***Paul's Anguish for the Jews, No. 3
Romans 9:1-5
RO124-01***

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The Apostle Paul begins Romans 9 by expressing his great personal sorrow for the fact that his fellow Jews have rejected Jesus Christ as their Messiah Savior. People from all over the known world who had heard the Gospel in Paul's day were accepting Christ and were pressing into heaven. But the Jews who should have been first in line were being left out completely from eternal life in heaven. To this day, the Jewish people following the lead of their first century countrymen are rejecting Jesus Christ, and they are marching in lockstep to eternal suffering in hell. The Apostle Paul felt such anguish over the doom of the Jews that he was ready, if it were possible, to take their place in hell so that they could be saved.

The tragedy of the Jewish doom was furthermore compounded in Paul's mind by the fact that they were Israelites, which meant that they were descended from the patriarch Jacob, whose name had been changed to Israel, which meant, "he who struggles with God," since he had wrestled one night with the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ on the brook Jabbock when he was trying to return home to his homeland after years of exile after stealing the birthright from his brother Esau and securing the hatred and enmity of his brother. The wrestling match of Jacob with Jesus Christ secured a position of special favor for Jacob and his posterity because when Jacob realized that he was wrestling with God, he refused to let him go until he had received the promise of a blessing of a special kind of favor in the dealings of God and upon his posterity.

The Jews, thus, were the only nation on earth with special claims to divine blessings culminating in the ultimate blessing of eternal life in heaven. Paul's anguish for a people who, in spite of holding the honor, the esteem, and the distinction with God of being Israelites, with all that that connoted, whom Jesus Christ had come to save first of all were stubbornly and blindly rushing into an eternity in the lake of fire with Satan. That saddened Paul. That was a great blow to him, and he wanted to do whatever he could to be able to turn that around.

Of course, things haven't changed for the Jews. Things haven't changed for the Gentiles. Because today, people still scoff at the Gospel along with the Jews, and they actually view this Gospel as foolishness. 1 Corinthians 2:14. Paul points that out when he says, "But the natural man [the unsaved person] receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them [he can't even understand them], because they are spiritually discerned." So, when a person bursts out in laughter and expresses contempt for the Gospel, because you know that one thing is very clear: God the Holy Spirit in His sovereignty, and God in His election has not chosen to open that person's eyes to realize that it isn't foolishness but that it is the truth. Until the Spirit of God does that, it will all seem to be nonsense.

So, this is what Paul faced. The Jews as a nation looked upon the Gospel which was based upon the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and they said that was all nonsense. And they laughed at it. Those whom Paul refers to here as Israel is not the same body of humanity, we want to stress, is not what we call, what the Bible calls "church." The physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the people that Paul has in mind by "Israelites." Individual Israelites will go to heaven. The nation as a whole will be preserved.

But when Paul is speaking of Israelites here, he's talking about the unsaved Jew who has not responded to Jesus Christ but who is in the heritage of the Old Testament promises, who is part of all that God promised to the patriarchs. The New Testament church body is made up of people who were called out by the Holy Spirit from both Jews and Gentiles to form the body of Christ today. So, while both Jews under Judaism and Christians under Christianity are saved on the basis of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, they are two distinct bodies of believers. God has separate and eternal programs for the Jews and for the Christians. Jews, Gentiles, and the church are never mixed. What belongs specifically to the Jews as their national heritage is never transferred to the church.

**Contrast Between Israel and the Church**

Let me show you some contrast to establish this between Israel and the church. As you read the Bible, you should be aware of these contrasts. Do not pretend that they are not there. Do not do as the leading ministers and religious teachers of our day do today - just spiritualize these things away, just pass them over, just twist them into some symbolic expression.

Point number 1: about four-fifths of the Bible has primary application to the nation of Israel. While one-fifth has primary application to the church. Now, we learn certain spiritual principles from that four-fifths that applies to the Jews, but what applies to us as Christians is not the four-fifths that belongs to the Jews. It is the one-fifth that is directly applicable to the church, the Body of Christ.

Furthermore, God's plan for Israel is related to earthly promises that are eternal, while God's plan for the church is related to eternal, heavenly promises. And that is very clear in the Bible. When God deals with the Jew, He's talking about earthly things in reference to the Jews - earthly blessings, earthly futures. When He's talking about Christianity and Christians, it's always something that's in heaven.

