***Praise God among the Gentiles
RO184-02***

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We are studying Romans 15:7-13. Our topic is "Accepting One Another," and this is segment number three.

**The Death of Jesus Christ for our Sins**

The Lord Jesus Christ came from heaven to earth as the God-man to the Jewish people. Paul has pointed out to us, in Romans 15, that He came to show the Jewish people the truthfulness of God by fulfilling the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant. The Lord Jesus Christ came in the role of a servant to the nation of Israel, and He also came to fulfill, in that role, the divine promises made to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. However, the rejection of Jesus Christ as Israel's Messiah by the Jewish rabbis led to His murder on the cross. Jesus Christ died on the cross as the Lamb of God in the once-for-all sacrifice which was needed to pay the penalty of death for the sins of mankind.

**The Resurrection of Jesus Christ**

Romans 6:23 has indicated to us that: "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ." That free gift of eternal life could not be handed out by a holy and righteous God until His justice had been satisfied with the payment of death for our sins. Christ paid that for us. In this way, the justice of God was satisfied, and then the salvation that Christ provided was confirmed by His being raised from the dead. His resurrection confirms that God the Father has been propitiated. His justice has been satisfied.

Romans 4:25 points that out to us when it says, "He who (referring to Jesus Christ) was delivered up on account of our transgressions, and was raised from the dead on account of our justification." He was put to death because of our sins and our evil. He was raised back to life because the payments had been accepted.

**The Abrahamic Covenant**

So, in this way, the promise which God made to Abraham in the Abrahamic Covenant of providing salvation for all mankind was fulfilled. This grace salvation included the gentiles as well, and it caused them to glorify God for His mercy to them. The Old Testament clearly predicted that the gentiles would someday praise God for His salvation mercy to them.

King David, on one occasion, expressing his own feelings, in fact, expressed the feelings of saved gentiles in Psalm 40:1-3. David says, "I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined to me and heard my cry. He brought me up out of the pit of destruction and out of the miry clay. And He set my feet upon a rock, making my footsteps firm. And He put a new song in my mouth – a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and will trust in the Lord." That's the very thing that the gentiles feel toward God. They had no hope; they are outside of the Covenant promises; and, they had no access to God except through the Jewish people. Finally, they are brought into salvation and to a distinctive, unique body, the body of Christ, the church.

So, the Old Testament has made it clear that nobody goes to heaven unless God provides a way for him. And the Old Testament made it clear that human salvation from the lake of fire had to be based upon the death of a sinless substitute who would pay for the sins of mankind. That person had to be provided by God Himself. The Old Testament animal sacrificial system portrayed this divine plan of salvation. The blood of the Passover lamb in Egypt portrayed salvation through the shed blood and the death of Jesus Christ. The rituals of the Mosaic Law of sacrificing a lamb for the sins of the whole nation on Yom Kippur, the Jewish day of atonement, foreshadowed the death of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, for the whole nation.

**Simeon**

When Simeon saw the infant Jesus in the temple, he identified Him immediately as One who was chosen by God, and sent by God, to bring salvation, not only to the Jewish people, but to the gentiles as well. So, he picked up the little Child, the infant Jesus. His hands, as an old man, were probably shaking with excitement, as God, speaking to him, made it clear that this was the Messiah Child. In Luke 2:29, Simeon says, "Now, Lord, You do let Your bond servant depart in peace according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all people – a light of revelation to the gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel." So, Simeon knew that through this child, Jesus, this infant that he held in his hand, God was fulfilling the promise in the Abrahamic Covenant of bringing a blessing to the Jewish people, and to all the people of the world – the blessing of salvation, so that both Jews and gentiles were included.

**Roman Catholicism**

Well, what's the situation today? Today, both unsaved Jews and gentiles are rushing through life into eternity, hoping against hope that they're going to make it into heaven. Some try to deal with this concern by saying that there is no God. Psalm 14:1 says that people who say that are fools. God says, "Anybody who says, 'There is no God' is a fool." Others try to deal with this problem by trusting in their membership in a religious organization which claims authority to send them to heaven. Periodically, and recently again, the Roman Catholic pope has made it very clear, and made a specific declaration – that there is no salvation unless you get it through the church. You cannot go to heaven on your own. Only the Roman Catholic Church can send you to heaven. And there are millions of people who are counting on that.

