testament, in Rom.4v25. and 5v18.. Christ is the end of the Law to a sinner seeking justification, but the Christian has to fulfil the Law of Christ. Gal.6v2. Mt.28v20. We are under the Law to Christ. 1Cor.9v21. Justifying faith is of the heart, and leads to action, practical holiness and love. Jam.2v14-26. There is no contradiction between Paul and James, justification is by faith, through God's grace; but justification is proved by the new life in Jesus being manifested in good works and godly living. Mt.12v37.

#### **F. FINAL SUMMING UP. Rom.11v1-10.**

**1. Rom.11v1-5.** Though Israel as a nation has been rejected by God, because of their unbelief; yet as in Elijah's day, there is a remnant which has believed.

**2. Rom.11v5,6.** God has elected out of Israel, all who were humble enough to ask for forgiveness as an act of grace, for only the contrite can be justified. Lk.18v14.

**3. Rom.11v7-10.** By the same offer of grace, God has hardened all who were too proud to ask for forgiveness, and were looking for a great reward for their virtuous lives. This has hardened their hearts against mercy and blinded their eyes to the truth.

#### **G. ISRAEL'S REJECTION IS NOT FINAL, THERE IS STILL HOPE FOR THEM. Rom.11v11-32.**

**1. Rom.11v11-15.** Has Israel as a nation any place in the purposes of God? Is there any hope for them in the future? Yes, even in unbelief Israel has been a blessing to the Gentiles. The restoration of Israel is to come, and they will be an enormous blessing to the whole world. Paul magnified his apostolic office to the Gentiles in order to provoke some of the Jews to jealousy in the hope that it might save some of them. Paul's magnificent obsession with the Jews got him out of the will of God in Jerusalem, instead of looking after his Gentile charges.

**2. Rom.11v16-24.** The Gentiles are warned not to forget that they are only wild olive, and they are saved, not by merit, but by faith. Paul warns the Gentiles to be careful lest they cease to believe, and so suffer the same fate as the unbelieving Jews, who if they repent and belief can easily be grafted in again. Paul urges the Gentiles to learn from the rebellious moral pride of the Jews and to remain humble and repentant.

**3. Rom.11v25-32.** Paul reveals "that hardening in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in." Rom.11v25. The nation of Israel, much of which has been shut up in unbelief and hardened, will take their place when Christ returns as "The Deliverer out of Zion." Israel have irretrievably lost the birthright of the first-born, as did Reubon and Esau, yet if they repent, they will inherit earthly blessing, the position of first-born now belongs to the Church. God will raise Israel up from their graves and put them in their own land and during the Millennium, Jerusalem and Israel will become the religious centre of the earth. Ez.37v1-14. v12. God will make Israel the source of blessing to the Gentiles, and they will rule the Millennial kingdom with the Church of Christ. Rev.7v1-8. 14v1-5.

**4. Rom.11v33-36.** Paul bursts out into a panegyric of praise and an ecstasy of wonder at the loving wisdom and knowledge of God. See 1Cor8v2. 2Pet.3v16. Paul quotes from Is.40v13. Jer.23v18. and Job.41v11. Paul speaks of the unfathomable depths of the wisdom of God, "O bathos." The unsearchable judgements of God, "unsearchable" is "anexerauneta," God's ways and wisdom are often unsearchable, and His ways past finding out, "anexichniastoi," means we "cannot trace out by tracks, incomprehensible and inscrutable." Some men feel they know better than God, but who has been his fellow counsellor or advisor, "sumboulos." Who has given to God; "proedoken," is the aorist of "prodidomai," which means "to give before, to give in advance, to give first, to give beforehand;" God knows the future completely, no one can give Him first or advise Him beforehand. No one can repay God for His giving, for God is the originator and giver of all things.

#### **N.B. 1. The raising of Israel from the dead.**

Israel's resurrection at Christ's return, and her position during the Millennium as the centre of the World, is clearly stated in the prophets. Is.22v20-24. 26vv19. Ezek.37v1-14. Ezek.40 to 48. Note. 44v9-16. esp.v12,13. Jer.17v13. Zech.6v9-15. Zech.12 to 14. Hosea.1v10,11. Hagg.2v20-23.

