

# Who Are God's Elect?

By  
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## ELECTION

### Excursus

As we begin our discourse on Election, we would like to express our profound love for **all** of God's people, **even those** who vehemently believe and teach the very opposite of the doctrines of salvation that we teach here at the Grace Gospel Church Ministries. We, at the Grace Gospel Church Ministries believe as the Bible teaches that there is but **one** body of Christ, which is comprised of **many** individual members, so there is only **one** Church. The Church is **not** identified by **any** affiliation or denomination or creed, it **is only** identified by its **head**. The **head** of the Church is **Jesus Christ**, the Son of the living God. In Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, the scriptures teach that we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins and that He is the image of the invisible God the first born of every creature. All things were created **by** Him and **for** Him and He is before all things and **by** Him **all** things consist. **He** is the **head** of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things He might have the preeminence (to be first).

We are further informed that our peace with God is obtained through His blood that was shed for the purpose of reconciling all things to Him, whether they are in earth or in heaven.

As we look at those of us who have been reconciled (through his blood) and remember we were all enemies and alienated and separated from God due to our sinful Adamic nature; but those who are reconciled, receive this reconciliation through the body of His flesh that is through His **death**. God's ultimate aim is to present **every individual member** of the Body of Christ, holy, unblameable and unproveable in **His** sight. We believe every confessed child of God will agree on the facts we have just stated. Where there is disagreement and differences of opinion is **how** God accomplishes this task? It is our belief that all of God's elect are obligated to continuously and enthusiastically seek the mind and will of God, concerning **His** eternal plan, purpose and will. This can only be accomplished by keeping both our Bibles and our minds opened to the spirit of God to enlighten us.

There are many factions, groups and denominations that are closed-minded and some can become down right offensive when they feel that their creeds or rules or their doctrine is being challenged. Some resort to name calling, labeling and attempting to use slogans to discredit those ideas and interpretations of the scriptures that are different from theirs. As we have forestated, we have formatted our presentation of what we believe in writings for all that wish to consider. So whether you agree or disagree with us, we still love you because you are members of the Body of Christ.

Accordingly we will not participate in name-calling, labeling or slogans. No, we are not "Calvinists" and we are not going to label anyone whose beliefs are different as "Arminians". We will not even accept the label "Pauline". In the third chapter of First Corinthians, Paul writes "For ye are yet carnal and walk as men" for some say I am of Paul and another I am of Apollos"...then he asks a question, "who is Paul and who is Apollos"? No, the only label that we will accept is "Christ", for He is the head of this body. Nor will we participate in slogans i.e., the acronyms T.U.L.I.P or O.S.A.S, for we believe them to be rallying points for divisions within the Body of Christ.

Here we pray that those who are truly interested will engage in open, honest dialog. This does not mean that we won't disagree on some issues, but we **will agree** if we are in the Body of Christ (and there is only one Church), that we do **share** the common testimony that the blood of Jesus Christ redeems us. Now again we welcome your comments in love.

## ELECTION

### Preamble

As we commence our dissertation on the doctrinal subject **Election**, we do so with the full understanding of the controversial nature of this blessed truth among many traditional religious factions. It is certainly **not** our aim to sow any seeds of discord among God's people for as we have continually stated we truly love the body of Christ and we would like nothing more than to see God's precious elect united. We also recognize that the **only** thing that **can** unite us is the **truth** i.e., the essence of the message that was revealed to the Apostle Paul for the Church, which includes the full understanding of all of the soteriological principles that are a part of the **mystery**.

In our examination of election, we note its application to two very important doctrines of salvation, namely **Reconciliation** and **Justification**. We believe that many who consider themselves to be students of God's word would at least agree that God is the sole initiator and actor who performs the tasks of bringing about the results of these spiritual truths. To define these terms briefly; under the **doctrine of reconciliation**, man is estranged and separated from God due to his sinful nature, thus God had to "reconcile" or "restore" some back into a fellowship relation with Himself. The only

method available to God in accomplishing this task was the substitutionary death of Jesus. This required removing the enmity that existed and of course the only remedy to sin is the blood of Jesus. We think that most of God's people who study His word will agree upon that one point.

Now for God to restore mankind and yet remain consistent with His attributes of being righteous, holy and just, it was **necessary** for Him to accomplish this feat without compromising the **standard** of His nature. In other words God's task was to justify His restoration of mankind and yet **remain just!** **How** God accomplished this is documented in the **doctrine of justification**. As we state numerous times during our discourse of this subject matter, justification is a legal term, which basically deals with removing the "guilt" and placing the one who is absolutely guilty into a position of absolute innocence. We certainly pray that we have demonstrated through God's word that only deity can accomplish this. The removing of guilt can only be the result of Jesus sacrificial work in effectuating salvation, as He died for (or because of) our sins and rose for (or because of) our justification.

As we turn to the doctrinal subject matter **election**, we move into an area that has caused numerous debates among member of the Body of Christ. The major point of contention is whether the task of **electing** or **choosing** is **solely** the act of God or is it a joint-effort shared either equally or partially by those who enjoy the privilege of being God's elect.

In the study of soteriology (salvation) most of God's people agree that the Holy Spirit's primary ministry to believers today is, (1) to enable us to understand the truth, which we are to impart to the lost (I Corinthians 1:23; 15:3-4). This should be a simple message centered in the redemptive death of Jesus Christ. (2) To empower us to comprehend the truth which He has given to members of the Body of Christ (Ephesians 3:18-19; Colossians 1:9-10). Note that this message must operate on the basis of grace, being what we are in Christ. (3) To make it possible for us to know that for which we should pray (Romans 8:26-27). The Holy Spirit intercedes and conforms all our prayers to the will of God. (4). We do not expect everyone to agree with us on this, but our minds should be revitalized with the truth of the word of God, Mystery Truth, which has been revealed to the Church that we may persuasively teach it (Colossians 1:25-26).

Now to the extent that we faithfully teach the epistles written by Paul and others whose writings are in alignment with his as the **message** to the New Testament Grace Churches, we will certainly flow with the Holy Spirit. We absolutely believe that, that which the Holy Spirit has written to the New Testament Grace Churches, particularly through the Apostle Paul, is the inviolable word of God for this present age of grace (I Corinthians 2:6-10; Galatians 1:12; I Thessalonians 2:13). This is the message which the Holy Spirit used to change lives in the initial grace church and we are confident that it is this same message that God uses to change and stabilize our lives today (Ephesians 2:11-13; 4:17-32). The closer we stay to the literal intended meaning of the Holy Spirit, as set forth in the church epistles, the more we can legitimately expect God to truly bless our ministering. Accordingly with this knowledge in hand we boldly (confidently) forge ahead into the turbulent waters of discoursing the "**Doctrine of Election**" as we believe it to be.

In our presentation of the subject matter "election", we will be dealing with other doctrinal issues\*, i.e.; (1) the sovereignty of God, (2) the total depravity of man, (3) limited atonement, (4) foreordination, (5) predestination, (6) unconditional election, (7) irresistible grace and (8) preservation (not perseverance) of the saints. We will also be conveying terms and definitions from the Greek Text, i.e., the Greek New Testament. In doing so, we note that the Grace Gospel Church Ministry utilizes the **modern Greek** pronunciation in lieu of the **erasmic** pronunciation as is found in some of the Greek lexicons that some may be familiar with, i.e., Young's and Strong's. \* It is not the intentions of these writings to duplicate or reflect in any manner the so-called five points of "Calvinism".

## [The Sovereignty of God](#)

[The Total Depravity of Man](#)[FOREORDINATION \(PREDESTINATION\)](#)[LIMITED RECONCILIATION \(ATONEMENT\)](#)[UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION](#)[Irresistible Grace](#)[PRESERVATION \(NOT PERSEVERANCE\) OF THE SAINTS](#)[The Sovereignty of God](#)

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The sovereignty of God entails God's absolute right to execute His will, plan or purpose without challenge, opposition or question from anyone outside of Himself. If we recognize that God is the maker and creator of all things in the universe (as He is), then we who are creatures of His creation must be in total subordination to everything that He says and every act that He does. As this relates to the subject matter "election", the main issue is how God brings spiritually dead sinners into a living relationship with Himself. In this regard, an appropriate theological title would be God's sovereignty in soteriology. Soteriology is the study of salvation. In this sense, our discourse on this subject matter will make sense only to those who are totally subordinate to what God says about the fall of Adam and its confirmation by his progeny (Genesis 3:4,19:4:8,11-12,16; Romans 3:9-18,23; 7:14; Ephesians 3:1-3; Titus 3:3). Now if our minds are infiltrated and permeated with humanistic evaluations of man, consciously or subconsciously, then one will be led to think that dead sinners, within themselves are capable of initiating a relationship with God. If this very popular yet secular, humanistic appraisal of man's ability is true, then why does God emphasize in his word that He is the initiator of the salvation relationship? (Acts 13:48;16:14; Romans 8:28-30; 9:10-18,23-24;11:6-7; I Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:3-6;11-12; Colossians 3:12; I Thess. 1:4; II Timothy 2:10; Titus 1:1; I Peter 1:1,9; II Peter 1:10).

We do not and are not participants in God's determinant will. Mankind is excluded as actors or initiators from God's determinant will. His determinant will, plan and purpose were prearranged, thus they will come to pass exclusive of man's participation, because God is always the sole actor and initiator of all things that He is determined to do. We are thoroughly convinced by the word of God, that the sovereignty of God concerning His choice and election falls into the category of His determined will, plan and purpose. In view of the overwhelming evidence (see preceding scriptures), which cannot truthfully be denied, it is obvious that God has a sovereign purpose and plan because it is His determinant will to restore (some not all) men back into fellowship with Himself (Colossians 3:9-10). As we continue our study on the doctrinal yet volatile matter of election, we make note of the teachings of this message of God's sovereign choice and setting apart of His elect.

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[The Total Depravity of Man](#)

We will convey a brief description of the total depravity of man. Of course we will go into extensive detail on each of these matters as we progress in our dissertation. Many vehemently disagree with the idea that man is totally evil and void of the capability of doing any good without the direct intervention of God's motivation. Here we must make the distinction between total depravity and absolute depravity. We acknowledge that man in his depraved state can and does exercise some restraint on all the evil that he is capable of doing. All men are not murderers or bank robbers or rapists. The fact remains that some are and that all are capable of each and every one of these heinous crimes. Of course, some will say not me! Here we must understand the value of godly influence on the ungodly nature of mankind. For one to be totally depraved does not mean he is as extensively evil as possible, but he is as intensively evil as possible. In order to have any semblance of a civilized society God must and does exercise His power of restraint on the nature of some men, but we must never forget that the potential is always there. So it is not that any one of us cannot commit or perform that which we are capable of, but it testifies that God does control the extent to which evil conduct is manifested. Here we must credit God with this restraint and not man.

Now it is a fact that nothing that a man does in his fallen nature can be counted as absolute good in God's sight, which from God's perspective is not good enough to save anyone (Romans 3:10-18; Psalms 14:2-3; 52:2-4; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Isaiah 59:7-8). The only one who is capable of giving a true evaluation of man is God, the one who created him. Man, as he was originally created, was made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27). In Genesis 1:31, God evaluated the man that he created as being good. Man as formed by God, was required to function as a free moral agent under the Edenic Covenant, i.e., he (Adam) was required to exercise a choose between what God said to be right or wrong. This does not mean that he was confirmed in his good and innocent state or that he possessed inherent righteousness (Genesis 2:6-7). The first man as a human representative agent, that is while Adam was still in his state of innocence, inevitably followed the word of God's adversary (Satan), rather than the word of God (Genesis 3:1-6). As a result of man's action even before he was tainted with sin (as we know it), he fell under God's judgement of death (Genesis 2:17; 3:2-3). Here we must fully understand what death is. The essence of death is separation. Man became separated from God. We should also understand that this death or this separation is spiritual and physical, a total cutoff from divine life. Now in contrast to and certainly to be distinguished from all other forms of life, Genesis 2:7 states, "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul". This special importation of life to man was withdrawn when he disobeyed God and died.

To die means to be dead, incapable of moving after the similitude of that which is spiritual, thus, this death set in immediately and ultimately physical death followed suit in due time. Understand, no man is righteous within himself (Isaiah 53:6; Romans 1:21-32; 3:23; 5:12-21). This is true of all men. The Greek word "ahr•ee•os" is translated "useless" or "valueless". This denotes that the whole mass of mankind is worthless, one dead putrid mass all lumped together.

In Romans 3:10-18, there is a vivid description of the depraved nature, as we read from the King James Version, (vs. 10) "As it is written, There is none righteous, no not one: (vs. 11) There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. (vs. 12) They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. (vs. 13) Their throat is open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: (vs. 14) Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: (vs. 15) their feet are swift to shed blood: (vs. 16) Destruction and misery are in their ways: (vs. 17) And the way of peace have they not known: (vs. 18) There is no fear of God before their eyes. Oh, what an indictment by these malicious and cutting words as they kill and bury the reputation of men. As we read from the Greek text Romans 3:13, "Their throat is an open tomb, they deceive with their tongues, the poison of asps is under their lips". Romans 5:12 explicitly states that sin came into the world through Adam, thus his penalty was death and since all men are inflicted with death, this is evidence that all have sinned! According to

Romans 3:23, it is documented “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”. One of the most accurate descriptions of the natural man is found in Ephesians 2:1-3. Here the Apostle Paul states as we read from the Greek text, “And you being dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you once walked, according to the age of this world, according to the ruler of authority of the air, the spirit now working in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all also once lived in the lusts of our flesh and of the thoughts, and we were by nature children of wrath even as also the rest”. Notice, according to these verses, the natural man is dead in sin and his lifestyle is patterned after Satan’s blueprint for this age. The ruler of the authority of the air, namely Satan, dominates man’s life. He lives in the lusts of the flesh and does the will of the mind of the flesh. In his nature he is a child of wrath, this obviously applies to all men (both Jews and Gentiles), who in their very nature are totally depraved sinners. So in view of God’s evaluation of mankind, and that is the only one that matters, he is a totally depraved sinner separated from God, dead spiritually and on death row physically and he himself within himself is unable to extricate himself apart from God’s deliverance. Now we will go into much greater detail on man’s depravity in the discoursing of our general subject election.

### FOREORDINATION (PREDESTINATION)

Now we briefly mention foreordination and predestination as these terms are sometimes used interchangeably. Foreordination denotes God’s sovereign plan, whereby He decides all that is to happen in the entire universe. Predestination is a part of foreordination, it defines the specifics of God’s eternal plan, i.e., God’s election, call (summons), justification, and glorification. In Ephesians 1:5, the Greek verb “**pro•oree•sas**”, rendered “foreordained” is formed from a combination of the Greek preposition “**pro**” meaning “before” prefixed to the word “**oree•zo**”, meaning boundary or limits or restrictions. Hence, its etymological meaning conveys the idea of to limit, restrict and mark out beforehand to “in prior time design and determine” or to “ordain before hand”, thus to specifically predestinate or predetermine.

As we follow the Greek word order in the usage of this word “**pro•oree•sas**”, it is always in the aorist tense. In interpreting this grammatical principle, its application always points to a given point or period, prior to the creating of the world when God both elected or chose and foreordained individuals to be holy (set apart) and blameless (justified) before Him and as such, to occupy a son-position. This cuts against the grain of what many have been taught and we only ask that you follow along with the study and allow the Holy Spirit to guide your thinking. In light of all of the facts of eternity, we should keep in mind that God is omniscient and all knowing, thus nothing in this world happens by chance. God is ultimately in back of everything. He decides and causes all things to happen. He is not sitting on the sideline wondering and perhaps contemplating in trepidation, what is going to happen. He has foreordained everything “After the counsel of His will” (Ephesians 1:11), everything is preplanned and pre-purposed, even the negative and sinful acts against Him. In all things, God who is all wisdom, always works out what He deems best and good and that, which pleases Him, is always the highest possible intelligent decision. So these eternal facts, plus God’s perfect judgement, enabled Him to, in His sovereignty according to His purpose for the ages, foreordain us, His elect to the praise of His grace and glory (Ephesians 1:6,12). We will go into greater detail of foreordination and predestination in our expository presentation of the subject matter of Election.

### LIMITED RECONCILIATION (ATONEMENT)

In our relatively brief discussion of the doctrinal issue known as limited atonement, we shall utilize this term only with the noted understanding that the word atonement (kawfer) in the Hebrew is exclusively an Old Testament term. We hereby absolutely state that you will not, will not find the word atonement in the New Testament. Some are going to adamantly point to Romans 5:11 and extrapolate this word from the reading of the King James Version, but hold on, not so fast!

The proper exegesis of this verse utilizing the Greek grammar as well as a thorough review of the context, clearly shows that the Greek word "katallayeen" is properly translated "reconciliation", giving the basic meaning of restoring to favor. As conveyed in this verse (Romans 5:11), it denotes the restoration of the favor of God to sinners who have been caused to confess their sins and put their trust in the expiatory death of Jesus Christ. So why use this term if it is not found in the New Testament? The Hebrew word (kawfar) basically references "a primitive root". It denotes a covering, thus it conveys the idea of to cover, to purge, to enact mercy (withheld judgement), to disannul, to appease, to put off, or pardon. To make atonement means to cover or coat with pitch, so it is that which pacifies. Prior to Jesus Christ's substitutionary death on the cross, this act of atonement was the best expression of God's mercy that could be manifested. One who buys something with a credit card demonstrates another analogy of atonement. Although a purchase transaction has been made, the merchandise or property or service is not completely paid for until the debt accumulated on the card is fully discharged. The commodity has been "spoken for" or "covered" with the understanding that the payment is forthcoming at a later date. On this side of the cross, the expression of atonement can now be advanced from the temporary act of covering to the permanent act of cleansing. Thus the stain and guilt of sin is no longer just covered, but it has been eradicated or removed and thoroughly purged enabling God to forgive and reconcile those who are separated from Him by the Adamic curse. This term "atonement" refers to the "provisions" that God has made to eradicate sin.

Those who agree as well as those who disagree with this concept have both traditionally accepted the use of the term "limited atonement". Accordingly we will utilize this established nomenclature to identify the principles and thoughts conveyed by the terminology "limited atonement", which is actually "limited reconciliation".

The basic questions that are ascribed to the doctrine of "limited atonement" or "limited reconciliation" are:

1. For whom did Christ intend to die?
2. Whose sins did Christ actually pay for?
3. For whom did Christ go into the depths of Hell?
4. Who did Christ reconcile to God?
5. For whom was Christ made a substitute?
6. What was God's purpose and intent for the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ?

(Was it to save everyone or is it limited to only those who God elected?)

Basically there are two distinct and opposite schools of thought, they are:

1. Jesus Christ died for everyone, all-inclusive. We shall designate this group as Group A.

2. Jesus Christ died for only the believer (God's elect). We shall designate this group as Group B.

Group A basically endorses the concept of unlimited atonement, which included unlimited election which provides an universal atonement and universal love for all, thus an indefinite atonement and indefinite love indiscriminately directed at all but to no one in particular. This group enthusiastically teaches that Jesus Christ died for the entire world and paid for the sins of everyone, including the reprobate, even those that consciously reject Jesus and are destined for Hell. They make a distinction between what Christ did, i.e., He died for all and what Christ accomplished (because all will not be saved). They offer an explanation of Christ's shed blood verses His spilled blood. They believe God intended to save all, but only some exercised faith so apparently some of Jesus' blood was wasted or it was spilled. Oh, what incredible thinking! To bolster their position, they appeal to such passages as I John 2:2, which states, "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world". This group points to other scriptures, i.e., II Corinthians 5:14, which states, "The love of Christ constrains us, because we judge that one died for all"; also they refer to the gospel of John 4:42, which states, "This is indeed the Savior of the world". In our discourse we will endeavor to demonstrate the inaccuracy of their interpretation of these and other scriptures.

Group B's position is; Jesus Christ died only for the believer (His elect) and only these chosen ones will be saved. In this school of thinking, Christ intended or purposed that His death should pay for the sins of only those who the Father had given Jesus (John 6:37-40).

For the purpose of attempting to expose the weakness of Group A's support of unlimited election or atonement, Group B has advanced the premise that if Christ actually died for the sins of the world, He would have in effect taken away the penalty of everyone's sins and thus everyone would be saved.

Of course such a conclusion is obviously not true, because much of the world will go to hell. So attention is mainly focused on passages of scriptures that support the contention that Christ died, not for everyone, but for His people (Matthew 1:21), and the Church (Acts 20:28), even His wife (Ephesians 5:25). He died for those whom He has chosen in Him before creation (Ephesians 1:4). The term limited is not intended to convey the thought that the blood of Jesus Christ is limited in the capacity or potency of its power to save. No one who understands the omnipotence of God, i.e., (unlimited power) will ever dare to purport that God is limited in his power to save.

The blood of Jesus Christ absolutely has the power to save all in the world, but God's power to save is limited by his purpose and will to save only those whom he has in His sovereignty chosen to save.

It is certainly true that the atonement is of infinite worth and value, but the unlimited value of the atonement of Christ is limited to its scope as defined by the predetermined will and plan of God. The fact is that which Christ intended to do, he actually did and that was to remove the guilt of the sins of a limited number of people, namely those whom God has loved with a special love from eternity. The results are that the atonement of unlimited value is limited to certain men (God's elect). The terminology "limited atonement" may actually prove to be confusing to some, so other terms have been preferred, i.e., "definite" or "particular" atonement. These terms may more accurately emphasize the objects of this atonement. They stress that the atonement, which is unlimited in its power is limited to a definite, particular number of people, God's elect, who are caused by God to believe. We will obviously need to revisit these issues in much greater detail as we progress in our study of the doctrinal subject of election.



## UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

As we give a brief description of the term “unconditional election”, we refer to the “conditional” aspect of atonement or God’s policy for restoring His elect unto Himself. Note the contrast between the limited conditions of atonement verses the unlimited conditions of election, yet the two concepts compliment one another as they both depend solely on the sovereignty of God. To understand this term “unconditional election”, one must consider the component words “election” and “unconditional” separately.

The word election simply means to elect or to choose, select or opt. A common example would be a political election wherein choice is made or a candidate is selected or elected by the voters from a field of candidates, to fulfill a certain office, i.e., the mayor of a city, the governor of a state, or even the president of the nation. A Divine election entails the sovereign choice made by God wherein the elect or the one selected is positionally placed in a favorable relationship to God.

Those who enjoy God’s favor are eternally linked with Him, thus they go to heaven. Those who are not favored by God are eternally separated from Him; thus they go to Hell.

The word unconditional denotes that which is unrestrained or undefined, there are no boundaries, no rules, regulatory or specification type requirements to be met. A conditional election is an election that is conditioned or predicated upon something that is supplied by the one selected. For example, all political elections are conditional elections. The voter’s choice is always conditioned by something that the candidate is or has promised. As we are all aware, some potential candidates’ promise whatever they feel it takes in order to be elected. A few honest political candidates only promise to be good representatives and to do that which they judge to be the right thing. Other political candidates appeal to the ethnic or religious relationship factor, i.e., to those who are Afro-Americans, or Jews, or Anglo-Saxons or Catholics or Muslims, etc.

These human elections are conditional elections whereby the choices of the voters are always based upon either the expected performance or some characteristics of the one to be elected. This concept of election is somehow attributed to God’s method of linking up with humanity but as amazing as it may seem, divine election is always an unconditional election. It must be understood that God never bases His choice on what man thinks, says, does or is. In God’s election process, it does not matter what man thinks, says, does, or is, because it does not factor into God’s formula for choosing His elect. In essence, it is not known by men, what criteria God uses but one thing is sure; election is not based on anything that is supplied or attributed to or contributed by man himself.

God does not see something good or of value or that which is attractive in a particular person or anything else that motivates or figures into His decision to choose him. Oh what a blesseth relief, what wonderful knowledge as one considers the question posed as recorded in the book of Hebrew as to who or what is man that God would be mindful to extend the very best that He has to offer and that is Sonship. Consider if God’s election to Heaven was based on something that we had to be, think or do. Under such requirements, who would be saved? What man can stand before God and say that he can produce that which is totally acceptable to the standard of God. The answer is none for we are all dead in our sins and trespasses (Ephesians 2:1).

There is no one that does good, no not one (Romans 3:10-11). So if God’s election were based on a single good thing that was expected from us, then absolutely no one would be elected. Thus no man would go to Heaven; all would go to Hell, because no one is good enough to satisfy the righteousness of God. Now we shall continue to define this issue during our dissertation on election.

## Irresistible Grace

As we scrutinize the issue of “irresistible grace”, we again consider the compositional structure of this term separately. The Greek word “**kar•ees**” means favor, benefit, kindness, or good will, that is undeserved or unmerited. The Greek word “**tho •rahn•ahn**” is often used conjunctively with grace (**kar•ees**) and basically means “free” or “without a cause”. Anything that can be earned or merited or is deserved or transferred with a cause or because of something is not grace. Only that which is received without any input on the part of the recipient can be considered grace. Ephesians 2:8 states the emphatic fact that one is saved by grace, thus salvation comes in the form of a gift.

The Greek word “**khahr•ees•mah**” is translated “gift” or “free gift” which conveys the idea of a favor which one receives without any merit of his own. This is the description of the gift of divine grace. It is through the economy or dispensation of divine grace, by which the pardon of sin and eternal salvation is appointed, based solely on the merit of Jesus Christ’s worth and value to God.

Many do not comprehend this simply because we do not understand the concept of what a gift in essence truly is. When men give gifts, for the most part, grace is not the motive. Normally the recipients of gifts given by men usually contribute something to receiving the gift. Basically the gift is given because of who the recipient is (love one or relative) or because of something the recipient has done (act of kindness, loyal service, etc.). In these cases that “gift” or expression of kindness that is conveyed is really a “token of appreciation”, thus it is not without cause and it is not a free gift. Another example of men giving so-called “gifts” is the un-noble practice of those who convey favors for the purpose of indulging the recipient in some manner. In this instance the “gift giver” expects to receive some favor in turn for his gesture. It is crucial for us to understand that God did not have any reason outside of Himself to save us; it was purely or freely by grace!

Now as we examine the word “irresistible” we note that the actual word is not found in the Bible. This term is so phrased to designate what the grace of God accomplishes in bringing a dead lowly reprehensible creature from a state of total rejection by Him into the glorious position of the most precious possession He has ever created. In the English dictionary the word “irresistible” is an adjective, meaning that which is too powerful, too tempting or too charming to be resisted or repulsed.

This could not possibly be ascribed to any quality or attribute or effect that man has or could have to attract the love of God. In other words there is nothing that any man has or any man possesses or any man has the capacity to do to draw the attention of God towards him.

As it is recorded in the second chapter of Hebrews, verses 6-7, (from the King James Version), the testimony, “What is man, that thou (God) art mindful of him? Or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the Angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor. Now from the Greek text, “But one testified somewhere, saying what is man that you remember him or the son of man, that you take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the Angels, you crowned him with glory and honor”. There are some key words in that passage, first the Greek word “**meem•nee•skee**” rendered “mindful” or to remember or to be called to mind. So the thought is what causes God to be mindful of mankind?

The second word we focus on is the Greek word “**eep•ee•skehp•tee**” translated “to look upon” or “to look after” for the purpose of helping or benefiting or providing for. Notice this verb is in the indicative mood (it’s a fact!); the present tense (it’s continuous) and the middle or passive voice which infers that man contributes absolutely nothing to the fact that God continuously visits, cares for and is concerned about such a lowly creature!

In verse seven, the writer exclaims that God “**eh • stehph • ahn • os • ahs**”, rendered “crownedst” or “to adorn” or “to honor”, thus God has adorned some of mankind with “**thox • ee**” (glory) and “**tee • mee**” (honor, respect and recognition of value). Ephesians 1:6 states (from the King James Version), “To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved”. Now from the Greek Text, “Unto the praise of His glorious grace which He freely gave us in the beloved”.

Here we focus on the Greek word “**ehkh ahr • eet • os • ehn**” translated “freely gave”, it is the verbal form of the Greek noun “**kah • rees**” rendered “grace”. Therefore what is expressed by the aorist tense and indicative mood and the third person singular is; in a past period and point (eternity), it is a definite fact that God graced or freely gave us something or He made us something very valuable. The third person singular proves that we had nothing to do with it. So the basic question is what did God make us or freely give to us? The Greek participle “**eeg • ah • pee • meh • no**” translated “to be well pleased” or “beloved one”, is expressed in the present tense (it is perpetual or continuous) and passive voice we have absolutely no input.

Therefore the significance is that God has caused Him to become and be graced into the essence of His Beloved Son (Jesus Christ), which has in turn made it possible for us to be called “beloved one”.

It is a fact that God is well pleased with the worth and value of Jesus Christ and is irresistibly pleased with Him. Likewise those who are products of “irresistible grace” enjoy the same status of acceptance to God. We will obviously need to go into greater detail of this issue as we progress in our discourse of election.

Another aspect or effect of “irresistible grace” is how God has made Himself to be so attractive and loved by those whom He has loved from eternity. We must recognize that God is the reason we love Him. Love is not initiated or sourced out of us.

All men do not love God and are not attracted to Jesus. Those of us who love His name and love His person and love His presence, do so simply because God has initiated it in our hearts to enable us to respond to His love (I Peter 1:8; I John 4:19). It is the love of God that irresistibly draws us to Jesus Christ (John 6:44; I John 4:8,10,16). Again, this is all motivated by God’s grace.

## PRESERVATION (NOT PERSEVERANCE) OF THE SAINTS

We herein examine the terminology “preservation of the Saints” and as we do so, we define this very misunderstood word “Saints”. In this regard the question is asked, “what is a Saint”? What constitutes the status of Sainthood? Is it inherent? Is it acquired? Is it bestowed? The words Saint and Saints are used approximately 100 times in the Word of God.

The Old Testament Hebrew word **Kaw-doshe** denotes “One who is Holy or set apart”. The New Testament Greek word “**ahy • ee • os**” conveys the designation of those who have been set apart to or by God and deemed to be consecrated and judged to be morally pure and upright before God. It must be understood that all of God’s elect (regardless of their dispensation) enjoy this privileged position of Sainthood.

It is the benefit of all of God’s people simply because it is not obtained by merit, it is not an accomplishment as some denominations so designate it. Sainthood has absolutely nothing to do with the recipient on which it has been bestowed. It is not acquirable or obtainable. No one (other than

God) can contribute anything to nor take any thing that which God has declared to be righteous. Saints are called (Romans 1:7) or summoned as a result of the foreknowledge of God and they were predestinated as the elect of God (Romans 8:28-30).

As we scrutinize the word “preservation” or its root, preserve or preserved, we also denote the meaning of its synonyms, i.e., guard or guarded and keep or kept. In the Old Testament several words are used to express the intended meaning of these terms: The Hebrew word “**khaw-yaw**” denotes the continuation of life. The Hebrew word “**mikh-yaw**” conveys “the thought of the preservation of life”. The Hebrew word “**naw-sar**” denotes that which is “guarded or watched over”.

The Hebrew word “**shar-mar**” means ‘to keep guard’, “have charge over” “protect” “save” or “to observe” or “keep (within bounds). The Hebrew word “**naw-tsal**” conveys the meaning of “to be snatched away”, “delivered” or “rescued from sin and guilt”. The Hebrew word “**yaw-shah**” means “to be saved, delivered and given total victory”. Lastly the Hebrew word “**daw-bak**” means “to cling, stick, stay close or cleave”.

In the New Testament, the Greek word “**zo•oog•on•eh•o**” is translated “to bring forth” or “give and preserve life”. Other Greek definitions are: “**sozio**”, meaning “to save, or “keep safe and sound”. The Greek word “**seen•teer•eh•o**” is translated “to preserve or keep from perishing or being lost”. The Greek root word of “**seen teer eh o**” is “**teer•eh•o**”, which conveys the idea “to attend carefully”, or to reserve or keep one in his current state”. The Greek word “**phoe•las•so**”, is rendered “to guard, watch or keep from perishing or being lost”. The Greek word “**kol•lah•o**” is translated “to glue, cement or fasten together firmly”.

Now one must fully understand this, only He who has the power to make one a Saint, also has the power to preserve, guard, keep and protect ones status or position of Sainthood. In II Timothy 1:12 the Apostle Paul states (from the King James Version), “I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day”. It must be clearly understood that God not only has the power, but it is also His will to preserve and keep intact that which He both bled and died for. The testimony of His commitment is manifested in the awesome sacrifice, which was displayed on Calvary’s Cross. We will further elaborate on all of these doctrinal issues as we continue our discourse on our subject election.

Note: None of the terminology in these writing is intended to duplicate the so-called “Calvinistic” views. The doctrinal terms presented in these writings are the results of gleaning developed from detailed scriptural analysis and prayerful consideration of the actual thought conveyance the teachings of God’s word.

## Who Are God’s Elect?

### "ELECTION"

Before we move into the specifics of identifying the profile of just who comprise God’s elect or God’s selection or God’s choice, we would remind you of one very important fact. Since **none** of us were around to witness God’s work of salvation in eternity and since none of us participated in God’s selection process nor any of his pre planning, please be very careful, **never** and I implore

you, **never** attempt to **identify** or **label** or designate any person or group as God's elect based upon your own personal opinion. The Apostle Paul **never** vouched **for** or **against** anyone's salvation. So we are never to judge (except through one's own testimony) as to who is **saved** and who is **lost**. You leave the picking and choosing **strictly** and **exclusively** to God and God alone. Do not be confused by the word elect, by crisscrossing dispensational lines and grouping all of God's elect into one barrel. God has special plans and defined roles for the diversity of His elect or His people, according to His divine purpose for each individual that he has chosen, down through the ages.

According to our study of God's word, we believe that God has grouped or placed his selection in-groups according to dispensations. We **know** that some do not endorse or accept the concept of dispensational arrangements and we ask that you consider this discourse with an open mind. The word dispensation is derived from the Greek word "ee• kon• om• ee• ah", which is a compound word which is formed from a combination of the Greek word "ee kos", denoting a house, family or people and the Greek word "neh• mo" which means to dispense, manage or administer. Thus the Greek word "ee• kon• om• ee• ah", translated "dispensation" or "economy" depicts the management of a family or a household or a group or grouping of people. It defines policies by which economies of state or nations as well as administrations of governments are run.

We believe that God has pre-purposed, preplanned and prearranged the management and administration of his will for his elect according to dispensations. If you do not understand this you will continually be confused by this word elect, as you read the word of God. We believe that this is the major reason that some believe in the rapture of the Church at mid-tribulation while others believe in post-tribulation. If God's elect are one grouping, then the Church must go through at least some if not all of the tribulation for Jesus states in Matthew 24:22 (KJV) "And except those days should be shortened, there shall no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened". This verse of scripture clearly and correctly indicates that at least some of God's elect will go through the tribulation.

If you believe that God's elect are one group (the Church) then you will be convinced by this scripture that either some (not all) of the Church will be Raptured or that the Rapture will not occur before the beginning of the great tribulation.

So the question is again "Who are God's elect?" Is the elect one grouping or has God more than one manifestation of his love for those who he has chosen to be the object of his affection? For the sake of shedding light upon this question let us consider God's policies or His administrative dealings with mankind throughout all the ages since the beginning of time. For our presentation to you, we have divided the administration of God's policies toward mankind into seven economies or dispensations.

The first dispensation is Innocence in which God created all living creatures upon the earth. (Genesis 2:8-17,25). Adam heads this economy.

The second dispensation is Conscience, wherein Adam and (Eve) fell into sin and all the earth received the curse and penalty of sin (Genesis 3:10-18, Romans 2:11-15). Adam heads this economy.

The third dispensation is Human Government, which was instituted subsequent to the antediluvians age, which culminated with the destruction of all who were living upon the earth, with the exception of Noah and his family. This dispensation was the first wherein God established civil rule (Genesis 9:6 Romans 13:1). Noah heads this economy.

The fourth dispensation is Promise, wherein God called and separated one man Abraham and He ultimately created from Abraham one sanctified nation Israel, to be his elect or his people (Genesis 12:1-3; 22:17-18). Abraham heads this economy.

The fifth dispensation is Law, wherein God gave his Law and rule of Law, His ordinances exclusively to His people (Exodus 20:1-26; Galatians 3:19). Moses heads this economy.

The sixth dispensation is Grace which is the present dispensation, from which the body of Christ, the Church is revealed and manifested as well as the fact that God's elect for this economy are comprised of **all** mankind (both Jew and Gentile) (Romans 5:20-21 Ephesians 3:1-9). Paul heads this economy.

The seventh dispensation is Kingdom, which shall be administered during the millennium (one thousand years) subsequent to Jesus Christ's return to the earth to set on the throne of David and rule this earth in **perfect peace** for one thousand years (Isaiah 9:6-7;11:1-9). Jesus Christ heads this economy.

God has (His elect (his chosen ones) in every dispensation and they must be grouped accordingly. Now before we proceed, we believe it is necessary to briefly revisit the sovereignty of God, in order to reemphasize God's right to pursue His will, purpose and plan **without question** or **challenge** from anyone outside of Himself. We (that is all of mankind) must never forget our origin (totally depraved sinners). It is to God's credit that he made provisions to reconcile or restore even **some** of mankind to an everlasting relationship with him through the medium of faith.

In view of the overwhelming evidence of God's love and mercy, which **cannot** be denied, it is obvious that God has a sovereign purpose to restore some men back into fellowship with him (Colossians 3:9-10). Here we raise the question, what has motivated God to reinstate **some**(not all) men into this loving relationship with him? The clear-cut answer, which has been expressed for many generations even **before** the creation of the world, is **God's love**. In Ephesians 1:4-5, it is decreed that God, motivated by love predestined us to be holy and blameless in the position of Sonship. Notice this involved his **individually** choosing us, before the foundation or creation of the world, to be identified with Christ, hence holy and blameless **in Him** (I Thessalonians 1:4; II Thessalonians 2:13).

In Ephesians 2:1-3, there is depicted the picture of the utter depravity of the entire human race, all are deranged sinners in their nature, spiritually dead and **not interested in nor capable of** making the slightest movement toward God. In the midst of this hopeless dilemma that is from man's viewpoint God's love motivated him to be rich in mercy toward us while we were yet sinners (Romans 5:6; Ephesians 2:4). The result is he has made us **spiritually alive** together with Christ because we are saved by his grace. Now according to Titus 3:4-5, God's kindness, affection and love for mankind "**phēe an• thro•pee• o**" has motivated him to save sinners according to His mercy. This verse as well as Ephesians 2:4 imply that God's love **precedes** his mercy in the sovereign restitution of sinners to Himself.

As we survey the sovereignty of God as it relates to our salvation, there is not only the essence of His love (**agape**), but also his mercy (**eh• eh• os**), that is clemency, compassion and withheld judgement. In Romans 9:14-18, it states God's declaration that He will have mercy on whom He **wills** to have mercy. There are some who incredibly contend that this statement applies to only God's elect (Israel), but we must remember that God's policy for choosing His elect is the same **regardless** of the dispensation in which the elect is chosen. The elect's salvation is not determined by his personal "**thehl• on• dos**"(willing) or "**trehkh• on• dos**" (running) i.e. by his **own** volition or by what **he** does, but by the **mercy** God **gives** to him. So from this we establish God's sovereign right to give mercy to whomever He wills as He leaves the rest of mankind in their Adamic depraved state of hardness.

According to Romans 9:23-24, those to whom God has extended mercy are referred to as vessels of mercy, which God prepared beforehand unto glory. These vessels of mercy are **individually called or summoned** out of both (in the dispensation of grace) the Jews and Gentiles (Romans 11:30-32), because God is sovereign.

Now there are those who are prepared to outright reject all of what we have said and of course one can if one is so inclined. However when one states that God has given him the right to exercise his **own** will, he is obviously oblivious to the fact of his depraved state of being. He is evidently

unaware of his fallen nature as the progenitor of Adam, (Genesis 3:4,19;4:8,11-12,16; Romans 3:9-18,23;7:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; Titus 3:3-4).