Another point: Israel as Abraham's physical seed is compared to the dust of the earth while the church, as Abraham's spiritual seed, is compared to the stars of heaven. And the analogy is significant. When God tells Abraham about his posterity, He says, "You're going to have two kinds. One kind is going to be physical descendants, and they're going to be as numerous as the dust of the earth. They're going to be related here. You're going to have a spiritual posterity, and they're going to be like all the stars you see out in heaven. They're going to be so numerous. And he makes this significant analogy of a distinct difference between Israel and the church.

Then, Israel entered its special privileges with God by physical birth as Jews, while the church enters its spiritual blessings by spiritual birth through the Holy Spirit. The only way you could come under the covenant privileges of the nation of Israel was that you were born a Jew. The Christian comes into his privileges by being born again into the family of God through rebirth of the Holy Spirit. It's a whole different ball game. Now, it is true that you had to be saved as a Jew as well. You could have the privileges of being in covenant relationship to God and have all the privileges that pertain to Judaism, but you could also be lost and go to hell as a Jew. But you had the right to be a part of the national blessing. And there's a great difference between the two.

This talk, you know, that the reformed churches have of God having a covenant agreement with Christians - that's nonsense. There's no covenant with Christians. The covenants were with the Jews. Another point: Abraham is the head of Israel, while Jesus Christ is the head of the church. When you talk about who's the head of the Jewish nation, it's Abraham. When you talk about who is the head of the church, it's not Abraham; it's Jesus Christ.

Point number 6: God has made a new covenant with Israel for salvation in the millennial kingdom. The church has a new covenant of salvation for life in heaven. Both Israel and the church have a new covenant, or a New Testament. But the new covenant with Israel has to do with salvation and life in the millennial kingdom. But, the church has a new covenant which has to do with salvation and life in heaven.

Point number 7: Israel is made up of people from a single nation on earth, while the church is made up of people from all the nations of earth. It's a big difference. Don't ignore that.

Point number 8, another evidence of difference: Israel was dealt with by God as a national entity, while the church is dealt with on the basis of individual believers. Religious denominations, like the Catholics, like to talk about THE church as if there were some hierarchical authority here on this earth. THE church. There is no such thing in the scripture. God does not deal with some church. All He deals with is individual Christians. All that is said in the Bible is that which pertains to individual Christians.

Why is it that you could be down at the beach and give a testimony of the Gospel to a friend, and suddenly he believes it and is born again? And he says, "What should I do now?" And you say, "Well, the first thing that you do as a Christian is you go through a visual declaration of your faith in Christ by water baptism." And he says, "Well, when can I do that?" Why is it that you can say, "Well, here's the lake! Right now, if you want!" And you can take him in there, every one of you, and baptize him.

Why is it that you thought you could do that without contacting me first, without asking to borrow my baptismal robe for you to wear while you perform this ritual? Where do you get off thinking that you can perform this? Try that in a Roman Catholic Church and see where you get. Try that in the denominational churches and see where you get. Of course you can do it because God only deals with the church as individual believers. He does not deal with some kind of a structure like He did with Israel. There, He dealt with them with the authority lines of the nation. Totally different. How on earth can anybody read the Bible and say, "There's no difference between Israel and the church?"

Then, Israel is present on earth in every dispensation since Abraham, but the church, you will discover, is found only in the current dispensation. The church was not on earth in the Old Testament time. The church was not on earth in any time except today. But, since the time of Abraham, the Jew, Israel, has been on this earth in every dispensation, and they will be so right out to the end. It is because they are different groups of believers.

Furthermore, Israel's religious interests face inward upon the Jewish nation and its temple worship. They gave little concern to evangelistic outreach, while the church basically faces outward to evangelize the world. It's a very distinct difference. Israel demanded the death of Jesus Christ whose salvation the Jews rejected. The church is the beneficiary of salvation based on the death of Christ. Big difference. Israel said, "We don't want anything to do with Him. We want Him killed. And if there's anybody to be held responsible for that, you can hold us and our children responsible for that." So that, they rejected the Savior where Jesus Christ is accepted by the church as the basis of eternal life.

Furthermore, the individual Israelite did not think of God as his Father, while the Christian believer views God as his Heavenly Father. To Israel, Jesus Christ is Messiah, Immanuel, and King. But to the church, Jesus Christ is Lord and Head and Bridegroom. Distinctly different relationships. Israel was only indwelt by the Holy Spirit for short periods of time, while the church is permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit. That's a very great difference.