**Human Good Works**

Some pursue a life of human good works by which they hope to outweigh their sins. Ephesians 2:8-9 make it clear that God saves on the basis of a great gift, and your works don't make any difference. Other people try to perform religious rituals in order to appease God's justice. But Isaiah 64:6 says that the best of what you do is a filthy rag with God. Some Jews and gentiles depend on their personal morality to qualify them for heaven. But Romans 3:12 says that: "There is none righteous. No, not one."

Some think that God is just too loving to send anyone into suffering forever in hell. The very thought is inconceivable. God just wouldn't do that. That is a human viewpoint conclusion. John 3:36 makes it very clear what He says: "He who believes in the Son has eternal life. But he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides upon him."

So, the Bible makes it clear that those who are not covered by the death of Christ are under the wrath of God, and those who are under the wrath of God are going to spend eternity in the lake of fire – make no mistake about that.

**Salvation**

So, God's plan of salvation requires that one trusts in Jesus Christ alone as one substitute in death to pay for one's evil. That's what salvation is all about. It's not inviting Jesus into your heart. It's not inviting Jesus into your life. It's not giving your life over to Jesus. It's not any of those pop Christianity phrases that men have invented, which in effect, confuse the issue, and lead people away from salvation. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; trust in Jesus Christ," the Bible says, "and you will be saved.

The death of Jesus Christ, the sinless God-man as the Lamb of God for the sins of the world, is the only basis upon which a person can come into heaven. God has made this provision for Jew and gentile. And yet Jews and gentiles today are wildly and blindly rushing along in their own religious systems that are carrying them into the lake of fire. You cannot escape John 14:6, where Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Me." If you want to get into heaven, you're not going to get there through your Roman Catholic Church or any other church. If you want to get into heaven, you're not going to get there through one of the ayatollahs and one of the imams of Islam. If you want to get to heaven, you're not going to get there through the concepts of the great force of Eastern mysticism and Hinduism. If you want to get into heaven, you're going to get there one way – through accepting Jesus Christ as the God-Man, the Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity, who, in His perfection, paid the price for the sins of the world.

Now, you're going to have to make a decision if that's true or that's not true. You're going to have to make the decision that that's true on the basis of the fact that the Bible is a book that confirms its own authority and its own truthfulness, or else you're going to take some human viewpoint conclusion (some rational conclusion) of man. But I guarantee you that the time will come when we will find out who's right and who's wrong. And you want to consider whether you can afford to be wrong on the subject of how to get into heaven. God has made a provision. Jews and gentiles are turning their backs on it. And they are going to find that the price will be horrendous for all eternity.

**Grace Salvation**

This is a grace salvation. It is not earned by human good works or religious rituals. And I'm happy to tell you, neither is it retained by your good works nor your rituals. Those who refuse to trust in Jesus Christ for salvation, the Bible is very explicit in saying – you will spend eternity in the lake of fire. Acts 4:12 puts it this way: "And there is salvation in no one else. For there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved." You must decide whether that's true, because the Bible is a true book; or, you must decide whether that's a bigoted point of view expressed by Dr. Luke, and that it doesn't really carry any weight with God. But your decision will be something you will live with forever.

On a recent television talk show, dealing with the subject of mixed marriages, they had several couples of marriages mixed between people who were Jewish and people who were Roman Catholics. They were seeking to lay down the basic thesis that all religions are roads to heaven. Each marriage partner, as they were interviewed, indicated that they did their own thing with religion. They were married, but they had no spiritual relationship between themselves. Each partner did his own thing. One did the Jewish thing; and, one did the Catholic thing. And being very broad-minded, they left it up to their children, when they were grown, to decide which parents' religion they preferred. And the children were left to decide whether they wanted to be Jews, and follow Judaism; or, whether they wanted to be Catholics, and follow Catholicism. But they all acted as if salvation is comparable to trying on different garments in the clothing store to find something that you like. As you listened to these people talk, that's the impression I got. It was like walking into a clothing store, and you try this suit on, or you try this dress on, and finally you find something and say, "Now, this is me. I like this. This is the way I'll go. I'll buy this. This is what I like."