Now in light of this, please explain how anyone by their **own** volition and their **own** will could **ever** move toward reconciliation with God? If ones mind is infiltrated and permeated with such ridiculous humanistic evaluations of mankind, absolutely disregarding the word of God's descriptive evaluation, then no wonder they are lead to either consciously or subconsciously think that dead sinners in **themselves** have the capacity of initiating a relationship with God. If this secular humanistic appraisal of man is true, then may we ask **why** does God **emphasize** in **His** word that **He** is the **initiator** of the salvation relationship? (Acts 13:48;16:14; Romans 8:28-30;9:10-18,23-24:11:6-7; I Corinthians 1:30 ;Ephesians 1:3-6,11-12; Colossians 3:12; I Thessalonians 1:4; II Timothy 2:10; Titus 1:1; I Peter 1:1,9; II Peter 1:10). In our discourse we will exegete many of these verses but there is much evidence to support God's initiation of the elect's salvation. So the order is; the elect are the recipients of God's love, which elicits God's mercy upon them, which results in their salvation (Titus 3:5)

Now as we refocus on the question, who are God's elect, we note that the scriptures identify three **distinct** classifications of people on earth, they are the commonwealth of Israel (Jews), the Gentiles and the Church. Outside of those designated members of the body of Christ, which is the Church, (comprised of both Jews and Gentiles), **all** who are **not** Jews, **are** Gentiles. Here we note the fact that up to the call and separation of Abraham, **all** the people of the earth were **Gentiles**. Abraham **was** a Gentile when God sanctified him as the father of the Jews (the Hebrew Nation, the Israelites) but as we shall see in our discourse, there is a **difference** in the grouping of the Israelites, the Hebrews and the Jews. Here we define the word **Shemite** as we note that after the flood, there was only **one** family alive on the earth. Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japhet. The descendents of Shem are Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. A descendent of Shem is a Shemite. Descendants of Abram (Abraham), Isaac and Jacob in addition to their descendants are Shemites. The **Israelites** are Shemites but the **Arabs** are also Shemites as are the **Edomites** (descendant of Esau). Remember Abraham has many other sons apart from Sarah (Genesis 25:1-6). Eber the great grandfather of Abraham is the father of the Hebrews, thus Abram was a Hebrew, (Genesis 14:13), he was the sixth generation from Eber, and all the descendants of Abram are Hebrews.

Notice Abram in his uncircumcised state was neither a Jew nor an Israelite (Romans 4:9-11). Thus Isaac, the son of Abraham was neither an Israelite nor a Jew. Notice also Jacob (Isaac's son and Abraham's grandson) in his original status was neither an Israelite nor a Jew. Remember Jacob had his name changed by God to **Israel** (Genesis 32:27-28), but he was born **neither** a Jew nor an Israelite. So the question is now posed, what is an Israelite? An **Israelite** is one who is **of** Israel and **all** of Jacob's (Israel's) sons were **Israelites**, meaning of **Israel**. Now the question is what is a **Jew**? Notice, one of Jacob's sons was named **Judah**, a grandson of Isaac and great grandson of Abraham, but again it must be pointed out that **Judah** in his original status was **not** a Jew, **but** he was of **Israel** so he was born an **Israelite**. So the **Jews** are descendants of **Judah** or they are **of Judah**. The word **Jew** comes from the Hebrew word "yeh• hoo• dee", which means "of or from **Judah**". Notice the words **Jew** or **Jews** are never used in the Bible until after the break-up and splitting of the Kingdom of Israel into two Kingdoms. Neither Abraham, Isaac nor Jacob were **actually** Jews. For Judah came from them, they did not come from Judah. So again the **Jews** are of the tribes of **Judah** and **Benjamin**. When the Kingdom of Israel was divided into different houses, i.e. (the house of Israel and the house of Judah), the house of Judah was composed of the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin. So those from **both** tribes are called Jews.

They were known as the "House of Judah" or as ""Judah". Note **Abraham, Isaac** and **Jacob** were **not Jews** because only the descendants of the **house of Judah** are **Jews** (Jeremiah. 34:9).

Now the identification of all these groupings, Shemities, Hebrews, Israelites and Jews are very important facts to know as we exegete Romans chapters nine, ten and eleven, as well as the Gospels

and the book of Acts. Before we move into our forum of expository verse-by-verse exegesis, there is one other term we feel is of great importance and that is the covenants of the Bible. We particularly note the covenant God made with Abraham (known as the Abrahamic covenant), the covenant God made with David (known as the Davadic covenant) and the New Covenant (made exclusively to the house of Israel and Judah), which was first mentioned in Jeremiah. Chapter 31.

The word covenant denotes a pledge, alliance, contract or agreement between two or more parties. As it relates to God's dealings, it describes a gracious engagement on the part of God to bestow blessings in accordance with a definite understanding, constitution or system, at an appointed time period or dispensation. So a covenant is a promise, commitment, or determination on the part of God to grant certain blessings, benefits, gifts, advantages, enjoyment and basic good will upon certain individuals and nations according to His own **plan** and **purpose**. Our focus is on Biblical Covenants i.e. a covenant between God and man, which is different from covenants between men. In the case of God's covenants God bestows all the blessings, benefits, gifts, advantages and good upon man without man bestowing any benefit or goods upon God.

In some of the covenants of the Bible, there are certain conditions imposed upon man. These are called the conditional covenants or to some they are known as the bilateral covenants. In other covenants, God does not impose any conditions upon man, and these are the unconditional and unilateral covenants. In the conditional covenants all of the obligations are imposed upon man. No obligation is imposed upon God, but man is required to do certain things in order for the covenant to be effective. In the unconditional covenants all of the obligations are the responsibility of God. There is no obligation or responsibility placed upon man to effectuate the covenant.

The Hebrew word for covenant berith (**ber• eeth**) actually means to cut, to make an incision and let the blood flow. It is an **agreement contracted** between two persons or groups of persons, tribes, nations or as delineated throughout the Bible; that which is between God and a particular man or between God and a certain nation or race or group of people. It always involves the shedding of blood. Note, as it relates to God, a covenant cannot be dissolved. If it is unconditional it cannot be destroyed and it cannot be abolished. The Bible contains both conditional and unconditional covenants. It is very important for one to understand the essence of covenants, in order to comprehend the **atonement, prophecy, mystery grace truth** as well as other subjects of the Bible correctly. Depending on ones classification format, there are some (19) different covenants in the Bible. It is not our intent to go into a full-blown study of the different covenants of the Bible, but in order to set forth the forum of our discourse; some are necessary at this point. Many do not understand covenants, therefore they are also very confused when they attempt to ascertain other subject matters i.e. prophecy, the throne of David, the second coming of Christ and the difference between the house of Judah and the house of Israel. This is because they have very little understanding of the covenants of the Bible. This is the very reason many do not accept the concept of present day **Grace Truth** or the offer and rejection of the **Kingdom Gospel** and the Church in transition as recorded in the book of Acts. Many are also void of the knowledge of the salvation doctrinal subjects of justification, reconciliation, adoption, imputation, redemption, regeneration and other terminology i.e. the day of Jesus Christ.

## **ABRAHAMIC COVENANT**

Note the Abrahamic Covenant was unconditional and it ushered in the dispensation of promise. As we turn our attention to Genesis 12:1-3, it states (from the King James Version), "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed".



Here we note seven promises or commitments that God made to Abraham and his dependants that are covered under promise.

They are:

1. I will make of you a great nation. (Which includes natural posterity).
2. I will bless you (Spiritual and natural blessings).
3. I will make your name great. Abraham to this day is not only known as the father of circumcision, but also the father of faith.
4. You shall be a blessing. (It is by and through the seed of promise that all of mankind shall be blessed).
5. I will bless them that bless you.
6. I will curse them that curse you
7. In you and through you shall all the families of the earth be blessed. This will be manifested in the dispensation of the millennium when the Gentile Nations shall be blessed through Israel (Deuteronomy 28:8-14; Isaiah 60:3-5,11,16).

Note in Genesis 22:15-18, this covenant was reaffirmed and confirmed after Abraham's faith had been tested in the offering up of Isaac; thus it was a perpetual or everlasting covenant and it was certified by the sign or seal of circumcision (Gen. 17:1-8; Rom. 4:11-13). Here we ask the question, how strong or binding is this contract upon God? The answer is, he made it an oath to Isaac and a law to Jacob; thus God is legally bound or governed by His covenant's law and an oath that he made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But how good is God's word? Let's look at Psalms 111:5-9. Here we see that:

1. All of God's commandments are guaranteed
2. His name or reputation is at stake.
3. His holiness or character is on the line.

So when the apostle Paul asks the question in Romans 11:1, "Hath God cast away his people"? He does so in light of the guarantee or God's covenants.

### **DAVIDIC COVENANT**

The Davidic Covenant, which in essence is an unconditional covenant, is found in II Samuel 7:4-17. This covenant was given to King David through Nathan, the Prophet at Jerusalem. It has only one condition, (rejection of acceptance), which God will effectuate as a result of his chastisement of his chosen people during the tribulation. Israel's rejection of the offer of the Kingdom; has temporarily postponed God's enactment of this covenant. Jesus Christ's reign on the throne of David has by no means been abrogated.

The Davidic Covenant contains four distinct promises. They are:

1. A Davidic house, thus the posterity of the house of David.
2. A Davidic throne, thus the Kingdom of David shall never be destroyed (At present it is being held in abeyance, but without doubt it **will** be set again when Israel's chastisement has been concluded (Luke 1:30-33).

3. A Davidic Kingdom; here the "son" of David is to have an earthly "sphere of rule". It will be over the millennial earth. "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Ps. 72:1-20).
4. The Davidic Kingdom will be unending. In II Samuel 7:16 it states, "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever".

Now the sign of this covenant is a son (Luke 1:30-33; 2:12). So the Davidic Covenant is the basis of Jesus Christ sitting on the throne of David in Jerusalem, which he will rule the whole earth during the millennium as well as times to come.

## **NEW COVENANT**

We will now focus on what is known as the New Covenant, as defined in the writings of the Prophet Jeremiah, chapter 31 verses 27-40. Here we read from the King James Version, (27) "Behold, the days come saith the LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. (28) And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict, so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the LORD. (29) In Those days they shall say no more, the fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. (30) But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall beset on edge. (31) Behold, the days come saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: (32) Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD (33) But this shall be the covenant, that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. (34) And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (35) Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day and the ordinances of the moon and stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the LORD of hosts is his name: (36) If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever.

(37) Thus saith the LORD; if heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth search out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD. (38) Behold the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. (39) And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. (40) And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more forever.

The New Covenant is unconditional and will be manifested in the millennium dispensation. Here the re-establishment of Israel reaches its completion in the making of a new covenant according to which the law of God is written in the hearts of the people; thereby Israel becomes in truth, the people of the Lord. Also the knowledge of God founded on the experience of the forgiveness of sins is such that there is no further need of any external means i.e. the mutual teaching about God (Jer. 31:31-34). This covenant is to endure forever, as liken to the unchangeable ordinances of nature as expressed in Jer. 31:35-37. As a consequence of this, Jerusalem shall be built as the holy city of God, which shall never again be destroyed (Jer. 31:38-40).

The Hebrew expression in Jer. 31:31-32, "ber-eeth kaw• rath" does not mean "to make an appointment" but "to conclude a covenant" or to establish a relation of mutual duties and obligation. Every covenant, which God concludes with men consists, that is on God's part as the assurance of his favors and the actual bestowance of them. So the covenant, which the Lord will make with all Israel in

the future, is called "a New Covenant" as compared with that made with the fathers at Sinai, when God led his people out of Egypt. This latter contract is thus implicitly called the "old covenant". Notice the words in Jeremiah 31:32, "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord": This must not be restricted in the one instance, to the day of the exodus from Egypt, nor in the other instance to the day when the old covenant was solemnly made at Sinai. They rather refer to the **whole time** of the exodus, which did not reach its conclusion until they entered Canaan, though it culminated in the solemn admission of Israel at Sinai, that they were indeed the Lord's people.

Here we consider the question, **why** is a new covenant necessary? There is no formal statement (in the context), however of the reason which is merely given in a subordinate and appended clause. The proper reason why a new covenant is made is **not** because they had broken the old one (even though they had), but that in spite of the fact that the Lord had united Israel to himself, their breach of the original covenant had rendered it necessary for God to make a new one that would **not rely** on their performance.

So God (The Lord Jehovah), in virtue of His unchangeable faithfulness would not alter the relation he had himself established in his love. But He simply found it anew in a way, which obviated or (removed) the breaking of the covenant by Israel. It was a defect connected with the Mosaic Covenant, in that it was conditional on the part of man, which made it possible to be broken on Israel's part. This defect does not exist in the **New Covenant**, which God makes with His people Israel for future times. Notice the character of the new covenant: "I, the Lord, give (will put) my law in their inward parts (within them) and write it in their hearts." Notice the difference of the writings "on the hearts" as opposed to "writings on tables of stone" (Exodus 31:18). So the difference, between the old and the new covenants consists in this. In the old, the law was laid before the people that they might accept it and follow it; receiving it into their hearts as the copy of what God not merely required of them, but offered and vouchsafed (granted) to them for their happiness. Here in the new, it is put within or implanted into the heart and soul by the spirit of God, and becomes the animating life-principle. The underlined difference between the two consists merely in this; the will of God as expressed in the law under the old covenant was presented externally to his people (Israel), while under the new covenant, It is to become an internal principal of life during the millennium age.

We now consider a few more notes on covenants before we embark upon our verse-by-verse exposition of Romans chapters 9,10 and 11. Again we have stated that a covenant is a contract or agreement between two parties. In the Old Testament the Hebrew word "**ber•eeth**" is always thus translated. "**Ber• eeth**" is derived from a root which means "to cut"; hence a covenant is a "cutting" with reference to the cutting or dividing of animals into two parts, and the contracting parties passing between them, in making a covenant (Gen. 15:1; Jer. 34:18-19). The Corresponding Greek word in the New Testament is "**thee• ahth• ee• kee**" which is however not rendered exclusively covenant as conveyed in the King James Version. But "**theeahth• ee•kee**", is translated **both** "covenant" **and** "testament" in the New Testament. The Greek word "**thee• ahth• ee• kee**" denotes a disposition or an arrangement which one wishes to be valid or the last disposition which one wishes to be carried out according to some desired conditions that have been prescribed.

Hence the covenant or testament in Biblical context is called God's "counsel, oath, or promise" (Ps. 89:3-4;105:8-11;Luke 1:68-75 Hebrews 6:13-20). God's covenant or testament consists wholly in the bestowal of blessings or benefits. The term covenant is also used to designate the regular succession of day and night (Jer. 33:20), the Sabbath (Ex. 31:16), circumcision (Gen. 17:9-10) and in general any ordinance of God (Jer. 34:13-14). Notice also the expression "a covenant of salt" which signifies an everlasting covenant, in the sealing or ratifying of which salt, as an emblem of perpetuity is used (Numb. 18:19; Lev. 2:13; II Chronicles. 13:5).

Before we begin our exposition in Romans chapters nine, ten and eleven, in following the theme of the question that we raised "Who are God's Elect? There are two other classifications of covenants, which we feel necessary to identify.

Covenants are basically characterized as either a covenant of work or covenant of grace.

### COVENANT OF WORKS

A covenant of works defines work either as performed by God or by man.

As an example, note the constitution under which Adam was placed at his creation. In this covenant (Adamic):

1. The contracting partners were God the moral ruler or governor and Adam a free moral agent and the representative of all his natural posterity (Romans 5:12-19).
2. The promise was life (Gal. 3:12;19:16-17).
3. The condition was perfect obedience to the principle of God's law; here the test in this case entailed abstaining from eating the fruit of the "tree of knowledge" etc.
4. The penalty was death (Gen. 2:16-17).

The covenant is also called: (1). A covenant of nature, as made with man in his natural or unfallen state; (2). A covenant of life, because "life" was the promise or reward attached to obedience; and (3). A legal covenant, because it demanded perfect obedience to the law. The "tree of life" was the outward sign and seal of that life which was promised in the covenant; hence it is usually called the seal of that covenant. The continuity of this covenant as well as some others (most notably the Mosaic) was fully dependent upon the successful performance of mankind (Adam and his progeny). As we examine the track record of mankind it becomes **very obvious** that every time he has been given the opportunity to effectuate the conditions of a covenant, he has miserably **failed**. Thus he is **not** a reliable partner when his performance is crucial to the success of a contract or an agreement.

### COVENANT OF GRACE

As we focus on a covenant of grace, we note that this covenant or contract or agreement falls under the auspices of the gospel of the grace of God, as delivered to the Church by revelation through the Apostle Paul. All prior covenants are subordinated and some are even abrogated under this gospel. Christ has fulfilled all its conditions in behalf of his elect (in eternity) and now offers salvation (only) on the condition of faith, which he and he alone imparts to those who are under the grace covenant. So it is still and it will continue (eternally) to be in force, as it rests on the immutable justice of God.

It is binding to all who have forsaken the performance of their own dead works for righteousness and have accepted the substitutionary work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who died for or because of our failure (sins) and rose for or because of his successful work or performance and thus our justification. Note the eternal plan of redemption entered into by the eternal Godhead (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and carried out in its several parts. Also note the sovereignty of God the Father and the surety or guaranty of Jesus the Son (John 17:4,6,9; Ps. 89:3; Isaiah. 42:9) and the seal of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13; 4:30). This covenant (of grace) is unmovable and unchangeable and everlasting, because it is based upon the performance of **deity alone**. Those who are under the covenant or agreement of grace find themselves in the most blessed position of all of God's elect; for it is in this dispensation, wherein God's chosen were **predestined** and **placed** in the body of Christ.

As we begin our expository verse by verse analysis of the scriptures concerning the question "Who are God's elect"; we have compiled some brief notes as we explore the Apostle Paul's theme as he

writes in Romans chapters nine, ten and eleven. In Romans chapter nine, Paul espouses the theme of election as he expresses his anguish for his kinsman, the Israelites, whom God made custodians of his word in prior dispensations as well as the progenitors of Christ's flesh body (verses 1-5). Here he explains that God's word has not failed just because many Israelites lack faith. Remember, according to the grouping that were previously identified (Shemities, Hebrews, Israelites and Jews), only those of the promise are children of God; those who are called according to God's elective purpose (verses 6-13). Paul affirms that God does not act unrighteously, but He bestows mercy selectively and leaves whom he will in stubbornness (verses 14-18). He attests that God has the sovereign right via mercy, to create one sinner for his honor and glory and leave another sinner, void of mercy, unto dishonor and the displaying of his wrath and power unto destruction (verses 19-26). In verses 27-29, Paul quotes the prophet Isaiah as he seeks to prove that only a "remnant" out of Israel will be saved. Lastly as Paul closes out Romans chapter nine, he explains that the Gentiles have obtained the righteousness of God (out of) by faith, which Israel missed while pursuing Law-Righteousness (out of) by works (verses 30-33).

In Romans chapter ten, Paul states his petition to God for his covenant elect (It may be implied "Israel" in many translations, the word Israel is not found in the Greek Text for verses 1-4). But he uses the Greek word " **avf• ton**", which is a personal pronoun translated "them" in the genitive case which gives inference that he is identifying those who are chosen of God to receive the blessings of the promise. Paul states that God's covenant people were zealous, but ignorant (without knowledge) of the righteousness of God, who is Jesus Christ to every one whom God causes to believe (verses 1-4).

In verses 5-13, Paul explains the plight of those engrossed in Law-righteousness, which can only be obtained by perfectly keeping the Mosaic Law whereas faith righteousness is freely given to all those who believe on the righteousness of Christ regardless of whether they are Jew or Gentile. Notice in verse 12 Paul's usage of the Greek noun "**Goo•theh•os**" rendered Jew as he now identifies God's people of the covenant of promise. In verse 5-17, he details God's methodology for his calling or summoning of his elect regardless of their classification. As Paul closes this chapter he quotes Isaiah and Moses as he makes the statement that God's people (Israel) heard God's Law but disobeyed it, likewise they have also heard, but disobeyed the gospel to this very day (verses 18-21).

In Romans chapter eleven, Paul's purpose is to inform those under the covenant of promise that God has not cast off His people whom he foreknew. As a testimony Paul expresses the fact that he himself, a saved Jew, is evidence, as well as the fact that there is a remnant as in Elijah's time, an elect group who has obtained this status by election through grace (verses 1-10). In verses 11 & 12, Paul states that if the fall of Israel has resulted in the salvation and riches of the Gentiles, how much more the fullness of Israel will enrich them. In verses 13-16, Paul addresses the elect Gentiles with the purpose of provoking some Jews to be saved. He reasons in this context that if their **rejection** achieved the reconciliation of the world, (that is those outside of the promise), then their **reception** will be life out from the dead (vs. 13-16). In verses 17-24, Paul identifies the Jews as the branches of the good olive tree that were broken off due to unbelief and the Gentiles as the branches of the wild olive tree who were grafted in by faith. He explains that if the Jews do not remain in unbelief, how much more God will graft them into their **own** olive tree. In verses 25-27, Paul discloses the revelation of Israel's partial hardening, which will continue until the "fullness of the Gentiles" has transpired, thus all who are truly Israel shall be saved because of God's covenant. In verses 28-32, Paul discloses that the Jews are enemies of the gospel for the Gentiles' sake.

But regarding the election, the Jews are beloved ones because of the Fathers sake and the purpose of their present disobedience is that God might have mercy on all, such that all must depend upon the mercy of God for salvation. Finally as Paul closes out the chapter in verses 33-36, he expresses amazement at the unsearchable riches, wisdom and knowledge of God, which the spirit has revealed to him. Here he marvels because all things are out of God (the source), through God (the agent) and have their end in God (his glory).

Now the question continues to be "**Who Are God's Elect?** Notice we have designated God's covenant people of the Old Testament according to the scriptures as one group (note **God** has, not us). In this regard we turn to the prophesy Isaiah 42:1-9, as we read from the King James Version, (1)"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles.

(2) He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. (3) A bruised reed shall not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgement unto truth. (4) He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgement in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law. (5) Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: (6) I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; (7) To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. (8) I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. (9) Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them". Here the prophet identifies God's servant, whom he upholds; God's elect in whom God is delighted and upon who rests the Spirit of God. As stated, he shall also bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. Now as we scrutinize the description given to God's elect in this passage, it details God's assessment of the attributes of his chosen one. As the Prophet Isaiah writes "Behold" (in verse one), this word is designed to call attention to the person that is immediately referred to. Obviously it is intimation that the subject is of importance and should command the highest regard. The Hebrew expression (**el•bed**) "my servant" properly denotes anyone who acknowledges or worships God or anyone who is regarded as serving or obeying him. This phrase "my servant" (**el•bed**) can also be applied to anyone who is esteemed to be dedicated or devoted or is obedient to the commands of God, thus this expression is often used to designate those who are considered to be the people of God (Gen. 50:17; I Chronicles. 6:49; II Chronicles. 24:9; Dan. 6:20; 9:2; Titus 1:1; James 1:1; I Peter 2:16; Rev. 7:3; 15:3). Now because of this designation "my servant" there is some who allege that this phrase in Isaiah 42:1, is properly applied to the Jewish people; as it is used in a collective sense in other verses (Isaiah 42:19;44:21; 45:4; 48:20). Before jumping to this unwarranted conclusion, note in Isaiah. 42:6 that this servant of God referred to is plainly distinguished from the **people of God**. God states in this verse "I will give thee for a covenant of (with) the people; for a light of the Gentiles".

This could not **possibly** be a reference to the Jewish people. As we look in Isaiah. 42:2-3, the Prophet gives a description of the character of the servant of God as "meek, mild, gentle, quiet and humble, which is certainly different from the character which Isaiah gives elsewhere of the Jewish people. Also, as we focus on Isaiah 42:7, we note that it is absolutely **not** a true statement concerning the Jewish people that they were appointed, as it is stated here concerning the servant of God, "to open the blind eyes, and to bring out the prisoners from the prison". This is evidently applicable **only** to a teacher, deliver, or a guide; thus in **no** sense could Isaiah be referring in **this** passage to the Jewish people.

Now the character and attributes that are conveyed in this passage seem to exclude all with the exception of the **Messiah**. There are several passages in the New Testament that mirror the descriptions and character attributed in Isaiah, chapter 42 verse one through nine; leaving no doubt as to who is referred to by the Prophet. Here we reference Luke 2:32 where Jesus (Israel's Messiah) is spoken of as "A light to lighten the Gentiles" as we compare this with Isaiah 42:6, reference to "The servant, God's elect" being a light of the Gentiles. In Matthew 3:17, God the father states "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased". This is language remarkably similar to Is. 42:1; "My servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth". Also in Acts 26:18, The Apostle Paul speaks of Jesus as given to the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light; as it is compared with Isaiah 42:7, wherein the prophet states "To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house".

As we turn to Matthew 12:17-21, we read from the King James Version, (17) "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Easiest the prophet, saying, (18) Behold my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. (19) He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. (20) A bruised reed shall he not break and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory, (21) And in his name shall the Gentiles trust". Here we settle the total question as to who the prophet has reference to in Isaiah 42:1-9 as Matthew 12:17-21 expressly and directly applies the Isaiah passage to the Lord Jesus Christ and states that it was fulfilled in **Him**. Here the entire description is one that is exactly and entirely applicable to our Lord Jesus. It is as applicable as if it had been made after he had appeared among his people and as if it were the language of his pre-biography rather than prophecy. It is an exceedingly beautiful and tender description of Jesus the Son of God; for no other can truly lay claim to such magnificent accolades. We in our discourse shall regard the passage (Isaiah 42:1) as applicable to **Him** and **Him** alone. It seems that the design of the Spirit, historically in introducing this reference to the Messiah, is to comfort the hearts of the exile Jews with the assurance that they must be restored to their own land. It was from **them** (the elect) that the Messiah was to proceed and from **them** that true salvation was to eventually be spread around the world.

As we focus on Isaiah 42:1, the expression "whom I uphold" or "whom I sustain or protect"; the question is "who is the object of my appreciation and care"; said the Lord? In Matthew 3:17, the expression is "in whom I am well pleased". Also in Matthew 12:18, it is rendered "my servant, whom I have chosen (elected)." Notice again, in Isaiah 42:1, the expression, "mine elect", "my chosen one" or the one whom I have selected to accomplish my exceeding great promises. Here it implies that God had designated or appointed him for this purpose.

In Matthew 12:18, it is rendered "my beloved", here it implies that **He, Jesus** was the object of the divine favor and God has chosen or appointed Him to perform the work of the Messiah (deliver of Israel), for only **He** could qualify. Also note the expression "in whom my soul delighted", as it is applied to our Lord Jesus in Matthew 3:17; 12:18. Here God regarded Jesus as qualified for his work; he approved of what he did, and he was well pleased with all his words, thoughts and plans. This phrase "In whom my soul delighteth" can also be expressed as "I myself in whom I delight". Next we focus on the expression (in Isaiah 42:1) "I have put my spirit upon him" as we compare the quote of John 3:34; as we read "For God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him".

We see here that our Lord Jesus was divine, yet as mediator he is everywhere represented as the anointed or chosen of God, or as endowed with the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:2). Note the reading of Isaiah 61:1, as compared with Luke 4:18, when the Messiah (Jesus) testifies of himself, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me". In Matthew 3:17, there is the account that before Jesus entered upon his public ministry, wherein the spirit of God descended on him at his baptism; as in all his work he showed that he was endowed abundantly with the spirit of God. Now we consider the prophet Isaiah's statement "He shall bring forth judgment (Isaiah 42:1). Here the Hebrew word "**mish• pawt**" rendered "judgment" is used in a great variety of significations. It defines the act of judging (Lev. 19:15); the place of judgment (Eccl. 3:16); a cause, or a suit before a judge (Num. 28:5); a sentence of a judge (I King 3:28); and hence guilt or crime, for which one is judged (Jer. 51:9). It also means right, rectitude, justice, a law or statute; a claim privilege or due, also manner, custom, or fashion; or an ordinance or institution. Here in this context it appears to be used in the sense of the order or institution that would be introduced under the Messianic (Kingdom) dispensation; obviously implying that he will establish salvation to the Gentiles. In Isaiah 42:1, note the expression "to the Gentiles". This is one of the many declarations that occurred in Isaiah, that the Messiah would extend salvation to pagan nations and that they should be brought to participate in God's privileges.

So what is the purpose of extolling the virtues of **Jesus** as the "elect" of God? The answer is, God has placed **supreme value** on the **worth** of His elect. All of the attributes that are ascribed to our Lord

Jesus, who is certainly worthy; are imputed or counted or placed to the account of God's "chosen ones" or **His elect**".

Now as we in earnest begin our verse-by-verse exegesis on the subject matter "election", we focus on Romans 9:1. Here we read from the King James Version, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost". In addition, from the Greek Text, "I speak the truth in Christ, I do not lie my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Spirit". The Apostle Paul's emphasis in this verse is on the fact that what he is about to say is the truth. The statement, "I speak the truth in Christ" affirms he is speaking as one who has a relationship with Christ, which in itself, verifies the truthfulness. In this verse Paul attest to the genuineness of his feelings toward his fellow Jews, adding, "my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Spirit". The Greek noun **seen• ee• thee• sees** translated "conscience" is a compound word and literally means to "know with" or the place where internal knowledge intersects. The conscience, generally speaking is the sum-total of that which has and is being impinged upon the mind. It is a reliable guide to the extent that the Holy Spirit feeds this truth for the body of Christ into it (I Timothy 1:19; 3:9). As Paul writes this epistle, it is important to note that his conscience is operating "in the Holy Spirit".

This means that his mind was functioning within the sphere of the Holy Spirit, i.e., in accordance with the Mystery Truth given for this dispensation of grace by the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 2:10; Ephesians 3:2-3). God has spoken **His** final message for **His** Church through **His** Spirit. It contains everything that is needed for teaching, reproof, correcting and disciplining believers to be complete and equipped for every good work (II Timothy 3:16-17).

Now as we move to Romans 9:2, we read from the King James Version, "That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart." Now from the Greek Text, "That I have great grief and unceasing pain in my heart". Paul gives us insight into his mental and emotional anguish for his brethren according to the flesh (the Jews). The Greek noun **lee• pee** translated "grief", may also be rendered "sorrow", "distress" and "heaviness". Here Paul describes this grief as being **mehg• ah• lee**, rendered "great" or "large" or "very much". This is very much the sentiment and emotion and concern expressed for God's covenant people in the Old Testament by the prophets (particularly, the weeping prophet, Jeremiah). So what Paul has in mind is his personal mental grief and sorrow for God's people (the Jews). Note in this verse (Romans 9:2), his statement "unceasing pain in my heart". Here the Greek noun **oth• ee• nee** translated "pain", conveys the idea of "hurting" or "suffering". The Greek adjective **ath• ee• ahl• eep• tos** rendered "unceasing" conveys the thought that he had incessant, un-intermittent and constant pain in his heart. This word **oth• ee• nee** in its various forms is often used to depict physical pain such as birth pangs. In this Greek phrase **ath• ee• ahl• eep• tos oth• ee• nee tee kar• thee• a moo** the Greek word **kar• thee• a**, translated "heart", is obviously used to denote the meaning of "mind" (**noos**); so what is probably implied is that he was anguishing and hurting both mentally and emotionally for his Jewish brethren. It seems that the Apostle Paul was one who was forever concerned about God's people.

In Romans 9:3, (from the King James Version) "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh": (and from the Greek Text) "For I was wishing that I myself to be accursed from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh," This verse, as commonly translated, is seemingly self-contradictory; and as a result of this many believers are perplexed when they read it. The answer to this puzzling enigma is relatively simple and that is the proper translation of the Greek tense. Note the main verb in this verse is in the imperfect tense as it depicts continuous action in pastime. It's meaning is accurately conveyed by the translation of **ee• ee• khom• een** as "I was wishing", "I was beseeching" or "I was praying". This verb sets the stage for what Paul is saying in this verse to the time when he was a religious Pharisee under the Mosaic Law. It basically speaks about what **Saul of Tarsus** was doing **before** Jesus Christ confronted him on the road to Damascus.



Let us examine what the Apostle Paul is actually stating in this verse (Romans 9:3). As we view its proper historical setting. He is affirming that there was a time in the past when it was his wish, desire and prayer "ee• neh", "to be" or "to exist" as one "an• ath• ehm• a", rendered "accursed"; as one "devoted to evil" and accursed from Christ. The evidence suggests that this time was during the period subsequent to the Day of Pentecost when many of the Jews were believing on Jesus Christ as the Messiah (Acts 2:41,47; 4:4; 5:14). Historically speaking, Paul is referring to a time when the very existence of Judaism was being threatened. As we look at Act 6:7, even a large number of the Temple's priests were obedient to the faith, i.e., some were believing that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah. These were certainly difficult days for the zealous guardians of Judaism. So with this knowledge in hand, one must keep in mind that the reason Paul was wishing to exist accursed from Christ at this time in his life was for the sake of his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh. Remember, as a devout Pharisee he confidently believed in Judaism and adherence to the Mosaic Law according to its interpretation. As far as Jesus Christ was concerned, he (Paul) was (in the past, not at the present) wishing and praying to exist in an accursed relation to **Him**, or as it reads in the Greek Text, "apo ton Khrees• too" translated "from Christ". At this point in Paul's life, he desired to be away from Christ. He probably even **knew** some of the priests, some undoubtedly his peers, who had defected from Judaism and accepted Jesus as the Messiah. Accordingly, as one who firmly **believed** that Judaism was the true religion for **all** Jews, his prayer (at that time) was that he might **continue** to be separated **from** Christ and committed to Judaism, "ee• pehr", that is "for the sake of" or "on the behalf of" and "for the furtherance of" what he perceived (at the time) to be the spiritual welfare of his Jewish brethren. The fact that Paul was wishing and praying to **continue**, suggests the unsettled and shaken position that many, even Paul, was faced with as they sought to reject Jesus, the Messiah.

Now we move to Romans 9:4, reading first from the King James Version, "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises". Now we read from the Greek Text, "Who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the law and the divine service and the promises". As we move through these next several verses of scripture in Romans chapter nine, bear in mind the grouping of God's covenant people Israel as well as the other information we conveyed, i.e., the different covenants. We believe that it is very difficult if not impossible to understand the contents of Paul's writings in these passages, without this information at hand. Romans 9:4 describes those who are Paul's brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh. First, they are "Israelites"; this name was conferred on Jacob in Genesis 32:28. It was then passed on to Jacob's descendants (Genesis 34:7; Deuteronomy 4:1). Second, Paul refers to his brethren as those (**on**) or to "whom belong" or "who possess" "ee yee• oth• ehs• ee• ah" translated "the adoption". This statement confirms the fact that God has placed Israel in a Son-relation to Himself (Exodus 4:22; Hos. 11:1). Third, Paul states that the "thox• a" rendered "glory" belongs to Israel. Note as God's covenant people, glory belonged to Israel and it will be fully expressed in the Messianic Kingdom (Matthew 19:28). Fourth, the "thee• ahth• ee• kee" translated "covenant"; belongs to Israel. Thus God conferred or made arrangements, dispositions and wills with Israel, which confirmed her future relationship to Him (Isaiah 55:3; Acts 3:25). Fifth, the "nom• oth• ehs• ee• ah" rendered "giving of the Law" belonged to Israel. This means that God placed, imposed upon, and enacted the Law through Angels by the hand of Moses (Exodus 20:17; Galatians 3:19). The Law was specifically given to Israel, not to the Gentiles. Sixth, "eel laht• ree• ah" rendered "the Divine Service" belonged to Israel. This speaks of the sacerdotal ministry of the Aaronic Priest as they served in the first sanctuary, which involved sacrificing upon the altar (Hebrews 9:1,6). Seventh, "ehp• ahyy• ehl• ee• ah" rendered "the promise" belonged to Israel. Note these promises go back to Abraham. God promised to him a land and that he would make him a great nation. And through him the Gentile (nations) would be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3). In Romans 15:18, it states "Christ has been made a minister" on behalf of the truth of God, unto the end to confirm the promises of the fathers".

Now the foregoing breakdown gives a brief resume regarding Paul's brethren according to the flesh. To summarize this verse (Romans 9:4), they are those who were chosen (elected) in Abraham, consequently made a special people and thus the word of God was transmitted to and through them (Romans 3:2). So during the time of his **pre-Damascus** encounter with Jesus Christ; Saul, as a zealot under Judaism fervently endeavored to get them to keep the Law, even to the extent of persecuting the Kingdom church unto death (Acts 7:58-60; 8:3; Romans 9:3; I Timothy 1:13).

But as the results of his **post-Damascus** encounter and subsequently Mystery Truth Revelation, we observe the Apostle Paul as the dispenser of the gospel of God's grace; who now had grief and pain in his heart for his Jewish brethren due to their lack of response to the gospel (Romans 9:2). This burden was evident throughout Paul's ministry as he continuously espoused the theme of moving away from the righteousness that was expressed through the keeping of the Law to the total dependence on the righteousness that is obtained through faith in Jesus Christ.

Now before we move to Romans 9:5, we will revisit Romans 9:3, in response to valid questions raised concerning our exegeses of this verse. Here the basic question is **what** did Paul **mean** when he made the statement (and we quote again from the King James Version), "For I could wish that myself were accused from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh". The vast majority read and teach that Paul's statement is conveying the message that if it could result in the salvation of the Jews, he would be content to be cut off from the land of the living in the most shameful and ignominious manner, as an anathema, or that he would be willing to become accursed, or separated from Christ or sacrificed for their sake if it were possible.

Many incredibly teach that Paul is stating that he would be content to be excommunicated from the society of the faithful, even separated from the Church, and from the communion of Saints, as a heathen man, if that would do them any good. They contend that Paul's love for his Jewish kinsmen was so great, that he could wish himself to be cut off from the blessings of God and remembered no more among the Saints, have his name blotted out and disassociated from the Church; even considering the fact that he had been so great a planter or establisher of churches and the spiritual father of so many thousands. Yet, they assert that Paul would be content to be disowned by the Church, cut off from all communion with it and have his name buried in oblivion or reproach for the good of the Jews. While such nobleness of sacrifice would certainly be commendable; Paul very well knew that even if one was willing and ready to make such a sacrifice out of love for the Jews, there was no **proper means** appointed for such an end. Thus, such a boast of his willingness would not be compatible to the knowledge of the Mystery that had been revealed to Paul. Those who embraced such humanistic chivalry give accolades to Paul, which would be contradictory to the very gospel, which he preached. Now grace does not spotlight the virtues of mankind outside of the righteousness of God that is imputed; thus we believe that Paul knew very well that such a statement would be an idle conjecture.

Many point to the account of Moses supposedly standing between the wrath of God and the children of Israel (Exodus 32:30-33), but those who espouse such an analogy; fail to recognize one very important factor and that is Paul's **knowledge of the Mystery!** Paul's understanding of God's will and plan was far superior to the limited knowledge that Moses comprehended in his time.

It is certainly true that in the opening verses of Romans chapter nine, we have the Apostle's solemn profession of a great concern for the nation and the Jewish people. He was heartily troubled that so many of them were enemies to the gospel of grace which he preached and were therefore out of the realm of God's provisions of salvation for this age. Now because of this, Paul had great heaviness and continual sorrow (Rom. 9:2). But we must understand what Paul's theme and subject in Romans

chapters nine, ten and eleven is, it is **election**, Paul thoroughly understood **election**. It is a central part of the Mystery, which God revealed to Him. In Exodus 32:32, Moses in a holy passion of concern for God's people pleaded with God, "Blot me, I pray thee; out of thy book which thou hast written". Here Moses spoke according to **his knowledge** of God's plan for his covenant people, which was the promise.

Note the historical setting before us in Exodus. Moses was dispatched to the people by God, who was in the process of giving to him the Law and the ordinances and the sacraments of service. Again note the **limited information** of God's plan that Moses was functioning under. We believe that it is impossible to assess such absurdity of understanding, in a literal sense to the Apostle Paul. Also note the supposition that **such an effect** could be produced by **such a sacrifice**; this is equally absurd and monstrous. Why would Paul seriously make such a statement (and he was serious) "I say the truth, I lie not", (Romans 9:1), in light of the fact that he knew that "all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26). Note, God had already revealed this information to Paul as a part of the Mystery (Romans 11:25-32). So why would this man to whom God had given such glorious understanding of the Mystery of His will, make such contradictory conjecture? The answer is, **he did not!**

As we have observed from our studies here at the Grace Gospel Ministries; there are three principle examinations that any verse of scripture must undergo to insure proper exegesis and they are:

1. Grammatical
2. Historical
3. Contextual

In using the Greek grammar, we literally read from the Greek Text. (Modern Greek pronunciation) "Ee• ee• khom• een gahr ahn• ahth•ehm• ah ee• neh ahf• tos ehg• o ahpo too khrees• too eep• ehr ton ahth• ehl• phon moo ton seey• yehn• on moo kaht• ah sahrk• ah", translated "For I was wishing that I myself to be accursed from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh". As we examine the Greek word order; it is amazing that so many great men of God and this includes many for which I have great respect and some are proficient Greek scholars, yet they completely ignore the facts! So, what are the facts?