Under the system of Judaism, God the Holy Spirit did not live in the body of the Jew. He did not walk every moment of the day with the individual believer. Sometimes, as in the case of those who were going to build the Tabernacle, God would bring the Holy Spirit upon the workmen, and He would indwell them to give them skills to accomplish the job. And when the job was finished, the Holy Spirit left them. Now, how can you say Israel and the church are the same thing, with an enormous difference such as that?

Israel lived under the Mosaic Law system which demanded right conduct to receive blessings from God. Do right, and you'll be blessed. But the church is called to right conduct because Christians have already been fully blessed in heavenly places by the grace of God. Christians are told to do right because they've already been blessed. It's an enormous difference. That's the difference between law and grace.

Furthermore, Israel received no special power from God to obey the Word of God, while the church has the supernatural enablement of the indwelling Holy Spirit. While the Jew knew what God expected of him, what was spelled out in the Mosaic Law, all he had was his own human, sin nature capacity to try to do what was right. He had no capacity for rising above himself to obey God. We Christians have God the Holy Spirit there to run interference for us to enable us to do what we would not do on our own.

Then, there is the fact that the farewell message of Jesus Christ to Israel is the Olivet Discourse. It is the discourse on the Mount of Olives. It is the future of the Jewish nation. While the farewell address to the church is found in the upper room discourse of the Gospel of John, which deals with the heavenly future of the church. These two farewell addresses are totally different. They apply to two radically different groups of people.

Furthermore, Jesus Christ returns to Israel as King over the regathered Jewish nation on earth while He returns to the church as her bridegroom to take her to His heavenly glory. That's a big difference. Israel is related to Jesus Christ as servants, but the church is related to Him as brethren in the family of God.

Then, Israel, we are told, will be the subjects of the King in the millennial kingdom, but the church is going to reign in the millennial kingdom with Jesus Christ as His bride. That's totally different. How can you say Israel and the church are the same thing? In the millennial kingdom, Israel is going to be ruled over. They will be the subjects. But Jesus Christ says that we Christians will be on the throne reigning with Him over the Jews.

Israel also had a special priesthood, but the church is a priesthood. Very great difference. In Israel, only the tribe of Levi and those descended from Aaron could be priests. Specialized priesthood. And, if you wanted to go to God, you had to go to this special priesthood to get there. Now, it's different in the church. Every one of us is his own priest, and we approach God directly. And that's why we have privacy in our dealing with God. That's a big difference.

Furthermore, Israel is viewed as an unfaithful wife who is to be restored, while the church is described as a virgin to be married to Jesus Christ. Totally different analogy. Israel is destined to come under the wrath of God, while the church is not called to face divine wrath. The Jew is going to have his worst hour. As terrible as things were in Nazi Germany, as terrible as things have been in history past, nothing like what the antichrist is going to do to them. The New Jerusalem, we are told in the Bible, will be inhabited by Israel described as just men made perfect and will be also inhabited by the church described as the church of the firstborn. That's very significant, isn't it?

Here we come to the New Jerusalem, which is another expression of God's heaven in the eternity. What do we find? We find that the Jew is still a Jew, and he is called part of a body of just men made perfect. All those Old Testament saints, all those millennial Jews who are born again, all those tribulation Jews who are born again - they're all Jews, but they're not part of the church. But there is another group in the New Jerusalem, and that is the church - the church of the firstborn, those who belong to Jesus Christ.

So, here are some basic differences that if you keep your eyes open and you keep these in mind, you will see this on the pages of scripture everywhere, so that there is no way that anybody with any kind of logic can say that Israel and the church are the same thing or that Israel has been transformed into the church.

**The Israelite's Advantage of Being Adopted by God**

In Exodus 19:5, we read, "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine." They were a very special people to God by a special act of divine adoption.

And then, in Deuteronomy 14:1-2, we read, "Ye are the children of the Lord your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead. For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the face of the earth."

God was telling the Jews that they were not to practice certain ritual procedures that the pagans did in worshipping their God, the sun God. And he said, "The reason for this is you've been set apart from all the nations of the world to be a special people unto me." So, the adoption of the Jews meant that they were the beneficiaries of spiritual and material blessings from God which was not extended to the Gentile nation. The Jews as a race, thus are a special family of God. That is not true of the Gentiles, and they are therefore treated in a very special way as the family of God. So, Paul says, "It is amazing that people who have been adopted into the special privileges as the legal heirs of the living God should turn against the Son that He sent to save them."