They acted like all these garments do the same job. So, it doesn't matter which one you pick. One is as good as another. And you can just pick something that you like. But they fail to understand that the garment they needed was one that they could only receive as a gift from God. And that's the garment of God's absolute righteousness. 1 Corinthians 1:30-31: "But by His doing, you are in Christ Jesus." That's what happens when you trust in Him as Savior: "Who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption – that just as it is written, 'Let him who boasts boast in the Lord." Don't boast in your religious system. Don't boast in your Judaism. Don't be like some woman on the Donahue Show that I saw one time, where they were discussing the subject of being born again, and a Jewish woman stood up, and, in her indignation, she said, "I'm a Jew, and I'm going to heaven." And I yelled back at her, "No, you're not – not if you reject your Messiah." And she responded, "Oh, yes, I am." But she's wrong – terribly wrong.

These people are trying on different garments – their religions, but the garment they need is the absolute righteousness of Jesus Christ. You can only secure this as a grace gift from God through trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. And I don't want you to be intimidated by people in our society who reject that narrow view of eternal life. Romans 13:14 says, "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ (put Him on like a garment), and make no provision for the flesh (the sin nature) in regard to its lusts."

Revelation 3:4: "But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy." They are dressed in the white garments of absolute righteousness. They are dressed in the garment of Jesus Christ Himself, and thus His righteousness.

Both Judaism and Catholicism have plans of salvation. Both of them are human viewpoint plans. These can never secure God's absolute righteousness. Here I watched a number of couples discussing how they were related to God, and every one of them had a system that was carrying them into hell, while they thought that somehow they were appeasing and approaching God. God rejects all sin-nature efforts of being saved, no matter how sincere the individual is. They all must be born again spiritually through faith in Jesus Christ. If you are not born again spiritually, you are dead spiritually. If you die physically while you are spiritually dead, you will go into the lake of fire.

In John 3:3, Jesus made this clear to Nicodemus when He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." That means to be born from above – to be born by God the Holy Spirit. Unsaved people, no matter how smart they are, and no matter how sophisticated they are, can never come up with a true answer on how to go to heaven. They always come up with a false system.

1 Corinthians 1:21-24 puts human rational capacities in perspective: "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world, through its wisdom, did not come to know God, God was well-pleased, through the foolishness of the message preached, to save those who believed. For, indeed, the Jews ask for signs and Greeks (gentiles) search for wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified: to the Jews, a stumbling block; and, to the gentiles, foolishness. But to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

So, here we are – Jews and gentiles. God made us a promise in the Abrahamic Covenant of eternal life, and salvation as a grace gift. God has come through, and done His work. He has provided, and here we are promised now, that by human reason, we will veer off into a misconception about salvation. But if we take the wisdom of God recorded in Scripture, which points to us salvation through acceptance of Christ as Savior, we will indeed end up with eternal life in heaven. There is no question about it. To reject this is to doom ourselves to the lake of fire.

So, God's salvation mercy, to gentiles who will listen to Him, causes them to praise Him for His loving kindness because of the realization that the gentile has, that he who had nothing, has been brought into salvation by the kindness of God. 2 Corinthians 1:3 says, "Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." It is so easy to get used to being born again, that we gentile's forget how fortunate we are.

**We Christians are already Positionally in Heaven**

Ephesians 2:4: "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ. By grace you are saved; and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, in order that in the ages to come, He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:4-7). What does this passage say? God says, "He will point to you and me as gentiles, as trophies of His grace. Furthermore, it says that you are already seated in heaven, in Christ Jesus. You are positionally in heaven. And because you are positionally in heaven, it is inevitable that you will someday physically be in heaven. That is already your destiny because you are already in Christ.