The facts are:

1. The Greek verb "ee• ee• khom• een", properly translated "I was wishing" is in the indicative mood. So Paul is stating a fact about something, not suppositions or a conjecture or an idle thought.
2. This verb is in the imperfect tense, which expresses continuous action in the past, not the present or the future, but it references his actions or thoughts as a point of time in the **past!**
3. This verb is in the first person singular, which is definitely Paul speaking of himself not some hypothetical person so this is his own personal testimony.
4. This verb is in the passive voice, which means that Paul, the subject was being acted upon by some outside agent. Now if he was wishing to be accursed from (ahpo) Christ, it certainly follows that deity did not influence him. So it clearly shows a situation in the past **where in** the evil one (Satan) controlled and dominated Saul of Tarsus, **not** the Apostle Paul.

Accordingly, the Greek grammar indicates that the translation could read "For I also was once an alien from Christ" on account of my brethren. For only Saul could even make such a statement and Paul is merely mentioning what had passed through his mind in his misguided state of being before God **rescued** him.

When we closely examine the historical setting we take note of Paul's declaration of the dispensation of the gospel of the grace of God, which had been committed unto him. Paul's declaration that he was **now** the Apostle of the **Gentiles** (Romans 1:13) and the gospel of the un-circumcision was committed unto him (Galatians 2:7). In light of this, is it conceivable to assess Paul's love and compassion for his kinsmen according to the flesh to override his dedication and commitment to the work, which God had commissioned him to do? Remember this is the same Paul who states "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). Paul's **greatest** pain, suffering and sacrifice were always for the love of Jesus Christ who saved and delivered him (Philippians 1:29; I Thessalonians 3:4; II Thessalonians. 1:5; I Timothy 4:10; II Timothy 1:12; 2:12; 3:12). Those who are acquainted with the life of Paul must surely know that there was nothing imaginable that he would **ever** wish to separate him from the love of God and/ or even the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 8:38-39).

As we examine the context of Paul's writings, it is in the light of revelation of knowledge regarding God's election or selection of his people and the groupings thereof. Notice not only does he refer to the Jews as his kinsmen, but more importantly as God's (elected) people (Romans 11:1), who are temporarily blinded so that he could usher in the Gentiles and thus his most glories election, **the Church**, which is comprised of both Jews and Gentiles.

Now as we continue our discourse we move to Romans 9:5, first from the King James Version "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." From the Greek Text, "To whom belong the fathers and out of whom is Christ according to the flesh, the one being over all, God blessed forever, Amen". In this verse Paul adds to the foregoing list of God's benefits to his covenant people as conveyed earlier in our discoursing of Romans 9"4.

To recapitulate, they are:

1. designated Israelites
2. The possessors of adoption
3. The recipients of the glory
4. The recipients of the covenants
5. The giving of the Law
6. The divine service
7. The promises

Here in Romans 9:5, we have two additional benefits, they are the (8) "**pat• ehr• ehs**", rendered "fathers" who belong to his kinsmen according to the flesh, that is Israel. The three most recognized fathers of Israel were Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Matthew 8:11; Acts 3:13; 5:30). The designation, "fathers" is also used with reference to later progenitors of Israel (Acts 7:11-12,52). Also (9) out of the Jewish heritage, Christ was born according to the flesh. This lineage is through Mary, his natural mother, and Joseph, his legal father (Matthew 1;16; Luke 3:23). Now the very fact that God would choose the stock of Israel through which to give his Son a flesh and blood body is the greatest favor he could bestow upon Paul's kinsmen according to the flesh (Genesis 3:16;4:4; II Corinthians 9:15).

Here the statement "o on ehpee • pahnd• on" translated "the one being over all"; is generally referred back to Christ. The nominative article "o", with which it begins; is commonly translated "who" as though it was a relative pronoun. Thus the more accurate and preference translation arrangement in this case may be "the one being over all"; which would be conveyed by the inclusion of the nominative article "o" in conjunction to the Greek participle "on". This grammatical construction in Romans 9:5 is substantiated by the content expressed in I Corinthians 15:28; II Corinthians 11:31 and Ephesians 4:6. Note, as we focus on the context of the latter part of this verse, we offer this feasible rendering of Romans 9:5. "To whom belong the fathers and out of whom is Christ according to the flesh. God is the one being over all, blessed forever, amen". Note the Greek preposition "eh pee", translated "over"; may also convey the idea that God is the basis, support or the one upon whom all things depend. So as the one who is the **basis for** all things, God is certainly **over** all things.

Here it is significant to observe that the Greek word "ehv• loy• ee•tos", is used eight times in the New Testament (five times in Paul's Epistles), always with reference to God the Father (Romans 1:25; 9:5; II Corinthians 1:3; II Corinthians 11:31; Ephesians 1:3).

Now as we summarize this verse, the thought seems to be that God is the basis, hence, the one over all things, particularly all things that pertain to his relationship to his people, Israel. But even though most of the Israelites are rejecting God's message of grace, God still uses it to provoke the Gentiles unto salvation (Romans 11:11). There is one question to be raised concerning Paul's intended thought in this verse (Romans 9:5), and that is; is he within the context attesting to the divinity of Christ? We believe that the answer is **yes**. Now while there is no direct doxological attribution to Christ, there **is** the implied naked statement of fact that while Christ is "of the Israelite Nation, as concerning the flesh", He is in another respect "God over all, blessed forever". Note in II Corinthians 11:31 the very same Greek phrase "o on", rendered "who is" in this verse is used in the same sense thus, as a testimony to the supreme divinity of Christ (Romans 1:25).

Now as we exegete the next 18 verses of scripture in Romans chapter nine, we should remember that God is sovereign. Thus He has the right to **select** or **elect** those chosen by him, solely on the basis of His sovereignty alone. He and He alone has the right to pick and place those who are selected to occupy positions in God's groupings. In other words it is God's **exclusive doings** as to who is a Shemite or a Hebrew or an Israelite or a Jew or even those who are members of the body of Christ for that matter. Also, the blessings of God are **His** blessings to be bestowed upon those chosen or elected to receive **His** mercy, love and grace, according to **His** promises and covenants.

Now with this understanding, we move to Romans 9:6, as we read first from the King James Version, "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:, and now from the Greek Text, "But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all these out of Israel, these are Israel". In this verse Paul is literally stating "oox ee on theh otee ehk• pehp• to• kehn o log•oos too theh• oo", rendered "it is the kind of or sort of thing that would indicate that the word of God has failed". The Greek compound verb 'ehk• pehp• to• kehn" is derived from the Greek preposition "ehk" prefixed to the verb "pehp• to" and basically means to fall out of or away from. As used in this verse it means to fall out of or away from. As used here it is saying that the word of God has not fallen away from its intended purpose; i.e. it has not become ineffectual and of no effect.

How can Paul affirm that the word of God has not failed when the evident indicates that it was reaching few Jews for Christ? Paul's answer is that "oo gahr pahn• dehs ee ehx Ees• rah• eel oo tee Ees•rah• eel", rendered "not all those out of **Israel**, these **are Israel**".

Now when one looks at the total group of **all** those who were descendants of Abraham, the percentage of those who were believing on Jesus Christ was very small. However, when one recognizes that all descendants of Abraham are **not necessarily counted** as Israel, the percentage of those being saved significantly increases. So the fact is that in this case as in all other cases, the

word of God **has not** failed, because the word of God **cannot** fail (Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33). Note the meaning of the statement "oo• tee Ees•rah •eel" translated "these are Israel", it is defined in the context of the exegesis of the subsequent verses as we progress in our discourse. Remember this as we go forward, Israel consists of those who are called (Romans 9:7) according to God's elect purpose (Romans 9:11). So those who constitute genuine Israel are the descendants of Abraham via Isaac, via Jacob, who have been called according to God's sovereign purpose (Romans 2:28-29); 8:28-30; Galatians 6:16). Now at this point in our discourse of Romans chapter nine, we read verses 7-8 (7). "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. (8) That is they that are the children of the flesh these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. And from the Greek Text, (7) "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children, but in Isaac your seed shall be called". (8) "That is, not the children of the flesh, these are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for a seed. Now before we proceed further we herein interject an excursus to the general subject "election" as outlined in the context of these verses. Note, the difficulties which encompass this profound subject of election, do not lie in the complexities of Paul's teaching, which by the way is plain enough, but in the varied concepts of the truths themselves. Now when these facts that Paul submits, are taken by themselves, the evidence is overwhelming, but the great source of confusion rests in the inferring that the election referred to here in this chapter is national rather than personal election. Consequently some conclude that it entails the essence of religious advantages rather than eternal salvation. So as we have conveyed in our exegesis of Romans 9:6, which is the verse wherein the subject of election opens, Paul expresses that "The choice of Abraham and his seed has **not** failed because God is faithful to his promise in that "all of Israel itself is not rejected, namely those whom God has chosen in the exercise of his sovereign right". God is never bound by anything except his oath or his promise, or his word, thus his choice or election is not to mere external privileges, but to eternal salvation. This will become more evident as we progress in our study.

The present state of the Jews does not indicate that the divine **promise** has been rescinded. Again, not all those who are descended from Israel are **really** Israel, because the promises of the Lord at any given period of history will actively involve only those whom he has decided it should cover. Note in Romans 9:7 in the case of Abraham's children God made a choice. The promise is **through**, (not inclusive of), but **through** Isaac. Here a distinction is made between the children of the flesh, those born of Hagar and Keturah (Genesis 16;25:1-4), and Isaac, born according to **promise**.

The children of the flesh are **not** thereby children of God, but only the children of promise are looked upon as seed. Now the basic message of the context is that the mere fact that **some** were descendants of Abraham; does not automatically make them the children of God. Note both Ishmael and Esau were descendants of Abraham, but neither they nor their offspring have any part in the promises given to Abraham. Just because one is a physical progeny of Abraham, does not mean that he will inherit the promises made to Abraham.

Here having declared that all Abraham's flesh children are not his spiritual children, Paul emphatically states "Alla" rendered "but" the **opposite** is true, for "in Isaac your seed shall be called". As a result of Ishmael's mocking' Sarah told Abraham to put him (Ishmael) and his mother (Hagar), out of the household (Genesis 21:10). God **confirmed** that Abraham should take this action, even though it was very difficult for him, as God explained to him that "in Isaac your seed shall be called" (Genesis 21:12). Note, Isaac was Abraham's **miracle son** according to God's promise, but Ishmael was Abraham's **flesh son** according to the will of the flesh, at Sarah's request (Genesis 16:1-6). Note the underlying principle of election; neither Isaac nor Ishmael **made any** input nor **gave any** contribution to their portion or status!

In Romans 9:8, a distinction is made between the children of the flesh, and of the seed as we examine the Greek phrase "toot ehs• teen", translated "that is" it suggests that this verse is primarily an explanation of what was stated in Romans 9:7. There were those, such as Ishmael and Esau who had merely a flesh relationship to Abraham and this in itself does not make them children of God. Note the

Greek phrase "tehk• nah too theh• oo" rendered "children of God". Here the genitive case denotes "children who belong to God" or "children who are God's possession". It is one thing to be a child of Abraham according to the flesh, but it is a great advancement over this to be a child of God according to both promise and election. As we proceed in this context, we must keep in mind that Paul continues to limit those who are "children of God". First, they are not all of Abraham's offspring. Ishmael, born according to the will of the flesh is passed by and thus receives no spiritual inheritance. Second, as this context unfolds, we see Esau rejected, thus he receives no spiritual blessings. On the other hand, the children **of** the promise, the promise that God would provide Abraham with a son through Sarah, are the true spiritual seed.

Now as we move to Romans 9:9, we read from the King James Version "For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son". Also from the Greek Text, "For this is the word of promise, at this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son". This promise is recorded in Genesis 18:14. We must keep in mind that Abraham and Sarah, even when they were young and healthy were not able to produce children. But when the Lord made this promise to Abraham, Sarah was old and physical beyond childbearing age. So the thought of her giving birth to a son was so ridiculous, that she laughed herself.

The spirit of God has specifically recorded this incident to make it clear that Sarah, within herself, was totally incapable of giving birth to a child (Genesis 18:11-15). Now there is no question about it. When the Lord told Abraham that Sarah would give birth to a son, he was literally declaring that **He** (God) was going to perform a miracle, i.e., to cause an aged barren woman to conceive and bring forth a male child. Note the subject of this sentence, the one who **made** this promise; was none other than the **Lord Himself**. Here the basis of God's sovereign calling of Abraham together with the miracle performed to effectuate Isaac's birth; unequivocally affirmed that Israel is indeed a miracle nation. She is not merely a nation among nations, but a very special nation, a people who have a key role in God's elective purpose and plan for the ages.

As we discourse the context of these verses, we focus on the Greek word "ehp•ahy• yehl• ee• ahs" rendered "promise". The inference denotes more than just an **announcement** or a statement of the will, plan and purpose. It is a **pronouncement** of a provision of assurance of what God not only intends, but also is determined to do. This was and is not something that **may** come to pass, but **will** come to pass.

Now as we move to Romans 9:10 reading first from the King James Version "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;" and now from the Greek Text, "And not only, but also Rebecca out of one conceived, even Isaac our father". In this verse, the principle of making a distinction among natural descendants of Abraham is not only settled by the promise, but it is still further seen and illustrated in the birth of the two sons of Isaac. We should also note the significance of these sons not only being brothers produced by the same parents (father and mother), but they were also twins. In the context of the preceding verses, Paul shows that the principle of making a distinction among the posterity of Abraham was recognized in the original promise, thus proving that all the descendants of Abraham were not to be saved. In this verse Paul now proceeds to show that this principle was utilized in the case of the posterity of Isaac's family. Here Paul settles the argument that one might make that Ishmael was rejected, not by the sovereign will of God, but because he was the son of the handmaid, or bondwoman and therefore unworthy to be the special seed.

But we observe that this was not the only limitation of the seed of Abraham with regard to inheriting the promise; for when Rebecca was pregnant by Isaac, that one person of the Abraham's issue to whom the promise was made, she inquired of the Lord as recorded in the book of Genesis. Here we read from the King James Version Genesis 25:23, "And the Lord said unto her, two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger". That is, the posterity of the

younger (Jacob) shall be a nation much more prosperous (through election) than the posterity of the elder (Esau).

Note the Hebrew word "**leh• ome**", translated "people" in this verse (Gen. 25:23), means "to gather". This "**gathering or grouping**" is always the exclusive work of God's sovereignty. Here it is demonstrated that it is **not** according to any natural principles that the selection was made. God not only made a distinction between Jacob and Esau, but he did it according to his sovereignty. So the thought in Romans 9:10 is that not only did Sarah gave birth to a son according to the promise, but also Rebecca conceived sons (twins) by Isaac. Here we literally quote this verse from the Greek Text "**ken Reh•vehk• kah ehx eh• nos kee• teen ehk oos• ah, Ees• ahahk too pa•tros ee• mon**". Here a more literal translation would be; "Also Rebecca out of one, Isaac our father, by a conjugal act was with child". The information given in this verse suggests that this was a very normal conception. However, prior to this Isaac had prayed for almost 20 years about his wife's barren condition. His prayers were abundantly answered, his wife conceived twins who immediately began struggling in her womb even before they were born (Genesis 25:22-24).

Now reading Romans 9:11, (from the KJV) "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;" Now from the Greek Text, "For the children not yet having been born, neither having practiced anything good or bad, in order that the purpose of God might remain according to election". Again, we make special note of the subject of the context; it is **election!** Here Paul is discoursing election and he is using these historical facts as evidence to corroborate the principle of **election!** Observe the setting of this verse is during the time when the twins Esau and Jacob were still in Rebecca's womb. We must clearly understand the principles of **election**. Note closely the first phrase in this verse (9:11). Here from the Greek Text "**mee• po gar yehn• nee• thehn• ton**", translated "for they being not yet born" or "before they were born", before Rebecca gave birth. Notice God's determinate choice and decision in choosing the younger to be the object of his favor and rejecting the older, who according to the tradition and custom of the times, was suppose to be entitled to special honor and rights. Note again that this distinction was made **before** they were born, **before** they had formed any character (moral or otherwise). There God's action could not possibly be in consequence of any works, or contribution or input that they had performed. It was **not** therefore, by any works of theirs. It was **not** because they had formed a character and manifested qualities that made this distinction proper. It was not relevant of any such character and therefore had its foundation in the **purpose** of God.

The second phrase of this verse (Rom. 9:11), again from the Greek Text, reads "**Mee• theh prahx• ahn• ton tee ahg• ahth• on ee phahv• lon**" rendered, "Neither having practiced anything good or evil". It conveys the thought that it was **before** they had occasion to do anything **good** or **evil**. This passage provided an ideal situation for Paul to use to depict the difference between the sovereignty of God and human works.

Notice the scenario here, two viable persons are encased in a womb in which they were isolated from doing either good or evil. During this time when these potential humans were isolated in their mother's womb, totally part from any works, the Lord said that "The elder shall serve the younger (Genesis 25:23). Here Paul uses this genuine historical event as evidence proving that God's relation to men is determined by His **sovereign elective purpose**. It is not determined by what men **may** or **may not** do. This is a very important passage in regard to the question about the purpose of God. To this end we scrutinize the last phrase in this verse and we read from the Greek Text "**een• ah ee keh ehk• loy• een proth• ehs• ees too theh• oo mehn• ee**", translated "In order that the purpose of God might remain according to election". When we isolate this first portion it reads "**proth• ehs• ees too Theh• oo**", rendered "the purpose of God". This denotes that God operates according to a pre-placed, predestinated and predetermined plan. Esau was the firstborn, the one who normally would have inherited the promise, but according to God's elective purposes it was reserved for Jacob (Genesis 25:23; Romans 9:12-13). Now we turn to the third phrase of this verse, as we again read literally from



the Greek Text "een•ah ee keh ehk•loy• een pro• theh• sees too theh• oo mehn• ee", translated "in order that the purpose of God might remain according to election". Here we continue to note that the subject is **election**! Paul simply uses the historical workings of God with His covenant people Israel, in prior dispensations (Promise and Law) to corroborate God's principle in His selection of those whom He chooses and again it is simply the **sovereignty of God**.

Now there are those who continue to insist that God's purpose in this context was **simply** to make the descendants of **Jacob**, rather than those of Esau, His special people. So let us consider **why** God dealt with Esau as he did. Paul states that it was "in order that the purpose of God might remain according to election". Note the Greek verb "mehn ee", rendered "remain", was to the end that the purpose of God **might continue** (subjunctive mood) and that it **would continue** unchanged (present tense) and **remain constant** according to election. Here we interject a posing question; "If God's purpose **iselection**, then what is God's purpose **for** election? To be more specific, what is God's election **to**, if it is not **to** salvation? Paul's entire epistle to the Romans is concerning salvation. If he is not discoursing the general theme of salvation (through election) in Romans chapters 9,10 and 11, then can one safely say that he is not espousing the theme of salvation (through imputation of righteousness) in Romans chapters three and four? Also are God's promises to Abraham and the institution of circumcision Paul's basic subject in Romans chapters three and four or is he discoursing salvation (through justification by faith)?

As we focus on the context of Paul's writings in Romans, note that he uses the historical sinful plight or accounts of mankind from Adam to Moses and from Moses to Christ (including Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), to corroborate God's methods and principle of dealing with men.

But his general subject is always **salvation** through or by faith in Jesus Christ; upon which everything must ultimately rest. So in the context of Romans 9:11, Paul's discourse is **salvation** through or by **election**! As we continue, the thought is that God's eternal purpose (salvation) has hitherto operated according to election and this is evidence (the distinction between Isaac and Ishmael and Jacob and Esau) that it continues to operate in this way.

The facts are, that subsequent to the Adamic fall, **all** natural men have been **spiritually dead**; incapable of making any advances toward God, totally dependant upon God to sovereignty bring them into a relationship with Himself (Romans 8:28-30). The choice is **exclusively** God's, unmotivated by any **contribution** or **input** from man because he made the choice **before** He ever created mankind or anything else. So regardless of whether the issue is those who are true Israelites or those who have been chosen from among the Gentiles, God is sovereignty and assuredly accomplishing **His** purpose by calling **Hiselect** unto **Himself** (II Timothy 1:9-11; 2:10).

As stated earlier, some translations (including the KJV), have included the phrase "not (out) of works, but (out) of Him, (the one) that calleth", in the last portion of Romans 9:11, while others have arranged it as the first part of Romans 9:12. Here for the sake of continuous thought flow, we begin our expression with "the purpose of God"; thus we read from the King James Version "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth". The expression "not of works" obviously refers back to the statement "that the purpose of God according to election might stand". We now read the entire expression from the Greek Text. "ee • nah ee keh ehk • loy• een ton theh• oo mehn• nee ook ehx ehr• gon alla ehk too kahl• oond• os", translated "That the purpose of God might remain according to election, not out of works".

Note when this statement is linked into one expression, we believe that it infers that any contribution or input that can be traced to the one who is called or summoned can be counted as work. In other words God's purpose is both totally dominated by and **dependent only on** His sovereign call and election or His purpose is **co-dependent** on the actions of those to whom he makes overtures. So based on this premise, what God does is **dependent upon what we do**, thus His purpose in our lives is contingent upon our response. If God waited for our cooperation, he could never bring His will to

pass. But if God had to rely upon the performance of men, then His plan, will and purpose would be **held hostage** to men. So the thought is that Jacob did not inherit the promise "**eh ehro gon**", rendered "out of works" i.e., works were not the source from which his priority position came. In contrast to works, the strong adversative conjunction (**alla**) rendered "but" emphatically asserts that God, the one who called him is the source from whom he received the right to be Abraham's true heir.

Now in light of God's sovereign election of Jacob, let us take a brief look at the birth and lives of Esau and Jacob. Esau was born first with Jacob a close second, "his hand had hold on Esau's heel" (Genesis 25:25). As a result of being born first, Esau had birth right privileges. Rebecca, the Mother, knew that the Lord had called Jacob to be the heir (Genesis 25:23); therefore in Genesis 25:27-34, we have an account of how the birthright was transferred from Esau to Jacob. Now the question may be poised, "**why** would God do this? Again the answer is "The purpose of God" **is** and **must remain** and to this day **it is** according to election. So God's favor (or grace) is always dispensed according to His sovereign will and pleasure. Note God's favor was not conferred in consequence of the merits of the individuals, but according to His "counsel" **before** the formation of their characters and **before** they had done good or evil. Thus the favors were conferred according to **His** choice or election. Also, the purpose of God was proved to have been formed without respect to the merit of either. The choice was not made by anything, which they had done to merit his favor or to forfeit it. It was formed on principles other than a reference for their works. So it is in regards to all that **shall** be saved. Now because we know that God is indeed both rational and just; we are confident that He has good reasons for saving those who shall be saved. But what the reasons are for choosing some (not all) to life, He has not revealed, but He **has** revealed to us that it is **not** on account of any action on their part, either preformed or foreseen. So the purpose of God is antecedent to the formation of character or the performance of any actions, good or bad. It is not a purpose formed because he seen anything as grounds for His choice, **but** for some reason, which He has not explained; which the apostle Paul simply identifies as the "good pleasure of his will" (Ephesians 1:5). If this is God's methodology in this case (and it is), if it was right and just then, (and it was), then it is **now**. If God dispensed his favors then on this principle he **surely will** and **does** now.

Here we focus on the Greek phrase "**ah• lah ehk too kah• loond• os**", rendered "but out of the one calling". Note the Greek participle verb "**kah•loond• os**", translated "the one calling" or "the one who calls". Observe the present tense which speaks of that which is happening now or in the present time; thus continuous action. Also it is the active voice masculine-singular, which means it is exclusively **God!** He and He alone does the calling or summoning. Since it is in the form of a verbal adjective, we have the genitive case, which denotes that the call or summons is **owned** or **possessed** by God. So the calling is according to the will and purpose of Him that chooses to dispense these favors. It is not by the merit of man, but it is by a purpose having its origin with God and formed and executed according to His good pleasure. It is also formed in such a way as to secure **His** glory as the primary goal (Ephesians 1:6).

As we move to Romans 9:13, we read from the King James Version, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated". Now from the Greek Text, "even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated".

Unfortunately there are those who seek to use this verse to prove that God's choice in this context is national and not personal. Notice the Apostle Paul quotes from the prophet Malachi, some 1400 years after the twins were born. Here we quote from the King James Version, (Malachi 1:2-3), "I have loved you, saith the Lord, Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? Saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau and I laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness". In speaking to the Prophet Malachi, the Lord said, "I loved Jacob, but Esau I hated, and made his mountains a desolation, and gave his heritage to the jackals of the wilderness (Jeremiah 49:18). Again, let's use the Greek grammar. Note the Greek verb "**eeg• ahp• ees• ah**", rendered "loved", that is associated with Jacob and "**eh• mees• ees• ah**", rendered "hate", which is associated with Esau. Here both verbs are in the indicative mood, which

mean God's contrasting sentiments toward both are factual, not allegorical. Also they are aorist-active first person singular, defining God's continuous actions toward both which was concluded or completed in the past. So God's deeds (love and hate) were not **deferred** but **conferred immediately** upon **both**. It is a stretch of the imagination to say that God's declaration upon Esau was postponed; apparently those who embrace this thought are relying on Genesis 33:9, "I have enough". It is **impossible** to be **blessed** by God outside of the **will** of God.

But even as one grants the historical posterity of the twin brothers (Esau and Jacob) in that these two nations (Israel and Edom) were at opposite ends of the spectrum of God blessings (Jer. 49:17-18; Ezek 35:6); it does not change the fact that God made a choice between two individuals (Esau and Jacob). In fact the situations just stated should testify to God's preferential treatment of Jacob over Esau.

The following should be evident in God's choice and election:

1. That it settles "the principle" that God might make a **distinction** among people, in the **same** nation and the **same** family, **without reference** to their works or character.
2. That He might confer his blessings on such as He is **pleased** to do so.
3. That if this is done in regard to **nations**, it may also be in regard to **individuals**. Actually the principle is the same and the justice the same if it is supposed to be unjust of God to make a distinction in regards to individuals; then it is certainly no less an injustice to make a distinction in regards to nations. The fact that numbers or groups are thus favored, does not make it the more proper or acceptable nor does it remove any difficulty when applying the same principles to individuals.
4. The basic reasoning is, if this distinction may be made in regards to **natural** or temporal things, why not in regard to **spiritual** things? Remember God is consistent, so the principle must be the same. If it were unjust in one case, then it would be in the other.
5. The fact that it is done in one case proves also that it will be in the other, for the same principle will run through all the dealings of the divine government. And as mankind **do not** and **cannot** complain that God makes a distinction among them in regard to physical or natural blessings or favors i.e., talent health, beauty, prosperity and rank, neither can they complain if He acts in sovereignty in the distribution of His spiritual blessings or favor. Therefore those who regard this as referring only to temporal and national privileges gain no relief in respect to the real difficulty in the matter. So regardless of the application, the unanswerable questions would still be asked, "Why has not God made **all** of mankind equal in everything? "Why has He made **any** distinction among people? The **only** reply to all such inquiries is the quote from Matthew 11:26 which states "even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight", or **God is sovereign!**

Now, there is no way around **what is written**; it is God almighty Himself, who makes the statement "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated". For those who are programmed to think naturally or logically as one would say; note that it might be thought that there was a **natural** reason for preferring the child of Sarah, as being Abraham's true and first wife as opposed to the child of Hagar, Sarah's maid or even the children of Ketutrah, Abraham's second wife. But there could be no such reason in the case of Rebecca; Isaac's **only** wife; for the choice of her son Jacob was the **choice** of **one** of two sons by the same mother. Yet God **preferred** the **younger** to the **older**, **before** either of them was born and consequently **before** either had done good or evil; to be the grounds of his preference. This establishes the principle that the sole ground of distinction reside in the term "**Unconditional Election** or choice of God"; "not of works, but of Him that calleth".

These words show conclusively the erroneousness of the theory by which some seek to get rid of the doctrine of personal or individual election in Romans chapter nine. Here they purport that the Apostle Paul is referencing the choice not of persons or individuals nor even nations, but that he is merely setting forth the conditions or terms on which God will save men and that only, is what God has a sovereign right to fix. But if this were the case then Paul would have said "That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but by faith". Instead of this, he specifically states, "not of works (or merit on our part), but of him that calleth", i.e., that which is **purely** of his **own** will to **call** whom He **please**. It is a serious diversion of the meaning of the context to infer that the purpose according to election, (which did not depend on non existing works, but rested on the sovereign will of God who calleth whom he will (again Jacob only, not Esau); was only to the theocratic land or some natural benefit. No, even though the statement predicted the state of their posterity, which came to pass as predicted, it is the **unconditional election** or choice of one individual over another on which the Apostle Paul reasons.

The word **serve** in Romans 9:12, need not be construed to mean political servitude, but it must be understood to denote the positioning of Esau below Jacob as it relates to birthright. Remember the custom; the elder son receives the inheritance, he became the patriarch when the father passed, All rights of ownership were bestowed upon him, thus the younger son served under his elder brother. But in this case God rearranged the order such that the elder would serve the younger. Regardless of the way, which one may wish to look at it, the stream of grace flowed away **from** Esau **to** Jacob. Now some may take strong exception to this, but all the commentaries and editorials, which state that **"to hate"** in this context, "does not mean to hate", but only to "love less" or to bestow a less advantage; will **not** satisfy the conscientious expositor.

Here we focus on the Greek word in this context "**eh• mees• ee• sah**", translated "hate" it's reference denotes hostility or to detest or abhor or reject that which is evil. No serious exegesis can overlook the quote in Mal. 1:2-3, as an example of a very strong and offensive expression of the wrath of God. Notice the even stronger statement of Mal. 1:4, "The people against whom the Lord hath indignation **forever**". Thus the objection to the doctrine of personal election is also an objection to the **sovereignty of God**.

Turning to Romans 9:14, we read from the King James Version, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid". And now from the Greek Text, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? May it never be! Now as a consequence of the statements that the older shall serve the younger, and that God loved Jacob and hated Esau, Paul raises the question "**tee oon ehr•oom eh**", translated "what therefore" or "then shall we say? Now the question is since God made this choice between Jacob and Esau before they were born, apart from them doing anything, is He unrighteous for treating them differently? To what conclusion shall we come to on the facts before us? Does God do injustice or wrong? Here we again turn to the Greek grammar and read from the Greek Text "**Me ahth• ee• kee• ah pah• rah• to Theh• o**", rendered "Is there unrighteousness with God? Or "unrighteousness (is) with God? Note the Greek interrogative participle "**mee**" rendered, "not" preceding the noun "**ahth• ee• kee• ah**", rendered "unrighteousness" or "wrong doing" or "disregard for what is right" or "wrong" or even "evil". As we scrutinize the structure of this sentence, note that "unrighteousness" is in the nominative case, so it is the subject. Now closely monitor the word order "**To Theh•o**" or "God" which is in the dative case signifying the indirect object. Thus God is the object (indirect) of unrighteousness. But also observe the interrogative, the Greek particle "**mee**"; in essence the negative particle "not" which is used for assumed hesitant or indefinite denial. Here it not only denies the **fact**, but also the **idea**! The participle "**mee**" is generally used for all moods in the Greek language with the exception of the indicative mood, which states a fact. So here it is used to negate the supposed assumption that God is the object of unrighteousness.

The Apostle Paul further reinforces the absurdity of this question by adding the Greek grammatical construction "**mee yeh• nee• to**" which expresses the strongest negative reply possible namely "May it

never be" or "let it never be thought or uttered" or "it is completely out of the question" or as it is rendered in the King James Version, "God forbid"! So Paul adamantly repels this notion.

But it is only in this severe manner of interpretation (i.e. those who understand that predestination is of **personal** or **individual** election to eternal salvation), that the question, "is their unrighteousness with God". In other words it would be an unnecessary question if election only refers to the bestowing of special privileges in an unequal manner. The important point to observe is that election is unto **salvation** and God treated Esau according to what he **deserved** as a sinner, but he treated Jacob according to what he **did not deserve(God's grace)**, which he had previously bestowed upon Abraham and Isaac. Thus God cannot be accused of being unrighteousness when he treats **some, (not all) men better than they deserve**. So the mitigated view of those who purport that God's election is **only** of national preference to external advantages, afford no occasion for such thoughts at all, therefore their interpretation can in no way evade this stringent connection of thought.

Now as we move to Romans 9:15, reading first from the King James Version, "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion". Now from the Greek Text, "For he says to Moses, I shall have mercy on whom I would have mercy, and I shall have compassion on whom I would have". This verse makes it absolutely clear that God reserves the right to be **selectively** merciful and compassionate. Here Paul uses what God said to Moses to substantiate the principle that it is his **prerogative** to choose to do good to whom he might will. We again utilize the Greek grammar, as we read literally from the Greek Text, "To Mo• ees• ee gahr lehy• ee, ehl• eh• ees• o on ahn ehl• eh• o keh eek• teer• ees• o on ahn eek• teer• o", translated "For he says to Moses I will have mercy on whom I would have mercy and, I shall have compassion on whom I would have compassion".

Note the Greek verb "ehl• eh• ees• o", translated "I shall have mercy"; it is in the indicative mood (it's a fact) and the future tense and active voice first person singular, which denote that He is an independent God showing favor in the time to come in a positive helpful sense. Now note the ensuing Greek verb "ehl• eh• o", translated "I would have mercy"; it is in the subjective mood (it might happen) and the present tense and active voice first person singular which means He exercises His good will continuously on whom He would or might desire. Now as we move forward in this verse (Romans 9:15), we firmly assert that it is God's prerogative to **select** the recipients of His mercy, favor and beneficence. Here the expression Paul references is found in Exodus 33:19, (from the King James Version). "And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy".

There can be no charge of unrighteousness in God's **choosing** whom He **will**, for to Moses he expressly claims a right to do so. Yet it is worthy of notice that this is expressed in the positive rather than in the negative form. Paul in essence makes the following argument, that if God says something, it must be true and if he does something it must be right. Also, the **Sovereign God** does say that he **chooses** whom he **will**, therefore it is both true that He does so and the fact that He is doing it causes it to be **right**.

As we continue our exegesis, we focus on the Greek verb "eek• teer•ees o", translated 'I shall have compassion' as it is also in the future tense. The basic meaning of this word is pity i.e., God shall have a feeling of pity and grief or a passive feeling of sorrow. The Greek verb "eek• teer• o" rendered "I would have compassion", is in the present tense and subjective mood. What Paul is conveying in this verse is that God shall have compassion on **whomever** He would or might desire. It is in the sphere of God's jurisdiction to express His feelings of compassion, pity and grief for **whomever** He pleases. Here the perception is that the Greek word rendered compassion (eek• teer• o) portrays God's passive emphatic feeling for the plight of sinners. On the other hand, the Greek word 'ehl• eh• o", rendered "mercy" expresses that which follows "compassion". Therefore because God is compassionate, He unfolds His mercy and favor toward whomever He may desire.

Note, **compassion** involves God passively sympathizing with the grief of **all** sinners, whereas **mercy** involves God actively working on behalf of **some** sinners, **the elect** (Ephesians 2:4-5).

As we move to Romans 9:16, we read from the King James Version "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy". And now from the Greek Text, "Then therefore it is not of the one willing neither of the one running, but of the one showing mercy, God. Here in view of the preceding context Paul points out that which causes God to **energize** on behalf of depraved men. We must understand that God is **not** impressed with the sinner's will power, determination and intentions. Neither is He **moved** by the unsaved man's expenditure of human effort, for He evaluates it as filthy rags (Psalms 14:1-4).

The individual who **thinks**, by his **own human** willing and running, that he is in charge of his **own destiny**, needs to consider **very carefully** what this verse is conveying. Now this is the thought content, man, engulfed in disobedience to God totally **lack** the spiritual dynamics necessary to initiate a relationship with Him, who **is** a spirit (John 4:24).

From the Greek Text we literally read Romans 9:16, "**ahr• ah oon oo too thehl•ond• os oo• theh too trehkh• ond• os ah• lah too eh• eh•ond• os Theh• oo**". As we have conveyed this is rendered, "then, therefore, it is not of the one willing neither of the one running, but of the one showing mercy, God".

Here the negative particle "**oo**" rendered "not" stresses the point that the genitive case of the verb participles "**thel• ond• os**", rendered "willing" and **trehkh• ond• os**, rendered "running" both carry the inference of negative possession, i.e., they **do not** belong or they are **not effective** and they do **not accomplish** the effectuation of a right relationship with God. So having rejected man's **willing** and **running** as that which effectuates a relationship with God, the Apostle Paul emphatically states "**all• ah**" or "but" it is owned or possessed or effectuated by the one showing mercy, which is God.

Note the construction of the Greek participle verb "**eh• eh• ond• os**" rendered "mercy" and the noun "**Theh• oo**", rendered "God" as they both carry the genitive of positive possession or ownership or effectuation of the God-man relationship. Here in contrast to human mental and physical effort, Paul firmly answers **no**. Without a doubt, a relationship to God has its source in the mercy of God. According to Ephesians 2:4, the Love of God is the precursor of the mercy of God. God's love for the Adamic Race even though in a state of rebellion; has caused Him to extend His mercy toward it **selectively**. Apart from the extension of God's mercy; choosing **individuals** in Christ, not one of Adam's descendants would have a relationship with God (John 6:44; Ephesians 1:4). The fact that the work of salvation originates and is motivated **exclusively** or **solely** on the part of God is that which is expressed in Philippians 2:12-13. Here Paul states (from the Greek Text), "So then my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, with fear and trembling work out your own salvation; for **God** is the one working in you both to will and to work out His good pleasure". Again as we look at the context of Romans chapter nine, we must conclude from the several instances conveyed by Paul, that the making or continuing of any group of people such as **God's elect**, is righteously determined not by the judgment, hopes or wishes of men, but by the will and wisdom of God alone.

Note again in the previous verses, that we have read that Abraham judged that the blessing and choice of the seed (for he willed or desired it) to be given to Ishmael. Also Isaac willed and desired it for his first-born Esau. Even Esau, according to the account given in Genesis chapter 27, was wishing and hoping that it might be his as he readily went hunting for venison, so that he might have the blessing conveyed to him as it normally would have been. But they were all mistaken. Here we see Abraham and Isaac, who willed and Esau who ran; but God had pre-purposed and preplanned according to His good pleasure, that Isaac and Jacob were **His** exclusive choice.

In Romans 9:17, we read from the King James Version, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth". From the Greek Text "For the scripture says to Pharaoh that unto this very end I raised you up that I might display my power and that my name might be published abroad in all the land".

In this verse Paul personifies the scripture. Here the Greek word "grah• phēe", rendered "scripture" is a noun in the nominative case; which means it is the subject of the sentence. So God, the Holy Spirit speaks and addresses the elective role of Pharaoh. According to this verse God is the one who raised up Pharaoh to the position of authority, which he occupied in Egypt. The implication is that God didn't raise up just another Pharaoh, but one who was particularly suited to fulfilling His two-fold purpose. First it was God's purpose to "ehv• theez• om• eh", rendered "display" or "manifest" or "demonstrate" or "declare" His power in the Pharaoh of Moses' day.

Note apart from Pharaoh's unrelenting refusal to let the children of Israel leave Egypt, God's miracle working power would not have been manifested. Second, it was God's purpose to use Pharaoh to "thee•ahyy• eh• ee", that is to "publish abroad" or to "proclaim" and "declare" His name in all the land.

Now as we look at the contents of Exodus 9:13-16, (13) "And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. (14) For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth. (15) For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. (16) And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth". We observe here the light in which the Apostle views the scripture. Now we quote again from Romans 9:17 from the Greek Text, "That unto this very end I raised you up". Note Paul had shown God's right to **ble**ss whom He will. Here he shows by an example that God also **punishes** whom He will. But God did not **make** Pharaoh wicked. Pharaoh, like all other men, was **born** depraved and wicked. God thus declined to make him **good** by the exercise of His special favor or His altogether **unmerited** grace.