**The Israelite's Advantage of The Shekinah Glory**

Secondly, Paul says it's even more amazing because they had the advantage of the glory, the "doxa." This word "glory" refers to God's character of absolute righteousness, His holiness. Furthermore, the inward perfection of God is displayed externally as a brilliant light emanating from Him and surrounding Him. And when we refer to the glory that surrounds God, this brilliant light emanating from Him, we are really talking about the perfect, holy essence of God - the light simply reflecting His perfection.

God's glory cloud surrounding Him, you will perhaps remember, was given a special term by the Jews. The Jewish rabbis called it the "Shekinah glory," this glory cloud that surrounded God. When God dealt with the Jews, He appeared in this glory cloud. They called in the "Shekinah glory." The word "Shekinah" means, "the dwelling in." The dwelling in the glory cloud.

In the Old Testament, the Jews saw the presence of God among them in the form of this cloud of brilliant light. And it was scary. It was impressive. Anytime that you can bring a brilliance of light in a concentrated form, it is impressive. The Jews, when they saw this, everybody spoke in hush tones. They knew they were in the presence of God. From the midst of this cloud of glory, God then spoke to the people.

We have this told us, for example, in Exodus 33:9, "And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar [the cloud of glory] descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses."

The Lord talked with Moses out of this cloud of glory. The visible Shekinah glory did one thing certainly for the Jews. It made the existence of God very real. The Jew could stand there, and he could see this glory cloud. He could stand at his tent door and watch Moses confronting God who was in the glory cloud and God speaking to Moses and they communicating, one with another - information being brought to them.

Exodus 19:9, we read, "And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever.' And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord." Now, that makes it a lot easier to believe in God - when you can stand there and hear God speaking to your leader, and then your leader transferring and communicating and expressing the information. God was not just a figment of some imagination for the Jews. The Shekinah glory was the solid evidence that God was with them.

The Shekinah glory, as you may remember, illuminated the Holy of Holies in the temple where God dwelt with His people Israel. In Exodus 29:43, we have reference to that, and this was evidence that God was present among them. Exodus 29:43, "And there [in the Holy of Holies] I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by My glory."

Exodus 40:34, "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." One more reference, Leviticus 16:2, "And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail [the Holy of Holies] before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.'" So, the Holy of Holies, in that inner sanctuary of the Tabernacle and later the Temple, above the mercy seat, above that flat, lidded structure that was on top of the Ark of the Covenant, there was the glory cloud of God.

And, Aaron was told, "Don't ever come into the Holy of Holies, Aaron, or you will die. Once a year, you can move back the curtain that divided the holy place from the Holy of Holies (where God dwelt), once a year, you come around that curtain with blood that you are bringing in there of a sacrificed animal symbolizing the blood of my Son which is to come. You may come in on the great day of atonement, on that day alone, and you may sprinkle that blood on the mercy seat as a sign of what I'm going to do in sending a Savior for these people. Then, you leave and don't come back for another year. And if you come in here without that blood, you will die."

You just did not come into the presence of God, because it was a real presence. He was really there. This was not just some figment of imagination. This was not just some Hollywood creation of a system of life. It was the real thing. So that, the Jews had no question about it, that God was in their midst. And only the Jews, of all the nations on earth, had such a visible contact with the Creator God. Without the Shekinah glory, Israel was just another tribe of people on the face of the earth. But with the Shekinah glory, Israel was superior to all the other nations on the face of the earth. They had a direct line to God.

Now, the point of all this with Paul is: these people had the glory, meaning the Shekinah glory presence of God. And his point is, how sad that in spite of their advantage of experiencing the very presence of God Himself in their midst, the Jews should have rejected what the Bible calls, "The Lord of Glory," Jesus Christ. And because they rejected the Lord of Glory, these who had the Shekinah glory lost it all.

**The Israelite's Advantage of Covenants With God**

Paul says they have another advantage, an enormous advantage. These are the people with whom God made the covenants, the "diatheke." "Diatheke" refers to an agreement which is made between two or more parties. This word may be used to indicate an obligation which is undertaken by only one member of the agreement or by both members. If it is something undertaken by one member of the agreement, then we call it an unconditional covenant. If it is an agreement in which each must perform something, then it is a conditional covenant.

We only have one conditional covenant with the Jewish people; that's the Mosaic covenant. That was the covenant that God said, "If you'll do this, then I'll do this for you. If you won't do this, then I'm not going to do this." But all the other covenants were unconditional. And that's the point Paul is making. God made agreements with us, and He didn't base it upon what we would do. He based it on the fact that out of His grace, He decided to do this for us.