Let's read one more passage in 1 Peter 1:3-5: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His great mercy." And I want you to notice the repeated word "mercy" here. Paul says that that's what the gentiles are going to glorify and praise God for: His mercy – His relief of their suffering, relative to their destiny: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His great mercy, has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled, and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you; who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." There God even says, "Not only have I saved you, but I do want to comfort you with the additional realization that I'm going to keep you saved. If you misbehave, I'm going to discipline you. I'm going to straighten you out. But you will always be My daughter; and, you will always be My son.

So, coming back, with that background, to Romans 15:9, the apostle Paul here begins a series of four Old Testament quotations, all of which predicted that gentiles, who would benefit by this great salvation that we've been discussing, would rise up with glorifying God with great zeal and enthusiasm and gratitude: "And the gentiles, to glorify God for His mercy, as it is written." "As it is written" is a technical phrase. It indicates that something is going to be given which is an authoritative statement from God. The Old Testament is a product of God the Holy Spirit. So, it is inspired, and it is without error. 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:23:21 indicate that to us. God gave the information. God guided the writers as they recorded it.

**"It is Written"**

"It is written" – in the Greek Bible, this is in the perfect tense, which tells us that this was done in the past, and it stands so today. It is passive. God's holy man produced the Bible. And its indicative mood – a statement of fact. The divine plan of the gentiles' glorifying God is now proven by Paul with four quotations.

**Praise God Among the Gentiles**

The first quotation comes from Psalm 18:49: "Therefore, I will give praise to You among the gentiles, and I will sing to Your name." The speaker here is King David. And the vision (the picture) here is David surrounded by a group of gentiles – gentiles, in fact, whom he has just conquered in battle. And David is giving praise to God in the midst of these gentiles. And this implies that these gentiles themselves are saved – that they have accepted David's testimony concerning his God.

**Praise and Sing**

So, David says, "Therefore, I will give praise to You among the gentiles." "Give praise to You" means that "I will acknowledge something" about God. The word "praise" looks like this in the Greek Bible. It's "exomologeo." We're acquainted with the word "homologeo." That's our word for "confession" like you have in 1 John 1:9. "Exomologeo" is an intensified acknowledging of something as being true. Here, the truth that he is acknowledging is the mercy of God to the gentiles in salvation. And then he says, "I'm going to sing." The word for "sing" in the great Bible looks like this. It's the Greek word "psallo." And, actually, this word means "to play a musical instrument." The idea is: "I'm going to play an instrument in honor of Your name." Sometime in the future, David says, "We will be praising God like this."

So, what this connotes is playing a stringed instrument in accompaniment to singing. David's military victories over the gentiles have opened the door for him to testify about the coming Messiah to them. And what he says he's going to sing about is: "The name of God:" "I will sing to Your name. I'll sing about Your name." And God's name connotes all that He is as God. Singing about God centers on His work in salvation for Jews and gentiles. In this way, historically, David brought Jehovah God to the gentiles, and sings a hymn of praise in their midst.

**Rejoice with His People**

The second quotation is in verse 10. This introduces a quotation from Deuteronomy 32:43: "Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people." The word "rejoice" looks like this. "euphraino." This word means "to be happy:" "Get happy." It's in the aorist tense in the Greek, which means it's at some point in time. But it's passive voice. You don't make yourself happy. God, through His Word, makes you happy when He teaches you and you obey Him. And more important to recognize here is that this is a divine command. God is commanding you to be happy.

If you were to read the context of this quotation in Deuteronomy 32, you will see that Moses is describing Israel's future deliverance from her enemies. This is deliverance specifically after the tribulation era. And at that time, the Jews are really going to be happy. Now the gentiles are invited to join in this rejoicing with His people, the Jewish people. The gentiles are going to be beneficiaries in the millennium of God's blessing upon them. So, someday the gentiles and the Jews are going to praise God together: "Rejoice, O gentiles, with His people, the Jewish people." The gentiles could rejoice that God would preserve the Jewish nation through whom Jesus Christ the Savior would come, because salvation is of the Jews.