Israel despised their heavenly calling, and set their hopes on an earthly kingdom, and so they will find that they have lost what they might have had, and will have to be content with second best. All of God's promises depend on faith, not birthright, and God withdraws His promise if people are unfaithful, "Ye shall know my breach of promise." Numb.14v34.

#### **N.B. 2. THE HOUSE OF DAVID AS GOD. Zech.12v8-12.**

In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; And he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; And the house of David **SHALL BE AS GOD**, as the angel of the Lord before them. (Gen16v7. Judges.2v1. Heb.1v4.) v9,And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." In Ezek.39v2,12. we are told that only a sixth of the soldiers of the nations that come

against Israel are left alive, this would be over 160 million people, because we are told that those armies number 200 million in Rev.9v16..It takes 7 months to bury the dead. Ezek.39v14-16.

**N.B. 3. In Zech.13v7-9., we see that Jesus has to "cut off" two thirds of Israel at His second coming.**

This is almost certainly because two thirds of Israel have followed, and been corrupted by Antichrist, and the majority of godly Jews have been killed by Antichrist in the Great Tribulation in his purges.

**7. THE PRACTICAL OUTCOME OF THESE DOCTRINES. Rom.12v1 to 15v13.**

**A. THE BODY OF CHRIST. Rom.12v1-8.**

**1. Rom.12v1,2.** Paul entreats the Romans by the mercies of God, to live a consecrated life, and have a transfigured mind and life. "Transformed" is the same word that is used of Jesus being transfigured in Mt.17v2. and Mk.9v2., both Gospels use "metemorphothe" the aorist passive of "metamorphoo." Here, in Rom12v2., "metamorphousthe," the present passive imperative of "metamorphoo" is used. In 2Cor.3v18., we are told that we will be transfigured as we behold the glory of the Lord; here "metamorphoumetha," the present indicative of "metamorphoo" is used. So our transformation should be a continuous ongoing thing as we yield to the Lord. Our inward beings can be transformed from glory to glory as we refuse to be conformed to the world and renew our minds and behold the glory of God.

In 2Cor.11v13,14,15., Paul warns us that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, and Satan's deceitful servants can transform and disguise themselves as apostles of God. Here the word is "metaschematizomenoi," the present middle indicative of "metaschematizo," from "meta" after; and "schema," the form or habit. The change is on the outside, the inside is unchanged and evil. The "schema" is the external, the "morphe" the internal reality, Christ was eternally in the essential form, "morphe" of God. Phil.2v7. People can put on clerical garb and look like servants of God, when they serve Satan well by their doctrine and manner of life. The word "metaschematizo" is used in a good sense in 1Cor.4v6., where Paul speaks of himself and Apollos as illustrations of truth; and again in Phil.3v21., where it means the transformation of our outward bodies at the resurrection and second coming of Christ.

**2. Rom.12v4-8.** Jesus, being now in Heaven, has need of the bodies of His saints upon earth, in order that He may prolong His days on earth, and through His Church extend His resurrection ministry through the earth. Is.53v10. Lk.12vv50. Mk.16v20. Gal,2v20. Instead of having just one body to work through as He did in the days of His flesh, Christ now has the bodies of millions of Christians who He can work through. Christians are, therefore, to look upon themselves as the body of Christ, with unique gifts, ministries and talents to reveal Christ, and to work for Christ. In Col.3v12-25., Paul makes it clear that when we do all things heartily as unto the Lord, we serve God. We truly serve the Lord in the everyday events of home and work and our personal prayer life as well as our public Christian fellowship and worship. Indeed, most of our work for God is in the daily routines of life, and God's gifts and guidance are needed here more than anywhere else.

**B. SUNDRY PRACTICAL MAXIMS. Rom.12v11-19.** Show practical affectionate love, in honour giving preference to one another. Rejoice, be patient, be steadfast in prayer; give to the needy and be hospitable. Bless persecutors and do not curse them. Rejoice and sympathise. Be content with humble things. Overcome evil with good.

**C. OUR ATTITUDE TO THE STATE. Rom.13v1-7.**

Paul states that officers of the state are God's ministers, appointed by Him to deal with earthly matters. See Dan.4v17,25,35. Is.44v28 to45.v7. Ezra.1v2. They are, therefore, to be obeyed conscientiously as of Divine authority. If, however, these rulers step beyond their authority and impinge on spiritual matters, then God is to be obeyed rather than men. Acts.4v19. The help of rulers is legitimately to be sought in worldly matters, Paul appealed to them for help. Acts.16v37,38. 22v25. 23v11 with 25v11. Ester relied on Divine help, but did not neglect to do her best in influencing the king. Ester.4v1-17. 6v1-3. 7v1 to 8v17.