As we further exegete this verse Romans 9:17, (from the Greek Text). "That I might display in you my power and that my name might be published abroad in all the land". It was not that Pharaoh was worse than others that God dealt with him in such a harsh manner, but it was **through** his character and position combined that he was rendered a fit subject for the display of God's **righteous** displeasure against the despisers of his authority, for this time. It all boils down to one thing and that is the **sovereignty of God**.

Now as we move to Romans 9:18, reading from the King James Version, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth". From the Greek Text " Then therefore he has mercy on whom he will, and he hardens whom he will:" Now before we exegete this verse, we believe that there is one other basic statement that should be inserted at this point. Note that the Apostle Paul having asserted the true meaning of God's promise, herein asserts to maintain and prove the absolute sovereignty of God. He does this in disposing of the status of men, with reference to their eternal state. Thus herein God is to be considered, not as a rector and governor; distributing rewards and punishment according to His revealed laws and covenants, but as an **owner** and **benefactor**, giving to men such **grace** and **favor** as He had determined in and by His **secret** and eternal will and counsel. So he dispenses the favors and privileges, which are **given to** some individuals and **denied to** others.

Here as we focus on Romans 9:18, we read from the Greek Text, "Ahr• ah oon on theh• lee eh• eh• ee on theh theh• lee sklee• ree•neh", translated, "Then therefore he has **mercy** on **whom he will** and he **hardens whom he will**. Note the Greek words "ahr• ah" rendered "then"

and "oon" rendered "therefore" which indicate Paul's conclusion in this verse as the consequence of what he had stated in the previous verses of Romans chapter 9. As we have already observed, God **selectively** gives mercy, favor and even help to sinners **according** as He wills. Now as we utilize the grammar, note the Greek conjunctive particle "theh" as it is proceeded earlier in this verse by the relative pronoun "on". In this instant the sentence structure denotes contrast. Thus on the **one hand** God shows mercy according to His will on the **other hand**; in compassion to those who receive mercy, those devoid of it are referred to as ones He "sklee•ree•neh", translated "hardens" or makes "obdurate and stubborn". We must be careful to point out that all sinners by **nature** exist in a state of hardness and callousness' against God **until** or **unless** acted upon by Him. So those who refuse to acknowledge God have been, in effect given over to Satan (Romans 1:21,24,26,28). In essence it is unnecessary for God to harden totally depraved sinners who are born in this state, He merely declines to intervene on behalf of those who are **already** condemned in their creation (Acts 19:9). This does however imply an act of sovereignty on the part of God in leaving some sinners to their chosen course; in that he does not put forth the influence, which could save such ones from death.

As to God's reason for choosing **some** and rejecting others, Paul does not address this question. Now because we are not given the **reason**, we should not however dispute the **fact** that he **does**. But we should have sufficient **confidence in God** to believe that it is in accordance with His infinite wisdom and rectitude.

In Romans 9:19, we read from the King James Version, 'Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? From the Greek Text, "Therefore you will say to me, Why then does he still find fault? For whom has resisted his will"? Now having stated that God gives mercy to whom He desires and He leaves in a state of hardness whom He desires, Paul recognizes in this verse that some may misunderstand or pervert what he has said. Here he raises the question himself, if the aforesaid is true, then why does God still find fault? In other words as the premise is stated, if God takes the initiative in extending mercy to some while leaving others in their depraved state of condition, how can He "mehm•pneh•teh", rendered "find fault"? **How** can God blame, or be dissatisfied with what depraved men do? To further advance the questioning of the misinformed; if God **wills** and **determines** whether men will be in the category of **mercy** and **blessing** or in the category of **depravity** and **condemnation**, then with reference to where they are categorized, it is a divine determination.

Here we must **not** construe God's will and purpose in His **original creation** of mankind as being contradictory with His eternal purpose in the **redemption** of mankind. In dealing with the question posed in this verse, we focus on God's original purpose in the creation of Adam (and Eve). In Genesis 1:26-27,31, (reading from the King James Version) "And God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. (27) So God created man in his own image, in the image God created he him; male and female created he them. (31) And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day". Observe man was created in the image and likeness of God to exist in a cooperative relationship with God. This was God's purpose for Adam and Eve and all their progeny. Note, God created mankind to be in fellowship with the creator (God). For this fellowship to begin and continue there must exist the ingredient of man's total harmony with God. This was God's purpose for the imaging and likeness of mankind (Genesis 1:26-27). The sustenance of the fellowship between God and mankind was and is totally dependant on man's conformity to the imaging of God, to both produce and perpetuate that which is required to certify harmony with Him.

Obviously this did not continue, due to Adam's failure and fall from fellowship with God (Genesis 3:1-13). Subsequent to Adam (and Eve's) rebellion against God, mankind has been spiritually dead and doomed to physical death (Genesis 1:14-24). In light of this, was the eternal purpose and will of God altered or interrupted in the slightest way? The answer is **absolutely not!** In spite of the Adamic



curse, which lies heavily upon the entire human race, God's **eternal purpose** was from a point **before** creation, to restore **some** (not all) men into fellowship with Himself.

God had purposed, prearranged and designed a plan in eternity to effectuate His desire to have fellowship with mankind. Jesus Christ fulfills the imaging and likeness criteria enabling God to save **some** namely those whom He has chosen (I Corinthians 9:22; Ephesians 1:4).

The plight of mankind is manifested in the fact that the whole world lies totally depraved in the evil one (Romans 3:9-19; I John 5:19); **all** men are sinners by nature (Ephesians 2:1-3). In view of man's self-imposed sinful condition in Adam, which has left him spiritually dead, he is totally **incapable** of reaching out toward God. This is the dilemma or plight of the entire human race; neither **is it interested** nor **can it elevate** itself into a relationship with God.

Due to this terrible impotent condition of sinners, God, because of His magnanimous love, has in His sovereignty shown mercy to **some**, (not all Ephesians 2:4) and left the rest in their exceedingly sinful state (Romans 7:13).

As we exegete the latter portion of Romans 9:19, we examine more closely the question "For who has resisted the will of God"? To fully understand the true implications of this question, we turn to the Greek grammar as we literally read this phrase from the Greek Text, "To gahr voo• lee• maht• ee ahf• too tees •", rendered "For who has resisted his will? There are some who feel that they have a duty to make a case of defense for God concerning this question, but God needs no defense in this matter. Note the grammatical construction of this interrogatorily expressed phrase. The Greek pronoun "**tees**", rendered "who", forms the basis for this interrogative. Notice the Greek case of "who" (**tees**), it is in the nominative case which means it is the subject or the one by whom the question is addressed. Here this interregional pronoun is used as the addressee of either a direct, indirect or rhetorical question. Note the Greek noun "**voo• lee• maht• ee**" rendered "will or determination or counsel"; it is in the dative case or it is the indirect object or the object of a preposition. So the object of the subject being addressed is a **will** or **counsel** or **determination**. But **whose** will determination or counsel? Here the Greek intensive pronoun "**ahf• too**", translated "His" in this context demonstratively emphasizes the identity and directs our attention exclusively to a particular person. The third person singular refers to an expressed or implied antecedent. In this context, He, Him or His, by implication is **God**. So it is **God's will, counsel** or **determination** that is being questioned.

Now as we move back to the subject represented by the pronoun "who", we must decide at this point, if this a direct, indirect or rhetorical question. If it is a **direct question**, it must also be considered a **direct challenge**. Now there are those who teach that man's disobedience to God is a successful challenge to His will, or that one who has disobeyed God, has also successfully resisted His will. But this is true **only** if the act of disobedience **alters** God's will. No **one, no man, nothing, nor creature, not even Satan**, the devil; **none** can **successfully** stand against His **will, purpose, counsel** or **determination**.

This is documented both in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible (II Chronicles 20:6; Job 9:12; 23:13; Daniel 4:35; Romans 8:27; I Corinthians 1:19; 6:14; Galatians 1:4; I Thessalonians 5:24; II Timothy 4:18; Hebrews 10:7, 9,10,37; James 1:18; 4:13,15; I Peter 4:19; Revelations 17:17). In light of all the evidence that is documented, the question posed could not possibly be a direct one to any creature. Then is the question "Who has resisted His will", an **indirect question**? To this we ask, **whom** outside of God and His creatures could such a question be **addressed to**?

So by the process of elimination, the only possible explanation is that the question is rhetorical. A rhetorical question, by definition is a question posed for the sake of emphasis and not for the purpose of soliciting an answer. Its context supplies its own answer by suggestion and admits of no others. In essence the actual question posed is **who is able** to go against His will, counsel, purpose or determination?

The obvious answer to this can be found in the writings of the Prophet Daniel chapter 4 verse 35, wherein he states, "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he does according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say unto him, what doest thou". The humanistic reasoning of mankind works like this: if God chooses and rejects, pardons and punishes whom He pleases, why are the rejected ones blamed? Who if rejected by Him cannot help sinning and thus perishing? This objection shows, quite conclusively, the real nature of the doctrine objected to and that is, **election** and **non-election** to eternal salvation prior to any difference of personal character. This is the **only** doctrine that could suggest the objection stated here and it is only to that doctrine is the objection plausible. So what is Paul's answer? As we move to the following verse Paul's explanation unfolds. First it is irreverence and presumption in the creature to arraign or indict the creator. In the next several verses it will become apparent that the Apostle Paul does not seriously entertain such objections to the **Sovereignty of God!**

As we progress further into the chapter, we read from the King James Version, Romans 9:20. "Nay but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? And from the Greek Text, "yes, rather, o man, who are you replying against God? Shall the thing formed say to the one who formed it, why have you made me thus"? In this verse, the Apostle Paul chides any man who would ask such obloquy questions in the proceeding verse. Instead of entertaining the questioning of God's right to find fault, Paul turns the tables, by asking, who do you think **you are**, you who are replying against God? Here the Greek participle "**ahn•dahp•ok•ree•nom•ehn•os**" rendered "replying against", is derived from the Greek words "**ahnd•ee**" and "**Kreen•om•eh**" and literally means "judgment from that is against", an "against-answer" or an "answer which rejects" what God has said.

The **main issue** at stake here is **God's sovereignty; His modus operandi** involved in bringing men into a relationship with Himself. Now those who **reject** God's **sovereign electing, giving mercy, and calling out** of a people today should take Paul's chiding seriously because it is also directed to them.

Here Paul goes on to ask, "Shall the thing formed say to the one who formed it, **why** have you made me thus"? Note as we pointed out earlier, the use of the Greek interrogative negative participle "**mee**" is rendered "not". Again, it is used for assumed hesitant or indefinite denial. It not only **denies** the **factuality** but even the **idea** of the thought that follows the particle, so it in essence indicates that such a question is **illegitimate**. Now we must understand this, the thing that is **made** has **no right** to **question** the **wisdom** of its **maker** (Isaiah. 29:16; 45:9).

The fact of the matter is that neither those **receiving** the mercy **nor those left** to **continue** in their hardness, have **any right** to **question** what **God has done**. **God** and **God alone** is the one who **establishes** and **determines** that which is **right** and **wrong**. He is **infinite** and **omniscient**. Contrary-wise we creatures are **finite** and **ignorant!** There is no other place or point in the history of man's so called Christian Theology to which the human heart has been so ready to make objections to the doctrine of the **sovereignty of God**. This passage conveys the idea of answering the absurdity of those whose argument impinges on the **honor** of God. It implies that when God **declares** His **will**, man should be **still** because God has His **own** plans of **infinite wisdom**. It is not our role or function to reply against Him, or to arraign Him of injustice just because we cannot rationalize the reason of His doings (Ephesians 2:10).

Now we turn to Romans 9:21, reading first from the King James Version, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? Now from the Greek Text, "or does not the potter of the clay have authority from the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor"? This verse paints a picture for us of a potter who has absolute authority over the clay, the raw material with which he works. Here the potter represents God, who has absolute authority, whereas the clay represents men in their dead-in-trespases-and-

sins state. Out of this clay, on the basis of mercy, God makes some vessels to be used in His presence. These are vessels of "tee• meen", translated "honor", "great worth", "valuable" or "precious". On the other hand God makes out of this clay vessels of "ah• ee• mee• ahn", translated "dishonor", comparatively speaking, "without worth and value", for menial or servile use (II Timothy 2:20-21).

As we gaze at this picture of the potter's fashioning clays, our attention is drawn to the fact that God has **complete power** over the clay, to make out of it anything He pleases. Furthermore, we observe that He **only** had **one** lump of clay, which constitutes the raw material used to make vessels fit for His glory.

Note, without **adding to** or **deleting** any ingredients from this lump, it is also used to make vessels for the most menial uses. This picture does not suggest that God makes some men who represent the lump, worse than what they were as the progeny of Adam. The basic ingredients of God's clay remain the same. Thus God glorifies **some** according to His good pleasure while He leaves **others** in the state of their Adamic worthlessness. He is just, when He **blesses some**, but He is also just when He **declines to bless others**.

Now those who object to the doctrine of **God's sovereignty** in the matter of **election** as it relates to **eternal salvation**, do so because they **thoroughly** misunderstand what the **rights** of their **Creator** and **Maker** are. Their objection is grounded on ignorance or misapprehension of the relation between God and His sinful creatures. They suppose that God **is under obligation** to extend **His** grace to **all** and they enthusiastically teach that **justice requires** Him to do so. But the fact of the matter is God is not under obligation to extend His grace to **any!**

When He extends His grace and mercy to **some**, it does not breach the **attributes** of His **righteousness** if He declines to extend it to **all**. **All** are sinners (Romans 3:23) and have forfeited every claim to His mercy. It is therefore perfectly **competent** for God to **spare one** and **not another**, to make **one** vessel to **honor** and **another** to **dishonor**. God as a **sovereign creator**, has the same right over the creature that a potter has over the clay. But the Apostle does not speak of God's right over **creatures**, but His right over **sinful creatures**, as he clearly intimates in the following verses. It is simply the cavil of a **sinful creature** against **his creator** that this verse answers to. The point of the matter is, God is under **no** obligation to **give** His grace to **any**, but as sovereign creator; fashions the clay to **His liking**. There is **nothing unjust** in such **sovereignty**.

Moving to Romans 9:22, we read from the King James Version, "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessel of wrath fitted to destruction". Now it is very important that we are absolutely accurate in our interpretation of this verse as well as the following verse (Romans 9:23), so we turn to the Greek grammar as we read from the Greek Text, Romans 9:22, "Ee theh then• lon o Theh• os ehn• theex• ahs• theh teen or• yeen keh gno• ree• seh to theen• ah• ton ahftoo eenehg• kehn ehn pollee mahk• roth• ee• mee• ah skehv• ee or• yees kaht• eer• tees• meh• nah ees ahp• o• lee• ahn", translated, "And if God, willing to manifest the wrath and to make known His power endured with much longsuffering vessels of wrath having been fitted unto destruction". This verse speaks of that which God was willing to put up with to show **wrath** against sin, but also to make known or shown His **power**. Note the Greek conjunctive particle "theh" as it is used to emphasize contrast. In this context, there are two things that God demonstrates. They are **wrath** on the one hand and His **power** on the other.

Here the Greek participle verb "theh• lon" rendered "willing", has the declension, active-nominative-masculine. Note the active voice denoting God's "working" or "willing". The thought is that God was **willing** in order to ", ehn• theex• ahs• theh" rendered "manifest" or "point out" and "display" both the wrath and to make **known** His power, to patiently **endure** vessels of wrath. Notice the Greek phrase "teen or• yeen", translated "the wrath" it is not rendered "His wrath", for it does not have the possessive pronoun "ahf• too" (His) associated with it. Here the emphasis is on wrath and anger

against sin; a requisite in a moral universe, and not on the one who expressed His wrath. However other passages make it crystal clear that the source of this wrath **is** God (Romans 1:18;3:5; Ephesians 5:6). The second thing that God willed to make known is "to thee• nah• ton ahf• too", rendered "His power", "His might" and "His ability". Here, the revealing of wrath and His power is highlighted against a background of sinful vessels destined for destruction. The key verb in this verse is "ee•nehg• kehn", translated "endured", which means He "bore with" and "put up with" vessels of wrath with "mahk• ro• thee• mee• ah" rendered, "much longsuffering". Thus it required much patience on God's part to endure the insults and blasphemy of Adam's depraved offspring. Here Paul describes them as "skehv• ee or• yees", translated "vessels of wrath" or "vessels that belong to wrath", as indicated by the genitive of possession. Note the participle verb "kaht•eer• tees• meh• nah, rendered "fitted", is in the passive voice; thus identifying those who have been "ordered" or "thoroughly prepared" to meet certain demands or conditions.

The intention of the Apostle is to denote in this verse those who have been "mortised together" or "knitted together unto the end of "ahpo•lee• ahn", rendered "destruction", or "perishing" or those "appointed unto death" at the time of the Adamic fall. The accusative case documents the fact that utter ruin and loss was the object to which these vessels of dishonor have been assigned. But why would God allow this? Again, note the Greek infinitive verb "gno• ree• seh", rendered "to make known"; it is in the aorist tense and the active voice which means that God preplanned and pre-purposed that which would **make known** and **magnify** His **power**.

Now we turn to Romans 9:23, and read from the King James Version "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore-prepared unto glory". Now from the Greek Text, "And that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy, which he prepared before hand unto glory". Again, as we have stated, the key verb in verse 22 was "endured" (ee•nehg• kehn). This same verb plays a key role in verse 23, which ties together the thought in both these verses. In essence, God patiently endures **vessels of wrath**, in the process of pointing out wrath and His power, which is basic to making known the riches of His glory upon **vessels of mercy**. Now if we are to grasp the **greatness** of the **riches** of God's glory, then we must also understand the **wrath**, which rested upon the entire sinful human race. This wrath and anger doomed **all** sinners unto destruction and death (Romans 6:23).

As God's mercy, motivated by His love, is extended to a **vessel of mercy**, the greatness of God's power is seen in His ability to deliver one from so great a wrath. Notice the greater our appreciation of the wrath against man's sin, the greater will be our appreciation of the **power of God**, which is able to extricate Him; and the **riches of His glory** will become more fully known to us. In order to measure **God's power**, we must begin with the **depth** of man's depravity and extend to the **height** of **God's glory**. Our failure to see man as he is presented in the word of God, as one utterly undone and **totally** depraved; will result in our failure to understand the **greatness** of God's power.

So having observed that even **vessels of wrath** play a role in magnifying the power of God, we closely scrutinize what is said about the **vessels of mercy**.

First the Apostle Paul states, that God was willing to endure patiently the awful effrontery of vessels of wrath, in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon the vessels of mercy. The Greek phrase "ton ploo• ton tees thox• ees ahftoo, translated "the riches of His glory" conveys the idea of the **wealth** and **rich benefits** which **belong** to His glory. Remember this, **all things, everything**, which is by word or deed, has as its ultimate aim; the **praise** which **belongs** to His **glory** (Exodus 9:16; Colossians 3:17; Ephesians 1:6,12,14).

Notice these vessels of mercy were "prepared beforehand unto glory". The Greek verb "pro• eet• ee• mah• sehn", translated "prepared beforehand" is derived

from "pro" and "eh• tee• mah• zo" and literally means (from the aorist tense) "in prior time" or "previously to make ready or prepare". Note the indicative mood verifying this factual action as indicated by the active voice. Here the thought is that in prior time God prepared certain individuals to become vessels of mercy; to become recipients of God's elective mercy. Such ones are persons who have been **predestinated** unto ultimate glorification with Christ (Romans 8:17; Philippians 3:21). Observe the phrase "thox• ee ahf too", rendered "His glory". Again, all things, including that "glorious exuberance of divine mercy", **was** and **is** manifested in His **choosing** and **eternally arranging** for the salvation of **some** depraved sinners.

As we now turn to Romans 9:24, we read from the King James Version, "Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? Now from the Greek Text, "Even us, whom he called, not only out of the Jews but also out of the Gentiles". In keeping the context intact, Paul states regarding the vessels of mercy, "Which he prepared beforehand unto glory, even us, whom he called", notice, out of **both** Jews and Gentiles. Here Paul identifies **us** believers as the **vessels of mercy**, as those who were **prepared beforehand**, and as those whom God **had called**. The same thought is presented in Romans chapter 8 wherein Paul states "And whom he predestinated, these he also called. In this verse (Romans 9:24), the Greek pronoun "ee• mahs", rendered "**us**", is used with reference to **all believers**.

The Greek verb "eh• kahl• eh• sehn", translated "called", represents a given stage in God's leading of men into a relationship with Himself. It speaks of the Holy Spirit's **calling** and **wooing** those who have previously been **prepared** and **predestined** to **receive mercy**. As a part of God's sovereign soteriological program, it is naturally **irresistible**. It is that which the Holy Spirit **does** as the **emissary** of God the Father (John 6:44).

Now as Paul deals with the issue of God in His sovereignty calling **individuals** to be vessels of mercy, he never speaks of those who God is **going to call**, but always points to those whom God **has called**. Every believer's call is effectively, a **past-completed occurrence** according to the foreknowledge of God (Romans 8:29-30).

Here as he reflected on those who had **responded** to the gospel of God's grace, the evidence was unmistakable, that God **has called** believers "not only out of the Jews, but also out of the Gentiles". Now it was not surprising that God had **called some Jews** into fellowship with himself, for they were His special people, having been set apart in Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). But what was hard for some of the more exclusive Jews to accept was that God had also **called Gentiles**. Now to speculate futuristically about **whom** God may or may not call (as some do); is entirely foreign to what the apostle Paul says. **Truth** regarding the **sovereignty of God** solidifies those already called; it explains how God has graciously brought them into a relationship with Himself. An understanding of God's sovereign soteriological program **rescues** one from the debilitate thought of having merely a "happenstance" salvation. Such thinking is the result of one not having an understanding of the **doctrine of election**.

Here, for the first time in Romans chapter nine, the calling ("ehk• ahl• eh• sehn") of the Gentiles is introduced. Up to this point Paul had confined his illustration of election to the choice of one portion and the rejection of another of the **same Israel**. Here he focuses on the substitution of the **called** Gentiles for the **rejected** Jews. Had Israel's rejection of their Messiah been total, then God's promise to Abraham would **not** have been fulfilled by the substitution of the Gentiles in their place. But Israel's rejection being only partial; there is the presentation of "a" remnant" in which the promise was made good but even it is "according to the election of grace". Here for the first time the Apostle tells us that along with this "elect remnant" of Israel it was God's purpose to "take out of the Gentiles a people for His name" (Acts 15:14), and that had been announced in the Old Testament scriptures. So here Paul made a very significant statement "not only out of the Jews, **but also** out of the Gentiles". What a profound statement! What a **glorious revelation**, what an **eternal fact** for us to know that **we** as Gentiles were **always** included!

Now as we read Romans 9:25, first from the King James Version, "As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And now from the Greek Text," As he also says in Hosea, I will call those who are not my people, my people, and her who is not beloved, beloved". To insure the complete understanding of what the Apostle is conveying as he quotes from the Prophet Hosea, we turn to the Greek grammar and read **directly** from the Greek Text, " Os keh ehn to o• seeeh lehy• ee, kahl•eh• so ton oo lah• on moo lah• on moo keh teen ook eeg•ahp•ee•meh• neen eeg•ahp•ee• meh• neen". Here in support of the fact confirming that God had called Gentiles to be the recipients of His mercy, Paul cites what Hosea has said on the issue (Hosea 2:23), "And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to *them which were* not my people, Thou *art* my people; and they shall say, *Thou art* my God".

Now a very meticulous translation of the phrase in this verse (Romans 9:25) would be "I will call the not-people-of-mine, my people, and the not-having been-beloved, beloved. This is a predictive statement made by the Holy Spirit through the Prophet Hosea. There are several schools of thought as to exactly what Hosea is stating in this passage. They are (1) The passage is not relating immediately to pagans Gentiles, but to the Kingdom of the ten tribes of Israel. Those who are persuaded in this thinking purport that since those who were subjects of the Kingdom of Israel at this point in History had sunk to the level of the pagans; they were "not God's people" and consequently "not beloved", therefore Paul is applying it to the Gentiles in this sense. Now this is erroneous because this would render God to be a covenant breaker (which he is not)! This would also be in total violation to the **principle of election**. Remember God's **elect** are **His not based on their actions** but on God's **sovereignty**. (2) Some construe this passage to outline the foretelling of the conversion of the Gentiles to salvation. Here they purport that Paul is referring to this passage to show how the rejection of the Jews and subsequent inclusion of the Gentiles was foretold in the Old Testament, and therefore is consistent with the Abrahamic promise made to the fathers under the doctrine of the Old Testament. Now this may seem logical to some, but it is very illogical if you understand dispensations and covenants. Notice some principles absolutely cannot cross-dispensational lines, while others may. God may replace a covenant with another, but He never alters the covenant itself.

The flaw in this interpretation is that the inclusion of the Gentiles as people of God was dispensationally reserved for the manifestation of the Mystery as revealed to the Apostle Paul (Ephesians 3:2-6). Also the Abraham Covenant never promised salvation directly to the Gentiles, but through the channel of Israel's acceptance of the promise. In other words the terms are that Israel **must accept** the promise in order for the Gentiles to receive any benefits of the covenant (Abrahamic). Also we must understand the theme of Hosea's ministry of prophecy.

The Hebrew word "Hosea" (**Ho-shay-ah** or **oshe ah**), means "salvation". The ministry or prophecy involves the restoring of one who "is unfaithful". God, who is **faithful** will never ultimately abandon or forsake His elect based on their actions and again, God is **not** a covenant breaker (Jeremiah 31:27-40).

So what is the Apostle Paul's reasoning in discoursing the context of Romans 9:22-27, as he quotes from the Prophet Hosea in verse 25? Going to the Greek grammar, we note the Greek conjecture "os" rendered "as". It is an adverbial form of a relative pronoun, thus the thought construction is "thus so" or "in such a way" or in the same way as or "it is like this". Notice the language of the Old and New Testament writings of the scriptures, namely Hebrew and Greek respectively. Here the grammatical construction involves combining semantically a substitute in place of a substitute in expressing a comparison.

Thus the verse could open with the expression "as it were" or "it is something •claimed or supposed. Note Paul is primarily referencing the policies of another generation wherein Hosea speaks of a future dispensation, which obviously pertains to the extension of the Messianic Kingdom's inclusion of the Gentiles (Genesis 12:3). This is indicated by the Greek verb "**kahl• eh• so**", rendered "will call" which

is in the future tense. So Paul does not use it in this verse to teach new Church Truth, which is not found in the Old Testament, but merely to corroborate, in a secondary sense, that which had been revealed to him. Notice the passive perfect participle verb "eeg • ahp • ee • meh • neen" rendered "beloved". Here the perfect tense denotes action that was completed or consummated in the past, with the results active in the present, thus God from eternity elected His "loved ones" or "beloved". This is borne out by this fact of the passive voice. In general, Paul often used the Old Testament to confirm like principles and as such, often apart and not directly related to contextual considerations.

To further illustrate this point we turn to Romans 9:26, as we read first from the King James Version, "And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God". Now from the Greek Text, "And it shall be in the place where it was said to them, you are not my people, there they shall be called sons of the living God". This quotation is also taken from Hosea, but from an earlier and different context (Hosea 1:10).

The main point is concerning those who are not the Lord's people, that the time is coming when they will be called sons of the living God, (i.e., in the Millennium Age). In a secondary sense, Paul uses this to confirm what was taking place in his day, namely that Gentiles had been called into a Son-relationship with God (Romans 8:14-16).

As we move to Romans 9:27, we read from the King James Version, "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:" From the Greek Text, "And Isaiah cries out on behalf of Israel, if the number of sons of Israel may be as the sand of the sea, the remnant shall be saved". The previous quotations from Hosea were cited to confirm what Paul saw actually taking place, Gentiles had been called and made vessel of mercy. Now he cites quotations (in a similar sense) from Isaiah to confirm what was taking place among the Jews, which is, they were **also** being called and receiving mercy. We should keep in mind that Paul is referring to God's elect for the present grace dispensation, those who are members of the body of Christ. So Paul seems to have had no illusions about great numbers of Jews being called. In fact, the passage that he cites in this verse (Rom. 9:27), speaks of only a remnant being saved. Here the Greek noun "ee • pol • eem • mah" translated "remnant", is derived from the preposition "eepo" and the verb "lee • po" and denotes that which is "left behind" or that which is "remaining" or the "survivors". The number of the children of Israel may be as innumerable as the sand of the sea, a very **great** number, yet out of these, a "remnant", a few remaining ones, an insignificant number are being saved in this dispensation (grace).

And now we move to Romans 9:28, we read from the King James Version, "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth" And now from the Greek Text, "For the Lord will execute a consummating and cutting short (of His) word upon the earth". The expression in this verse is a continuation of the quoted passage that Paul refers to in the preceding verse. All of its significance is basically addressed in the context.

Now we read from the King James Version Romans 9:29, ""And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrhah. Now the Greek Text, "And even as Isaiah has previously said, except the Lord of the Sabaoth had left us a seed, we would have become as Sodom, and we would be even like Gomorrah". According to the Hebrew Text, a better translation would be "except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a very small remnant, we would have become as Sodom" (Isaiah 1:9). Observe the fact that God has called a few Jews to be recipients of His mercy in this church age. This is confirmed as being typical of the Jews and adds credence to the fact that only those called are the true seed of Abraham (Romans 9:7-8). Now the clear implication in this verse is that apart from God's mercy, preserving a small remnant of Israelites, Israel would have become just as bad as the worse of the Gentiles. This is a reaffirmation of the fact that all men, including the Jews are totally depraved and devoid of that, which is right and good in God's sight (Romans 3:9; Ephesians 2:1-3).

Failure to accept what the Bible says about man's **depravity** predisposes one to fail to comprehend the sovereignty of God in the sphere of soteriology (salvation). Now we make one further observation on the contents of this verse (Romans 9:29). Note, the Greek phrase "ee mee kee• ree• os sah• vah• oth ehg• kaht• eh• ee•pehn ee• meen spehr• ma", rendered, "Except the Lord of the sabaoth had left us a seed". The word Sabaoth is a translation of the Hebrew word meaning "armies" or "host". Thus it is more accurately in this verse expressed "the Lord of hosts" or "the Almighty One" (James 5:4). It is a phrase properly expressive of His majesty and power and is appropriately introduced here as the "act of saving the seed". It was a signal of the "act of power" in the midst of great surrounding wicked opposition to the will of God concerning the preservation of His elect. Note the Greek phrase "ehg• kaht• eh• ee• pehn eemeen" rendered, "had left us", "had preserve" or "kept from destruction". Here the preservation of the Jews is ascribed to God, and it is affirmed that if God had not interposed, "the whole nation" would have been cut off. Note also the reference to "the seed". In Hebrew the word "zeh• rah" or "seed" in Isaiah means "one surviving or escaping", corresponding with the word "remnant". The word "seed" in the scripture most commonly means "descendant" or "posterity".

Here the receiving Jews in this dispensation of grace are referred to as a "part", "a small portion" and "a remnant". Now this shall be dealt with in greater detail as we progress in our discourse of Romans, chapters ten and eleven.

Now as we move to Romans 9:30, we read first from the King James Version, "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith". And now from the Greek Text, "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles who were not pursuing righteousness obtained righteousness, the righteousness which is out of faith". Now in view of the fact that only a relative small number of Jews were accepting the gospel of God's grace as Paul writes this epistle; the question was raised regarding the word of God, i.e. has it (the word) failed? The question was posed because the number of Jews being saved, compared to the total number, was a very low percentage. Paul does not, however concede that the word of God has failed (Romans 9:6). Instead he deals with the issue from the standpoint of God, the dispenser of mercy.

The number that is saved **does not depend** upon human response to the gospel or that which is depicted by exercising the human will or running. But it does depend upon **how many receive mercy** from God, **are called** by God and **are made** new creatures by God (Romans 9:24; II Corinthians 5:11).

Now in the process of pointing out that God, in the final analysis, is the one who determines **how many** will respond to the gospel call; Paul also brought the Gentiles into the picture in verse 24. Even as God had called a small percentage of all the Jews, He was also calling elected Gentiles.

Note again that in verses 25-29, Paul used the writings of the Old Testament, not to teach something new, but in a secondary sense to show that this was feasible in view of what Hosea and Isaiah had stated.

Now as we approach the following verses (Romans 30-33) in closing out Romans chapter nine, the emphasis is on faith, which is the **only** way divine righteousness can be obtained. The opening question in verse 30, "What shall we say then", means that as a consequence of what he has said, what should he now say or what should be his conclusion. In the previous context, Paul had just finished positively declaring and affirming that salvation is totally of the Lord. He then switches to the faith aspect of it, clearly implying that saving faith is from the Lord (Ephesians 2:8). God's bestowal of mercy upon hell-bound-sinners includes both the sacrificial death of Christ and the faith by which it is appropriated. Here Paul exclaims that 'the Gentiles who were not pursuing righteousness obtained righteousness. Note the Greek participle "thee• oo• kon• dah", translated "pursing it" infers that the Gentiles were not chasing after and earnestly endeavoring to acquire righteousness. Their adherence



to various pagan religions could not be interpreted as pursuing righteousness. In fact, it often involved pursuing immorality.

So when the gospel of God's grace was proclaimed to these pagan Gentiles, they "kaht• eh• ah• vahn", rendered "obtained". That is they "laid hold of" and "attained" unto righteousness. Here Paul describes what they laid hold of as the out-of-faith righteousness. This means that the source of this righteousness is the faith, which God imparts to those He calls. It is an undaunted belief in God and all that He has provided for us in Jesus Christ, including His righteousness (I Corinthians 1:30). The out-of-faith righteousness involves God-given faith, which fully depends upon the perfect faithfulness of Jesus Christ instead of on the works of the Law for righteousness (Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9).

As we move to Romans 9:31, we read from the King James Version ". "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness". Now from the Greek Text", "But Israel pursuing Law righteousness, did not come up to the Law". Here the Apostle Paul in the context speaks of two kinds of righteousness: the out-of-the-law righteousness and the out-of-faith-righteousness. The first depends upon doing the works of the Law to gain righteousness, whereas the second involves faith, depending upon the faithful person of our Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness and righteousness.

In this verse Paul states that Israel pursued Law righteousness, but they did not "eh• phthah• sehn", that is they did not "come up to" or "attain to" or "arrive at" keeping the law. Since all of those under the law, failed to fulfill the law, they came under the curse of the law rather than being made righteous by it (Galatians 3:10).

Thus, the reason the Mosaic Law utterly failed to make men righteous was due to the weakness of the flesh of its depraved adherents (Romans 8:3).

Now we move to Romans 9:32, as we read first from the King James Version, "Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;" Now from the Greek Text, "On account of what? because they did not pursue it out of faith, but as out of works. They stumbled at the stone of stumbling". This verse opens with the Greek phrase "thee• ah tee", translated "on account of what" or "because of what" or simply "why"? The thought is, why did Israel fail to obtain righteousness? What was the reason for this failure? Paul's answer is that they tried to obtain it out of works, out of the source of works, by keeping the law, rather than out of faith, i.e. out of the source of faith, or out of God-given faith. In other words, Israel failed to acquire a righteous standing with God because she was depending on her flesh to keep the law, which doomed her failure. As Paul states in Romans 8:8 "Those existing in the flesh are **not able** to please God". While Israel had her eyes fixed on the law, she failed to see the precious stone God sent to her; hence, "they stumbled at the stone of stumbling". As we look ahead at the next verse (Romans 9:33), this "stone of stumbling" is clearly identified as being the person of Jesus Christ (Isaiah 8:14-15; I Peter 2:6-8).

One of the tragedies of works-program religions is that they keep their adherents so involved in so-called good works that they blind them to the majestic person of Jesus Christ. Most professed Christians today are bound by legalistic interpretations of the scriptures, which prevent them from enjoying the wonderful benefit of Jesus Christ and the freedom we have in Him (Galatians 5:1). God and God alone has secured our salvation.

As we close out the ninth chapter of Romans, we read verse 33 from the King James Version, "As it is written, Behold I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. And now from the Greek Text, "Even as it is written, behold I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and the one believing on Him shall not be put to shame". This quotation is similar to Isaiah 8:14 and Isaiah 28:16. It implies that God the Father is the one who set

forth Jesus Christ in Zion (Matthew 1:21). The person who believes "upon" (**ehp**) Him shall not be "**kaht•eh• skheen• thee• seh• teh**", translated "put to shame". This Greek verb is in the passive voice and conveys the thought that no one shall be put to shame, disgraced or made sorry for believing on Him (Jesus Christ) and being identified with Him through faith.

Now as we make final commentary on the closing text of Romans chapter nine we note that it outlines the plight of the Jews. Again we observe how they have missed their goal. The reason is, they followed after the Law of (for) righteousness (Romans 9:31). They indeed desired justification and holiness and seemed very ambitious of being the people of God and the favorites of heaven.

But they did not attain to it, that is, the greatest part of them did not, as the vast majority stuck to their old Jewish principles and ceremonies and sought comfort in those observances; embracing the shadow, while rejecting the substance which was available. Thus they fell short of acceptance with God and therefore went to their house unjustified. They diligently sought righteousness but not in the way which was provided for them; they did not seek it in a humbling way, they did not pursue it "by faith", i.e. depending on the merit of Jesus Christ. They did not submit to the terms of the Gospel of Christ, which are the very **life** and **end** of the law. But they sought it by works, as if they could expect justification by their observances of the precepts and ceremonies of the Law of Moses. This was the stumbling-stone at which they stumbled. Israel refused to reject the corrupt principle, which they had espoused, that through the observance and obedience of the Law they would be justified before God.

Their pursuance of this fruitless **endeavor** excluded them from the true means of being reconciled by or through the doctrine of Jesus Christ. What a tragedy! Christ Himself is to them a stone of stumbling! It is sad that Christ should be set for the fall of **any**; that the foundation stone should be to **any** a stone of stumbling and the rock of salvation a rock of offense, as He is to the unbelieving Jews. But thank God, there is a remnant that does believe on Him, and they shall not be ashamed or disappointed and their hopes of being justified by Him shall not be disappointed.

But the saddest commentary of all is that there are many of God's elect today who **should** benefit from observing the failure of Israel, but unfortunately many denominations have instituted like same principles and patterns of approach to satisfying the righteousness and justice of God. **In spite** of the documentation of Israel's failure in **these** as well as other New Testament **scriptures**, some of God's people **even today** have **rejected** the righteousness of God and have gone about to **establish their own**. It is **so** sad. Here we have the record of the Jews shortcomings, yet some **completely ignore** it because men love institutions that glorify men, rather than God. It is only by the grace of God that men are saved today. How sad that the magnitude and essence of the sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for all sins and rose because of our justification; is not taken seriously enough for us to know that **it**, in **itself** is sufficient, without any other additive or any other ingredient. **He is enough**, yes **even more than enough** to satisfy the righteousness and justice which is **demanded** by a righteous and just God.

Now we begin our exegesis of the verses of Romans chapter ten, by the reading of verse one in the King James Version, "Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved". Now since we have a slight variation of wording in the Greek Majority Text from that in the United Bible Societies (Greek) Text, we will read this verse literally from the Greek Majority Text.

"**Ahth• eh• phee ee mehn ehv• thok• ee• ah tees eh• mees kahr•thee• ah keh ee theh• ee• sees pros ton Theh• on ee• pehr ahf• ton ees so• tee• ree• ahn**", translated "Brethren my heart's desire and supplication to God on behalf of Israel is unto salvation". Now the context makes it very clear that the antecedent of the Greek pronoun "**ahf• ton**", rendered "them" is the actual wording, not "Israel" as it is rendered in some of the English translations. But it is clear that Paul is referring to his Jewish "**ahth• eh• phee**", rendered "brethren". Here Paul's "**theh• ee• sees**", rendered "supplication", "entreaty" or "petition" to God was ("**ees**") "unto the end" or "for the purpose" that they might be saved (I Corinthians 9:19-22).