**Praise the Lord**

Third quotation is in verse 11. This one comes from Psalm 117:1: "Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise Him." The word "praise" in the Greek Bible looks like this: "aineo." This word is used in New Testament only of praising God, and never of praising people. And it is again a command. It is present tense, which means that this is something that we gentiles are supposed to do all the time – praising God.

Now, this is not one of these fake, goofy things that the charismatics like to do. We had one on television this morning. His whole program was a "Praise the Lord" program, and those guys can really go wacko over praising the Lord and getting emotional. This is a movement of the heart toward God as the result of the Word of God welling up in your soul under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit. And when you have that, you're ready to sing, and you're ready to praise God. Praising God is a command of something that we are to do.

"Praise the Lord, you gentiles." Now, the gentiles who have, in the previous verse, joined the Jews in praising God, here are told to praise God on their own, because of what God has done for them. "And let all the peoples (all the gentiles) praise Him." He says, "Praise Him" the second time. In verse 11, it says, "Praise the Lord, all you gentiles ('aineo')." Then he says, "Let all the peoples praise Him." God the Holy Spirit emphasizes that he really means this, because the Greek word there takes this word and as a little preposition, so that it becomes "epaineo." And "epaineo" is an intense idea of heaping up phrase. What this word means is "keep piling up praise to God."

Your week is going to be a lot easier if you take this seriously. Praising God is stopping to thank Him for what He has done. It is not just saying, "God, I have this problem, and I need a solution." You pray; He gives the solution; and, now you can go on from there. It is always important to remember to thank Him and to praise Him. And that's the point of this commandment to us gentiles – piling up praise to God. Heap it up.

This word, "let all the peoples praise God," is all the nations that Matthew 28:19 tells us Christians to go out and testify to. Matthew 28:19 sends us to all the world, in order to bring in these nations to heap up praise to God.

Psalm 117 is the shortest time in the Bible. If you look at it for a moment, you see that verse 1 is the one he's quoting: "Praise the Lord, all nations (all gentiles). Laud Him, all peoples (all gentiles). Verse 2, however, tells us why. Verse 2 of that psalm (the rest of it) says, "For His lovingkindness is great toward us." This word "lovingkindness" in the Hebrew is what we mean by "grace" in the Greek: "Praising God for His grace, and the truth of the Lord is everlasting. Praise the Lord." He is praising God for two things here: His loving kindness (His grace); and, for His truth (His doctrine). Those are the things for which you should praise God.

Now, if you are not inclined to praise God for His grace, then you're out of touch with reality of what He's doing in your life. This is the very fact that He's given you the capacity to have the next breath. This is the very capacity that He's keeping all the systems within your body operating, so that there's another day for service, and for storing treasures in heaven. And if you are not aware of praising Him for doctrine, then you don't appreciate the Word of God, and you're out of touch with a great gold mine of divine viewpoint that is available to you. This has been extended to Jew and gentile from the Abrahamic Covenant. Gentiles, of course, are not under the blessing of the national promises to Israel. I don't have to make that clear to you, do I? When we say "blessings upon the gentiles of salvation through the Abrahamic Covenant," we are not implying that the rest of the covenant (the national promises, and the Jewish future), that you have anything to do with that that. That only belongs to those people out there on the side of the Mediterranean Sea in the land of Palestine, the Israelis, when they get their head screwed on straight, and they finally turn to Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

**A Root of Jesse**

The fourth quotation is in verse 12. And this is sort of a climax. This time he quotes from Isaiah 11:10: "There shall come a root of Jesse." The word "root" here means a descendant. This descendant is identified as coming from Jesse, who was the Father of King David. It refers specifically to Jesus Christ as that root sprout from the royal line of David, and from the Jewish family of Abraham.

In Revelation 5:5 and Revelation 22:16, Jesus Christ is referred to as the root out of the royal life of David. It says, "There shall come the root of Jesse, and He who arises." The word "arises" looks like this in the Greek Bible. It's the Greek word "anistemi," which means "to come on the scene of history." So, he is saying that there is someone who is going to come on the scene of history at some point in time, and this person is going to: "Rule over the gentile." And the word "rule" here means governmental authority. This refers to Jesus Christ as king over all the gentile nations, specifically in the millennium.