**D. LOVE IS THE FULFILLING OF THE LAW. Rom.13v8-14.**

Paul exhorts them to love one another and to "cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light," and prepare for the kingdom. Christians can and must "put on the Lord Jesus Christ."

**E. HOW TO ACT IN DIFFERENCES OVER CONSCIENTIOUS MATTERS. Rom.14v1. to 15v13.**

1. Good Christians can differ in their ideas of what is right and what is wrong, for example, in matters such as Sabbath observance, or eating of meats, 1Cor.10v27-33.; or drinking of wine. See John.2v9. Mt.11v18,19. 1Tim.5v23. Gal.2v12-14. Acts.11v1-18. 10v9-17,28.

2. Each man's conscience is to be his own guide, not the guide of someone else. Rom.2v1,19. The guide of what is right and wrong is not to be one's own satisfaction, but the profit of one's neighbour. We are not to boast of our superior grip of spiritual things, but to consider weaker Christians.

3. We must remember that the only person who knows all the facts to judge our neighbour, or ourselves, is the Lord.

4. It may well need patient study of the Scriptures to bring us to a common mind on doubtful matters of conscience. Paul tells us to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit until we come to the unity of the faith. Eph.4v3,13. Col.1v9-11. Jews and Gentiles have such different backgrounds, that willingness to accept each other for what they were was vital; this fact is very applicable to the present charismatic revival and fellowship between Christians of different denominations.

#### **8. PERSONAL REMARKS, GREETINGS AND FAREWELLS. Rom.15v14 to 16v27.**

1. What a beautiful warmth of personal love and affection! Paul's love for his converts was the strong link between himself and his converts, he did not need to make an authoritative appeal to his apostolic authority. Paul had plenty of words that he could use for command, but he chose to beseech and appeal in love to those he wrote to.

2. How differently things turned out from what Paul expected, he got to Rome in a different way than he expected, or God intended. Paul's determined disobedience to the Holy Spirit's command not to go to Jerusalem, got Paul into a lot of trouble, and to Rome, by his appeal to Caesar. Acts.21v4. 22v17-23. 25v22-32. See Appendix 1.

3. The final blessing emphasises the eternity of the plan which was always in the mind of God, but was only in this age made plain to all who believe.

#### **APPENDIX ONE: PAUL. THE PRISONER OF JESUS FOR THE GENTILES. Eph.3v1. 4v1.**

##### **Paul's consuming pain and sorrowing love for his people.**

This consuming love continually drove Paul back to Jerusalem, even against the express warning of Christ that the Jews would not receive Paul's testimony, and against Christ's clear command to leave the Jews and go and preach to the Gentiles. Paul clearly remembered the warning and direction that the Lord gave him, when He appeared to Paul in a wonderful open vision in Jerusalem in A.D. 37, for he refers to this vision when he gave his testimony to the Jews in Jerusalem, in Acts.22v17-22., some 21 years later in A.D. 58. Such a vision was impossible to forget, but Paul hoped that the Jews would listen to him and went to Jerusalem and gave his testimony to them, in spite of Christ's warning that they would not listen to him. Paul's love for his people, and his desire to win them through his own testimony, caused him to neglect the ministry to the Gentiles that the Lord Jesus had given him. So Paul ended up in being taken back to his Gentile charges in chains. The events that led up to this are as follows.