Now we scrutinize the fuller meaning of the phrase "my heart's desire". Paul often uses the Greek word "kahr• thee• ahs", rendered "heart" to denote rational and reasonable affection, i.e. a feeling of affection conjoined with the intellect. Here the Greek word "ehv• thok• ee• ah", translated "desire" is from "ehv" and "thok• eh• o" and literally means "to think well", "good pleasure", and "good delight". The thought is that uppermost in Paul's mind and heart, that which would please and delight him most, would be the salvation of his own people, the Jews.

Now having observed the meaning of the Greek word "theh• ee• sees", rendered "supplication", we note the fact that it is directed "pros ton Theh• on", rendered "towards God". According to the scriptures, **all** prayer is addressed to God the Father (Matthew 6:6,9; Romans 8:15; Ephesians 1:16-17; 3:14).

It should be in the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:26-27; Jude 20), through (thee• ah) Jesus Christ (Colossians 3:17), or "in the name of" Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:20). Now there are some who point to the statement in this verse and say that our prayers can be the source of men being saved, purporting that Paul's desire for his brethren's salvation was backed up by his supplication to God unto this very end. It is true that if Paul didn't believe that prayer makes a difference; that it was an important ingredient in the process of God saving his kinsmen according to the flesh, there would certainly be no reason for him to make the statement in this verse. But we must understand that while this, as well as other scriptures is strong evidence favoring the propriety of praying that lost men may be saved (I Timothy 2:1-4); Paul, by no means in this verse nor anywhere else in his epistles, ever directly linked the determination or receiving of salvation to anyone's request of God. Even though Paul knew that Israel had been hardened (Romans 11:7,25) and had stumbled and fallen with reference to the gospel of God's grace, he still pleaded their case before God; knowing that according to God's elective mercy, he was going to save a remnant out of them (Romans 11:5). Note it is exceedingly important to be mindful of the fact that Paul looked on **all men** as potential candidates for salvation, therefore bona fide subjects of prayer. Now the sovereignty of God in salvation, should be an unchallenged principle in the process of determining those who are saved. So Paul's application of God's sovereignty is always to those who **have been saved** and not to those who **will be saved**.

Now we turn to Romans 10:2, we read first from the King James Version "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge". And now from the Greek Text, "For I bear witness to them that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge". Now, from his own experience as a Jew, even one that had been a zealot of Judaism, Paul certainly knew the Jewish mindset. Thus he was capable of bearing witness as formerly an insider and now as an outsider (Acts 9:1-2; 20:22-23). Here he "mahr• tee• ro", rendered "witness" "testifies" and "declares" that "they have a zeal of God". The Greek word "zee• lon", rendered "zeal" means that they are fervently jealous and ardently aspiring to do what they think God wants them to do. Paul calls this "zee• lon theh• oo", rendered "a zeal of God", i.e. a zeal that belongs to God, a zeal that should be associated with keeping the Mosaic Law. The terminology Paul is using here is approbative: that which would be very desirable in conjunction with adherence to the Law.

Note, Paul does not condemn their zeal as such, but he indicates that it is misplaced, a jealousy for the wrong thing at the wrong time. Here he uses the strong adversative "ahl• lah", rendered "but" to emphasize the fact that they are off track, i.e. their zeal is not according to knowledge. The Greek noun "ehp• eeg• no• seen" is derived from the preposition "eh• pee" prefixed to the verb "yee• no• sko" and may literally be interpreted "knowledge upon" hence "added knowledge".

This noun is used to depict the perfect, complete and full knowledge revealed for the Church. The point Paul is making here is that these zealous Jews were missing the mark because they were not serving God according to knowledge that was indeed available to them; they chose to cling to the traditions of their heritage. So Paul states that they have a misconception regarding the Law and the zeal associated with it, insisting it was still God's program some thirty years after it was laid aside

(Matthews 27:51; Galatians 3:24-25). They were **passionately religious**, but in vain, for they had missed the main reason for the giving of the Law; to impress the exceeding sinfulness of sin upon man's conscience (Romans 7:13). Unfortunately there are many today who are locked and entrenched in religious systems that regulate the mind and blind the eyes to the **true light**, who is Jesus Christ, our **only** righteousness. If any group or denomination has anyone trapped into a doctrine that espouses the virtues of man or a dependence upon the accomplishment of man, one needs to come out from among them and separate from such! Thus **true holiness** and **true righteousness** cannot be realized except through our total surrender to that which has been provided for us, the matchless Lamb of God. His blood is able to eradicate our sins, wipe our slate clean and deliver us before God **justified!**

Now as we move to Romans 10:3, we read from the King James Version, "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God". And now from the Greek Text, 'For being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they have not been subjected to the righteousness of God'. Here the Greek present participle "**ahg• no• oon• dehs**", translated "being ignorant", means that they were existing as ignorant ones, as non-knowing and non-understanding ones. This participle describes their state of being, the kind of people they were, not in a derogatory manner, but factual. Note Paul never excused ignorance, but over and over again expresses his desire that it may be replaced with knowledge (Romans 1:13; 11:25; I Corinthians 10:1).

Now that which they were ignorant of was "**teen ton Theh• oo theek•eh• os• een• een**", rendered "the righteousness of God", or as expressed by the genitive of possession "the righteousness which belongs to God". This is a righteousness which is totally owned, possessed and of God's doing (Ephesians 2:10). This divine righteousness is mentioned some eight times in this epistle of Romans. Jesus Christ is the embodiment of this righteousness. According to I Corinthians 1:30, He "was made wisdom for us from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption". In Philippians 3:9, Paul expresses his desire to have the righteousness which is "through the faithfulness of Christ", i.e. the "out of God" righteousness based on faith" (Galatians 2:16).

Note their willful ignorance of Jesus Christ is synonymous with their being ignorant of God's righteousness (Romans 10:5). Now we must understand that Paul is not charging these Jews with being ignorant of the **personal** holiness or righteousness of God, but of God's **plan of justification** which is that of **Him declaring** sinners righteous by faith in His Son (Jesus Christ). Here God's plan stands opposed to their efforts to make themselves righteous by their own works. Incredibly many of God's people are entrenched in this same mindset today. There are many denominations that encourage their followers to endeavor to confirm or make valid their own righteousness, to render it such as to constitute a ground of justification before God, or to make **good** on their **own** claim to eternal life by their own merits. These are ones who stand **opposed** to salvation and justification **by grace, by or through faith**, which is God's **only** plan. All those who espouse such practice and doctrine must in **every instance** be **opposed** and **challenged to deny** themselves and **surrender** to the perfect will of God. Regardless of what ones denominational doctrine promulgates or tradition has led one to think, one must **not** have **any** confidence in his own righteousness. One must **yield** his heart to God's plan, which requires one to confess that his flesh has **no merit**, and can only be saved by the merit of **another** (Jesus Christ). No obstacle to salvation is so great as the self-righteousness pundits who insist upon factoring in the human element into God's **perfect** formula for salvation. It is an outright stench in the nostrils of God.

As we further exegete this verse (Romans 10:3), we observe that in contrast to accepting God's righteousness as a free gift, these Jews were "**zee• toon• dehs**" rendered 'seeking' or "striving" and "endeavoring to obtain" their own righteousness. Note the active voice and present participle; again, they were a seeking-your-own-righteousness people. The Greek phrase "**teen ee• thee• ahn**" rendered "your own", refers to that which was private and peculiar to them; a righteousness which they,

themselves were trying to generate through keeping the Law (Romans 10:6). Paul once had this same kind of righteousness before he was saved, which he referred to as "eemeen theek• eh• os• een• een" translated 'my righteousness' which he rejected when he received God's righteousness in Christ (Philippians 3:8-9).

As we close our exegesis of this verse (Romans 10:3) we note Paul's statement "They have not been subjected to the righteousness of God". Here the Greek verb "eep• eht• ahy• ees• ahn" translated "subjected" is in the passive voice and means that they have not been arranged or placed under nor subordinated to the righteousness of God. The literal and obvious meaning of this clause is that God has not extended His mercy to these; God, as indicated by the aorist tense, had not called them (Romans 9:23-24). Consequently, they remained in their sins, keeping the Law, but insubordinate to God's righteousness and void of it.

As we now move to Romans 10:4, we read from the King James Version "For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. And now from the Greek Text, "For Christ is the end of the Law unto righteousness to everyone believing". Now having stated that the Jews were seeking to establish their own righteousness by keeping the Law, and were not subject to the righteousness of God which is embodied in Christ, Paul now affirms that "Christ is the end of the Law unto righteousness". Here the Greek noun "tehl• os" rendered "end" means that Christ is the consummation, fulfillment and the one who has brought the Law to an end. In essence, where the Law ends, Christ begins. The Law **ends** with **representative sacrifices** (types, shadows) whereas Christ **begins** with the **real offering**. As Paul explains in the epistle to the Galatians, the Law was a schoolmaster to lead the Jews to Christ, whereas salvation was and is never its (the Law's) intention. Again, its defined purpose was to lead them to Christ. Christ is the ultimate atoning sacrifice for sin, **He was always** the grand object of the whole sacrificial code of Moses, and His death was the fulfillment of its great object and design. Now when one separates the sacrificial death of Christ from the Law; the Law had no meaning, because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats, to take away sins. Wherefore their Messiah (Jesus) is represented as stating "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin offering hast thou not required: Then said I, Lo I come to do thy will; a body thou hath prepared me" (Psalms 40:6-7; Hebrews 10:4-10).

This proves that God never designed that the sacrifices of the Law should be considered the remedy for sin, but they were a type or a representative of that remedy; the actual remedy **was** and **is** the sacrificial body and blood offering of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus **He was the end** of the Law in respect to its sacrifices. And as sacrifices were offered merely to procure pardon of sin, righteousness or justification, Christ is the end of the Law for this justification to everyone that believes on Him. Thus He died for our offences and rose again for our justification, having made peace through the blood of His cross. Here Paul infers that every one of these Jews who had **rejected Christ**, had in effect rejected their **only** means of salvation, which the Law witnessed and required and which could not be obtained except through Christ and Christ alone. Now it is thoroughly documented that only **perfect obedience** to the Law could accomplish justification before God; to the end of securing His favor and eternal life. This same end is now accomplished by faith in Jesus Christ. So the simple and plain fact concerning ones salvation is that faith in Jesus Christ is the same end as that which is required by perfect obedience to the Law. What one must come to understand is that the formal (faith in Christ) is **possible** whereas the latter (man's perfect obedience to the Law) is **impossible**.

Now as we further exegete this verse (Romans 10:4), we examine the Greek phrase "ees theek• eh• os• een• een", rendered "unto righteousness". Here the Greek preposition "ees", as used with the accusative case conveys the thought that the object of Christ's perfectly keeping the intended spirit of the Law was "**unto the end of righteousness**". Note again, the Law had a definite place in God's eternal purpose, with reference to which Jesus Christ states "I did not come to destroy it but to fulfill it" (Matthew 5:17). Christ fully met the requirements of the Law by perfectly fulfilling its stipulations in spirit and act. Now whereas the Law was never perfectly kept by any and as a result rendered men cursed rather than righteousness, Jesus Christ's fulfillment of the Law consummated its

purpose in God's plan, i.e. revealing the contrast of the exceeding sinfulness of man's sin and the true righteousness that is found in the perfect essence of our blessed Savior of both Jews and Gentiles (Galatians 3:10, 24-25).

Now as we close our exegesis of this verse (Romans 10:4), we note that there is a limitation placed on the giving of this righteousness embodied in Christ; it is "pahn• dee to peest• ehv• on• dee" rendered "to everyone believing". Here the Greek participle rendered "believing" is in the present tense and passive voice; pointing out the fact that Christ is the perfect fulfillment of the Law to every Jew believing, trusting and having faith in Him. Thus, Paul is addressing Jewish believers in Rome, those who were once under the Law; informing them that through their faith –identification with Christ they have fulfilled the Law. Since the Law details the standard of God's righteousness, it can only be fulfilled by Jesus Christ. We note from the usage of the passive voice that these elect (believing) Jews were caused to believe, thus their belief was the result of God's gift of faith to them.

Now as we turn to Romans 10:5, we read from the King James Version, "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them". And now from the Greek Text, "For Moses writes regarding the righteousness that is out of the Law, that the man who has done it shall live by it". Now the latter part of this verse is a quote from Leviticus 18:5, which states "You shall keep my statutes, and my ordinances; which if a man do, he shall live by them". Note Paul makes it clear in his epistles that where there is righteousness, there is life, and vice versa, where there is life, we have to posit righteousness (Galatians 3:21). Here Paul references that the Law; promised life on the condition that a person does the Law actually according to the aorist participle it is to the man "o pee• ees• ahs", translated "who has done it". Strictly speaking, according to the Law of Moses, no one under it could know whether or not he had life until he was beyond the state of knowing namely death.

Now it is a fact that due to the weakness of the flesh (Romans 8:3), no one ever did the Law; therefore no man has acquired life by or through the Law (Galatians 3:11). Actually instead of the Jews gaining life by their futile efforts to keep the Law, as we have previously observed, they came under the curse of the Law namely, death (Galatians 3:10). This is why the Apostle Paul states that the main purpose of the Law was **not** to give men life and righteousness, but in their failure to obtain these, it **was** to make them conscious and aware of their sinful condition (Romans 3:19-20).

The failure of men to obtain life by the Law was certainly **not** the fault of the Law, which merely set forth God's principles and standards for His people at that point in time. But it made obvious the fault of men, that they were sinners by **nature**; who needed a Savior (Matthew 9:12-13).

Now as we continue to focus on and highlight this issue of righteousness as Paul dealt with it in his epistles, we note again that there are two kinds of righteousness. They are "conditional" and "unconditional". "Conditional righteousness" is that which a person obtains if he can meticulously observe every single aspect of the Law. Remember, he who is guilty in one point, is guilty of the whole (James 2:10). Since the Law operated on the basis of the flesh, and the flesh is sinfully sick (Romans 8:3), no man has ever attained or acquired Law-righteousness, because no man has ever fully met the conditions of the Law. On the other hand "unconditional righteousness" is righteousness, which God freely and in His sovereignty gives to His elect in accordance with His mercy and calling of them (Romans 9:23-24). This righteousness and the faith by which it is personally acquired are provided by God's grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Now we move along to Romans 10:6, as we read first from the King James Version, "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above):".

And now from the Greek Text" But the out of faith righteousness speaks thus, Do not say in your heart, who shall ascend into heaven? That is to bring Christ down;. Now we note again the conditional aspects of Law-righteousness as identified in Romans 10:5 vs. the unconditional aspects of faith-

righteousness as identified in this verse (Romans 10:6). Here Paul's description of them in these verses emphasizes the source from which each came. Again, Law-righteousness is "ehk too no• moo" rendered "out of the Law" where a faith-righteousness is "ehk peest• eh• os rendered "out of faith". The difference between the two is law-righteousness, due to its dependants upon performance of sinful flesh, has never made **anyone** righteous. Faith-righteousness, which totally depends upon the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ, has made **all** of God's elect righteous (II Timothy 2:10).

Here we note the latent account of faith-righteousness in the Old Testament as depicted by Abraham's relation to God. In Genesis 15:6 it reads, "And Abraham believed God and it was counted to him unto righteousness" (Romans 4:3). Now following the period of time when God related to Abraham through faith, Israel voluntarily chose to relate to God through the Mosaic Law (Exodus 19:3-20:21). So for some 1400 years, God's relation with His people Israel was via the Law. Speaking with reference to this time, Paul writes to the Galatians (Greek Text), "Before faith came we were under the custody of the law, being locked up unto the about to be revealed faith" (Galatians 3:23). Now the principle of faith-righteousness was **in effect prior** to the giving of the Law, and was restored again after the annulment of the Law (Galatians 3:24-25). So God's method of saving and making sinners righteous in this Church age (of grace) is **not in essence** something new. The fact of it and the precedent for it was **revealed** to the Apostle Paul (Galatians 1:12). This concept of God's dealings should not be confused with the basic message of Mystery Truth, which pertains to the body of Christ, the Church, which was revealed for the first time to the Apostle Paul (Ephesians 3:2-9).

As we exegete the latter part of this verse (Romans 10:6), we note that Paul describes the out-of-faith righteousness as speaking "oo• tos", rendered "thus" or "in this way" or "in this manner"; namely "do not say in your heart, who shall ascend into heaven"? Now the background for this quotation is in (Deuteronomy 30:11-12), where God says through Moses, "For this commandment which I command you this day, it is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us". Even as Moses in this passage was telling the children of Israel that the covenant God was making with them was **not far off**. That it was not something they had to go to Heaven for, likewise, Paul in this verse (Romans 10:4), conveys the message that out-of-faith righteousness is **not far off**; it is not something one needs to ascend into Heaven for, but it is present or available to the elect. In fact, to ascend into Heaven, would be to bring or lead Christ down.

Of course this is absurd thinking, for Christ has already revealed the good news that sinners are only made righteousness out of faith (Gal. 1:12; 2:16).

Indeed, the gospel of the grace of God in essence expresses the fact that sinners are made righteous through faith. This message (God's provision of righteousness is near us, so available to us, so plain and clear, right at our fingertips in the word of God (Ephesians 2:8).

Now we move to Romans 10:7 as we read first from the King James Version" Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.). And now from the Greek Text, "Or who shall descend into the Abyss? That is to bring Christ out from the dead". Now the context surrounding this verse is dealing with out-of-faith righteousness with reference to which Paul states "Don't say in your heart who shall descend into the abyss"? Even though this quotation is not found in Deuteronomy 30:11-14, the thought it contains is obviously a projection from this passage. It is the opposite of trying to find out-of-faith righteousness in Heaven. Now to contemplate a trip either to Heaven or to the abyss to find the message of faith righteousness, would be ridiculous, for this message is externally and internally impinging on those to whom God shows mercy. Jesus Christ had already revealed the truth that sinners are made righteous by faith, it is the essence of Paul's gospel of salvation. Therefore, why would or how could anyone look for it in the heights or depths (Romans 5:1; Ephesians 1:13)?

Now as we move to Romans 10:8, we read first from the King James Version "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; and now from the Greek Text, "But what does it say? The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart that is, the word of faith which we preach".

Here this quotation **is** taken from Deuteronomy 30:14, which reads "The word is very near unto you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it". Now the Lord through Moses to Israel originally spoke this passage. The thought is that the message of the covenant was near them, in their mouth and heart, to the end that they might **do** it. The Law function on the basic of **doing**. In contrast, Paul uses this passage to illuminate the fact that the message of faith **righteousness** is very near, even within those to whom God has imparted it and thus causes them to believe it. Note, the dispensation of law was a time when Israel abortively attempted to keep the Law, but utterly failed due to the sinfulness and weakness of their flesh (Romans 8:3). In contrast, during this dispensation of grace, God is in His sovereignty imparting out-of-faith righteousness to whom He wills and they **walk, by faith** in obedience to His word (II Corinthians 5:7; I Timothy 1:4). Paul states that, what was near them and all of God's elect, "is the word of faith which we preach". Here what Paul has reference to, is that which was and is being proclaimed by the preaching of the word to both Jews and Gentiles. There is no doubt about it. Paul and his associates were preaching that God's righteousness is obtained through faith.

It should be very obvious to all of God's elect that the essence of this righteousness is Jesus Christ, the one who went through the cycle of death and resurrection on our behalf (Romans 4:22-25; I Corinthians 5:21).

Note, the constant theme of Paul's epistles is the need to come into a right relationship with God through faith, through believing the basic gospel message that Jesus Christ died for or because of our sins and rose for or because of our justification, according to the scriptures (I Corinthians 15:3-4; Romans 1:17; 3:24-26; 9:30; Galatians 2:16; 5:5).

Now as we further scrutinize the phrase "the word of faith which we preach", there is a misunderstanding by some as to its exact meaning. As a result many ministries utilize this terminology word of faith, in setting up their ministry based on healing, deliverance and prosperity. Now it is certainly within the workings of God's power to heal, deliver and provide for His people, but Paul's usage of this term conveys a **deeper** meaning. To demonstrate this we utilize the grammar. Note the Greek phrase "to ree• mah tees peest• eh• os" rendered "the word of faith" or the word, which belongs to faith, as indicated by the genitive of possession. Here the Greek noun use in this verse is "ree• mah", which denotes that which is spoken or that which is definitely being stated, hence that which is discoursed or declared. So this "word" which Paul refers to as being possessed by faith, denotes the message which Paul and his associate ministers preached. Now we pose the question, what did they preach, i.e. what was Paul's message? Note the Greek phrase "o kee rees• so• mehn" translated "which (that) we preach", describes the gospel which Paul preached.

In Romans 16:25, the Apostle Paul distinctly describes that gospel or message or word which he preached. Here he states (Romans 16:25) (from the Greek Text), "To the one who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept silent in times eternal, but has been manifested now through the prophetic writings, according to a commandment of the eternal God, having been made know unto obedience of the faith unto all Gentiles". By this, we note the distinction of Paul's gospel from that which was previously preached. Note Paul's personal reference (my) as he separates his message from the scope of other gospels or messages that were previously heard. Paul consistently makes this distinction throughout his writings (Romans 2:16; Ephesians 3:2-4; II Timothy 2:8-9.) So Paul instructively directs them to the contents of those truths that are expressed in the gospel that he preached, namely the Mystery and all other truth that is in alignment with it. In the book of Galatians, Paul states (from the Greek Text) "I make known to you, brethren, the gospel that was preached by



me, that it is not according to man; for neither did I receive it from man, neither was I taught it, but (I received it) through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:11-12).

From these as well as many other scriptures in Paul's epistles, it is crystal clear that his message, that is the gospel that he preached, yes, even the word of faith that Paul and others preached consists of that which was revealed to him. Thus it is obvious that the contents are **not** Old Testament prophecy or healing or signs and miracles or prosperity. Now there is no question about Paul and those associated with him proclaiming a message of salvation, hence, of righteousness, which was received on the basis of believing the **gospel of God's grace**.

Now as we turn to Romans 10:9, we read from the King James Version, "That if thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved". And now from the Greek Text, "Because if ye might confess with your mouth Lord Jesus, and might believe in your heart that God raised Him out form the dead, you shall be saved". This verse opens with the adverbial conjunction "**ot• ee**", rendered "because" or "on account of". Here it is used to introduce a cause or a reason based on an evident fact. In the previous verse (Romans 10:8), it is established that the word of faith was and is near. So the Apostle Paul now states "If you might confess with your mouth Lord Jesus you shall be saved". Now because some theologians use this verse in an attempt to **deflect** or **dilute** or even **refute** the principle of God's sovereign election to salvation; we turn to the aid of the Greek grammar in exegeting this verse.

In this regard we literally read from the Greek Text, "**Ot• ee eh• ahn om• ol• oy • ees• ees ehn to stom• ah• tee soo keer• ee• on ee• ee•soon keh peest• tehv• sees ehn tee kahr• thee• ah soo ot• ee o Theh•os ahf• ton eey• ee• rehn ehk nehk• ron so• thee• see**", rendered 'Because if you might confess with your mouth Lord Jesus, and might believe in your heart that God raised him out from the dead, you shall be saved'.

Now notice the Greek verb in this verse "**Om• ol• oy• ees• ees**", translated "confess". It is in the subjective mood. Thus the statement should read "If you might confess" or "say the same thing" or "affirm what God has said" or established in the essence of Jesus Christ, "**ehnto stom• ah• tee**", rendered "with your mouth"; thus one is required to **admit** that Jesus Christ is the only remedy for sin. So for the most part, one will **openly** acknowledge Him. That is, those who **will accept** Him **will confess** Him. As we further exegete this verse, we note the second aspect by the Greek phrase "**peest• ehvs• ees ehn tee kahr•the• ah**". Here again notice the subjective mood or "iffy" connotation which is properly translated "and might believe in your heart". Now some point to the "iffy" aspect of the subjective mood to espouse a concept of "conditional salvation". It **is** a fact that **confession** and **faith** and **belief** are conditions **of** salvation, but they are not conditions **to** salvation. The statement "**if** you might confess" and "**If** you might believe" are **conditional** statements in the subjective mood.

In other words, the conditions of salvation are tempered by the fact that men are unable to meet or supply the where with that are within themselves, to confess **or** believe. **Belief** and **confession** are initiated and motivated by God and God alone. So the conditions **of** salvation are required **by** God, but the conditions **to** salvation can only be supplied or provided by God. The conditions **required** must be fulfilled by the conditions **supplied**. Note also that the aorist tense expresses action completed in the past. This speaks of the pre-choice of God in eternity. Thus **if** God supplies the faith for you to **believe** and **if** through that faith God causes you to believe unto salvation, then **He** had made provisions for you to meet the requirements **of** salvation. Remember the statements of Jesus; "No man can come unto the Father except by me" (John 14:6). That is the condition **of** salvation. But also note the Lord's statement "No man can come to me except the Father which has sent me draw him" (John 6:44). That is the condition, which leads **to** salvation. So this is all consistent with God's election and call to salvation, which began in eternity (Ephesians 1:4). There is no doubt, if you are God's elect, you **will confess** with your mouth and you **will believe** in your heart because God will **see to it** that you do, and you, as a result of God's call and God's election, **shall or will** be saved! But it is

God's **doing** and not **ours**. It is exclusively through the determinant counsel of God's plan, will and purpose that His elect is placed into a saved and everlasting relationship with the eternal God of glory. Remember it is **all by grace** and **not any by works** (Ephesians 2:8,9). Notice as we have observed in this verse Romans 10:9, the message that Paul preached was also in their hearts which was the rational and emotional center of their beings.

Now as we summarize what is being conveyed; the message of faith, which Paul preached, was very near, both in their mouth and heart. This message entailed saying the same thing about Christ that God Himself said, and believing in His resurrection, which confirmed His deity, that he is truly the Son of God (Romans 1:4). This confession and faith are directed toward God, and they are aspects of a single transaction namely, faith in Jesus Christ as set forth by God.

As we move to Romans 10:10, we read from the King James Version, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation", and now from the Greek Text, "For the heart believes unto righteousness and the mouth confesses unto salvation". Notice in this verse the inverted order of the Greek verbs "**peest• tehr• eh• teh**", believes and "**om• ol• oy• ee• teh**" (confesses). In the preceding verse (Romans 10:9), the order was confession first and then believing. Here, this verse focuses on the operation of the heart in conjunction with the spirit, exercising divine faith that has been deposited by God, who is the author or originator unto the end of righteousness. Now as a result, the mouth confesses to God. I.e. it says the same thing God says, unto the end of salvation. Notice this places the focus squarely back on the track of faith righteousness, again it is faith in Jesus Christ; the only thing that can be counted for righteousness. We **must** be **identified** with **Him** for He **alone** is the righteousness of God (I Corinthians 1:30).

So the mouth confesses unto the end of **receiving** salvation. This means that the mouth says the same thing back to God, which He requires for salvation. The mouth **agrees** with God regarding the gospel of salvation and exercises divine faith in it. Here the **combining** of the faith in the message, which is faith in Christ, results in righteousness (salvation). As we turn to the Greek grammar, note the functioning characteristics of the verb "**peest• ehv• eh• teh**", (believes) and "**om• ol• oy• ee• sees**" (confesses). They are in the indicative mood (it's a fact), the present tense (its continuous), the passive voice, (that which is acted upon by an outside agent) and the third person singular denotes that, the agent is outside of human flesh (Ephesians 2:8). So our hearts (minds) are programmed or directed to believe and our mouths are caused to confess, according to our sovereign call and election **by** God **unto** salvation.

Now again we cannot emphasize this enough! God has only one plan of justifying **His** people and this plan is the **only** way we can be declared just or righteous in His sight. This is the way it works. The moment, the instant we believe or we are caused to believe, we are justified; our sins are pardoned, they are done away with and we are introduced or baptized into the body of Christ. Therefore we are completely saved. We believe the scriptures identify the total redemptive work of positional salvation as being instantaneous, including regeneration, faith etc. No extra curricular activity, i.e. mourner's bench or prayer or tarrying rooms; just the plain simple act of one exercising **his** faith in the finished work of Jesus' sacrificial death upon Calvary. Now no man can be justified or accepted unto God except through the merit of Jesus Christ, for this is God's only acceptable plan for salvation and He will not depart from it. Some vehemently disagree with this because of the traditional teachings of denominations or legalistic organizations. But one must be committed to the word of God, not to the doctrines of men, who seek to be honored and glorified. As the scripture teaches, let God be true and every man a liar (Romans 3:3-4).

Now as we move to Romans 10:11, we read from the King James Version, "For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed", and now from the Greek Text, "For the scripture says, everyone believing on Him will not be put to shame". Note again the subject of Romans 10:6-10 is faith-righteousness or out-of-faith righteousness; this is the word of faith or the message of faith,

which Paul preached. It is a message that is near in both our hearts and mouths and as such we personally agree that what God says is true and we believe it. Notice the preceding verses (Romans 10:9-10), do not teach that we must do **two different things** in order to be made righteousness or saved but merely **two aspects of the same**; which is involved in faith righteousness. Faith must be in the truth, which God has spoken, namely in the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24; Galatians 1:8-9). These verses leave no room for ignorant, misplaced faith.

There must be **agreement with** and **adherence to** the **faith message**(Romans 10:8), which God has revealed to the Apostle Paul (Galatians 1:12), the only gospel for salvation in the dispensation of grace. Now having considered what is involved in the out-of-faith righteousness conveyed in Romans 10:6-10; Paul in this 11<sup>th</sup> verse of Romans chapter 10, speaks of the benefit which accrues to those believing. Paul's gospel as it relates to salvation was revealed unto him by Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:12), and he often corroborates it by citing passages from the Old Testament. In this verse (Romans 10:11), Paul cites Isaiah 28:16, that "Everyone believing on him will not be put to shame". Here in chapter 10 verse 11, the Greek phrase "**pahs o peest• ehv• on**", rendered "everyone believing", literally means "every single one believing", emphasizing that no one who believes will suffer shame or disappointment. Note that the Greek phrase "**oo kaht• ahee•skheen• thee• seh• teh**", translated "will not be put to shame", is in the passive voice and future tense and means that no one will be able to cause the one believing on the Lord to be shamed or to be disappointed. In other words, no one who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ will ever have cause to regret it (Romans 5:5; 9:3; I Peter 2:6).

Now we read Romans 10:12, first from the King James Version, "(12) For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him". And now from the Greek Text, "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same one is Lord of all, being rich unto all those calling upon Him". Now what is conveyed in this verse is that regardless of whether a person may be a Jew or Gentile, God manifests His riches unto all His elect; therefore, there is **no** possibility of anyone who believes, being put to shame or turned away. Note, according to the gospel of the grace of God, that it is utterly impossible for **anyone** to want to believe on Jesus Christ and not be **able** to believe. Some may ask why not? Well, the **very** fact that a person **wants to** believe is an omen that he is a recipient of God's mercy and elective calling (Romans 9:23,24). And regardless of what he may have done or who he is, he will not be put to shame, rejected or refused (John 6:37; I Timothy 2:4).

Now having considered the contextual relation of this 12<sup>th</sup> verse of Romans to what has preceded it; we herein exegete, in a meticulous manner, its meaning. The Greek word "**thee• ahs• tol• ee**", rendered "distinction" is used to indicate that there is no difference between a Jew and a Greek (Gentile). Notice the preposition "**thee• ah**" prefixed to the verb "**stehl• lo**", which means that there is no separation, putting asunder or severing between Jews and Gentiles (Greeks) Romans 3:2. The Jews are God's elect in a previous dispensation (promised), when He separated them from the human race via Abraham, to be His **own** special people (Genesis 12:1-3). The word Greek is used here to denote **all** those who are **not** Jews, hence it is comprehensively used denoting the Gentiles. So in this present church age, God is equally extending mercy to both Jews and Gentiles; i.e. under grace, He has no priority group (Romans 11:30-32; Ephesians 2:14-16).

Observe the Greek phrase "**o gahr ahf• tos keer• ee• os pahnd• on**", translated "for the same one is Lord of all". Now this may be rendered "for the same Lord belongs to all", as expressed by the genitive of possession. Formerly (in prior dispensations, i.e. promise and law), the Jews had an inside track with God. They were his peculiar people. But during this church age (grace) they as a group have lost this unique position (Acts 17:30; Ephesians 2:13-22). Now it is certainly true, historically speaking, that is, before Israel was laid aside (Romans 11:11,12,25), that Paul did preach the gospel first to Jews in the synagogues (Acts 13:46; 18:6;28:28). This was unique at that point in time and it ended with the final laying aside of Israel (Acts 28:28). But again we reiterate there is **no distinction** today in this church age.

As we exegete the latter portion of this verse (Romans 10:12), Paul adds that God is the one "being rich unto all those calling upon Him". Here the Greek present participle "plooo• ton", rendered "being rich," denotes that God continuously, out of His abundant (unlimited) wealth and resources, provides salvation to all those calling upon Him. We also note the Greek present participle "ehp• ee• kahl• oom• ehn•oos", rendered "calling upon", conveys the idea of "calling on", appealing to and crying for help. Generally speaking, it appears that the meaning of this word presupposes the presence of faith. Hebrews 11:6 throws further light on the faith implied in the meaning of this as it states, "For it is necessary for the one coming to God to believe that He is and that He will reward those seeking Him".

In light of the preceding and following contexts we would interpret this word to mean that God is rich unto all those calling upon Him with faith unto salvation. But we must be ever mindful that this faith is not out of us; it is supplied or sourced out of God (Ephesians 2:8-9). Now before we move to the next verse, we will look at one other term. Note the Greek pronouns "pahnd• on" and "pahnd• as", rendered "all" as they are used respectively in the genitive and accusative cases. This term taken in its true context infers the meaning "every kind of" or "everyone of a kind", as indicated by the genitive of possession and as the express object of those who belong to the Lord. Thus the term "all" has reference to certain designated ones, namely God's elect.

Now as we move to Romans 10:13 we read from the King James Version, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved". And now from the Greek Text, "For whoever might call upon the name of the Lord will be saved". Now this is an exact quotation from the prophecy of Joel. In its original historical and prophetically setting, it refers to those who are delivered in the terrible day of the Lord. In this verse (13) Paul uses it to depict those, who as a result of calling on the name of the Lord, will be saved from sin. Here the Greek verb "ehp• ee• kahl• ehs• ee• teh" rendered "might call upon", is in the subjunctive mood and may also be rendered "whoever would call upon the name of the Lord".

Here we acknowledge that this brings us into the depths of deep doctrinal waters as we exegete this verse (Romans 10:13) as well as John 3:16; as they both contain the same Greek grammatical dialog defining the terminology "whoever" or "whosoever". There are many who are persuaded to move away from the doctrine of God's sovereign call and election as a result of several words that are used in scriptures to describe the process of His choice in saving those whom He has elected to receive His blessings and to receive His eternal Son-positions. One should not allow certain words, i.e. all, every or whosoever as they are perceived by some, to negate God's exclusive work of determining who will be saved. Now as we have stated in the previous verse (Romans 10:12), it is certainly **factual** that confession and belief by a sinner are essential for receiving salvation. No doubt about it one **must** and **will** call upon His name if he is ever to be saved. Also we have established the fact that there is no distinction (or difference) between Jew and Greek. So there is no difference, or designation of groupings that effectuates the determination of those who receive salvation. So the first question is by what **means** and through what **methodology** is the determination made as to **who** will call on Him or **who** will believe or **who** will confess? Some will say that it is based upon those who exercise faith to believe on Him and this is true! But the next question is what causes **some** men to believe in Him and confess while others totally reject Him. Also what is the catalyst that infuses the exercise of faith in **some** but not in **all**? It is a fact even though some dispute it, that **all** men, i.e. **every** man who is the progeny of Adam; is totally depraved or valueless and thus void of the capacity of producing faith to believe or confess or call upon His name.

Thus those who comprise "all" or "every" or "whosoever" must be qualified or determined by some agent **outside** of "sinful mankind". But there are some who assert and teach the doctrine of "free will" or "free choice"; squarely placing the choice and determination of salvation within the realm of sinful creatures. In essence the usage of the words "all" or "whosoever" or "the world", transfers the choice of election from God into the hands of depraved men. Those who espouse such thinking refer to certain scriptures to support their supposition, i.e. [John 4:42](#), "The Savior of the world", [II Corinthians 5:14, 15](#),

"He died for "all", [Hebrews 2:9](#) "That He by the grace of God should taste death for "every" man", | [John 2:2](#), "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world". Now on the surface, this seems very convincing but when one looks into the in-depthness and fully exegete these writings; they in fact solidify the consistency of the doctrine of God's selection of individuals, solely based on His sovereign call and election to salvation. These scriptures **do not** infer that God's sacrifice of Jesus is **indiscriminately** directed to "all" or "every" or "whosoever" or "the world". Now in order to demonstrate this, we refocus on the verse of scripture that we are exegeting (Romans 10:13) and turn to the Greek grammar and literally exegete from the Greek Text. "Pahs gaho os ahn ehpe• ee• kahl• ehs• eet• eh to on• om• ah keer• ee• oo so• thees•eht• eh" again rendered "For whoever **might call upon** the name of the Lord **will be saved**". Notice the grammatical construction of this verse.

First note the Greek clause "pahs gahr os", which conveys the expression "for whoever". Now, to understand the implication of this thought; notice that the Greek word "pahs" is technically structured with distributive significance i.e. "all" or "every kind of " which is denoting or designating everything **belonging to** a classification or any individual **within** a classification; thus implying "each and every kind" or ""all parts of the whole. Next observe that the Greek conjunction "gahr", rendered "for" in the structure; gives grounds for a conclusion or an explanation, thus in this case it introduces the "cause" or "reason for" or "because". Now observe the Greek relative pronoun "os" as it compliments its antecedent "pahs" both in gender and number (masculine, singular), with its case (nominative), which is determined by its usage in the clause, as they function constructively as the subject of the verse. As we further scrutinize the verse, note the contrasting moods of the main verbs of this verse namely the subjunctive mood for "ehpee• kahl• ehs• eet• eh", rendered "might call upon" and the indicative mood for "so• thees•eh•teh", rendered "will or shall be saved". Note again the subjective mood denotes probability, which expresses that it is possible, that **some** (not all) **might** or **would** call upon the name of the Lord.

So what is conveyed is the possibility and probability that some (not all) "will" and "do" call upon the name of the Lord. As we survey the effect or result of those calling, we observe the indicative mood, as it denotes the factuality that those who call upon Him "**shall** or **will** be saved". In other words "all those "who **do** call upon the name of the Lord (without exception) "will be saved". Now we note the respective tenses and voices of the main verbs in this verse namely, aorist tense and middle voice for "ehpee• kahl• ehs• eet• eh" (might call upon) and future tense and passive voice for "so• thees•eht• eh" (will or shall be saved).

In the former instance, the iffy connotation of the subjective mood (might call upon) is tempered by the past-completed action of the aorist tense; as well as the middle voice, which infers, that the determination of the action of those calling, occurred or was completed in a period in the past. This speaks to the preventive work of God upon the call to salvation.

Thus those performing the action **were cause** to do so. In the latter instance, the actual connotation of the indicative mood (will or shall be saved), is certified by the future tense as well as the passive voice by which God's foreknowledge and predetermined will, controls who will be saved, thus the recipient **passively** receives the action of salvation.

In light of the above, this verse properly conveys the message that "all those" (every individual) designated (elected) in eternity; are **called by** God and thus **is cause by** God **to call upon** God for salvation. Without any input from anyone outside of God, men's salvation will follow their calling upon the Lord (Romans 8:28-30). The calling upon the name of the Lord is the manifestation of the exercising of God's divinely implanted faith, which in turn assures us of eternal salvation in Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Titus 1:2-3; Hebrews 5:9).

Now, we know this is contrary to what many ministries and traditional doctrines teach. As one Pastor recently remarked, "Predestination is factual as long as you don't take it too far". He was saying that

God's predetermined will is **limited to** and **dependant upon** the cooperation or input of men to respond to God's eternal provision of the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ upon Calvary. Nothing could be further from the facts. The certainty of God in bringing His elect into a perfect and justified relationship with Himself, **cannot** and **does not** rest upon the **whims** of humanity. The **only** way for God to guarantee that even some would respond to His call; would be for God himself to **initiate** the call and then **cause** a depraved soul to respond through faith, which **God alone** is able to deposit within the heart of a dead sinner.

We will now properly and correctly exegete the very misunderstood and misapplied verse of scripture John 3:16; focusing on certain key words as they are applied in scriptures by some in an attempt to challenge the doctrine of God's sovereign call and election of individuals to eternal salvation. Now before we move into this hotly disputed area of contention, again, we would like to express our profound love for all of God's people. All of the elect are **precious to and loved by** our Lord Jesus Christ who died for or because of our sins and rose for or because of our justification. As we submit our disquisition we are fully aware of the widely taught doctrine of mankind's input into the selection process of salvation. We herein affirm our love for all of God's people, because if you are God's child then you are His elect; chosen (elected) in Him before the foundation (creation) of the world. One of the greatest benefits of election is that, as the elect of God, it is neither our actions nor our understanding of God's actions that have caused Him to effectuate our position of Sonship. God's love for us is not stimulated by anything outside of Himself.

Thus, what we **are** is **not** determined by anything contributed or supplied or provided by our own efforts. Accordingly we pray that God's people will learn to love one another, regardless of our differences of understanding of what the word of God is conveying on the doctrines of salvation. We sincerely believe that God's people can dialog in open and honest exchange of thought and though there may be some diversity of constructive ideas, we should always recognize the greater tie (the blood of Jesus) that binds us and unites us in this one body. The church (body of Christ) is comprised of many individual members; Jews and Gentiles, male and female, plus those who are bound, as well as those who enjoy the freedom that is in Christ (Galatians 5:1).

Now before we begin our detailed analysis of John 3:16, as well as other verses containing the usage of certain words, i.e. "whoever", "whosoever", "all", "every" and the expression "the whole world"; we will interject what we have determined from our studies as to what the Bible teaches about election. Election is in essence, the act of God whereby in eternity past He chose those who will be saved.

Election is **unconditional** because it does not depend on anything outside of God such as good works or foreseen faith (Romans 9:16). We believe that this doctrine is repeatedly taught in the Bible, and is also to be extracted by the knowledge of every unbiased student of God's word. True Biblical evidence documents that all men are born dead (spiritually) in sin (Ephesians 2:1-3). In this state of death, no sinner is able (of himself) to respond to any spiritual stimulus and therefore is incapable of loving, obeying or pleasing God in any way. Man, in his unregenerate status "is hostile toward God", for he does not subject himself to the law (moral principles) of God. It is a fact that "those who are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:7-8). The effect of this is that no sinner can ever make the first move in the salvation process. In other words, **man's actions towards** God can only be initiated by **God's initial action upon him**, which in effect **causes him to react**. So man can only act or react as a result of being **acted upon** by God. This is clearly illustrated by John 6:44, wherein Jesus states" (king James Version) " No man can come to me, except the father which hath sent me draw him" Now if all the above is true (and it is), then what does John 3:16 actually convey? Here we read first from the King James Version " For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life". Now from the Greek Text, "For God did so love the world, that His Son, the only begotten, He gave, that every one who is believing in Him may not perish, but may have life eternal or everlasting". Now as we have fore-stated, there are key words and expressions in this verse which some utilize to espouse a doctrine of "free will" or "free choice" of all mankind. Thus the doctrine of universal redemption is energetically taught,

that Christ died for "everyone" or the entire human race and that it is **exclusively** up to each individual to "choose" or "apply" God's provision for or to his or her salvation. In this verse (John 3:16) many theologians apply the universalize doctrine of Christ's redemptive work based on two expressions, first "God so loved **the world** and second "that **whosoever** believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life". Their assertion is that the expression "the world" defines universal love and provisions for **all** thus God has provided indefinite love and provisions indiscriminately directed **at all** but **to no one** in particular.

If this is **actually** the case in fact, then "whoever" or "whosoever" means that it is entirely and **exclusively** left up to each individual as to whether he or she will be saved from perishing or from destruction. This is a very frightening proposition.

Can one really fathom the impetus of the exclusive responsibility resting **solely** on a sinner's shoulders, without any input or determination from God? Would one really want his eternal destiny solely dependent upon his **own** ability or his **own** strength or capacity to believe God and call upon Him and confess, in order to escape everlasting torment and destruction? If this is what is widely accepted (and it is) then no wonder God's people are so insecure and unstable and so unsure about their salvation or their state of acceptability to God.

We should be glad and grateful that He (God), according to Romans 8:29-30, foreknew us, predestinated, called and justified us and He has glorified us because God's promises are factual. The **only** way for our salvation to be secure and everlasting or even attainable, is that it must be **wholly** and totally the work of God, **both** to provide and to **deliver** or **bring us to Him**, because we do not have the wherewith (on our own) to go to Him. Now **if** we have depended upon our **ownability** and we think that it was by our **own** volition that we ( unaided by Him) came to Christ, then how can we ever be sure that our relationship with Him is unalterable? Also, please answer this, who made the choice, was it us or was it God? In other words, did we choose God or did He choose us or did we choose each other simultaneously?

Now as we closely scrutinize John 3:16; we literally read from the Greek Text, "Oo• tos gahr eeg• ahp• ee• seen o theh• os ton kos•mos os• teh ton yee• on ton mon• oy• eh• nee ehth• o• kehn een• ah pahs o peest• ehv• on ees ahf• ton mee ahp• ol• ee• teh ahll ehkh•ee zo• een eh• o• nee• on", rendered, "For God so loved the world , that His Son the only begotten, He gave, that everyone who is believing in Him may not be loosed or perish, but may have life everlasting (without end). Unfortunately, some people quote this verse with complete disregard for the verses that both precede and follow it; thus the context wherein Jesus spoke it is completely ignored. My former Pastor, a man I dearly loved, Pastor Clyde Colbert Sr., use to always admonish the ministers under him, of the danger of taking one verse out of a passage and using it without reading at least a few verses above and a few verses below it, before attempting to interpret its meaning. I have found this to be excellent advice, for it allows one the advantage of conceptualizing the total context wherein a thought is expressed or a question is raised or a statement is made. Thus, it is encumbered upon us to read the total contents of this passage and not in isolation take this verse (John 3:16), and rely upon the expressions "the world" and "whosoever" to determine what the lord was conveying. Also, we must consider **whom** Jesus was speaking to and what He was talking about! Is it possible that Jesus, who was God incarnated in the flesh at the time He is quoted in this verse, would ever make a contradictory statement to the sovereignty of God's election and call to salvation? The obvious answer is no! The Bible repeatedly stresses that salvation is the **exclusive** work of God. For an example, it states in Acts 13:48, (King James Version) "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed". Note they did not believe first and then they were appointed, but they were **caused** to believe, because they had been **previously** appointed.

In Acts 16:14, it speaks of one named Lydia, who was saved when "the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul. Also in II Thessalonians 2:13, the Apostle Paul states (KJV),

"God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation".

Now in light of this, it is not possible that Jesus is stating that God's election to salvation is arbitrary and extemporaneously placed into **"the world for whosoever"**.

Now as we in earnest begin our exegesis of John 3:16, there is one thing that we wish to note and that is, there are three aspects of scrutiny by which we should always evaluate scripture when seeking to give proper interpretation to the word of God. They are:

1. Grammatical
2. Historical
3. Contextual

If the contents of the verse or verses of scripture can agree or convey the consistency of the examination of all three aspects; then there is a great possibility that you have grasped the correct meaning of the passage.

Now with this in mind, we begin with the contextual and historical aspect of

John 3:16. As we move to the beginning of chapter three of John we note that the entire context which is John 3:1-21 gives the account of a conversation between our Lord Christ Jesus and one named Nicodemus. So here we ask the compound question, who was Nicodemus and what is the **total contents** of their conversation? Now it is recorded in God's word "that not many wise men, after the flesh" or mighty or noble are called (I Corinthians 1:26, James 4:6). But Nicodemus is identified as a "ruler" in the King James Version. Here the Greek noun "**ahr•khon**", rendered "ruler", describes him as a high official or respected leader or one who exercises authority or one who is invested with power or dignity, thus a Lord or Prince or Magistrate. Historically speaking, Nicodemus was a member of the Sanhedrin and was counted as one of the three rich men of Jerusalem, but it was said that afterward he became poor. This was conjectured because later his daughter was seen gathering barleycorn for food from under the horse's feet. However, during his interview with Jesus, he was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin or "council" or the highest ruling body and court of justice among the Jewish people at the time of this encounter. The High Priest of Israel and the Sanhedrin headed this tribunal, which in this day in our nation would be synonymous with our Supreme Court. They were granted by Rome limited authority over certain religious, civil and criminal matters of the Jews. Now knowledge of Nicodemus's background is very important as it forms the basis for properly assessing the things Jesus would say and how he would say them. In other words, in the contents of their discussion, Jesus conveys things that would be known and legally understood by one of Nicodemus's status, but perhaps not familiar to those not versed in the laws, customs, ordinances and traditions of Israel. Note the Sanhedrin was comprised of the Sadducees or "Chief Priests" and "Elders" and the "Pharisees" or "Scribes". So we must keep this in mind when we analyze the contents of their discussions and consider the contexts or legal aspects of the questions posed by Nicodemus as well as the explanations given by Jesus.

Also, historically speaking one must understand the economy or dispensational setting at the time of this interchange of communication. It must be fully understood that the Kingdom gospel message first introduced in the New Testament by John the Baptist and taught by our Lord Jesus Christ and his disciples and followers (the 70); were extended manifestations of the books of prophecy outlining God's administrative fulfillment of His covenants and promises to His elect (Israel or the Jews). Thus, nothing that is said, neither through questions that were raised, or explanations that were given; could be construed as the basis for the message **to** the Church. Note it is through the revelation of the "Mystery" that we receive the message or manifestation of the "body of Christ". So it is very important to know that there is absolutely nothing **mentioned** about the church (body of Christ) in the Old Testament because it was not part of the truth, which was **prophesied** in the Old Testament.



Contrary to what some teach, Jesus is **not** making a revelation to Nicodemus concerning direct provisions of salvation to Gentiles. Note, this revelation is reserved for the "Mystery", that volume of truth that entails the union of both Jews and Gentiles into one body (the Church) Ephesians 3:3-6. So if this information is reserved until it is revealed unto the Apostle Paul for the Church (and it certainly was), then it is impossible for the usage of "whosoever" to be inclusive of those who were not Jews. Others assert that Jesus makes a prophetic statement in this context to Nicodemus. But notice the nature of Jesus words, they are part of an answer or explanation concerning those things that Nicodemus should have already known (John 3:10). We again emphasize **whom** Jesus was communicating with. Nicodemus was a very learned man, member of the Sanhedrin, a Pharisee and a Scribe, one very well versed in the law, ordinances, customs and traditions of Israel. As such, he would have known that salvation (at this time) was offered only to Israel. Thus "whosoever" would necessarily be limited to God's elect at that point and period of time, which according to the Law is Israel. The same would be true concerning the term "the world"; it, according to covenant, would be **limited** to "the world" of those **covered under the covenant**, again at this time, "Israel".

Note the introductory statements of John, chapter three verse one, two and three (King James Version), "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: (2) The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. (3) Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God". Now as we have already stated, Nicodemus, a Pharisee and ruler came to Jesus at night for a private interview. No one else was present; there was no one else around so we must keep in mind that this conversation, this communicative exchange of questions and answers were conducted in privacy and exclusively between Jesus and Nicodemus.

Note in verse two, how Nicodemus, who was of the Sanhedrin, addressed Jesus as Rabbi. Here the Greek noun "**Rahv•vee**" is a transliteration of the Hebrew word 'Rabbi', which comes from a Semitic root word meaning "great" or "head".

Note it is only used in the Matthew and John gospels, usually of Jesus, although John the Baptist's disciples addressed him once as such (John 3:26). Its literal meaning is "my teacher". Note that this highly respected ruler in the Sanhedrin used a respectful term denoting a title of honor and respect given by the Jews to their teachers and spiritual instructors, thus a teacher of the Law. This term Rabbi was highly coveted by the religious leaders (Pharisees/Scribes) as it denotes one who is highly trained in Jewish Law, ritual and tradition. In Matthew 23:7-8, Jesus referred to this desire for honor and recognition elicited by the scribes and Pharisees, as He spoke of them being called "Rabbi", "Rabbi "in the market place". Note how He forbids His disciples to be called "Rabbi" in verse eight; "But be not ye called Rabbi for one is your Master, even Christ", (referring to Himself). So the term "Rabbi", basically means "Master" and "Ravvoni" (my Master) as used by many at the tomb of Jesus (John 20:16). Also, observe the words of John the Baptist in response to his disciples addressing him as Rabbi; as he states that (King James Version) "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven", then he cautioned them with the words, "Ye yourself bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him and that "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom" (obviously referring to himself), "which standeth and hearth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:27).

Note, these documentation all testify even as Nicodemus states in John 3:2, "Rabbi (or Master), we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him". Here it is established that Nicodemus is not only giving credence to Jesus because of the miracles, healing, etc. that he performed (as many do), but he more importantly is referencing his message (the gospel of the Kingdom); coming forth from the "teacher who has come from God".

This message (the Kingdom) was prophesied by the prophets of old and they were all recorded; thus Nicodemus, this Scribe, this Pharisee, of the Sanhedrin was more convinced by the manifestation of the words that Jesus spoke, which were corroborated by the signs and miracles that followed. Again, Nicodemus probably surmised that Jesus' message was an extension of the scriptures that he, as a Scribe was very familiar with.

Thus the purpose of Nicodemus coming to Jesus was to inquire in greater details of the doctrine (the prophesied Kingdom) that He (Jesus) came to teach. He may have been convinced that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah, the Anointed One, which would have been foreshadowed as Prophet, Priest, and King, which should have been known by one who was as knowledgeable of the scriptures, such as a Scribe (including Nicodemus as well as Saul of Tarsus). Here we have the account of Nicodemus inquiring of the one promised of God, the one designated as the great deliverer of Israel. So it is in this context and this context alone that the dialog took place.

Now as the interchange continues, verse three of John chapter three begins with the expression "Jesus answered". Here note the Greek verb "ahp• ehk• ree• thee" rendered "rely" or "answer" is in the indicative mood. This means the subsequent conveyance is factual. The aorist tense conveys the inference that the statement that is to follow describes an action completed in the past. The passive voice means that which is conveyed, is an action, which is not performed by any man, but rather it is received from God. Thus, that is the promise of the new birth by and through the seed, which is Jesus Christ (the anointed one). Here it is very helpful to have a working knowledge of covenants, i.e. the Abrahamic, Davidic and New Covenants, all unilateral contracts that God has with His covenant people of prior and future dispensations (promise, law and millennium). The manifestation of the new birth in essence is the catalyst of the implementation of these covenants for it is by and through Jesus Christ that all the conditions of the contracts are fulfilled.

So all that Jesus conveyed to Nicodemus in the contents of John 3:3-21 is confined to the promise, law and millennium (kingdom) dispensations and the covenants associated with them. Historically speaking, at the time of this interchange or dialog, the grace dispensation is unknown to men for it was kept secret until Jesus revealed the "Mystery" unto Paul (Romans 11:25; 16:25-26; I Corinthians 2:7-10; Ephesians 3:3-5; Colossians 1:26). Now as we observe some of the things involved in the historical approach to the writings in this passage, one should consider that a good communicator, i.e. our Lord Jesus (and He was the very best ever); would have in mind, the transferal of His thoughts in such a manner that they would stimulate identical thoughts in the mind of His recipient (Nicodemus). All the explanations that Jesus conveyed should be interpreted in the light of what had already been known by Nicodemus, which is the intelligent comprehension of detailed truth that took place as it was meaningfully related to his existing mindset. So Jesus in this case regulated the contents of His thoughts to the one whom He was addressing. In view of this principle, it is logical to expect the conveyance of His (Jesus) words to accommodate the mental status of His listener (Nicodemus). Jesus' words should be considered by what could be known and understood by Nicodemus at the time of this exchange.

Now as we continue the grammatical aspect of scrutinizing the contents of this passage, we see that when the above stated reasoning is followed, it gives restrictive flow to the general and universal interpretations that are ascribed to the many things that Jesus conveys in this communication. Jesus, who was God incarnated in the flesh, was omniscient, so He knew **all** things but he disciplined Himself (Philippians 2:6-7).

Thus in John 3:3, the Greek Text reads "ah• meen ah• meen lehg• o see eh• ahn mee tees yehn• nee• thee ahno• thee oo theen• ah• teh ee• theen teen Vahs• eel• ee• ahn too Theh• oo", this would actually translate "Truly, truly, I say unto you, if any one may not be born from above, he is not able to see the reign of God". Note the Greek phrase "yehn• nee• thee ahno• thee", rendered "born or birth from above or renewed". Here Jesus elaborated on one of the key subjects that the Pharisees had established an ardent posture on and that is **birth**.

The Pharisees had doctrinal distinct positions on birth and resurrection that was accepted by many of the Jews.

From the writings of the respected biblical historian Josephus, it is stated that "the Pharisees say that the soul of good men only passes over into another body, while the soul of bad men is chastised by eternal punishment". In Matthew 14:2, note the question asked by Jesus' disciples, (KJV) "master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? So the "Rabbis" as many Jews referred to the Pharisees, believed in the pre-existence of souls as well as the resurrection. Thus, it is in this vein that Jesus began His elaboration on the subject "yehn• nee• thee" or "birth". Here Jesus knowing the doctrinal position of Pharisaical teaching immediately explains that this birth was **not** an incarnation but a regeneration. Here He expresses the phrase "yehn• nee• thee ahno• thee", specifying that it is a 'birth from above' or as it relates to the past, that which is initiated at a prior time or from an earlier period, from the beginning or from the first. Also as it would relate to future time, it would indicate repetition, or that which is anew.

Now hearing this Nicodemus was astonished and inquired, as we read John 3:4 from the Greek Text, "Nicodemus said unto him, how is a man able to be born, being old? Is he able into the womb of his mother a second time to enter, and to be born"? Here Jesus quickly continues His expatiation on the matter by explaining in John 3:5, that He was not referring to "natural birth" but to "spiritual birth", as He states in the Greek Text, "Verily, verily, I say to thee, if any one may not be born of water and the spirit, he is not able to enter into the reign of God'. Here Jesus reiterates the prescription for entering into the Kingdom of the Messiah.

Again we must emphasize that the only gospel (good message) that had been taught at that time by Jesus and others (including John the Baptist) was "the Kingdom". Now the Kingdom Gospel is or that which pertains to the Millennium age or that which is manifestly recorded in the books of prophecy and that which should have been known by a Scribe or Pharisee such as Nicodemus. He undoubtedly, because of his training and background, must have been expecting the Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of Israel's Messiah (deliverer) shortly to appear in external or physical pomp and power (as it most Jews imagined it would be).

Note the wording of verse 5 as contrasted with verse 3, "This renewed birth from above" is of water and spirit". Note the Greek word "ee•thahr• tos", translated "water" as it is used conjunctively with the Greek word "pnehv• mah• tos", rendered, "spirit" in verse 5. Now, there are many who teach that this verse (as well as others) documents the fact that the usage of the term **water**, in this context; causes the ceremony of water baptism to be an essential prerequisite for (to) salvation. And then this assertion of water baptism leads to division of factions debating the issues as to how the ceremony should be performed. Again we raise the question, who was Jesus speaking to? The answer is Nicodemus and in light of this, the reference to "water" absolutely signifies "washing" or "baptism", through the medium of "washing". Now again we pose the question, "what gospel did Jesus preach?"

The answer is the Kingdom Message, the gospel that is accompanied by signs and wonders; which includes "repentance and baptism" (Acts 2:38; 41; 8:12-13,36,38; 9:18; 10:47-48; 16:15,33' 18:8; 22:16; Galatians 3:27). It is a fact that under the Kingdom gospel message, water baptism **is** considered a binding ordinance on all who propose to love the Love Jesus Christ. This is documented by the message that the Apostle Peter preached on the day of Pentecost as recorded in the second chapter of Acts. But the gospel Kingdom Messianic Message, which was delivered unto Peter to preach to the circumcision (Jews); is distinct and different from the gospel (grace or Mystery Truth) which was revealed (delivered) into the Apostle Paul to the un-circumcision or to the church (Jews and Gentiles), which ushered in a new dispensation (Acts 20:24; Romans 11:25; 16:25-26; I Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 3:3-5; Colossians 1:26).

Now we will reserve further comment on this for a future forum that is, when we will discuss the doctrinal issue "water baptism, is it necessary for salvation"? But we **will** here in attest that the "one

baptism", mentioned by Paul in Ephesians 4:5 is in **not** by means of water but by or through the Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13).

Now as we focus on the context of John 3:5, we note that Jesus is talking to Nicodemus, a Jewish ecclesiastic and in this light he is referencing the ceremony of baptism or the washings or cleansing by water; which was so familiar with the symbolical application of water, in every variety of way and form of expression. Thus the language that Jesus used was structured to convey the communication that, that which is intended was none other than a thorough "spiritual purification by or through the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Indeed this component of expressing the co-element of water and the operation of the spirit was linked together in a glorious evangelical enlightenment of that which is recorded in Ezekiel 36:25-27, (from the King James Version), "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

And I will put my spirit, within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them".

Now Nicodemus would have been knowledgeable of this had not such spirituality's been overshadowed by the reigning formalism of tradition. But this formalization of religious practice of traditional ceremonies is unfortunately continuing until this very day among God's people as rituals of baptisms and other liturgies have become the great visible door of entrance into "the body of Christ, while the reality of the matter is that **the birth from above is solely the work of the Holy Spirit.**

The Mystery of regeneration (new creation) had not yet been revealed at that time so Jesus spoke in terms of that which was known, i.e. cleansing or purification by means of washing (symbolically), by water. Now in essence Jesus is expressing what it means to be spiritually born again and that is to be born of the spirit. Observe that this change is not wrought by any wisdom or power of ones own initiative or accomplishments, but by the power and influence of the blessed spirit of God's grace to His elect. This is positively, vehemently asserted by our Lord Jesus as he exclaims verily or truly or amen, "I say to thee", (reading from the Greek Text), "If any one may not be born of water and the spirit (of God) he is not able to "enter into" or "abide in" the rein (Kingdom) of God.

Now as we continue in our context of John chapter three, we note Jesus' statement in verses 6 through 12 contrasting earthly or "terrestrial" things with Heavenly or "celestial" things. Here, our Lord explained the necessity for this change of man status, by stating that the earthly (fleshly) and visible conditions for which man is associated with this present sinful world; is distinct from the Heavenly, spiritual and invisible conditions. Thus it is necessary for man to be transformed in order to be in harmony and fellowship with the rein (Kingdom) of God. Consequently that which is birthed or born of the flesh is and could never be any thing else but corruptible, whereas only that which is birthed or born of the spirit can inherit those things that are incorruptible. So here Christ shows that it is necessary in the nature of the thing, for no man is fit to enter into the reign or Kingdom of God until he is re-birthed or renewed, because that which is born of the flesh is corruptible flesh. Note that which is seen versus that which is unseen illustrates this change. Here, note the usage of the exact Greek word "**pnhv• mah**", translated both "spirit" and "wind", as Jesus demonstrates the reality and authenticity of the eternal Heavenly things.

Now we focus on John chapter three verse 13, reading from the Greek Text, "And no one hath gone up to heaven, except He who out of the heaven came down, the Son of man who is in the heaven. Here Jesus offers the fact that no one had attained in prior times this new birth by stating that no one hath gone up to Heaven and returned except He (the man Christ Jesus) who out of the heaven came down; who is also the Son of man who is in the Heaven.

Jesus, herein verses the fact that, that which is earthly and corruptible cannot inherit that which is Heavenly or incorruptible; which can only be received by that which is regenerated or re-birthed or that which is of or from above.

Here we note the phrase, " the Son of man who is in the Heaven"; as it conveys the fact that our Lord Jesus is divine, thus He is in Heaven even while on earth incarnated in human flesh. This is an illustration of a very remarkable expression, i.e. Jesus, "the Son of man" while bodily on earth conversing with Nicodemus, is at the time Jesus, "the Son of God", abiding in the Heaven. This gives testimony of both Jesus' divine and human nature, which qualified Him for the unique ministry of the reconciliation of mankind.

In verse 14 of John chapter three, we read from the Greek Text, "And as Moses did lift up the serpent in the wilderness, so it behoveth the Son of man to be lifted up". Again, because of whom Jesus was talking to, note the figurative illustration utilized by our Lord as He proceeds in this, as well as the following verses to state the **reason why** He came into the world.

Here He uses that which Nicodemus was familiar with to explicate the methodology and design as well as the efficacy of His coming; by referencing the documented situation of the brass serpent recorded in Numbers 21:7-9. Nicodemus, a scribe, was very knowledgeable of the historical incident wherein the children of Israel complained against God and Moses in the dessert as they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea near Edom. The Lord consequently sent fiery serpents among them and the serpents bit them and many died because of their sin. As a result of Israel's repentance from this sin, the Lord directed Moses to make an image of the serpent and place it high on a pole in the sight of them and those who look upon it would be (forgiven), healed, and would live. Now there are those who allegorically teach and preach that this image of the serpent is a type of Christ, the Messiah, but this is very inconsistent with what the serpent represented in the garden of Eden, that is, the curse and enmity of sin. So it is more likely that the serpent would represent the curse and enmity between the penalty and curse of sin and the seed of man as we note God's judgment in Eden; that the seed of woman "shall bruise the serpent's head and the serpent shall bruise the seed of woman's heel". Thus this illustration by Jesus probably has reference to the effects of the **curse** and **penalty** of sin, which is death and the **redemption** or **deliverance** from death unto life that is associated with obedience to His word. Thus Jesus used it, as a striking illustration of His redemptive work for which He came into the world and that was to bring life unto those (His elect) who are dead.

Now that which **is** similar in type is the manner or design of resurrection from death unto life; as He, like the serpent is "lifted up" and placed on high, such that those who will trust or look unto Him will live (John 12:32; 8:28).

Here the points of resemblance between Jesus being lifted up and that of the brass serpent are:

1. In each case those who are to be benefited cannot be delivered in any other way. The bite of the serpent was deadly and could be healed only by looking on the brass serpent, while the deadly nature of sin can only be removed by looking to Jesus and His redemptive work on the Cross.
2. Observing the mode of being lifted up; the brass serpent was lifted up high in the sight of the Israelites whereas Jesus was exalted from the earth and raised upon a tree upon Calvary.
3. Observing the similarity of design, the brass serpent was an illustration of saving temporal, physical lives, whereas those who look to Jesus receive salvation unto eternal life.
4. Note the similarity of the manner of the cure; the children of Israel were to look on the serpent for natural or physical healing whereas sinners are to look upon Jesus for spiritual healing (salvation).

Now as we move closer to our primary verse of scripture (John 3:16), we note two things in John 3:15. They are:

1. The continuation of thought flow from verse 14.
2. The duplication of the wording in the second phrase of verse 16.

Here we also note that if the thought that is conveyed in verse 15 is a duplication of the latter phrase of verse 16, then these congruent phrases are both continuations of the thoughts expressed in verses 13 and 14, as well as that which is expressed in the first phrase of verse 16.

Now as we view our context on the basis of cause (reason) and effect, John chapter three verses 13,14 and the first phrase of verse 16; would constitute the cause or (reason) of the context, whereas verse 15 and the latter phrase of verse 16 would constitute the effect or results of that which is conveyed. Thus, to contextualize this portion of the contents and develop fluid thought flow, we group the cause or reasoning aspect of verses (13,14, 1<sup>st</sup> phrase 16) into a continuous precession of conveyance; followed by the consequent sequence of verse 15 and the latter portion of verse 16 as it ensues.

Hence following this format we read from the KJV, [verse 13](#), "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven". [verse 14](#), "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up": [vs. 16\(1<sup>st</sup> phrase\)](#), "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son".

And now from the Greek Text, [verse.13](#), "And no one hath gone up to heaven, except he who is in the heaven". [verse. 14](#), "And as Moses did lift up the serpent in the wilderness, so it behoveth the son of man to be lifted up". [verse. 16 \(1<sup>st</sup> phrase\)](#), "For in this manner or way, God did so love the world, that His Son, the only begotten, He gave". Now continuing this format, we read from the King James Version, "[verse. 15 and 16 \(2<sup>nd</sup> phrase\)](#)", "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal everlasting life. And now from the Greek text, [verses 15 and 16 \(2<sup>nd</sup> phrase\)](#) "That (or in order that) every one who is believing in Him may not perish (be loosed), but may have life everlasting (without end)".

Now as we proceed in verse 13 with this word order we continue in the Greek grammar, as we note the Greek adjectival pronoun, "[oo• thees](#)", rendered "no one", as it is used for negating a referent, thus "no other" or "no one other than" He (the Son of man) who is in the heaven, that is, already "[ahn• ahv• ehv• eek• ehn](#)", (ascended) is born or renewed. Therefore, in verse 14, only He (Jesus) can be or should be exalted. Here the basic theme is that which is "[eep• so• sehn](#)", rendered "lifted up on high" or "exalted above all".

So the metaphorical reference to the occurrence of the brass serpent in the wilderness, actually avers to the fact that, (from the Greek Text) "[oo• tos eep• so• thee• neh thee ton yee• on too ahnth• ro•poo](#)", translated 'in this manner it • or (is necessary) that the Son of man be lifted up (or exalted).

Thus from the Greek Text ([1<sup>st</sup> phrase of verse 16](#)), "[oo-tos gahr ee•gah• pee• seen o Theh• os ton kos• mos os• teh ton yee• on ton mono• yeh• nee eh• tho• kehn](#)", rendered, "in this way or manner God did so love the world, that His son, the only begotten, He gave". So the **cause** or **reasoning** for what God had provided for deliverance and salvation is now clearly set forth and that is Jesus, the Son of Man, the only begotten one uniquely born or birthed from above; was given as a ransom for those who will be saved.

Now we pose the basic question, "Is this remedy of deliverance and salvation provided for everyone"? Many ministries preach and teach that it is, but here we observe the fact that the remedy of the bass serpent was defiantly not for everyone! It was **exclusively** effective for only those in the camp, God's elect Israel. No gentile could have benefited from this provision in the wilderness; as the context in Numbers 21:6-9, makes it very plain that it was confined to "the people of Israel" (Numbers 21:6). The basic question now expands and may be posed in this manner, did Jesus' usage of the term "the world", entail a prophetic revelation to Nicodemus namely, that the exclusive provision of the type (bass serpent) in the wilderness; now provide for direct inclusion of the Gentiles? The obvious answer has to be no! It is necessary for one to know the context of Jesus' revelation to the Apostle Paul to understand that it is not possible if Paul's testimony is to be accepted (Ephesians 2:11-19, 3:1-8). Thus, direct salvation for the Gentiles was a hidden fact until God revealed it to the Apostle Paul.

So what or who was Jesus referring to in the context as He spoke to Nicodemus concerning "the world" in John 3:16? Now as we continue to note, Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a Scribe, thus one very well versed in the Law and covenants that God had made with His sanctified people, Israel. In this light, it is inconceivable that Jesus would casually mention the inclusion of the provisions of salvation to Jews and Gentiles alike without some specific excursus on the matter. Such a profound statement would have required some special prophetic declaration or at least an explanation. It is by and through the ordinances of the Law and Abraham's decree, that Israel had always been directed to be separated from the Gentile Nations. Thus it would seem that Nicodemus would not construe Jesus' terminology "the world" to include those outside of the world of His elect people Israel, who alone had claim to "the God of Israel".

As we continue our exegesis in light of the context, we note that the Greek noun ""ton kos• mon", translated "the world", as used in this verse, would be out of harmony with the scope and meaning of the passage if it refers to all who believe (Jews and Gentile). Thus as Jesus makes the statement, Gentiles are **not** included because salvation at this point historically speaking, had not been directly offered to the Gentiles. Now we have all heard this statement, " Surely, **world** means **world**, that means you, me and everybody". In reply to this, we ask that you will take a Bible concordance and look up the word "world" and then read carefully the various scriptural passages in which the term "world" (as a translation of "kosmos") occurs. As you do this, you will quickly perceive that to ascertain the precise meaning of the word "world" in any given passage; is not nearly as easy as you might otherwise suppose.

Those who attempt this exercise, will find that the Greek word "kos•mos", and its English translation "world" is not used with a uniform significance in the New Testament. Actually "kos• mos" (world) is used in quite a number of different ways. For example, we refer to a few passages where this term occurs: (from the KJV), (1) In Acts 17:24, "kos• mos", (world) is used in reference to the **universe** as a whole. (2) In John 13:1, "kos• mos" is used in reference to the earth. (3) In Ephesians 1:4, "kos• mos" is used to reference **creation**. (4) In John 12:31, "kos• mos" is used in reference to the world system. (5) In Romans 3:19, it is used in reference to the **entire** human race. (6) In John 15:18, and Romans 3:6, it is used in reference to humanity **excluding** believers. (7) In Romans 11:12, "kos• mos", is used to reference Gentiles as contrasted from Jews. (8) In John 1:29, 3:16,17; 6:33;12:47; I Corinthians 4:9; II Corinthians 5:19, "kos• mos" is used in reference to **believers** only. (9) In Romans 3:6, "kos• mos" is obviously used in reference to **unbelievers**, because believers will not be judged (condemned)!

Thus it is demonstrated from the examples given that "kos• mos"(world) has several different clearly defined meanings in the New Testament. So the question may be asked, has the Holy Spirit allowed the usage of a word to confuse and confound those who read the scriptures? The answer to this and any other questions of this nature is **absolutely no!** Note, as we have said, and here we again implore all of God's people; "the word of God **can not** be understood by merely academically reading it, but it must be prayerfully studied or scrutinized to be spiritually comprehended (II Timothy 3:15).

Now this automatically eliminates those who are not recipients of the Holy Spirit for He (alone) is the teacher. Also the scriptures are not written for those who are too lazy or too dilatory or too busy with the things of this world, such that they have little or no time and no heart to "search and study" the Holy writings (John 5:39). Now the next question is, "How is one who searches the scriptures and know the relevant meanings of the term "kos• mos" (world); to determine its application in any given verse of scripture? The key word is **contextual**. This may be ascertained by a careful study of the context, by diligently noting what is predicated of "the world" in each passage, and by prayerfully cross referencing other parallel passages to the one being studied.

Now as we return to our base text, i.e. the **1<sup>st</sup> phrase of John 3:16**, we note again the Greek adjectivally adverb "oo• tos", rendered "in this manner (or way). Observe its three-fold functions. First as a combination with reference to what precedes it (verses 13 and 14) with a correlation to produce a comparison in reference to it and finally to introduce that which follows it. Thus we proceed in this way; we now note the Greek noun "O Theh• os", rendered "God", as it is in the nominative case (subject of the sentence). So the principle thought of the phrase is that God "ee • gah• pee• seen", translated "loved" "ton kos• mos", translated "the world". But it is clear who is identified in this context, as evidenced by the selective reference to Israel as God's exclusive elect in the wilderness in the companion verses of 13 & 14. So it follows that "ton kos• mos", in John 3:16, would identify and be confined to God's elect, the **world of believers**.

Thus God in the manner historically documented in the wilderness, did so love "ton kosmos", (the world) (of His elect), os • teh (that), "ton Yee• on" (His Son), ton mo• no• yeh• nee", (the only begotten) "eh•tho• kehn" (He gave or granted). Now observe that the principal subject of John 3:16, is Christ as the gift of God. Note that this phrase identifies what moved God to "give or grant" His only begotten Son and that was His great love. But the underlying questions are (1) whom did God love so much? and (2) for whom did He give His "only begotten Son"? Now it is essential to understand that the "the world" in John 3:16, refers to "the world of believers" (God's elect), in contradiction from the world of the ungodly (II Peter 2:5), or the world of unbelievers (John 15:18; Romans 3:6). So the term "world" is unequivocally established by a comparison of the other passages which speak of God's "love". Note, in Romans 5:8, it states in the KJV "God commendeth his love toward us in that while we (God's elect) were yet sinner, Christ died for us (God's elect). In Hebrews 12:6-8, it states, (6) "for whom the Lord loveth He "peh• thehv• ee", (chasteneth and instructs through disciplining) and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth (the elect).

(7) "If you "eep• om• eh• o", (endure or abide under), chastening God dealeth "pros• phehr• o", (dealeth or bring unto) with you as with sons; for what son is he whom a father chasteneth not? (8) But if you be without chastisement, whereof all are "meht• oo• khos" (partners or participators) or partakers, then are you bastards, "no• thos", (illegitimate or rejected) and not sons. In I John 4:19, it states we (God's elect) love Him because He first loved us (God's elect).

So what is God's relationship to the world? We again consider John 15:18-19, wherein it states (from the King James Version), (18) "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you". (19) "If you were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you. In I John 2:15, it states "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him". Is it conceivable that God would not want His elect to love that which He loves?

Also in I John 3:1, it states "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed (granted or given) "thee• tho• mee", upon us (God's elect) that we should be called the Sons of God: therefore the world "knoweth", ("yeen• os• ko") us not because it knew him not". Thus it is established that there is **no form** of intimacy between God and "the world". Accordingly, the usage of the term "kos• mos", (world) in John 3:16 unmistakably has reference to God's own, (God's elect), whom He loves and gave His only begotten son for, "that is" the world of believers".



Now we turn to the effect or results or the remedy that was provided by God for deliverance and salvation as we consider John 3:15 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> phrase of John 3:16. Note as we have stated, the wording in it's implied context, is the same but the literal congruency is not exacting. In verse 15, the literal reading is "ee• nah pahs o peest• ehv• on ehn ahf• to eh• khee zo• een eh• oo• yee• on", literally translated "that everyone who or is believing in Him, may in Him have eternal life". Notice that the clause "should not" or "may not perish"; does not actually appear in the Greek Text, but it is freely inserted by most translations because the context does indeed imply that which is not actually written.

Here the conjunction "ee• nah", rendered, "that" "or in order that", expresses the purpose or goal of the preceding verse or verses; in this case (verses 13 & 14). Thus there was instant deliverance and salvation to those Israelites in the wilderness camp. Now again we stress the fact that this deliverance (salvation) was not applicable to "everyone" in the wilderness that was or may have been bitten by the serpent, but "only those Israelites" who were in the camp who looked upon the remedy of the bass serpent on the pole. Thus we now consider the Greek adjective "pahs", rendered, "whosoever" or whoever" and here we note what many Greek scholars either consciously or subconsciously, but conveniently ignore and that is the definite article "o".

Note, "pahs o"; as structured with the definite article and followed by the substantive prepositional phrase; implies inclusion of all members or parts of a category. So "pahs o", would be rendered "the whosoever" or "the entire or whole" or "everyone of a kind or group" or "everyone who". Also the Greek present participle "peest• ehv• on", rendered "believing" is in the active voice and its declension; nominative masculine, singular agrees with its descriptive Greek adjective (and definitive article) "pahs• o". Hence the translation would literally read, "in order that everyone who is believing". Now as we revert to the cause or reasoning aspect of the communication, we note that the message centers around obedience to the word of God (to focus on the bass serpent). Here in this verse, the focus shifts from the serpent on the pole that was raised; to the Son of man who is exalted above the earth upon the cross of Calvary. Note, this is substantiated by the Greek phrase "ehn ahf• to", rendered "in Him". Note the statement of Jesus in John 12:32-33 wherein He declares (from the King James Version) (verse 32), "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me". (verse 33), "This he said, signifying what death he should die". Here it is documented that all who are to be delivered and saved (salvation) must be drawn to **Him** through the sacrificial offering by His crucifixion on Calvary (or the lifting up on high) of the Son of Man (Jesus).

Note the actual or literal Greek Text of John 12:32, "Kahg• o eh• ahn eep• so• tho ehk tees yees pahn• dahs eh• kee• so pros ehm• ahf• ton", translated "For (when) I if I may be raised (lifted up high) from (above) the earth, will draw (drag) all (the elect) unto myself". Note the wording "all men" is not actually stated but the adjectival pronoun "pahn• dahs" (all or every) which is in the accusative case proceeds the Greek verb "eh• kee• so" (to be lead by force or drag), thus the implication is all who may be (subjective mood) strongly pulled and attracted (compelled) **by Him, unto Him**. Observe the indicative mood (it is a fact) and future tense of the verb "eh• kee• so", (will draw or drag); it connotes God's action as a result of His propitiating sacrifice or status of being lifted or exalted above the earth. Now again, it is **in Him**. So John 3:15, without a doubt has reference to the elect of God identified by the antecedent verses 13 and 14, which is exclusively designated to those Israelites in the wilderness.

Now we focus on the effect or results or the remedy of the 2<sup>nd</sup> phrase of John 3:16, as we note the literal Greek wording; "ee• nah pahs o pee• stehv• on ees ahf• ton mee ahp• ol• ee• teh ahll eh• khee zo• een eh• oo• nee• on", translated "that whosoever believeth (everyone who is believing) may not perish (be loosed) but have life unending (eternal).

Here again note the conjunction "ee• nah", rendered "that" or "in order that", as it expresses the introduction of the resulting clauses, which expresses the purpose or goal of the 1<sup>st</sup> phrase antecedent context. So the key question is, what is the actual context? Now again, to insure

exegetical accuracy, we apply the three fold principles of scrutiny, namely grammatical, historical and contextual. In the grammatical sense we note, that the structure of the Greek adjective "pahs• o" is in the same format as we previously viewed in verse 15, i.e. it carries the definite article. Thus "pahs o", would likewise, as in the case of verse 15, imply inclusion of all members of a certain category.

Hence the translation would be literally, "the whosoever" or "the entire or whole" or "everyone of a kind or group (the elect) or "all who believe" or "everyone who is believing. Historically speaking, this would be confined to Israel. If we consider the prophetically aspect, it would be confined to "all believers" or "those who are caused to believe" or the elect of God"; for no man can receive God on his own initiative. Indeed God must initiate this belief. Contextually speaking, it is demonstrated by the facts of all that is conveyed in this passage; that the contents entail private communication between the Lord Jesus and one named Nicodemus. Note, all the accommodations and provisions elaborated upon in the context; are in accordance with the conditions defined by the covenant relationship that God established with His elect people Israel. Thus "whosoever" would be relegated to "all those who believe", who would be "all those who are called". In the case of Israel (Jews), God determines all who are born into the commonwealth of Israel as **evidenced** by the **inclusion** of Isaac and Jacob and the **exclusion** of Ishmael and Esau as the elect of God. Nicodemus very clearly knew and understood that the identity of "the world " and "whosoever" would be confined to God's elect people (Israel). Likewise "the world" and "whosoever" in this dispensational age (grace) would be confined to God's elect people (the Church) or those who are determined by God to be birthed (new birth) into the body of Christ (Eph. 1:4).

Thus, God determines those of us who are to believe in Jesus Christ; whom God has given **for us**, even **to us** to accept the gift, and answer the intention of the giver, who alone has effectuated this exclusive remedy of salvation. Now it is a fact as conveyed by the clearly defined remedy; the expressed latter ensign of Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, who replaces the former insignia of the bass serpent, that those (the whoever) **believing** on Him shall not perish (be loosed). Note again the participle verb "pee• stehv• on", translated "is believing", it is the present tense and active voice, which defines continuous action in the present. Thus, faith (belief and trust) is manifested by the recipient of God's grace in a two-fold manner. First, **the gift of deliverance** is provided by God through the Son of Man (Jesus Christ). Secondly, **the gift of faith** is also provided by God to believe upon the only remedy for salvation. Hence, the exercise of saving faith is expressed through the usage of the Greek preposition "ees", in the accusative case as it denotes God (even Christ) as the direct object of salvation. So the Greek phrase "peest• ehv• on ees ahf• ton", rendered "is believing in Him" denotes one who is relying on God for help to have confidence to believe (Mark 9:23-24).

Now in examining the contrasting resulting effects of belief and unbelief, note the aorist tense and subjunctive mood of the Greek verb, "ahpo• lee• teh", augmented by the negative participle "mee", rendered "may not perish" or "may not be loosed". Here again, we have the iffy status of the subjunctive mood conjunctively guided by the aorist tense, which conclusively connotes a completed action in the past. This is verified by the strong adversative conjunction "ahll", rendered "but", which indicates contrast, difference and limitation or an introduction to an exception or exemption then "ahll" (ahllah) could also be expressed "rather" or "however". This Greek conjunction thus serves as a bridge to change the thought direction from the preceding to the succeeding condition. Consequently those who "are believing", do not perish; rather they "eh• khee zo• een eh• oo• nee• on", translated "may have life everlasting" (without end). Note again that the iffy connotation of the subjunctive mood of the Greek verb "eh•khee", is conjunctively guided by the present tense; denoting the present continuous position of eternal security, which is realized by all of God's elect. It infers a close everlasting relationship engendered with the possession of spiritual blessings that are exclusively enjoyed by those who are favored by God. Here the active voice connotes God's grace that is bestowed upon God's people. Thus, the sacrificial death of Jesus insures that everyone who is believing (or caused to believe) in Him will not perish or be loosed from Him, but will (not many) have (possess, own and enjoy) life without end. God eternally purposed this position (in Him, in Christ) for His elect only.

This is further illustrated by the succeeding verses and that is the contents of verses 17-21. Here we read John 3:17 from the King James Version, "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved". And now from the Greek Text, "For God did not send His Son **to** the world that He may judge the world, but that the world may be saved through Him". Note in light of our context, it is explicitly stated that God's reason for sending His Son ("**ees**", preposition accusative) "to" the world (of believers); was not to judge or condemn the world (of believers) but He sent Him for the purpose that the world (of believers) may be delivered or saved through Him.

Now the Greek verb "**ahp• ehs• teel• ehn (ahp• os• tehl• o)**" is translated "to send away". It denotes a commission or one who is sent with authority, for a purpose. Here the indicative mood and aorist tense of this Greek verb document the fact that it is a completed action that occurred in a past period. Thus God in eternity commissioned His Son (Jesus) to "**so• thee**", (save, preserve from harm or rescue) His elect, the world of believers, as determined exclusively by Him. This is confirmed by the aorist tense and passage voice of this Greek verb, which documents that this past completed action, was conferred upon the world (of believers) at a previous point. Thus God by giving His Son shows that He purposed (in eternity) the salvation, not the destruction of the world (of believers); nevertheless, those who will not receive His provision of salvation must necessarily perish because Jesus is the **only** remedy for sin.

This is expressed in John 3:18, as we read first from the King James Version, "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God". Now from the Greek Text, "He who is believing in Him is not judged, but he who is not believing hath been judged already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God". Note the key Greek verbs in this verse, first the participle "**peest• ehv• on**" (he is believing) and "**kree•neh• teh**", (**kree• no**) (judged or condemned). In the first phrase they are present active nominate masculine singular and indicative present passive 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular respectively. Now observe the verbs in the latter phrase of this verse, namely "**keh• ree• teh**", (determine, decide or judge) and "**pehp• ees• teh• kehn**" (believed, trusted, convinced or confidence) as they are both indicative perfect 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, but passive and active voices respectively. Now if we accurately utilize the Greek grammar of this verse (John 3:18), then the context will automatically align itself in a consistent manner. Note that the Greek word order in this verse certainly is in harmony with the historical and contextual contents of those truths that are previously conveyed in this passage. Observe that the focal points are belief, trust and confidence thus faith of the lack of it on the one hand, verses judgment and condemnation or the lack of it as it has been previously determined decided and judged in the past. Some are going to take serious issue with the premise that this was all adjudicated in eternity, but this verse as well as the entire passage consistently authenticates the sovereignty of God's choice and election through His foreknowledge, predestination, call (summons), justification, and glorification (Rom 8:30).

Here note the Greek phrase "**o peest• ehv• on ees ahf• ton oo kree•neh• teh**", rendered "he who is believing (present tense) in Him, is not judged (present-indicative). So it is a present fact that the condition of believing (in Him) is positively linked with the status of one who is not condemned (or negatively judged). Note the passive voice of the Greek verb "**kree• neh• teh**", (condemnation) as it conveys the thought that an outside agent (God) made the evaluation (innocence or guilt) based on the recipient's trust in Jesus. Thus it follows that the determination of one's status would necessarily be conditioned upon the determination of one's condition (belief, trust). This is further demonstrated by the continuation of the next Greek phrase, "**o theh mee peest• ehv• on ee• thee keh• kree• teh**", rendered "but he who is not believing has been judged already. Here note the structure of the definite article "**o**" as it is used to form the participle into a relative clause as it is joined by its coordinating counterpart "**theh**". The conjunction "**theh**" is most commonly used to denote continuation and further thought development; taking its specific flow from the context, which in this case denotes contrast

accordingly it is rendered "but". Thus in contrast he who is "mee peest•ehv• on", (not believing), notice the present tense; is "ee•thee keh• kree• teh", rendered "already condemned". Here note that the Greek adverb "ee• thee", rendered "logically, "of time", "by this time" or "already", modifies the verb "keh• kree• teh", rendered "determined or decided". Thus the one who is not believing, has already been determined (to be negatively judged or guilty), as conveyed by the perfect tense. Now the perfect tense defines a completed action in the past with the results of that action continuing until the present. Hence the determination of judgment (condemnation) in the past; is linked with the determination of the continuous action of unbelief in the present.

Now we move to the conclusive Greek phrase in this verse, "o• tee mee peh• pees• teh• kehn ees to on• om• ah too mon• oyehn• oos yee• oo too Theh• oo", rendered "because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God". Here this phrase sums up the preceding two statements (phrases) in this verse. First we note the Greek conjunction "o• tee", rendered, "because" or "since" or for (this reason), as it is used to introduce a cause or reason based on an evident fact. Thus the thought is conveyed of one who has "mee peh•pees• teh• kehn", rendered "not believed" or "not trusted" or "has not been convinced" and does not have any confidence in ("ees) the "on•om• ah (name) of "too mono yeh noos yee• oo too Theh• oo", rendered "the only begotten Son of God". Now this occurs 'according to" or as "a result of" or "because of", a prior determination and the resulting effect as expressed in the antecedent phrases in this verse as well as the entire preceding verses of this context. Again this is substantiated and confirmed by the perfect tense as it defines a completed action in the past with the results of the action continuing until the present.

The next two verses in the context (John 3:19-20) give demonstrative testimony to the state and status of those who are the non-elect of God as we read first from the King James Version, (19) "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil". (20) "For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deed should be reprov'd". Now from the Greek Text, (19) "And this is the judgment, that the light hath come to the world (of unbelievers) and men, the (non elect), did love the darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil". (20) "for every one who is doing wicked things hateth the light and doth not come unto the light, that his work may not be detected (condemned)". We now observe the pre-arranged state and status of the non elect or permanently unregenerated mankind as we note in verse 19 the Greek phrase "eegah• pee• sahn ee ahn• thro• pee mahl• lon to sko• tos ee to phos", rendered "men did love the darkness rather than the light". Here we focus on the main verb of this phrase, "ee• gah• pee• sahn", rendered "did love".

Notice the indicative mood and aorist tense as it speaks of the fact that this love for darkness over light was a (one time) completed action in the past that was determined and attributed to those who are eternally lost. This was all implemented through the fall of mankind. Thus these are the ones who have not been ordained to receive God's mercy (Acts 13:48). Now this is manifested by the Greek phrase "een gahr ah• ton pon• ee• rah tah ehr• gah", translated "for their works, were evil. Note the Greek verb "een", rendered "were" as it is expressed in the indicative mood and imperfect tense. Here we observe that the imperfect tense denotes continuous action in the past, thus it is a fact that evil works or deeds were previously assigned to those who "love darkness rather than light", and this "ehs• teen", "is" the basis of the "kree• sees" judgement or condemnation (note the present tense and indicative mood). Now this is the underlying fact governing those who are lost and will perish.

This is further illustrated in the 20<sup>th</sup> verse by the Greek phrase "pahs gahr o phahv• lah prahs• son mee• see to phos keh ook ehr• kheh•teh pros to phos", rendered "for every one (or all of a kind) who is doing evil things hateth the light and does not come into the light". This is pre-conditionally true of all men (by the nature of Adam total depravity), but note the Greek verbal expression "ook ehr• kheh• teh", rendered "does not come".

This verb is in the indicative mood (it is a fact) and present tense and the middle or passive voice, which indicates an outside agent (Satan the devil) is the influence, directing the lost away from the light (II Corinthians 4:3-4). So those who are lost practice their deeds of wickedness in darkness. The obvious reason for this is expressed by the Greek phrase "ee• nah mee eh• lehghk• tee tah ehr• gah ahfton", translated "that his works may not be detected or exposed and reproved". Here we note that the Greek verb "eh•lehghk• thee", rendered "detected" or 'expressed' as it is in the subjunctive mood and aorist tense. Here the "iffy" connotation of the subjunctive mood speaks of the inactiveness of God in dealing with the present condemned acts of the lost, non-elect in this age. The Apostle Paul states in Hebrews 12:8 (KJV), "But if ye be without chastisement (correction), whereof all (the elect) are partakers, then are ye ("noth•os") bastards and (illegitimate) and not sons (or children of God)".

This is the reason why the gospel is directed exclusively to and will draw only the elect of God. One of the designs of the gospel is to reprove, rebuke, chasten or chastise its recipients. The gospel causes condemnation upon the conscience of those who receive its message as it convicts men of sin; because the sinner must be convicted or convinced of sin in order to be saved. Now God's inactivity regarding the wicked affairs or workings of men in this age should never be construed to mean that He is apathetic to evil deeds. All that is not dealt with in this age; will surely be addressed in the ages to come. There is no escape from the righteous judgments of God. Only those who are drawn to God's only remedy for salvation, Jesus Christ; will avoid the eternal justice (condemnation) that has been assigned to the lost (non -elect).

Now as we move to the final verse of our context (John 3:21), we read first from the King James Version, (21) "But, he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God". Now from the Greek Text, (21) "But he who is doing the truth, doth come to the light, that his works may be made manifested, that in God they are having been wrought". Here we note the conclusive statement of this verse as it confirms the factuality of God's contrasting relationship with His elect as it is distinguished from those who are not called by Him. Now this verse does not begin with the strong adversative conjunction "allah", rendered "but", however the Greek phrase "o theh pee• on" is grammatically constructed to be translated, "but he who is doing". Here again as in verse 18, the Greek definite article "o" (nominative, masculine, singular) is placed before the conjunction particle "theh", to denote continuation and further thought development, taking it specific sense from the context as it is contrasted from the antecedent verses 19 and 20, thus the implied counterpoint could be expressed by the English word "but". So those or he who "pee• on"; here the Greek verbal participle is translated "is doing", "teen ah•lee• thee• ahn", rendered "the truth", "ehr kheh• teh pros to phos", rendered "doth come to the light".

Note the indicative mood and present tense and passive voice of the verb "ehr• kheh• teh" rendered 'does come' as it conveys the fact that those who do come (present tense) , are drawn by an outside agent (note the passive voice), who is God (John 6:44). Thus the one who comes to the light, is doing or loves the truth. The truth ("teen ahl• ee•thee• ahn"), is defined as the word of God (John 17:17). Now the results are expressed in the final Greek phrases "ee• nah phah• nehr••• thee ahf• too tah ehr• gah o• tee ehn Theh• o ehs• teen eer• gahs•meh• nah", rendered, "that his works may be manifested, that in God they are having been wrought". Here the Greek verb "pah• neh• ro•thee", translated "manifested" is in the subjunctive mood (iffy condition) but it is guided by aorist tense, which connotes that the revelation or manifestation of righteous deeds are causative, i.e., made known or are caused to be by an agent outside of the believer (passive voice). The Greek conjunction "o• tee", rendered "that" is used declaratively to form a direct assertion.

This assertion or perception is that it is "eer• gahs• meh• nah", rendered "wrought" or "accomplished" or "activated", "ehn Theh• o", translated "in God". Note the verbal participle "eer• gahs• meh• nah", (accomplished) as it is in the perfect tense and the passive voice. The perfect tense denotes continuous action in the pass with continuous results in the present. The passive voice denotes that

this accomplishment of bring us to the light was brought about by an agent outside of the believer (God). Accordingly, the contents of John 3:1-21, all conclusively give consistent testimony and documentation to the sovereignty of God's eternal choice and election of individual (believers) to salvation. All those who will unbiasedly consider the writings of John in this context will understand that the writings therein thoroughly authenticate the doctrine of election.

Now as we move to Romans 10:14, we read first from the King James Version, "How then shall thy call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And now from the Greek Text, "How then should they call upon him in whom they have not believed? and how should they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how can they hear (apart from one preaching) without a preacher"? Here our focus is on three Greek terms in this verse namely: (1) **ehp• ee• kahl• ehs• on• the**, which is rendered, "should call upon" (2) **ehp• ees• tehvs• os• een** rendered, "should believe" and (3) **ahk• oos• oo• seen** rendered, "should hear". Also note that each of these Greek verbs is in the subjunctive mood. Again the subjunctive mood expresses probability or it expresses an "iffy" connotation, though it may be in either a positive or negative sense. Now observe the negative participle "ook" in relationship to "**ehp• ees• tehvs• os• een**", (should believe) and "**ahk• oos• oo• seen**", (should hear) as it expresses the thought that one might not believe and might not hear. Thus the question is posed regarding those from verse 13 who 'might call upon the name of the Lord and be saved'. Here the aorist tense, (past completed action) conveys the probability that one might not have believed and might not have heard due to the fact that it has not received a preaching or one who has proclaimed the gospel. So it follows that first, it is not probable that anyone will call upon the Lord who has not first believed in Him. Second, it is not probable that anyone will believe in the Lord unless he has first heard about Him via the gospel message. Third, it was not probable that any would hear the good news about the Lord unless there was first someone preaching and proclaiming it to them. This must be understood in light of the logical sequence that ignites the process of those who are drawn into a saving relationship with God.

Now as we move to Romans 10:15, we read from the King James Version, "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! Now from the Greek Text, "How should they preach if they may not be sent? even as it has been written and , How beautiful are the feet of those preaching a message of good things". Note, this verse is a continuation of verse 14. Here the Greek verb "**kee• reex• os• een**", rendered "how should they preach"? is likewise in the subjunctive mood and may also be rendered "how might they preach"? The basic thought is that it is not probable that they could preach unless they had been sent. Now this quotation which is primarily taken from Nahum 1:15; is mainly used to corroborate what Paul is saying. Now if we link verses 14 and 15 together as a single sentence, which in essence they are, and when we consider the transactions in them in the order in which they take place, we have the following sequence. First, the preacher is sent with the gospel of the grace of God. Second, through the preaching, one hears the gospel of grace. Third, as a result of hearing, some (not all) believe. Fourth, as one who has been caused to hear and has believed, he or she is in a position to call upon the Lord. Note the implication is that faith is a prerequisite to the desire and ability to call upon the Lord. Note the Greek phrase "**eh• ahn mee ahp• os• tahl• os• een**", translated "if" or "except" "they may not be sent".

As we follow the word order, we note that when the conjunction "**eh• ahn**" is arranged with the negative particle "**mee**", it is rendered "if not" or "unless" or "except". Here the Greek word "**ah• po• stahl• seen**", rendered "might be sent" is derived from the preposition "**ahpo**" prefixed to the verb "**stehl• lo**" and it means to "send from", hence to "send forth" or to "dispatch". This compound verb is in the aorist tense and passive voice, which indicates that at a given point in time, God is the one who sends forth, messengers with the gospel. In light of this, we can confidently affirm that those who go forth with the gospel of God's grace, God's message for this present church age; have been sent by God. It follows that we can also positively affirm that those who are not preaching

the gospel of God's grace in this disposition of grace have not been sent with the message for the Grace Church.

Now due to erroneous misconceptions of what the Bible teaches about God's sending and His call, many have and they continue to misconstrue Satan's call to confuse and hinder the preaching of the gospel from that which God has intended it to be. Now the latter phrase of this verse "kahth• os yeh• grahp• teh os o• ren• ee ee poth•ehs ton ehv ahg• yehlee• zo• meh• non (ta) ahg• ahth• ah", rendered, "even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of those preaching a message of good things". Here the Apostle Paul quotes from Isaiah 52:7, as the prophet expresses profound appreciation of not only the Messianic Message of glad tidings but the very feet of those publishing this glorious message, are called beautiful" for the sake of their message.

Here praise and thanksgiving is given to God for all those who preach the gospel of peace i.e., the gospel of the grace of God. All those who truly understand and are courageous enough to preach and teach grace mystery truth as delivered to the Church by revelation to the Apostle Paul should be highly commended. Here I think of my former Pastor, the late Pastor Clyde Colbert under whose ministry I served 31 years. He was very precious to me in many ways, but most of all I loved and highly esteemed him for his ministry of the doctrine of the grace of God. The minister of God who preaches and teaches and ministers grace is an invaluable servant of God. The Apostle Paul states in his epistle to the Thessalonians that we should (KJV) "Know them which labour among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their works sake" (I Thessalonians 5:12-13). It is through the dedication and sacrifice of men (and women) like my late pastor and many others that the gospel of peace (gospel of grace) is preached, taught and conveyed to God's people. Thus honor to the one laboring in the truth and praise to God for His working through the minister or preacher or proclaimer; should always be expressed. In I Timothy 5:17, the Apostle Paul states "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine". So from this we make the conclusive statement that, those that welcome the message cannot do anything other than love the messenger! (I Thessalonians 5:12-13).

Now as we move to Romans 10:16, we read first from the King James Version "But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? Now from the Greek Text, "But all did not obey the gospel; for Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed our report? Now this verse begins with the strong adversative conjunction "alla", translated "but". It emphasizes the contrast between what was preached and their disobedience to it. Here the Greek word "ehv• ahg•yeh• lee• o", translated "gospel" defines that which is good news or a good message.

Note, there are many messages in the bible as they are manifested in the various covenants. Here one must put into proper contexts what message the apostle Paul was referencing; as it determines what the good message or "news" or "gospel" is. In this case he identifies the Prophet Isaiah, thus the gospel or the good news would entail that which is conveyed by the contents of the prophetic writings, which is that which is derived from the prophetic covenants. So the quote is of Isaiah giving a prophetic report regarding the Messiah, particularly relating to his rejection and substitutionary death (Isaiah 53:1-11).

Here we note that the message as written in its context is prophetically applicable to Israel and their relationship to their Messiah, although many apply it to our experience with our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ for this age. Now there is certainly much in common between the way the word "gospel" is used with reference to Isaiah's report of Israel's salvation and the way Paul uses it pertaining to salvation, such as his revelation of the gospel of our salvation. In fact, on the basis of what is stated in this verse (Romans 10:16), we can affirm that Paul considered Isaiah 53 as a forerunner, or the antecedent of his gospel as it relates to salvation. Now the point that is made in this verse (Romans 10:16) is that regardless of the veracity of the message or the provisions for deliverance or salvation entailed of the message –"all did not obey the good news or message" which was proclaimed by Isaiah. The evidence Paul cites for this statement is documented in Isaiah 53:1. Here we literally read the last

phrase of Romans 10:16, from the Greek Text "**Kee• ree• ee tees eh• peest• ehv• seen ahk• o• ee ee ee• mon**", rendered "Lord, who has believed our report"? The implication is that very few of Israel if any, believed what the prophet Isaiah had stated. This is evident by the fact that the Jews did not know or recognize him and consequently lightly esteem or despised and therefore did indeed reject him. Note the Greek verb "**eep• eek• oos• ahn**", translated "obey" in the first phrase of this verse (Romans 10:16). Here the compound word is derived from the preposition "**eep• o**", prefixed to the word "**ahk• oo• o**" and literally means to "hear under" hence to do what is heard thus to obey. Accordingly obedience or the act of obeying is the consequence of **true faith** (Acts 13:48; Ephesians 1:13). Here, the apostle Paul continues to reference the experience of Gods' elect Israel, that they have not all obeyed the gospel; as he notes elsewhere in these writings that the greater part of them remain in unbelief and disobedience. Here we must observe that the gospel (message) is to first be heard, then believed and finally obeyed. This is the progressive flow and working of faith. So the obvious answer to the question, "who hath believed our report?", in this context is very few (if any). Few as compared to what one would think should have believed such a faithful report that was certainly worthy of acceptance by all that heard it.

Now we move to Romans 10:17, another controversial verse of scripture. No, the statement of this verse is not contentious with itself. But some have used these expressed thoughts to explain their conception of where the origin of faith lieth. We read from the King James Version, "So then faith *cometh* by hearing and hearing by the word of God". We will now read from the Greek Text, "Then faith is out of hearing and the hearing is through the word of Christ". Now some Bible versions (King James and Young's) have translated the latter half of this verse "the word of God", but the majority Greek transcripts have rendered it "the saying or word of Christ". Here we read the entire verse literally from the Greek Text, "**Ah• rah ee peest• ees ehx ahk• o• ees ee theh ahk• o• eethee• ah ree• mah• tos Khrees• too**", rendered "then faith **is** out of hearing, and the hearing **is** through the word of Christ". Now we will meticulously exegete this verse utilizing our three principles of scrutiny, namely grammatical, historically, and contextual. Here we prayerfully submit documentation of our exegesis of this verse; in light of those who would abrogate the determination of the excise of faith from the sovereignty of God into the hands of depraved men.

Now we note the Greek particle "**ah• rah**", with which this verse begins. This is an inferential particle denoting the transition of natural sequence to show corresponding thought flow, or logical inferences and it draws its inferences from the antecedent verses particularly verse 14. Now as we have been continuously attempting to convey, it is very important to remember that, no one verse of scripture should ever be idly used to establish what it actually conveys. So the contents of Romans 10:17, should be viewed in light of the context of Romans 10:13-17; thus verse 17 is basically a summation of the progressive thought flow of its antecedent verses (13-16). Thus this is the reason why it is conjunctively linked to the precursory or anterior conveyances preceding it. So the Greek particle "**ah• rah**", rendered "then" or "therefore" or "as the results of", indicates that what Paul states in this verse is a **consequence** of what he has previously stated, beginning in verse 14 and culminating in the actual meaning of its message.

Now we turn to the grammar (notice there are no actual verbs in this verse), here we focus on the Greek phrase "**ah• rah ee peest• ees ehx ahk• o• ees**", translated "then" or "as the results of –faith (ehx) by or out of hearing". Now as we observe the Greek word order, we note the case of the noun "**pees• tees**" (faith) which is nominative as it is linked (prepositional (ehx) (by or out of) to the noun "**ahk• o• ees**", (hearing) which is genitive. Here we define what the function of a verb is. It is the word mechanism that expresses either existence or action (motion) or occurrences in most languages. In the Greek grammar verbs are expressed in five different parts, namely; person, (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>) number (singular, plural) tense (conveys the idea of time plus kind of action), mood (degree of probability), voice (active, middle, passive).



Now due to the absence of a verb in this phrase, all information that would be conveyed directly by these functions or parts are excluded with the exception of number, which is conveyed as a part of nouns. Next we note that in the absence of a verb, there is the existence of the preposition "ehx" (by or out of).

A proposition, functions as that which is placed before a substantive (noun function) indicating the relation of that substantive (functions as noun or noun equivalent) to, in the absence of a verb, another substantive. But as previously stated there are two nouns in this phrase, thus the noun or substantively; by the presence of the preposition, expresses or designates the existence of the nouns (person, place or thing) i.e., faith and hearing.

So this is the basis or reason most translations have inserted derivations of the verb (to be) i.e. "comes" (King James Version) or "is" (Young's Literal Translation). Now as we continue the formation of the word order, we note that the preposition "ehx" (out of or by) is placed before the Greek noun "ahk• o• ee", literally rendered, "the message heard". Here observe the cases of both the preposition (ehx {out of by} and the noun (ahk• o• eel {the message heard}); they agree (as they should) and are genitive, showing source, possession or ownership. This is usually very clear when the accompanying noun or substantive is in the accusative (direct object) or dative (indirect object) cases. But as we note in this phrase, the accompanying Greek noun "peest• ees" is in the nominative case. The nominative case indicates or expresses the subject of the sentence (or phrase), note, **never** the object of a preposition.

So what is the conveyance in Romans 10:17 of the phrase "ehx ahk•o•ees" (by or out of hearing)? Does it convey the message that hearing is the origin of faith or is it possible to hear before one possesses faith? Sequentially speaking, which is the prerequisite, hearing or faith, faith or hearing, which comes first. To shed light upon this question, we revert to the expressions of the thirteenth and fourteenth verses of this chapter (10) of Romans, namely (Greek Text) verse (13) "Whoever might call upon the name of the Lord will be saved". Verse (14) "And how then should they call upon him in whom they have not believed"? and how should they believe in him whom they have not heard"? The key is the iffy connotation of the subjunctive mood, which governs the expressions, "might call", "should call upon", "should believe" and "should hear". Note that all of those probabilities are culminating in the certainty of some depraved men being saved, i.e. all that **do** call and **do** believe and **do** hear, "will be saved". Note the ending Greek verb in Romans 10:13, "so• thee• seh• teh", rendered "will be saved". Observe that this verb is in the future tense and indicative mood (it's a fact). So the fact of the matter is that as sure as night follows day, salvation follows the calling upon the name of the Lord.

Now again, it is not a probability that **anyone** will call upon the name of the Lord, until he believes and it is not a probability that anyone will believe in God unless he hears the gospel message.

But the certainty of salvation does not rest upon the probability of hearing and believing and calling, but the surety of the one who **causes** the hearing and the believing and the calling. This all requires the exercising of a divinely implanted faith, which in turn assures one of eternal salvation by the initiator of the entire process, a sovereign God! (Titus 1:2-3; Hebrews 5:9). Thus all of the above workings are not dependant upon the active voice connotations of men as expressed by the Greek verbs in verse 14 (calling, believing & hearing), but the factuality of the passive voice connoting those being saved, as expressed by the Greek verb in Romans 10:13, which presupposes the presence of faith (Hebrews 11:6).

Now as we refocus in Romans 10:17 on the question, which is the prerequisite or which precedes the other, hearing before faith as opposed to faith before hearing, we turn again to the grammatical construction of this verse and once more note the nominative case of the Greek noun "peest• ees", translated "faith". This means that faith is the subject of the phrase, and as it is structured functions as the doer of the action or that, which is described by the predicate, thus it is the cause or basis for

action. Accordingly, "ehx ahk• oo ees" (out of hearing), denotes the excise (not source) of previous divinely deposited faith that is activated by its defined source (God). Thus a simplified rendering of this phrase would be that faith is expressed through hearing. God alone is the author or originator of faith, resulting in eternal salvation (Hebrews 5:9; 12:2).

Now as we move to the latter phrase of Romans 10:17, we focus on the syntax or the Greek "locution "ee theh ahk• oo ee thee• ah ree•mah• os Khees• too", translated "and hearing through the word of Christ". Here again, we note the absence of verbs in this phrase, thus the corresponding exclusion of all information that could be gleaned by the functions of person (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>) tenses (time and kind of action) moods (degree of probability of occurrence) and voice (active, middle or passive). However this latter phrase is linked to the former by the conjunction particle "theh", as it denotes continuation and further thought development; taking its specific sense from the preceding context, thus the thought conveyed is further elaboration of its antecedent. Here we follow the word order as we note the case of the Greek noun "ahk• oo ee", (hearing or that which is heard or the message) which is nominative as it is linked prepositional (thee• ah), (by or through) to the nouns "ree• mah• tos Khees• too", (words or message of Christ). As this is arranged the preceding phrase of this verse, the cases of the preposition (thee• ah {by or through} the noun (ree• mah• tos{word or message}) and "Krees• too" (Christ) all agree (as they should) they are genitive, showing source, possession or ownership. As we noted in the former phrase of this verse, this would present a clear-cut conclusion if the accompanying noun were in the accusative (direct object) or dative cases. But again we observe that the noun "ahk• oo ee" (hearing {the message}) is in the nominative case, it is the subject of the phrase. Thus a simplified rendering of this phrase would be that hearing is expressed through the word (saying) of Christ.

So as it is arranged, that which is heard is conveyed by or it entails the words or the sayings or utterances of Christ. Thus, that which is heard or understood and received **is** the messages or utterances of or concerning Christ. Summarizing this verse should read: so or then faith, by out of hearings or a message and the hearings message by (out of) the word of Christ. According the original faith (divinely implanted) is excised through the hearing (and receiving) of the word (message) concerning Christ. Accordingly all who believe that God's method of saving sinners today is entirely by grace, must, (in order to be consistent), also believe that He gives those whom He has elected, the necessary faith for hearing, believing and calling.

Now it is certainly true that these acts are attributed to **some** men not **all** men. Thus, we must understand that those who **do** believe, hear and call are distinguished only by the fact that God has imparted saving faith to His elect, who are chosen in Christ before the foundation (creation) of the world (Ephesians 1:4).

Now before we proceed to closing out the final verses of this chapter (18-21), we would like to note that it is feasible to think that the salvation process may begin when a sinner listens to or reads the word of God. It is a fact that God's word is living and dynamic, and that just listening to it or reading it **could** instill faith in the believer, but that is not the way God implants initial faith. There is a difference between the initial deposit of faith and the exercise of that which has been gifted by God. Other wise would a sinner who is dead in trespasses and sins, be willing to listen to the Word long enough to have faith generated in him unless he first believes that God does exist (Hebrews 11:6). Also, what about sinners, who have little or no exposure to the Word of God, but upon hearing it, they believe and are saved? In such a case, the question is where or how did they receive their instant faith? There is no question about it, on the basis of this context, faith is obviously generated in sinful men. but we are convinced by and through our close examination of God word, that God's methodology is that He imparts saving faith by His sovereign act of electing (choosing) those who He will in eternity, (Ephesians 1:4). Faith is then activated by God in time when He calls (summons) (Romans 8:29) and is energized progressively as believers are caused to submit themselves accordingly (Ephesians 3:20; Colossians 1:29; I Thessalonians 2:13).

Now this all becomes very evident as we exegete the final verse (18-21) of Romans chapter ten. To this end we move to Romans 10:18, as we read first from the King James Version "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world". And now from the Greek Text, "But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed, their sound went out into all the land, and their words unto the ends of the inhabited earth". In this verse Paul raises the question, didn't Israel hear the word of God given to them? In other words didn't they know God's requirements of them under the Law and the Prophets? The answer is emphatically "mehn•oon•yeh", rendered "yes indeed". Actually it was not a matter of Israel ignorantly sinning against God, in which case there might be some basis for excusing (I Timothy 1:13), but in spite of knowing what the Law and the Prophets said, they willfully persisted in that which they knew to be contrary to that which had been spoken to them.

Here Paul cites from Psalms 19:4 (in the King James Version) "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world". In this verse Paul paraphrases it with the quote "their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world". This saying supports what is conveyed regarding the widespread dissemination of the message that God has given them. It had gone out unto all the land, i.e. the land of Israel.

His words extended far beyond the land of Israel, unto the farthest parts of the earth, which was inhabited. The Israel of the Old Testament knew the will of God, but they rejected it. Likewise, the Israelites during Paul's day and even to this day, for the most part, have rejected the gospel of God's grace (Acts 13:48; 20:24).

Now as we move to Romans 10:19, we read from the King James Version, "But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by *them that* are no people, *and* by a foolish nation I will anger you". Now we will read from the Greek Text, "But I say, did Israel know? First Moses says, I will provoke you to jealousy by that which is not a nation, and by a nation void of understanding I will anger you". Now in the preceding verse (18), the Apostle raises the question as to whether Israel had really heard, which he answers with an emphatic yes. In this verse (19), he raises the further question, Did Israel **really** know? Did they have adequate information regarding the Law and the Prophets? Now the quotation in this verse is from Deuteronomy 32:21. The surrounding context posits the fact that Israel was not living in accordance with the knowledge, which she had. The implication of the quotation cited is that Israel **did** have the knowledge of God and His will, and it is against the background of this knowledge that God is going to stir them up by wooing an ignoble that did not know Him. The basic principle is that God in some instances uses the uninformed to put to shame those having knowledge or the wise

(I Corinthians 1:27-28).

Now as we move to Romans 10:20, we read from the King James Version, "But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. Now from the Greek Text, " And Isaiah dared to speak out and say, I was found by those not seeking me, I was made manifest to those not interrogating me". Now the thought in this verse is that Isaiah "ahpo•tol•mah", rendered "dared to speak out", i.e. he took the risk and threw off restraints in saying what he did. Oh that men of God would be courageous and uncompromising when it comes to conveying the word of God, yes Mystery Truth! It may not be popular, but it is so truthful. Here we observe that what Isaiah said was designed to provoke Israel to jealousy. Notice the use of the passive voice indicates that God was the one who initiated a courtship with those not seeking Him. Again, this proves that God has, does and must always be the initiator of any contact between God and depraved men. Thus He was the one who manifested Himself to those who were not making an inquiry concerning Him or seeking to know Him. Note the Greek phrase "tees eh•meh mee zee•too•seen", rendered "those not interrogating me" or " those not inquiring about me". In all these citations the principle is the same; God is **always** the one who is initiating a relationship with sinners, while sinners (unprovoked by God), are never reaching out toward God. Note, the very thing which

made Israel jealous was the fact that God was leaving her in the shadow and eliciting the favor of her no-status neighbors.

Now we move to the last verse of Romans chapter ten verse 21, as we read first from the King James Version, "But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people". And now from the Greek Text, "But to Israel he says, all the day I have stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and speaking-against people". Now the quotations in verse 20 and 21 are from Isaiah 65:1-2. The purpose of the first one is to provoke Israel to jealousies that they might realize what a wonderful God they have. The second quotation calls their attention to God's relentless compassion toward them. Historically speaking even though they are disobedient and speaking against God, He continues to "ehx• ehpeh•tah• sah", rendered "stretch forth", "extend and "spread out" His hands toward them all day long. This reminds me of Jesus' compassion for Israel mentioned in Matthew 23:37, where He says, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one killing the prophets and stoning those sent to her, How often I have wanted to bring together your children in the same manner a hen gathers her young under the wings and you would not".

In summarizing verses 18-21, we note again God's independent determination concerning His relationship with His elect. First, all Israel in and beyond their land had an opportunity to hear God's message. Second, they also had occasion to know the basics of God's law, that by which they were to be governed during that dispensation. Third, God often used the principle of jealousy to stimulate Israel to appreciate His majestic essence. Fourth, in spite of Israel's disobedience and obstinacy, God continued to woo her back compassionately to Himself. Fifth, even though Israel heard and did not respond, and knew and did not obey, God continues to love her and preserve her, even to the extent that He has a remnant in this age of grace, as it is documented in Romans chapter eleven.

Oh, what a magnificent documentation of God's unwavering love, mercy and grace that He bestows upon His chosen ones. How astounding is His commitment to those who He has shown favor to. How blessed are His elect (of every dispensation) for whom He has made eternal provisions throughout all eternity.

Blessings though undeserved, are securely reserved for those who He elected in Christ Jesus.

Now as we move to chapter eleven, we note the continuity of the progression of thought flow as we read verse one from the King James Version, "I say then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin". Now we will read from the Greek Text, "I say then, has God cast away his people? May it never be! For I also am an Israelite, out of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin". Now as a consequence of what the Apostle Paul stated in the latter part of chapter ten, it is possible that some would draw the conclusion that God has "ahp• o• sah• to", rendered, "cast away" or "thrust away and repelled from His covenant people, Israel".

Note as he opens this chapter (Romans eleven), he hypothetically raises this very question as he uses a Greek grammatical construction which clearly indicates that God has not cast away His people. Here he points out in absurdity of such a notion as he exclaims the Greek expression "mee yehn• ee• to", rendered "let it not be", "may it never be", and "absolutely not" or as expressed in the King James Version "God forbid". Thus he is saying, "Let there never be such thinking". Observe that this expression ("mee yehn• nee• tos", is in the optative mood, the mood in which prayers (or petitions) are made, thus some translations have taken the liberty of translating (God forbid). But in essence he is staying that it is impossible for God to extricate from Him His elect or His people. It is established that the designated descendants of Abraham (and Sarah) are indeed "lah• on ahf• too", translated "His people". Therefore it should be understood that those whom God has chosen are "His people or "His elect" forever.

Here Paul presents himself as evidence to prove that God has not cast away His people. He states that he is an Israelite himself being of the tribe of Benjamin, which is very significant, in that it places him under the auspices of the Kingdom of Judah or a Jew. Thus he is separate and distinct from the descendants of the ten tribes who formed the Kingdom of Israel (Philippians 3:5). Note again the Greek verb "ahp•oo• sah• to" (cast away or drive away or to reject) is in the indicative mood (it is a fact) and the aorist tense which verifies the determination that such can not and shall not occur; as it is a past completed action. Those who shun and reject the doctrine of eternal security should look very closely at Paul's declaration in this verse. If ever there were a reason for people to be loosed from God, Israel would certainly be qualified candidates to receive His repudiation. But the fact that Paul was a child of God, a member of God's family (Ephesians 2:9), in spite of his terrible past record (I Timothy 1:13); it certainly proves that God has not driven away His people Israel. Now if God was interested in saving a chief of sinners like him (Paul) as an example of His (God's) longsuffering, Paul was confident that the door was wide open for other believing Israelites (I Timothy 1:16-17). Remember God's choice is not based on the merits of depraved men, but on the value and worth of Jesus Christ.

Now as we move to Romans 11:2, we read first from the King James Version, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying". Now from the Greek Text, "God has not cast away his people whom he foreknew. Or do you not know what the scripture says respecting Elijah? How he intercedes with God against Israel"? This verse opens with a positive declaration that God has not thrust away, repelled or repulsed the very people who He foreknew in Abraham. Here the Greek word "pro• ehg• no", rendered "foreknew" is in the aorist tense and goes back to the point when God knew beforehand, in advance and in prior period that He would make Abraham the progenitor of a new nation-His people, Israel (Romans 8:29).

Here we must keep in mind that when God foreknew Abraham and his descendants, He **knew** everything that they would think and do in the future ages. In other words He Knew that they would not obey the Law and that they would speak against Him, and they would clamor for the death of His Son. So the logical question is **why then** would He cast away His people when they do that which He **knew** they would do before He foreknew them? Here we observe the working of God's foreknowledge as it relates to His elect. Notice how Paul now focuses on the incident of Elijah's plea to God against Israel as recorded in I Kings chapter 19. Note in verses 10 and 14, Elijah the Prophet actually thought that he was the only one left who was serving God in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. As the situation is documented, he encounters fierce opposition from King Ahab and the wicked one name Jezebel. As a result, there was a price placed upon his head and under pressure he began to feel sorry for himself. This also led him to the erroneous conclusion that God had cast away all His people **except him**.

Here Elijah's ignorance (as well as men of today) can be attributed to a lack of understand of the foreknowledge of God. Again, we consider the question that is answered by the Apostle Paul, who was given the revelation of the foreknowledge of God. Note, Paul makes the emphatic statement that God has not, has not finally and irrecoverably rejected a people whom He has loved (or approved) for so long, in spite of their obvious rejection of Him. For this is evidently the meaning of the Greek word "pro• ehg• no", translated "foreknew" or "foreknowledge". Hence we note the general meaning of the Hebrew word "ya• da", which is in the primitive root which means to know or to ascertain as it is used in a variety of senses, i.e. figuratively, euphemistically and inferentially, including observations, recognition, but also causatively. Thus foreknowledge involves comprehension and discernment as well as understanding that are governed by declaration. Now as we focus on the original Greek verb "yeen• os•ko", which is a prolonged form of primary verb, meaning to "know" (absolutely) in which a great variety of applications and with many implications, i.e. to be aware of, to perceive, to understand and that which is known because it is caused, decided or resolved to be a fact.

Notice in this verse (Romans 11:2) the question Paul poses, i.e. "Do you know what the scripture saith"? Here as we focus on the Greek grammar, we note the usual use of the Greek verb "ehn• eeg• khan•ee", rendered "intercedes" or "pleads" or "to converse with". This verb derivation of it is used in reference to the Holy Spirit interceding on behalf of the Saints (Romans 8:27,34). It is also used as it expresses that Jesus Christ is continually living to intercede on behalf of those coming to God through Him (Hebrews 7:25). Thus we conclude that if Elijah had been in harmony with the foreknowledge of God, he would have interceding on behalf of Israel instead of against Israel as the apostle does in Romans 10:1. Now as we have linked the conveyances of verses one and two, we summarily submit that Paul proves that Israel has not been cast away by citing the fact that as an Israelite he has been saved.

Also, he states that Israel is constituted of God's people whom He "pro• ehg• no", (foreknew), i.e. a decision based upon timeless perfect knowledge, therefore immutable. Accordingly those who preach and teach such doctrine as so-called 'backsliding"; wherein it is possible to be loved by God and drawn into the special knowledge of Sonship and then discarded; should take special note of what Paul; is conveying in this message regarding God's unalterable commitment to His beloved elect. God does not change His mind regarding His love for His own because all decisions and callings are based on His complete and eternal knowledge.

Now as we move to Romans 11:3, we read first from the King James Version, "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life". Now from the Greek Text, "lord, they have killed your prophets, they have undermined your altars, and only I have been left, and they seek my life". Now these are the words, which Elijah spoke to the Lord while he was in the cave at Mount Horeb. It was during the time when he was in hiding for Jezebel, who had threatened to kill him (I King 19:1-14).

Now the first two complaints Elijah made against Israel were true. They had killed true prophets who God had sent to them. They had determined and destroyed the altars of the Lord God. However, Elijah's third statement was false, for there was no way he could know the relationship of every person in Israel to God. Now one should be aware of one's tendency to be like Elijah, in judging the relationship of others to the Lord when we do not have the divine facts. This is particularly true during this present dispensation of grace; when God is bringing men into a relationship with Himself by grace through faith apart from works. Now, God who knows the hearts and minds of all men, corrected Elijah on this third point. He informed him that He still had 7,000 in Israel, the Northern Kingdom, who had not bowed their knees unto Baal nor kissed (I Kings 19:18). Furthermore, instead of sympathizing with Elijah's plight, God told him to get moving, to anoint Kings for Syria and Israel, and to anoint Elisha to replace himself as a prophet (I Kings 19:15-16).

Now as we move to Romans 11:14; as we read first from the King James Version, "But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee *to the image of* Baal". Now we read from the Greek Text, "but what did the divine communication say to him? I have left to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal". Here the Greek word "kree• maht• ees• mos", translated "divine communication" or "divine response" or "oracle" or "answer from God" (King James Version) is used only in this verse in the New Testament. In the classical Greek, this expression conveys the idea of doing business or negotiation or listening to an Ambassador.

In light of the historical settings as expressed in I Kings 19:11-13, the thought seems to be that God is communicating, negotiating and expressing a warning to Elijah. God must have been displeased with Elijah's erroneous, egotistical conception that he was the only one in Israel who was on the Lord's side. Since allied forms have the idea of warning, it is most logical to think that through the use of this word, God may be warning and chiding Elijah for his egoism, self-pity, and moping in this Mount Horeb cave.

Note the Lord's response to Elijah is that he has "kaht• eh• lee• pon", rendered "left behind" or "remain behind", or He "has remaining seven thousand men for Himself". This certainly aligns with what Paul says in II Timothy 2:19, wherein he states, "The Lord knows those who are his (Numbers 16:5). Thus He knows those who have not bowed a knee to Baal, i.e. who have not given him their alliance. Now notice that the main reason Paul calls our attention to Elijah's negotiations with God, revolves around the seven thousand men who remain faithful to God. So they remain or constitute a remnant and the remnant is expressive of the call, choice and reservation God makes to Himself.

Now we move to the heart of the matter concerning the doctrine of election, as we exegete the following verses 5 and 6. Note the essence of election revolves around the sovereign choice of God of individuals chosen to fulfill God's plan and purpose. It is an election or selection based solely on the principle of grace! Thus no merit or input contributed by those who are called or summoned by God. No, it is God alone who has already decided who will serve Him, it is only through His sovereign call that men are united with His program.

Now as we focus on Romans 11:5, we read from the King James Version, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace". Now we read from the Greek Text, "Likewise then also at the present time there exists a remnant according to the election of grace". Again we need to be aware of the fact that it is not God's purpose to save all men nor is it His purpose to save most men, but it is His purpose to save those who He has chosen in Christ before the foundations (creation) of the world (Acts 13:48; Romans 8:28-39; 9:11; Ephesians 1:11; II Timothy 1:9). Now we know that this does not set well with some denominations and other religious minded groups, who teach that it is entirely in the hands of each individual to determine his own eternal destination and that the choice is not God's but man's. But the determination of one's eternal destiny was pre-determined in an era before time began or before creation. Thus no one was around to make a decision except God. Accordingly, God alone always makes the decision concerning the call of His elect, so it is God's sovereign choice without any meritorious part of mankind.

Now as we continue in Romans 11:5, note that several different terms are used to designate those who are a part of God's remnant, such as chosen, foreknew, foreordained, called, elect, vessel of mercy, etc. These are terms that every child of God should be very familiar with, for they identify God's actions or dealings with those who were the object of His love from the beginning. Here in this verse (Romans 11:5), Paul's thesis is that it is not God's purpose to save all Jews, but save selectively some of them (I Corinthians 9:22) and these are customarily referred to as the elect ("toos ehk• lehk• toos"), according to II Timothy 2:10.

Here in Romans 11:5 the Apostle Paul uses the Greek noun "leem•mah", translated "remnant" to depict that rather small number of Jews when compared to the total number who are being saved in this Church age. This word literally means "those remaining" or "left" or 'a small residue'.

Note, as Paul writes in this verse, he is not speaking of the Jews who are being saved or who are going to be saved. But he is speaking of those who "have been saved". Note that the leading verb in this verse "yeh• go• nehn", translated "to be" or "to exist" or "that which exists" or "that which is", is in the perfect tense (completed action in the past with present results). Thus it denotes that this remnant "has been made" or "has been brought into being" or "has been elected" or "preordained" or "caused to exist", according to the election of grace. Here the implication is very clear, i.e. if there was no election of grace, there would be no remnant, and thus, none of the Jews would be saved today. This points out the determination of God's previous act in eternity in picking or choosing and placing individuals according to His eternal plan and purpose.

Now we focus on the ending clause of this verse (Romans 11:5), as we examine the Greek phrase "kaht ehk• lo• yeen kah• ree• tos", rendered "according to (kah• tah) the election of grace". Here the Greek noun "ehk•lo•yeen" rendered "election" is derived from the preposition "ehk" prefixed to the verb "leh• go" and it literally means "to speak out" or "to pick out" or "to select or choose". Note

that the Greek noun "**kah•ree•tos**" is in the genitive case as it denotes possession, consequently the basic thought is that this remnant has been brought "into being", according to the **principle** of election **which belongs** to grace. The specific premise expressed is that the factor of grace (or no merit) on the part of those saved; posits the fact that the selection process rests entirely on God's sovereignty saving His elect solely on the basis of the merit of Jesus Christ.

So all who are called as a result of God's sovereign election, are so favored because of Jesus Christ, because of all that He is and all that He has done. Jesus Christ, the matchless, Spotless Lamb of God; is the epitome, expression of the grace of God. Apart from the worth and value of Jesus Christ, and His finished work on Calvary, the concept of election would have an empty hollow sound. In order for God to elect to bring a sinner into a relationship with Himself, there had to be the predetermined purpose to give His Son, the only perfect sacrifice a propitiation, the just on behalf of the unjust, in order that He, God, might simultaneously remain just and be the justifier of the ungodly (Acts 2:23; Romans 3:24). Note, ever as election depends upon grace to make it effectual, grace depends on election for the recipients who will believe the gospel. It is very important for all to understand, that apart from the espousing of election and grace, there would be no remnant of the Jews nor any gentiles saved during this present church dispensation of grace.

Now as we move to Romans 11:6 we read first from the King James Version, "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more of grace: otherwise work is no more work". Now from the Greek Text, "And if by grace, it is no longer out of works, for then grace is no longer grace". Now notice the omission from the Greek translation, the second sentence of the verse that was read from the King James translation namely, "but if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work".

Now this time we will read literally from the Greek Text, "**Ee theh•kahr• ee• tee, ook•eh• tee ehx ehr• gon,eh• pee ee kahr• ees ook•eh• tee yee•neh• the kahr• ees**", again it is translated literally word for word, no additions, "And if by grace, it is no longer out of works, for then grace is no longer grace". So it is evident that this second sentence is added in so translations, supposedly for the sake of emphasis or clarity; utilizing the word order connotation of the conditional participle "**ee**", to express a contrary-to-fact condition. Thus some translations, i.e. King James Version have taken the liberty to add the consequence clause so expressed. But in essence it appears to be an unnecessary duplication, an added gloss, which goes beyond Paul's succinct definition of what grace is and what it is not.

Now since this verse (Romans 11:6) makes it clear that grace and works are at opposite ends of the spectrum, and that they are mutually exclusive; it is important that we consider the exact meaning of both of these words. Here the Greek noun "**kah•rees**", translated "grace" as used in this verse, conveys the meanings of a free gift, or free favor, freely given all that is necessary for salvation and the free provision God has made for us in Christ (John 1:17; II Corinthians 8:9; 9:15). Notice that grace focuses on what God has done for us in Christ, the benefits of which are freely proffered to us (II Corinthians 5:21). Finally, God's offer of salvation by grace included both the **provision** of it and the means by which it is appropriated, namely by or through faith, (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Now as we again briefly consider the contexts of Ephesians 2:8-9; in correlation to the text of the verse of scripture before us (Romans 11:6), we again reemphasize its conveyance by noting that the Greek word "**kahr•ees**", denotes a favor, benefit, kindness, or good will, that is undeserved or unmerited. Notice in Ephesians 2:8, the Greek word "**thor•ah**", which is often used conjunctively with "**kahr•ees**" (grace) and is basically translated "free" or "without a cause". Now anything that can be earned or merited or is deserved or transferred with a cause or because of something is not grace. **Only** that which is received without **any** input on the part of the recipient can be considered grace and we note again (for the record) that Ephesians 2:8 states this emphatic fact that grace is a **gift**.



Also note in Romans 5:15, that the Greek word "khahr• ees• mah", is translated "gift or "free gift" which conveys the idea of a favor which one receives without any merit of the recipient. This is the description of the gift of divine grace. It is through the economy or dispensation of divine grace, by which the pardon of sin and eternal salvation is appointed, based solely on the merit of Jesus Christ worth and value to God. Now many do not comprehend this simply because we do not understand the concept of what a gift in essence truly is. When men give gifts for the most part, grace is not the motive. Normally the recipients of gifts given by men usually contribute something to receiving the gift. Basically the gift is given because of either who recipient is (love one or relative) or because of something the recipient has done (act of kindness, loyal service etc.) in these cases that "gift" or "expression of kindness" that is conveyed is actually a "token of appreciation", thus it is **not** without cause and it not a free gift. Another example of men giving so-called "gifts"; is the un-noble practice of those who convey favors for the purpose of influencing the recipient in some manner.

In this instance the "gift giver" expects to receive some favor or acclamations in return for his gesture. It is crucial for us to understand that God did not have **any** reason outside of Himself to save us, it was purely or freely by grace!

As we refocus on Romans 11:6, we note the second principle word of this verse, namely the Greek word "ehr• gon", rendered works, which refers to anything that man may endeavor to produce in his flesh to gain acceptance with God. This word (biblically speaking) is generally used in conjunction with the works of the Law. So, salvation by and through grace is a free gift from God whereas the effort to obtain salvation by the works of the Law is futile due to the weakness of the flesh (Romans 8:3). Thus to mix grace and works together effectively cancels both.

In paraphrasing Romans 11:6, it could be conveyed, "And now if (it be) by grace (that is, election) then is it no more of works; otherwise grace (becomes) is no more grace". The general position here laid down is fundamental and of supreme importance. It may be thus expressed: there are but two possible offerings of salvation-men's works and God's grace. It should be noted that they (grace and works) are in essence distinct and opposite thus salvation cannot possibly be of any combination or mixture of both. It must be wholly either one or of the other. The essence of salvation is that one has been justified or declared to be legally righteous before God. So the basic question is, how is one able to stand and be declared legally just or righteous (sinless) before God? Romans 4:25, speaks of God's only remedy as it reads (King James Version) "Who (Jesus) was delivered (sacrificed as an appeasement for (because) our offenses and was raised again (up) for (because of) our justification (being declared righteous)".

Here we note the Greek expression "os pahr eh• tho• thee• ah tah pah rahp• to• mah• tah ee• mon" rendered "who was delivered up because of our offenses (transgression, sin)". Note it was "on account of our sin", that is, it was in order to expiate (perform an act of penance) (an act of self-mortification or devotion performed voluntarily to contrition, confession and acceptance of punishment thus absolution that leads to reconciliation (to amend, to atone completely) by His blood. Notice the second Greek phrase of this verse "keh ee•yehr• thee thee• ah then theek• eh• o• seen ee• mon", rendered "and was raised up because of our being declared righteous". Note the Greek preposition "thee• ah", as it is expressed in the accusative case; here it denotes a cause or is indicative of the reason, so it is literally rendered "on account of" or "for the sake of". Thus it was on account of or for the sake of our justification, i.e., in order for our being justified ("theek• eh• o• seen") or declared legally righteous or perfectly acceptable to God.

Now this Greek word "theek• eh• o• seen", literally rendered "perfectly righteous"; strictly denotes an act of making right or just, hence justification, acquittal or absolute vindication. So justification is the righteous act that sets free and gives life (Romans 5:18). Now the basic question is; what is the righteous act or acts that set sinners free and give(s) life to those who are dead? Here we note the Greek verb "ee• yehr• thee", is literally translated "to wake up" or "to awaken" or "to arouse"; but its

meaning intransitively is to "get up" or to "bring back" from death; and such is the resurrection of Jesus. Next, the question is who is able to carry through to completion the action of resurrection? Also, can any man qualify to the extent of defying the sting ("kehr•dron"-harmful force which is impelling) of death by fulfilling the obligations and requirements in answering to the curse and penalty of sin, which is death? Here the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ is more than the ample antidote to arrest the destructive effect of sin unto death or separation from God. Accordingly the exclusive work or righteous act of justification is limited to the virtuous accomplishments of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross of Calvary, as He died for or because of our sins (sin nature) and rose (resurrected) for or because of our justification (righteousness acceptable to God).

Now in light of the above, it should be evident that no man made remedy or solution or antidote is sufficient to accommodate that which is required to satisfy the justice or requisite demands of righteousness. No rite, no ritual, no ceremony, in fact no baptismal ceremony, no religious function(s), no do penance, nor repentance, no matter what it is; **nothing, nothing** but the blood of Jesus is competent to deliver us faultless before the throne of God, free and cleared of **all** charges, adorned with the sufficiency that is acceptable to God. Accordingly it is essential for all of God's people to understand that righteousness before God is obtained **only** through imputation, i.e. the righteousness of God being transformed to mankind through the merit of Jesus Christ.

It is so important for God's elect to be aware of the deleterious results that follow those who hold the position that portions of the bible simultaneously teach both Law and grace. Now as we have just observed, Law avers that man saves himself by his works; whereas grace avers that God in Christ has already accomplished the work necessary for salvation. Note the contrasting distinction; Law makes salvation **totally** dependant upon what man does, therefore there is never any assurance that the one working has done enough to be saved. On the other hand, grace connotes that salvation is totally dependant upon what God has done. So it is an accomplished fact for the believer; therefore, he has assurance that he is saved. Thus the major difference is that Law states that the person who had done his works will live (Romans 10:3); whereas grace states that believing i.e. exercising one's God given faith, identifies the believer with the life which is in Christ (John 3:16; I John 5:11-12).

These are only some of the basic differences between Law/works/and grace/faith. Now it is a fact that these two systems operate according to opposite principles, which if mixed, cancel the effectiveness of each other. So, to confuse the law/works program of the Old Testament with the grace/faith program given to the Church destroys the effectiveness of both. Likewise to confuse the law/works program of the Messianic Kingdom, presented in the Synoptic Gospels and the first seven chapters of Acts; with the grace/faith program presented in the epistles of Paul; cause one to face many conflicting and contradictory statements.

The child of God who rightly divides the scriptures, recognizes these obvious contradictions of messages as he approaches the Bible in a literal manner. Thus when God's word is properly divided according to dispensations and covenants, one is forced to acknowledge that diverse portions of the Bible deal with different subjects for different economies; some which are governed on the basis of Law, while others are governed on the basis of grace. Now the humanistic thinking person with a more cynical frame of mind, who is too lazy and uninterested to thoroughly investigate just what the Bible **teaches** instead of what it is purported to **say**, may in his slothful academics reject it as a trust worthy book due to these **seeming** contradictions; even though none actually exist, when they are properly classified according to distinctive administrations.

But the subtlest and perhaps the most devastating result of mixing law/works with grace/faith, is the subconscious effect it has on those who do so. It is sad, yet it is a fact that most believers don't personally examine the contents of the scriptures. What most of God's people commonly do is to depend upon some person or persons to **tell** them what the Bible teaches. If their teachers do not adequately distinguish Mosiac and Kingdom laws with their works, from Grace Truth for the Church, inconsistent conflicting thoughts will be impinging upon their minds. Notice, as this insidious process

continues, at a conscious or subconscious level, without divine interventions it usually tends to dilute their attitude toward the truth of God's word.

Now Grace Mystery truth is the prime directive to the Church, thus it should be explicitly obeyed. However when there is an opposing misapplication of the principles of the law and kingdom messages mixed in with the grace message; a conflict arises which induces an internal mental struggle. This usually robs God's people of the basic appreciation for grace truth; as well as the readiness to obey it. So instead of enjoying spiritual buoyancy in the body of Christ, some believers often tend to drift into a state of spiritual indifference and coolness. This common occurrence is the most widespread and devastating result of canceling out grace by mingling law with it. This is why every informed child of God should take an uncompromising stand against injecting the Mosaic or Kingdom Law into this Church age. Now if there is a vivid understanding that election is by grace and that any input or contribution on the part of men would constitute work (even if one were the initiator of his won faith, then it stands to reason that this as well as any work of the law would mitigate grace. Thus Paul in this verse (Romans 11:6) makes the explicit statement that if there is present the works of the law the result is "kah• rees ook• eh•tee yee• neh• teh kah• rees", rendered, "grace is no more grace".

Now as we continue our discourse, we move to Romans 11:7, as we read first from the King James Version "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded". Now from the Greek Text "What then? That which Israel seeks, it did not obtain this, but the election obtained it, and the rest were hardened'. Now in light of all which was expressed in the context of Romans 11:5,6, regarding grace and law; this verse (Romans 11:7) begins with the Greek phrase "tee oon", rendered "what then"? i.e. Israel did not obtain righteousness and salvation because they did not seek for it according to grace. That which Israel was seeking (like some are today) was their **own** righteousness through the Law (Romans 10:3). Here the Greek word "ehpee• zee•tee", translated "seeks", has the preposition "eh• pee", prefixed to the Greek verb "zee• teh• o" for the purpose of emphasis.

Thus it may well be translated "that which Israel diligently, fervently and persistently "seeks" or "aspires for", they did not obtain. Now the reason Israel did not obtain it was not because they failed to diligently pursue it; for they religiously **did**, but it was because of the weakness of their flesh while they were under the Law (Romans 8:3), and it was because they were seeking it **from** the wrong source, works instead of grace.

So Paul affirms that Israel, as a whole, did not obtain righteousness and salvation. Here we note that the Greek verb "ehpeh• tee• kheen", translated "obtain" means that Israel did not arrive at, reach, or attain unto salvation. In other words, as this is being written, the Apostle Paul observed that the vast majority of Israelites were estranged from God that is they weren't having any genuine spiritual relationship with Him. Now they did have a religious godly zeal, but it was not according to knowledge; because they were ignorant of the righteousness of God in Christ (Romans 10:2-4).

But the fact that Israel as a whole did not obtain salvation; does not mean that the gospel, i.e. the word of God, had failed (Romans 9:6). Whether or not something fails or succeeds depends upon the extent to which it accomplishes the purpose for which it was given. If the purpose of the gospel was to save **all** Israelites according to the flesh, then it would be considered a colossal failure. But if, on the other hand, the purpose of the gospel is to save a God selected remnant out of Israel, then it has to be considered a tremendous success (Romans 9:6-8; 11:5). Note just as certainly as Israel as a whole did not obtain salvation by works, 'the election (remnant) obtained it". Here we observe that the same Greek verb "ehpeh• tee• khehn", is used for "obtain" in both clauses of this verse. Stated another way, it would read Israel did not acquire it by law/works, but the election acquired it by grace. Here the Greek noun "ehk• loyee", rendered "election", refers to God's "speaking out", "selecting" and "choosing" certain individuals for salvation, namely (1) Those whom God had chosen before the foundation (creation) of the world (Ephesians 1:4). (2) Those whom He foreknew and foreordained (Romans 8:29). (3) Those to whom He extends mercy and calls (Romans 9:23-24). Now all these will

be made righteous through faith and saved. So the faith, which God implants in His elect, in conjunction with the Holy Spirit, irresistibly brings them into an eternal relationship with God in Christ.

This means that the gospel elicits a one hundred percent response from God's elect, and therefore is perfectly successful in accomplishing its purpose. But what about the Israelites who are not among the elect? Here the ending clause of this verse (Romans 11:7) states 'and the rest were hardened'. Now the Greek phrase "ee lee•pee", translated 'the rest', refers to the remaining ones or those left were hardened. Note the Greek verb "ehpo• ro• thee• sahn", rendered "were hardened" is in the aorist tense and passive voice which means that at a given point of time in the past, they were made unimpressed, insensible and callused. Here the passive voice indicates that an outside source hardened them. Now the Alternatives would be either God or Satan. According to Genesis 3:4-5, Satan, in the form of a serpent, made Adam and Eve insensitive to God's words.

Thus it is logical to think that when Adam and Eve's sin resulted in their spiritual and physical death as a result of their obedience to Satan, that it was in their association with him he hardened them against God (Romans 1:24,26,28; Ephesians 2:1-3). In summary, Adam and Eve sinned against God, and He gave them up to Satan's sphere, who in turn hardened and petrified them against God. Thus it can be assumed that those who were hardened, would follow the same process. However it is still left entirely under the providence of God as to **who** is **allowed** to be hardened and whom He will **irresistibly draw** unto Himself.

Now with this knowledge in hand, we move through the following three verses of scriptures (Romans 11:8-10). Beginning with the reading of verse eight in the King James Version, "(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day". Now from the Greek Text, "Even as it is written, God gave to them a spirit of slumber, eyes that should not see, and ears that should not hear, unto this very day". Note the Apostle Paul cites this verse from Deuteronomy 29:4; to verify the fact that the rest were hardened.

Here he states that God "eh• tho• kehn" (gave) to them. Note the indicative mood and aorist tense of this verb illustrating that, at a point in the past, a spirit of "kah• tah• neex• eh• os", rendered "slumber, stupor or dullness" was committed unto them. This involved eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear. Notice the Lord through Moses spoke this statement to the children of Israel in Moab. Thus it is affirmed that this condition existed up until the day it was spoken.

Now as we proceed, we make special note of the two phrases respectively used in Romans 11:7 & 8, namely (literally from the Greek Text) "ee theh lee• pee ehpo• ro• thee• sahn", rendered "and the rest were hardened (blinded)" in verse seven and "eh• tho• kehn ahf• tees o theh• os pnehv• mah kah• tah• neek• eh• os", rendered "God gave to them a spirit of slumber (deep sleep) in verse eight. These two phrases speak to the activity or inactivity of God in determining who will see (spiritually) and who will hear (spiritually). Thus they detail who will be drawn (elected) unto Himself. First note again as previously stated the aorist tense, indicative mood and passive voice of the Greek verb "ehpo• ro• thee• sahn", in verse seven, rendered "was hardened that it occurred in a past period, namely simultaneously with the fall of Adam which was instigated by Satan himself in the Garden of Eden. Next note again from the root word "theeth• o• mee", the Greek verb "eh• tho• kehn", in verse eight rendered "gave" or that which is assigned or appointed by one who is in a superior position to one who is in a subordinate position. Here we observe that this word is also in the aorist tense and indicative mood, but it is in the active voice. This means that this action (God giving or assigning men a spirit of blindness and hardness also occurred in a past period and the question is when? The answer would have to be, again, at the fall of Adam when all of mankind was surrendered to the curse of separation from God, thus the inability to see or hear (spiritually). But if this is a fact (indicative mood), what is the connotation of the active voice? The answer is God's active decision to allow (permit) Satan to influence Adam (and Eve); even though He (God) certainly had the power to thwart the efforts of Satan, His choice was to be inactive in the matter. Thus as we exegete the context of these verses (7 & 8), we acknowledge this stupor, lack of perception and inability of these Jews whom

Paul speaks of, as well as all men who 'have a spirit of slumber (blindness)", i.e. eyes that should not see and ears that should hear; as verified by the genitive case, which also would more accurately read "eyes and ears which are possessed by or belong to non seeing and non hearing.

These depraved conditions are the results of the Adamic Fall and the curse that is associated with it. So it is **not** so much that God actively elected some and then actively hardened others, but that He actively elected some out of all men who thought His inactivity had been previously hardened by the activity of Satan. If it weren't for divine election **all** men would remain in a hardened, calloused and petrified position against God (Romans 1:24-32; 3:9-18). It is to God's praise and glory that He has selectively called (summoned) and actively intervened to reverse the curse of eternal damnation to some (not all). He paid the price in sending His only begotten Son, Jesus, who tasted death for those who are delivered from the penalty of death and whose eyes and ears are opened so that they may see and hear and believe the gospel. But as Paul states, others remain in unbelief "until this very or present (see• meh• ron) day"

Now as we turn to Romans 11:9, we read first from the King James Version, "And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them". And now from the Greek Text, "And David says, let their table be unto a snare and a trap and a stumbling block and a recompense to them". Now the forepart of this verse quoted from Psalms 69:22, where David is speaking to God about his adversaries. Here Paul cites this verse as a description of those who are hardened and callused against God. Notice David invokes God to let their table become a ruinous snare, to let their peace become a trap, unto the end that the same may be a stumbling block and a proper retribution unto them. What Paul seems to be expressing with respect to those who have been hardened is, let the manner in which, they have treated others be returned unto them. Now on the other hand, Paul's petition was that his Jewish kinsmen might be saved (Romans 10:1). Yet on the other hand, he does not plead mercy for those who are hardened, but justice, that they may be justly rewarded for their evil.

Thus the apostle Paul's ministry was directed not toward all (Israel) men, but toward the elect, who are scattered among all. Therefore it encompassed all men (II Timothy 2:10). The gospel of the grace of God is extended to all mankind in this age of grace, but specifically those whom God has elected in eternity, are going to believe and respond to the call and be saved, because election is according to grace (Romans 11:5).

Now as we continue in the vein of our discourse, we move to Romans 11:10, as we read from the King James Version, "Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back always". Now we will read from the Greek Text, "Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and their back continually bowed". Now the forepart of this scripture is from Psalms 69:23. In contrast to the statement of fact in verse 8, where it is said that they have eyes, which are not able to see, this verse is an imprecation (a curse) that they may not be able to see. Here he further imprecates that their backs may be continually bowed. As Paul identifies this passage with those who have been hardened, it portrays them as spiritually blind people who are bowed down and under their burdens.

Summarizing, at this point, the first ten verses of Romans chapter eleven, we note that God has not cast away His people, Israel. Even as God had a remnant in Elijah's time, likewise in this present time He has remnant that has been called out according to the election of grace. Paul emphasizes that if election is by grace, which it is, then there is absolutely no room for works. He points out that Israel as a whole did not obtain the salvation that, they sought via the works of the Law, but the elect Israelites did obtain it. Here he classifies Israel as a whole as being hardened, a fact that he verifies from the Old Testament.

Now as we move through the following 21 verses of the eleventh chapter of Romans, we confront the questions of why Israel is currently estranged from God and what is God's ultimate plan is for reconciling His elect unto Himself? In this regard, we turn to Romans 11:11, as we read from the King James Version, "I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather* through

their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy". Now from the Greek Text, "I say then, did they stumble in order that they might fall? May it never be; but by their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles unto the end to provoke them to jealousy". Now in view of the comparatively small number of Jews being saved in this Church age according to the election of grace, and the large number who were hardened, here Paul speaks of Israel as having "eh• pee• teh• sahn", tendered 'stumbled', i.e. of having failed to reach its goal or as having fallen. Now the Apostle James uses a reference to this same word to depict that the person who stumbles over one thing in the Mosaic Law is guilty of all the Law (James 2:10). Thus Israel's insistence upon relying upon their performance of keeping the Mosaic Law for righteousness has assured their estrangement from God. Here Paul posed the question "mee eh• pee• teh• sahn ee• nah• peh• so• seen?", rendered "did they stumble in order that (or for the purpose that) they might fall? In other words, did God permit or cause Israel to stumble just so He could see her "peh• so• seen", rendered "fall" or "fall down", or "fall short" of obtaining salvation by grace in Christ?

Now we must keep in mind that Paul posed this question only for the purpose of bringing out a very important point. Here the Apostle uses the Greek grammatical construction "mee yeh• nee• to", rendered "may it never be or let it never be or God forbid" as it is expressed in the King James Version. So Paul answer to this question is a resounding no! May this never be God's purpose of let it never be the reason for Israel's stumbling (II Peter 1:10).

So in contrast to the question, did Israel stumble that they might fall? Paul emphatically answers no, "but (ah• lah) by their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles. Now as we scrutinize this statement, we pose an additional question and it is what was it about the fall of Israel that caused salvation to be offered to the Gentiles? To answer this question, we turn first to the eternal purpose and plan of God, when in eternity He predetermined the elect for all the ages to come. As we now understand, salvation was first offered to the Jews. They are God's covenant people, who first received the call of God unto eternal blessings, even though they are all earthly.

Now for God to effectuate His second call, it was necessary for Him to focus his attention away from the initial ones elected to those whom God had hid, that is, those who already belonged to Him, but they were unknown to all except God Himself. So He has moved in a direction away from Israel for a period and blinded their eyes and stopped up their ears, thus it was their hardness, inexorableness and unyielding refusal to believe in Jesus Christ, the one who embodied the righteousness of God, that triggered God's move to the Gentiles. According to Acts 13:46 and 28:28, the Jewish rejection of the gospel caused it to be preached to the Gentiles. So Israel's rejection stimulated the preaching of the gospel to those foreordained Gentiles, who gladly received it.

Thus, by means of Israel's fall, salvation reached out to the Gentiles; the very end of which was "to provoke them to jealousy". So we should keep in mind that Paul's emphasis in this chapter of his theme on election, is on Israel, not on the Gentiles and the initial reason he turned to preaching to the Gentiles was in order to stir up jealousy in the midst of Israel, to motivate them to believe the good news about Jesus Christ. Here the Greek infinitive "pah• rah• zee• lo• seh", translated "to provoke to jealousy", conveys the idea in this verse of exciting, to emulate, to vie, to surpass or to make them envious to believe on Christ (Romans 10:19).

Now continuing this train of thought, we move to Romans 11:12, as we read first from the King James Version, "Now if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness? Now from the Greek Text, "But if their fall is the riches of the world, and their failure the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fullness". Note the Greek noun "pah• rahp• to• mah", translated "fall", is derived from the preposition "pah• rah", prefixed to the verb "peep• to" and literally means "to fall by the side of" or "to fall away", with respect to the truth, hence to trespass, or a transgression. Now accordingly the breadth of meaning of this noun, the fall of Israel may also be called the trespass or transgression of Israel. Since their fall involved their

hardened adamant and obdurate mind and heart, which were manifest in unbelief, it follows that their unbelief could be equaled with their trespass and transgression.

We must, however, bear in mind that unbelief is the symptom of a faulty mind (heart) attitude toward God. Now to say that Israel's transgression is unbelief, is not adequately comprehensive, for it should also include that which produced the unbelief, namely their hardened conditions.

Now, let us compare the two "ee" or "if" clauses: (1) If the fall of Israel is the riches of the world; (2) And if the failure of Israel is the riches of the Gentiles. Here it appears that these two clauses, even though worded differently for variety, express basically the same thing. Note the Greek words "pah•rahp•to•mah", rendered "fall" and "eet•tee•mah", rendered "failure", each portray their sinful condition, their trespassing and defaulting. Here the Greek word "Kos•mos", rendered "world" is apparently used to depict Gentiles. Remember, the divers meanings of "Kos•mos". Thus this means that if their trespassing and defaulting has resulted in the riches of the Gentiles, then "how much more their fullness". Note, the Greek noun "plee•ro•mah", rendered "fullness" refers to the completion and consummation of Israel i.e., God receiving them in full fellowship with Himself (Romans 11:15). We shall see in our further discourse that it speaks of the time when all Israel, i.e. all those (who are **indeed** Israel), shall be saved (Romans 11:26). This is a time, when God will pour out His mercy, not just on a remnant, but on all Israel (Romans 11:31).

Now we move to Romans 11:13, as we read first from the King James Version, "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office": Now from the Greek Text, "But I speak to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then that I am the apostle of the Gentile, I glorify my ministry". Now in verses 11 and 12, Paul primarily directs his remarks to the Gentiles. Here the Greek phrase "ehph•oo•son", translated "inasmuch", may also be rendered, "in as much as or "as long as" or "in so far as", thus he is speaking to them because he had been assigned to them as the Apostle of the Gentiles.

Here Paul states as he refers to himself, "mehn oon ee•mee eh•go eht•non ahpo•sto•los", rendered "I am the apostle (over) to the Gentiles, i.e. he is one "belonging to the Gentiles" as we observe the genitive possession of the Greek noun "ehth•non" (Gentiles). Remember, when Paul was saved through his experience on the road to Damascus, the Lord expressed the following decree to one named Ananias, "This is an elect vessel for me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and Kings and the children of Israel (Acts 9:15). Note in Romans 15:16, Paul refers to himself as "minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles". In addition Paul writes in Galatians 2:7-9, that the Kingdom Apostles Peter, James and John also recognize that the Lord had made Paul the apostle of the Gentiles. Now several other passages affirm that Paul had the message for the Gentiles committed unto him (Ephesians 3:1; I Timothy 2:7; II Timothy 4:17). Notice with respect to his ministry unto the Gentiles, Paul states "thox•ah•zo", rendered "I glorify" or I magnify" or "I highly honor it". This denotes that he thought very highly of his ministry (not himself); which God had ordained to him, thus he invested it with dignity and he magnified it. It is very important for minister's and teachers and particularly Pastors to realize that the ministry does not glorify or magnify the servant, or the one who God appoints to it, but those so called should seek to extol or exhort the ministry **not themselves**.

Note the statement that Paul makes in I Corinthians 3:4-5, where he states (King James Version) verse 4, "Wherein one saith, I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos: are ye not carnal? (5) Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed even as the Lord gave to every man". In Romans 3:21, Paul states (King James Version) "Let no man glory in men". Now there is no doubt about it, God bestowed a great honor on Paul when he selected him to be the Apostle of the Gentiles and as a result Paul did not take it lightly, but exalted and extolled the office or the ministry, but never sought to be exalted or honored personally (I Corinthians 3:8-9).

Now as we turn to Romans 11:14, we read from the King James Version, "If by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are* flesh, and might save some of them". Now from the Greek

Text, "If somehow I may provoke to jealousy my flesh and save some out of them". Now there are those who preach and teach so-called corporate election and they (that is some of them) point to this verse supposedly to make their case that there is man-made participation in ones call to salvation. But the proper exegesis of this verse actually confirms and is consistent with the sovereignty of God's choice in election. Here we again literally read from the Greek Text, "**Ee pos pah• rah• zee• lo• so moo teen sahr• kah keh so• so tee• nahs ehx af• ton**", rendered again, "If somehow I may provoke to jealousy my flesh and save some out of them". Note the Greek verb "**pah• rah• zee• lo• so**", as it is here rendered, "provoke to jealousy", as it conveys the idea of inciting rivalry or agitating to compete or to rouse one to emulate. Here we observe that in Paul's election discourse, this word is used three times (Romans 10:19; 11:11 and this verse 11:14), as it refers to God's saving of Gentiles to arouse Jews, those of Paul's own "**sahr• kah**"(flesh) kindred, and of the seed of Abraham, to be saved. Now someone will say, well this proves the input of men, but let's look at the Greek grammar! Note that the verb "**pah• rah• zee• lo• so**", (jealousy) in each instance as used in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> chapters of Romans, is either subjunctive aorist or indicative future. Now as we previously explained, that which may be subjunctive, which means that it might happen or it is "iffy"; is tempered, when it is linked to the aorist tense, which denotes a past-completed action; it means it has already been determined. Also, when we have the indicative mood (which means that it is a fact) linked to the future tense, again the connotation is that it has already been determined. To corroborate this we note the grammatical construction of the Greek phrase "**ee pos pah• rah zee lo• so**", rendered "if somehow (some way) I may provoke to jealousy. