

EXPOSITION OF ROMANS

Message #41

Romans 11:25-36

Isn't it enough to know that Jesus loves me? Many studies and seminars will tell you it is enough. Do I need any more than that? Well, one answer to this question is found in our text today and the answer is yes! It is not enough to know you are saved. It is not enough to know Jesus loves you. It is not enough to know a few facts or to have memorized a few verses. God expects His people in His Church to know the essence of His entire program. God has devised a remarkable plan and He wants His people to know that plan. He does not want us graduating from this earth in ignorance. He wants us to fully know His plan for the ages - which includes Israel and us.

GOD DOES NOT WANT HIS PEOPLE IGNORANT OF HIS ETERNAL PROGRAM WITH THE JEWS AND WITH THE GENTILES, AND THIS KNOWLEDGE SHOULD LEAVE US HUMBLY RECOGNIZING GOD'S GREATNESS.

Now there are two main parts to this powerful text of Scripture:

PART #1 – God is presently working out His program with the Gentiles. **11:25**

We may observe three immediate facts from this verse:

- 1) God does not want us uninformed ;
- 2) God does not want us proud ;
- 3) God does want us to recognize the temporality of our program.

The main emphasis here is that we should not be ignorant of the fact that God has temporarily blinded Israel until He has completed His program with the Gentiles.

Ever since about A.D. 400 and the Council of Carthage, our complete N.T. has been in existence as we know it, Matthew to Revelation. The tragic reality is most of the Church has lived unaware of what God's program for this age actually is.

One of the outstanding passages of Scripture which testifies of the purpose of the Gentile program is Acts 15:13-18. Paul and Barnabas were testifying at Jerusalem Council that God was indeed now saving Gentiles (Acts 15:7). When James heard this, he said his classic words which in capsule form establish the purpose of God for this age - God is "taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name" (Acts 15:14).

In other words, God is presently saving and developing people for His glory in His Church. That is the purpose of God for this age.

- 1) The purpose of God is not to stamp out sin in this world.
- 2) The purpose of God is not to bring about some millennial peace in this world.
- 3) The purpose of God is not to give us some land.
- 4) The purpose of God is not to make the world a better place to live.

How does He call out a people for His name and develop them for His glory?

- 1) By salvation - it begins when someone trusts Jesus Christ.
- 2) By education - it continues by one's knowledge of Scriptures and Doctrines.
- 3) By service - it moves to one finding his or her spiritual gift and using it in the context of the church.

PART #2 – God must ultimately finish His program with Israel . **11:26-32**

There are **four reasons** why God must finish His program with Israel:

Reason #1 - Because it is written in Scripture. **11:26a**

Isaiah 59:20-21 is quoted in **Romans 11:26-27**. Paul's point here is that Israel will be saved because it is written in the Word of God that she will be saved. God cannot go back on His Word!

Reason #2 - Because it is a covenant of God. **11:27**

God must finish His program with Israel because He has made a covenant to do so. That word "covenant" has to do with a "legal document" which contains legal rights such as a will. This is much more than just some agreement between two parties; it carries with it the idea of a legal binding obligation.

The meaning here is that God has made a binding agreement with Israel and He is obligated to fulfill it. What is it that God must do? He must do what He says He will do or He cannot be God. When we turn to Jeremiah 31:31-34, especially verses 35-37, God states it is impossible for Israel to be cast off.

In Hebrews 13:20-21, we learn that this same God has made an everlasting covenant with every believer in Jesus Christ. We, like Israel, are part of God's covenantal program. This is why we cannot lose our salvation. For the same reason Israel cannot lose her land - God has entered into a legal pact with us and He will fulfill all of His promises to us, which includes everlasting life.

Reason #3 - Because it is an election of God. **11:28**

Paul says here that even though God has temporarily blinded Israel to the Gospel so that Gentiles might come to Christ, Israel is still part of God's elective purposes and she still is beloved by God. Israel has been, is, and always will be God's elect nation. She is God's choice.

The word "choice" or "election" scares many people, but actually it is this very word that saves people. Israel is God's chosen, elect nation - that is a fact. No human or any satanic power can change this reality. God will fulfill His promises because God has elected His nation.

Now remember Romans 9:24 - God's elective purposes include individual Gentiles.

Reason #4 - Because of the immutability of God. **11:29**

God cannot ever go back on His promises or His Word because He is a God who cannot lie. God cannot change His grace gifts and He cannot change His elective purposes.

Salvation, according to Ephesians 2:8-9, is a gift God gave us. God saved us and it is impossible for Him to take this gift back.

There is also no hint in these verses that God will fulfill His program with Israel because Israel is faithful. The text abounds with the truth that God will fulfill this because He is faithful to Himself.

Why would God want a nation like Israel? Why would God stop a program with Israel to allow someone like us into His eternal plan? Frankly, why would God save anyone, Jew or Gentile?

The answer is found in **verses 30-32 - God did all of this to demonstrate His mercy**.

God has not stopped His program with Israel because He has forgotten her. He cannot do that; His character will not permit that. He has stopped His program with Israel so He can demonstrate His mercy to the whole world.

It was about this point that this whole program hit Paul. He realized that God had elected a nation, and then He stopped a program by blinding that nation so that He could extend His mercy to Gentiles; and when it hit him he exploded into a beautiful doxology - **Romans 11:33-36**.

Three ways this text should impact our lives:

- 1) It should give us knowledge of God's program for the ages.
- 2) It should give us humility that we are part of God's program.
- 3) It should give us a deep reverence for God and appreciation for Israel.