With the Jewish people, God established the basic, unconditional covenant which we call the Abrahamic Covenant. We have looked at this in detail in Genesis 12:1-3. You may remember that in that covenant with Abraham, God promised to give Abraham and his descendants three things: a land that would be theirs forever; a seed (a nation, a posterity) that would exist forever; and a spiritual blessing, that is salvation, which would be theirs forever.

The land promised was later expanded in what we call the Palestinian Covenant. The seed promised was later expanded in the Davidic covenant, which told about the development of their kingdom. And the blessing of salvation was later expanded in the New Covenant. So, you have one basic covenant, the Abrahamic covenant. You have three covenants explaining the basic one.

Now, God has not made such an unconditional covenant with any other nation on the face of the earth. And He has not made such unconditional covenants with the church. So, let's get rid of this nonsense about talking about covenant promises that we Christians may claim from God. We've got no such covenant promises. The covenants belong to Israel. And I hope we have already demonstrated how different Israel is from the church. These covenants simply do not apply to the Gentiles.

This is indicated, for example, in Ephesians 2:12, where Paul is describing the past situation of Christians when they were Gentiles, and they were unsaved. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel [you were not part of Israel; you were Gentiles], and you are strangers from the covenants of promise [because the covenants do not apply to Gentiles], having no hope, without God in the world."

The covenants never apply to Gentiles, and they have never been applied to the church. The unconditional covenants obligated God to supply fundamentally a Savior for the Jews and to provide salvation for them, first in line, before any other people on the face of the earth. The covenants are going to be fulfilled completely. No, they have not been fulfilled completely to this point. They will be in the future, but most Jews will not enjoy the fruit of that covenant. They will not be raised to live in the millennial kingdom to enjoy the fulfillment of these covenants. They're going to spend their eternity in the lake of fire.

It is unbelievable to Paul that Jews, with their sure-thing covenants, including a Savior to be provided for their personal salvation to cover their sin, that they should have lost out on that salvation when Jesus Christ came along. It is unbelievable to Paul that people who had all this to begin with in promises that were entirely dependent on what God was going to do should have blown it and lost it all.

**The Israelite's Advantage of Having the Law**

Furthermore, Paul says, these people were not ignorant of what God is like and what He expected and what the standard of righteousness is. Because, he said, these are also, these Israelites, the people benefited by the giving of the law. The Greek word is "nomothesia." "Nomos" stands for "law." "Thesia" stands for giving. "The giving of the law." The word here means "the law giving." This refers to the Mosaic Law which was given to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai - to the Jewish people, not to Gentiles, and never, of course, to the church.

Leviticus 26:46 says, "These are the statutes and ordinances and laws, which the Lord hath made between Him and the children of Israel in Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses." Now, how in the world can you be more clear than that? These are the rules that God made between Himself and Israel. And it is only the sloppy use of language that can take Israel and say, "He meant 'church.'" Definitely given on Mount Sinai to the Jewish people.

The Mosaic Law, as I've indicated, was a conditional covenant. Its blessings were dependent on the Jews' obedience to the rules God laid out for them. The Mosaic Law was given to Israel as an expression of God's absolute righteousness. It was, therefore, the divine guide for the Jewish way of life under Judaism. And that's the best way to think about the Mosaic Law. It was a way of life. It will help you if you think about it that way to see why we Christians don't live according to the way of life of the Mosaic Law.

In the early church, since the early church was all Jewish, this became a big problem. They just could not imagine themselves cut off, turning their back upon the Mosaic Law. And so, they had these early conflicts about what relationship the Mosaic Law had to the church. And finally, the early church apostles had to come together, and they had this conference that they called in Acts 15, and they made a decision as to what relationship the Mosaic Law had to Christianity. And they concluded it had not relationship! It was totally separate.

The Apostle Paul had to battle, as we learned earlier in the book of Romans, had a battle the legalists who were saying, "If you don't circumcise your male children, they'll never go to heaven, because that's required under the Mosaic Law." And Paul says, "You're wrong. You can not only circumcise, you can butcher yourself if you want to, but it's not going to take you into heaven." It didn't even take a Jew into heaven. It was only a symbol of an act of faith of removing confidence in the flesh. And now, under Christianity, the symbol is no longer significant. So that the Mosaic Law was clearly not applicable to believers in the church age whatsoever.

The Mosaic Law, however, was a very valuable product from God. It was a very valuable gift, and it gave certain clarifications that they needed for their way of life under Judaism. It had three sections. Number one: it had the commandments. The commandments are the moral code expressing the righteousness of God in human relationships. The commandments said, "This is the way I made you as human beings to exist with one another in terms of moral relationships."

On a Donahue program this week, they had the discussion about sex before marriage, sex outside of marriage. And as I watched that program, it was amazing. Not once, as people said, "What difference does it make? Who's to say it's wrong to do these things? Who's, who's making the rules?" Not once did anybody say, "God made the rules. God has given a moral code. He gave it to the Jews very explicitly, so we know exactly what He thinks about these matters. It was spelled out, let alone all this was reiterated in the New Testament scriptures for Christians."

But, you see, the commandments were unknown to the ancient world. Only the Jew knew how to work as a human being in relationships to other human beings so that the devil could not destroy him. That was the point of the moral code.

Secondly, there was the section called the judgments. The judgments was the civil code governing the social relationships of the people, how they were to deal in economic matters. The sanitary laws, and all of the health laws, all of the business dealings, and all the relationships of the civil code were spelled out in that portion of the Mosaic Law.

And then, the third section was called the ordinances. This was the religious code. This gave the details for governing the worship ceremonies, the rituals, and all the approaches to God and all the significance of all of those things. Now, the Mosaic Law demanded a level of conduct which nobody could possibly achieve. So, it served to establish that all Jews were lost sinners, and they were all in need of a Savior. That was one of the things that God intended to do with the law was to show that when He told you what He expected of you, you knew exactly what to do. You knew in all these three divisions how you should act. You didn't do it. To show you that you had a contaminated nature of sin that judged you to be worthy of the lake of fire.

Romans 3:20 points out, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." You're not going to get to heaven by reading the Mosaic Law. You'll learn by reading the Mosaic Law exactly why you're not going to get to heaven.

Then, in Galatians 3:24, we have pointed out that it was God's intention that the Mosaic Law should have shown the Jews their inability to secure absolute righteousness and thus for the law to act as a guide to lead them to obey Jesus Christ who obeyed the Mosaic Law for them perfectly. Galatians 3:24, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster [or our teacher] to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." The law should have shown the Jews that they couldn't make it and should have pressed them to Jesus Christ when He arrived, He who kept the law perfectly in their behalf.

So, instead of receiving Jesus Christ, the Jews murdered Him. And they used the Mosaic Law to create a ritualistic, human righteousness which was totally unacceptable to God and which was taking them into the lake of fire. Romans 10:3 says, "For they [the Jews] being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness [by keeping the rules of the law], have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." They went about trying to make it on their own, and they rejected the righteousness that God would give them through Jesus Christ.

Galatians 5:4 says, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." God has a grace way of taking you to heaven, and you are fallen from that grace way by trying to do it through the law.

So, the Mosaic Law was not a way of salvation. It was never applied to Gentiles. It was never applied to the church. It was designed for Israel only. Romans 6:14 points out, "For sin shall not have dominion over you [Christians]: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

So, in spite of the enlightenment of the Mosaic Law, the Jews were completely blind to their need of salvation as a gift from God. They were blind to the fact that they could not secure a salvation by their own human efforts. The law should have told them that, should have taught them that.

In Romans 3:28, we read, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." You see, even if a Jew could have kept all of the 613 regulations of the Mosaic Law perfectly, he still was condemned, because he had the sin nature that he inherited from Adam. He was still under Adam's moral guilt. So, no amount of law keeping could secure eternal life. Titus 3:5 makes that very clear. Moses told the Jews to look for a Savior from God who was going to come. That Savior was, of course, to be Jesus Christ.

We have this referred to in Acts 7:37. Acts 7:37, "This is that Moses, who said unto the children of Israel, 'A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like me; Him shall ye hear." This was a prophetic statement on the part of Moses that there was coming another prophet, a voice of God such as he had been to them in their day, whom they are to listen to, who would be God's final voice. He was referring, of course, to Jesus Christ.

And so, the Apostle Paul says, "It absolutely astounds me that in spite of the fact that they had all of this (they had the law of Moses, which clearly spelled out what God expected of them and clearly demonstrated to them that they couldn't make it), that they should have all fallen to their knees and cried out in agony to God, "Give us a Savior, give us a salvation. We cannot produce it on our own." Yet, when the Savior came who could give it to them, they turned their back upon them.

Well, that's not the end of their advantages. There are several more very impressive ones, and we'll take those up next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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