In the order of events, the next thing that God is going to do in human history (the next prophetic event to be fulfilled) will be the sudden removal of the church (all of you) to meet Jesus Christ in the air. Seven years of the tribulation period will then complete the 490 years which were promised to Daniel – that Jewish history had left. Daniel went to God when he realized that the 75-year period of captivity in Babylon was coming to an end. Daniel, now a very old man, went to God and said, "What's next? How long are you going to deal with Israel before you fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant?" And God said, "I'm going to have 490 more years of dealing with your people." And sure enough, history moved along, except it stopped on crucifixion day – seven years short.

Now, we're going to get back on our Sunday evening studies to some very fascinating observations concerning the Jewish religious year. Increasingly, scholars are recognizing a dramatic development. Occasionally, something big happens in Jewish history, like the time they charged into Jerusalem in the war that restored to them the Wailing Wall. That was a great, Jewish, festival, holy day. And when you start looking at the things that have happened in Jewish history on these dramatic days, then you realize that we have a time table that is clicking off in human history that is coordinated to the Jewish religious calendar. We'll talk more about that later.

However, now we will just tell you that the dramatic development of 490 years was cut short by seven years. That seven years is when God finishes the tribulation era. Then Jesus Christ comes to this earth, with you and I accompanying Him. And at that point in time, Christ will begin ruling over the gentile nations. He doesn't rule over gentiles today. He's not in charge of gentile nations today. The devil is in charge of gentile nations. That's why he told Jesus, on the amount of temptation: "If you will forget the cross, I'll make you a king, and I'll put you over all the nations of the world." And Satan could have done it, because he is in charge of all the nations of the world. This is his hour. This is his moment.

However, when Christ returns, everything changes. That's what is the background of this particular quotation. Here, God has brought gentiles salvation. Indeed, they should praise God tremendously for that. What a great provision! And here He comes along and says, "Someday a child descended through the royal line that began with the father of King David, Jesse, will arise, and this man is going to rule over all the nations of the world." That's exactly what Revelation 19:16 says to us when John writes: "And on His robe (that is; on the robe of the returned Christ, at the end of the tribulation – seven years) and on His thigh, He has a name written: 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords,'" because he will be King of Kings, and He will be Lord of Lords.

Jesus Christ, here in this Old Testament passage in Isaiah, is viewed like a flag around which people would rally: "There shall arise to rule over the gentiles. In Him, the gentiles hope." In Isaiah 11:10, from which he is quoting, we should look at this one in the Old Testament. Isaiah 11:10: "Then will come about in that day, that the nations will resort to the route of Jesse, who will stand as a signal for his people (or as a flag an ensign to rally around), and his resting place will be glorious." This is what Paul is quoting. And I want you to notice that it says, "Then it will come about *in that day*." In that day, Jesus Christ will rule over the nations of the world.

We're having a great debate in theological circles now. The amillennialists are up to their old tricks. And even the post-millennialists have now come back into the picture, saying that there will be no reign of Jesus Christ upon this earth, and He will not rule over the nations of the world. Now, Paul has just said, "You gentiles are going to glorify God, because Jesus Christ Himself is going to be appointed to rule over you. Here in Isaiah, we see that that's going to happen in that day. What is "that day?" "That day" is the day described in the preceding verses.

Notice Isaiah 11:1: "Then a chute will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit (Jesus Christ), and the Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him: the Spirit of wisdom and understanding; the Spirit of counsel and strength; the Spirit of knowledge; and, the fear of the Lord. And He will delight in the fear of the Lord." Now, we have a long series of tapes on Isaiah 11:2, because this describes the system of power that God the Father provided for the humanity of Jesus Christ. It's the same system of power that is available to every Christian in this era. It's a fascinating study, and it gives you all the insights of the capacities that you have, as a believer, to make it in the devil's world.

Verse 3: "He will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears here. But with righteousness, He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth. And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips, He will slay the wicked. Also, righteousness will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist. And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little boy will lead them. Also the cow and the bear will graze; their young will lie down together; and, the lion will eat straw like the ox." The lion isn't going to eat oxen anymore. It's going to go for straw.

Now, will you tell me what in the world (in human history) has this condition ever prevailed? And yet it says that in that day, when this condition prevails, is when you gentiles are going to be ruled by Jesus Christ, and rejoicing in His authority. Obviously, he's talking about the future millennium.

Verse 8: "And the nursing child will play by the whole of the cobra. And the weaned child was put will put his hand on the vipers den. They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." It really takes a lot of gall and a lot of facial muscle control for the amillennialist to tell you that this is taking place now – that this millennial condition now exists. We have had people in this congregation who have made that declaration in the past: "The millennium is here." And you take them back to this passage, and they have nothing to say, because obviously this is describing conditions which would be impossible today. Obviously, there is something in the future for the gentile race that we have never yet experienced.

Yes, we have salvation. But what Paul is talking about here is great hope: "In Him shall the gentiles hope." The Greek word for "hope," as you know, means something that's going to happen – not just a possibility. This is some future hope that the gentiles have in Jesus Christ for salvation and for eternal life in heaven. This is a hope from God which is a sure thing – a justifiable expectation. This gentile hope is in Jesus Christ because he is, as Hebrews 6:19-20 tell us, the anchor of our souls, relative to salvation. Gentiles, therefore, rest their hope in Jesus Christ, the very one who the Jews today reject.

Yet apart from Jesus Christ, the royal sprout from the line of Jesse, with the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant – none of those promises to be fulfilled without Jesus Christ. And thus none of gentiles could be saved, because He is the one who fulfills that. Israel is going to have a special place over the nations in the millennium. This is based on the Abrahamic Covenant. But the gentiles are going to be blessed equally as well as they rally around Jesus Christ. In Luke 13:29, Jesus told His disciples that: "People from all over the world, at that time, are going to rally around Me." Today, the Jew and the gentile, who trust in Jesus Christ for salvation, are united in one family, the church. Ephesians 2:14-18 tell us that the middle wall of partition has been broken down between Jew and gentile – that spiritual wall that separated. The antagonism has been broken down, because when a Jew is saved, he becomes a Christian. He is no longer a Jew. When a gentile is saved, he becomes a Christian. He is no longer a gentile. He is now in the body of Christ as one united group that God has specially brought together.

The point of Paul quoting these passages is what he started off with – Christians should be nice to one another. Christians should treat each other as members of the same family. Christians should be patient with the weak among them. Christians should be patient even with the strong among them, because the strong have freedoms in Christ in grace that sometimes the weak Christian gets irritated over. And certainly the weak Christians irritate the life out of us because of their spiritual backwardness. But Paul says, "You take it gently. You are a gentile's yourself who one time had no claims from God. You had no rights with God. And yet, God has brought all this upon you. Therefore, you need not be heavy-handed.

There is nothing more irritating in the royal family of God than to see a member of our aristocratic group, the church, acting like a commoner. There are plenty of Christians who are so contemptuous that they think they know it all. They do not have to be taught the Word of God. They don't show up for instruction in the Word. They're in and out. They're erratic. They're preoccupied with their lives. And five or six years down the line, they're going to get a big blast when they discover what life is really all about.

It is interesting that the proof that the apostle Paul has given us in these four Old Testament passages comes from the three main sections of the Old Testament. The first and third quotes come from the Psalms. That's one main section. The second quote comes from the Law. That's one main section. The fourth comes from the prophets. That's the third main section. Luke 24:44 indicates that the Law, the Psalms, and the prophets constitute the Old Testament Scripture. And Paul proves his point, that gentiles have ground to glorify God, from all three sections. And he uses the quotations from three great leaders: Moses; David; and, Isaiah.

**The God of Hope**

We conclude with verse 13: "Now, may the God of hope." This is a benediction. Actually, this verse is the end of the doctrinal portion of the book of Romans. Paul could have put a period, and put the book aside here. The rest of the book is some personal greetings and some personal observations that tie it all up. But this is the end of the doctrinal portion: "Now, may the God of hope." That is the God Who is the source of hope – that confident expectation. This is hope referring back to what he taught in the previous verse, verse 12 – the hope that the gentiles have. This is the God Who imparts hope to those who trust and obey Him. The Christian, for salvation from hell, finds Christ his hope (Hebrews 6:19-20): "May the God of hope fill you" – to put something in abundance in you.

This is an interesting mood in the Greek language. This is optative mood. The Greek word looks like this: "pleroo." The optative mood is rarely used in the New Testament. It is the way of expressing a conceivable possibility: "But there are so many of you gentiles who are so fouled up that you're never going to make it. There are so many of you gentiles who have a great chance, and eventually you get blown out of the water." Some of the greatest tragedies in Berean Church is to see people who once were really at the heart of God in serving and knowledge and working, who drifted off by force doctrine; trivial matters; or, temporal issues, and are blown out of the water, and they're useless to themselves and everyone else now.

That's why the optative mood is used here. Now Paul says this almost as a prayer, like a benedictory prayer: "Now may the God of hope fill you. I hope He will. I hope He can do this." This is a conceivable possibility. But I know that a lot of you are going to stand in the way of what God is waiting to do for you, because you're not in the Word; because you're sloppy about confessing sin; because you're not readers of Scripture; because you're not participating in personal service; and, because you're not investing in eternity: "May He fill you with what He wants to fill you with: namely, joy; your personal happiness; and, the anticipation of having your hopes fulfilled.

**Joy and Peace**

In John 15:11, Jesus said, "I give to you Christians My personal joy." Paul then says: "And peace." That refers to the quietness of soul. Peace results from the assurance that your hopes are going to be realized.

**In Believing**

In John 14:27, Jesus said, "I give you My own personal peace." So, we Christians carry both the joy and the peace of Christ Himself: "That with all joy and peace in believing." And here's the keyword. This is what God works: "pisteuo." This word means "to trust." Our God is a God who works on the basis of people who take Him at His Word. It refers to trusting in God – to His doctrine. This is expressing His divine purpose. Joy and peace in the Christians are the products of believing God. (1 Peter 1:8, Philippians 4:7). The man without Jesus Christ as Savior, and the man without the doctrines of Scripture, will believe what is a figment of his imagination, and he ends up in his own self-destruction. If you don't know doctrine, you don't know anything.

**God's Word is Settled in Heaven**

The unbeliever will lull himself into a peace which is going to turn into a terror. The world is doing that today. The unsaved create a joy which will become their great sorrow. The man without God will hope in what will prove to be a false expectation. Believing is an expression of confidence in the veracity of God (Philippians 1:6). The real truth, that leads to salvation with peace and joy, is in the Bible, because it is God's Word. Psalm 119:87 declares that: "God's Word is settled in heaven." That means that nobody is going to change what He said: "Your Word, O Lord, is settled in heaven." The Great Church of the Open Door in Los Angeles, California, when it was located in downtown L.A., has this across the front of its facade as its motto: "Thy Word, O Lord, is settled in heaven." The noblest title that you can bear in life is to be a believer.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing." For what purpose? That you may abound: that you may have a surplus of something – a surplus of hope. The idea is repeated here again. *The hope* of which he has been speaking: *the hope* of God keeping His Word of providing something for which you gentiles are going to glorify God, is a hope which you receive by the power of the Holy Spirit. All blessings come from God through the Spirit of God. Hope is created by the Holy Spirit through doctrine which is utilized in the mind of the believer, and it forms the basis for your personal joy in peace. The infinite power of the Holy Spirit is stressed here in contrast to your own finite power – your finite capacity to deal with the issues of time and eternity.

Christians with this kind of a bright eternity should really treat each other kindly. 1 John 3 reminds us of something we all have to remember about each other first. 1 John 3:2 says, "Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is." If you have some Christian brother that you can't stand, remember that 1 John 3:2 reminds you God's not quite finished molding him. The time will come when you like him very much indeed. When people seek their own ways, they oppose God's ways. Romans 15:13 brings to a close a dramatic instruction of Christian consideration, and the Christian principles of the attitude of accepting one another.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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