##### **God's continuous and clear warnings to Paul not to go back to Jerusalem.**

As Paul travelled back to Jerusalem, the Lord tried to stop him by a series of solemn and serious prophetic warnings through the body of Christ. Paul told the elders of Ephesus, at Miletus, in Acts.20v22,23., that in every city, the Holy Spirit had solemnly and emphatically kept warning him, that imprisonment, persecution and suffering awaited him at Jerusalem. "Witnesses" is "diamarturetai," the third person singular present indicative of "diamarturomai," to make solemn affirmation, to declare solemnly and earnestly, to protest, to make a solemn and earnest charge. The Holy Spirit protested and testified repeatedly, fully, solemnly and earnestly, of the consequences of Paul's visit to Jerusalem. "Bonds and afflictions," is "desma kai thlipseis," (both are used together as in 2Cor.1v18. Phil.1v17. See "desma," Lk.8v29. and Acts.16v26.), real bonds and fearful pressures were awaiting him at Jerusalem. When Paul disobeyed these warnings from the Holy Spirit he went "bound in the spirit" to Jerusalem. He is not referring to the Holy Spirit, but to his own spirit, for the mention of the Holy Spirit in Acts.20v23., is in definite contrast to his own spirit in v22.. "Bound", is "dedemenos", the perfect passive participle of "deo," to bind, the perfect showing the continuing state or condition. When Paul, in Acts.19v21., "purposed in spirit" to go to Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit started a series of warnings which Paul ignored, and the result was that he was bound in his spirit, which was certainly not good and desirable. Paul was disobeying his own teaching that the peace of God should rule our hearts in our decisions and guidance; his bondage in spirit was the very opposite of this peace, and was another proof that he was disobeying the Holy Spirit. Col.3v15.

##### **Paul sails from Miletus to Tyre.**

Paul sailed from Miletus, probably in a small coasting vessel, some forty nautical miles due south to Cos, then about fifty miles from Cos to Rhodes, and about fifty miles from Rhodes to Patara. Probably anchoring each night at these three ports. At Patara Paul sailed in a much larger vessel, a sea-going merchantman about 400 miles to Tyre, the journey would take about two days. Paul spent seven days at Tyre, after searching for and finding the Christians there. "Finding," is "aneurontes," the aorist active participle of "aneurisko," to seek for, to find by searching. As soon as Paul had found the Christians at Tyre the Holy Spirit used them to warn Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. They kept on warning Paul "through the Spirit, ('dia tou pneumatos,') not to go up to, or set foot in Jerusalem." Acts.21v4. These warnings were very specific and continual, for the word "said" is "elegon," the third person plural indicative imperfect active of "lego." It means "to lay forth, to relate, usually in a systematic and set discourse." It is a speaking that links and knits together in a connected discourse the deepest thoughts and inward feelings of the mind. They conveyed to Paul the deepest feelings and thoughts of Jesus about Paul's visit to Jerusalem. (The word "logos," is derived from the verb "lego;" "logos" means "something said, including the thought; intelligence, and word as the expression of intelligence. "Logos" is reasoned speech, "rhema," an utterance.) The imperfect shows that they continually warned Paul not to go to Jerusalem for the whole of the seven days that he was at Tyre. This was done through the Holy Spirit, and in a systematic and heartfelt way, by

Christians who had no axe to grind, and out of a deep concern for Paul. Paul disobeyed the express commands and warnings of the Holy Spirit through these warm-hearted Christians and set out for Jerusalem.

It seems Paul could have stayed seven days at Tyre while the ship was unloaded and its other business matters were completed; so did the providence of God order events in order to speak to Paul and try to prevent him from going out of His will. There are many theologians who try to justify Paul's determination to go to Jerusalem. They say that the prophecy in Acts.21v4., was a warning and not a prohibition, and so Paul was not disobeying the Holy Spirit. All theologians agree that Paul was forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach in Asia and Bithynia in Acts.16v6,7.; they should also accept as equally authoritative and correct the Holy Spirit's command in Acts.21v4., that Paul was not to go up to Jerusalem.

Paul finished his sea journey with the thirty miles voyage from Tyre to Ptolemais, the modern Acre, they stayed only one day there, and the next day they went the 35 miles to Caesarea by land. They stayed "many days" at the home of Philip the evangelist, who had four daughters who prophesied. Acts.21v6-10. One wonders why Paul hurried past Ephesus and neglected the Christians there, when he could spend so much time in Philip's home?

#### **Paul stays at the Home of Philip the evangelist and meets Agabus the prophet there.**

While Paul was at the home of Philip at Caesarea, the prophet Agabus accurately warned Paul, by the striking symbolic binding of Paul's feet and hands, of the evil consequences that would follow if Paul went to Jerusalem. When they heard this the disciples tried to persuade Paul not to go up to Jerusalem, but he would not be persuaded, and his earnest words convinced them he was right, and they said, "The will of the Lord be done!" It seems they were in such awe of Paul's mighty apostolic ministry, and his willingness to die for Christ, that they laid on one side their first God-given spiritual feelings and warnings and sacrificed their judgement in the matter. Paul tells us in 1Thes.5v21., that we must never fail to exercise correct judgement over spiritual revelation; indeed, we are to test supposed revelations very carefully, we are "to prove all things;" "prove," is "dokimizo," and it is used of the testing of metals in the fire. When a whole group of godly and spiritual people say the same thing, it is often the voice of God trying to save us from danger and distress and from going out of God's will. Peter also said with the very same earnestness that he was prepared to die for the Lord Jesus, and was not prepared to listen to the prophetic warning. Strong affirmation and earnestness do not mean a person is right. Luke.22v31-34, 54-62.

#### **Paul rehearses all that God had done among the Gentiles.**

After Paul arrived in Jerusalem, he gave an account to the Church leaders of what God had done among the Gentiles. They glorified God for it. All seemed so well and so promising, and the Spirit's warnings so incongruous and unnecessary. Then the trouble started, the Jewish Christian leaders asked Paul to show that he was a good Jew and kept the Law by performing a Nazarite vow, which involved the offering of sacrifices in the Temple. Acts.21v17-24. This was obviously an attempt to reconcile Paul with the Jews; but it shows how deficient the Church leaders at Jerusalem were in their knowledge of our Lord's plans for His Church, and the theology about the Church and its relation to Judaism. Fulfilling their request meant that Paul had to deny the theology about the Church and the New Covenant and its relationship to Judaism, that Christ had revealed to him, and entrusted him to reveal to the Church, the theology revealed in Paul's epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians.

#### **Paul should have taught the Christian leaders at Jerusalem the theology of Galatians.**

Paul should have told them, as he did the Galatians in Gal.5v4., "If you try to be justified by the Law, you automatically cut yourself off from the power of Christ; you put yourself outside the range of His grace." Phillips Translation. Instead of teaching them the truths Christ had taught him, Paul went along with their expediency, and bound himself with a Nazarite vow and offered sacrifices in the Temple, which he knew had been fulfilled in Christ. Acts.19v21. 21v26. Paul had rebuked Peter and Barnabas for this same hypocrisy in Gal.2v11-18., and yet we see him showing the Jews that he is "zealous for the Law." Acts.21v20-24.

Paul said in Gal.2v18,21., "For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. v21. I do not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain." Again in Gal.3v1-14., Paul calls the Galatians foolish for going back on justification by faith, by keeping the Law, and says in v10., "Those who take their stand on observance of the Law are all under a curse." In Gal.5v1., Paul calls the Law a yoke of slavery, from which Christ has made us free, and tells the Galatians not to be entangled again with it. The New English Bible translation of Gal.5v4. is very instructive; "When you seek to be justified by way of Law, your relation with Christ is completely severed: you have fallen outside the domain of God's grace."

If the Church leaders at Jerusalem had grasped the truth of these Scriptures, they would not have asked Paul to show he was a good Jew and kept the Law. The fact they did so, makes it clear that they were still in bondage to Jewish tradition, and were to a large extent, either still ignorant of, or unwilling to receive, the theology that had been revealed to Paul by our Lord, regarding the New Covenant and the Church. These Scriptures also reveal the very definite disobedience of Paul to the truths that he believed. It is not surprising that the Holy Spirit tried to stop Paul from going to Jerusalem, for he knew that it would result in Paul seriously sinning by denying and compromising vital New Covenant truth.

From the above facts we can see that the church leaders request to Paul was a carnal human expedient to try to reconcile the Jews to Paul and the Church. This human expedient was definitely a stratagem inspired by Satan to

destroy the Church by compromise with Judaism. Satan knew well that if the Church tried to justify itself by the Law, it would come under the curse of the Law and be doomed. Gal.3v10.

### **The request of the Church leaders can also be judged by its fruits.**

The result was not their hoped for reconciliation between the Jews, Paul and the Church, but a riot, and a terrible exacerbation of relations between Judaism and the Church. There could be no compromise between the New Covenant and the Old Covenant, it was as impossible as reconciliation between the two sons of Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac, as Paul taught in Gal.4v21-31.. This hypocrisy and carnal expediency had several horrific effects on the early Church.

### **1. The truth Jesus gave to Paul about the Church and New Covenant was going to be greatly hindered.**

Satan used Paul's actions to veil truth from both the Church and the world. Gal.1v11,12. 2Cor.11v1 to 12v12. Eph.3v1-12. Is.25v6-9. His actions had denied the truths in Galatians, and as a result Judaism took a firm hold on the Church. The conflict between the advocates of the New Covenant and the Old Covenant was one of the biggest problems of the early Church.

### **2. Paul gave the Judaizers the ammunition to attack him, and bring the Church in bondage to the Law.**

The Judaizers said that Paul's example showed that Christians had to keep the law to be saved, and that Paul was guilty of double standards and hypocrisy. The result was disastrous, for the Judaizers turned many churches to their way of thinking, it appears that even Ephesus followed them for a while, for Paul wrote in 2Tim.1v15., "all they which are in Asia be turned away from me." Paul's converts turned against him, and it broke his heart, his visit to Jerusalem was undoubtedly the cause of their disaffection. When Paul warned of the wolves that would attack the Church, he did not realise that it was his own actions that would set the Judaistic wolves free to attack the Church. Acts.20v28-32.

### **3. Paul's visit to Jerusalem resulted in his ministry to his Gentile converts being permanently restricted.**

Paul had neglected his ministry to his Gentile converts, to get to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost, even though he knew that many of them would never see him again. Acts.20v16,17,36-38. This permanent separation from many of his converts was the result of Paul going to Jerusalem. Paul's ministry was greatly restricted by this disobedience to Jesus he spent five years in custody with a greatly restricted ministry, and he was unable to visit His converts, and protect them from the wolves he said would attack them. In Eph.3v1., Paul said he was "the prisoner of Jesus for you Gentiles," he said that Jesus had used the bonds and imprisonment to send him back to his calling and work among the Gentiles, unfortunately this was on a very restricted basis. See Eph.4v1. Paul was in detention at Caesarea for two years from A.D. 58 to 60, Acts.24v27.. Festus sends Paul to Rome by sea in the Autumn of A.D. 60. After the shipwreck, Paul winters at Malta, Acts.28v11., and arrives at Rome in the Spring of A.D. 61. At Rome Paul was confined to house imprisonment for two years, from the Spring of A.D. 61 to the Spring of A.D. 63. Acts.28v30. Here he wrote; Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians.

There is no clear evidence regarding what happened to Paul on his acquittal and release from prison in A.D.63. There is some patristic evidence from Jerome, Theodoret, ( 2nd. Century), and Clement of Rome, to indicate that Paul fulfilled the desire expressed in Rom.15v24,28. and went westward to Spain from A.D. 64 to 66, but this is disputed by others. Clement, a contemporary of Paul, (Origen, who died 254 A.D., says Clement helped Paul at Philippi) says Paul went on his missionary journeys "to the extreme limit of the West" and became "a herald of the Gospel to the Eastern and Western world." Jerome, who died 420 A.D., also spent time at Rome, said that Paul, "after his first imprisonment he preached the Gospel in Spain. The Muratorian Canon written in about the middle of the second century, appears to take it for granted that Paul went to Spain. Eusebius, who died 341 A.D., says that Paul preached the Gospel after his release from imprisonment, and that he wrote his second epistle to Timothy while he was imprisoned at Rome for the second time, and then suffered martyrdom there just after writing it. This would be in May or June of A.D. 68.

### **4. Paul's action fogged and confused the minds of the Church leaders about coming prophetic events.**

The apostles and Church elders at Jerusalem were obviously deficient in their theology about prophetic events regarding Jerusalem and the Temple. The prophetic warnings of Jesus seemed to be far from their minds when they asked Paul to take a Nazarite vow in the Temple. They should have been warning the Christians that the Temple was soon to be destroyed, but they were acting as if the Old Covenant still applied, and Judaism would go on for ever. The truth was that God's protection of the chosen people was gone, God had forsaken Israel because of their sinfulness and wilful unbelief, and both Temple and Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70, within twelve years of Paul's Nazarite vow in the Temple at Jerusalem. Mt.22v7. 23v38,39. 27v51. The actual start of the war with the Romans was only eight years away in A.D. 66, so the Church at Jerusalem was rapidly approaching the worst crisis that Israel had faced in their history. The Church leaders at Jerusalem failed to appreciate Christ's warning in Lk.19v41-44., of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, which was so dramatically emphasised by our Lord's heart-broken sobbing and lamentation. Jesus clearly saw the fearful carnage that would occur, and His great grief makes it clear that this was not His or the Father's will. The one blessing to come out of this dreadful suffering, was that the destruction of the Jewish Temple and religion delivered the Church from the Judaizers, and stopped it from becoming just another part of Judaism.

The whole story demonstrates the strength of the ties of race and tradition. Even the leading theologian of the Church found it difficult to escape the chains of misguided love, nationalism and tradition. We need to take heed to the warnings of these Scriptures, and watch our traditions and our strong and loving desires, for they can lead us out of the will of God, just as they did Paul. If we insist on going our own way after our heart's desire, the Lord may give us the desire of our hearts, but send leanness into our souls. Ps.106v15. In spite of this determined rebellion by Paul, the great grace of our Lord was manifested to Paul in a vision in the night, "The Lord stood by him, and said, Take courage, Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." Acts.23v11. There was no rebuke, only encouragement, the grace and love of Jesus and our heavenly Father are beyond all human thought, their kindness pours out to us even in our failures. But one does wonder what wonderful plans our Lord had for Paul, if he had obeyed the voice of the Lord and kept away from Jerusalem. We can also wonder how often God has had to modify His plans for us, because we have not obeyed or listened to His warning voice or plans for us. The most lovely plans of our Lord Jesus for us are often frustrated by us; He still has to say, "How often would I---and ye would not," Mt.23v37.; and "Oh, that you had heeded my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, And your righteousness like the waves of the sea." Is.48v18.

**There is some evidence in the Scriptures to indicate that Paul might have visited the following places.**

Some think that Paul may have fulfilled the desire expressed in Heb.13v23. to take Timothy with him to Jerusalem, and left Titus at Crete on his way there. Titus.1v5. However, there is no record that Paul ever saw Jerusalem or the Temple again, the Jewish revolt against the Romans, and the consequent war from A.D. 66 to 70, made travel there difficult and dangerous.

Wordsworth deduces from Heb.13v23., that Paul possibly wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews in the Spring of A.D. 64, just before Nero started his vicious persecution of the Church; Bullinger in "The Companion Bible," says it was written in A.D. 53 to 54. The churches of Jerusalem, Palestine, Syria, Asia and Alexandria, say that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews. Jerome says, "All the Greek writers received it as his." The churches of both East and West said it was written by Paul. It is easy to see why Paul wrote this great work anonymously. No one was better qualified to write this work, but no one was hated so much, if his name had appeared on the epistle, it would have made many unwilling to read it. Paul had real enemies both inside and outside of the Church, and if his name had been on the epistle, it would have hindered its message. Paul also may have fulfilled his intention of visiting Colosse; Philemon.v22., and performed his promise to go to Philippi in Macedonia. Phil.2v24. 1Tim.1v3.

Paul certainly did visit Troas in Asia, 2Tim.4v13.; and Miletus, 2Tim.4v20.; and Nicopolis, Titus.3v12.; and Greece, 2Tim.4v20.; before he was imprisoned for a second time in Rome. 2Tim.1v16,17..

When Paul wrote his first epistle to Timothy from Macedonia in A.D. 67, it appears that Timothy was at Ephesus from 1Tim.1v3.. The fact that Paul expresses a desire in 1Tim.3v14. to see Timothy, does not mean that Paul went to Ephesus, for in 1Tim.3v15. he makes it clear that he may not be able to visit Timothy, and in Acts.20v36-38., Paul had said he that he would never see the Ephesians again. It seems that Paul went close by Ephesus when he left Trophimus sick at Miletus and may have seen Timothy there, but there is no definite record that he visited Ephesus. 2Tim.4v20.

From these fact we can see that Paul was released from approximately A.D. 64 to 67, and only had between three and four years liberty to minister to his converts at a time of great crisis for the Church. The monster Nero set fire to Rome on July 19th. A.D. 64, and blamed it on the Christians, and persecuted them with terrible ferocity and cruelty until his death on June 9th. A.D. 68, at almost the same time as Paul.

**NOTE:**

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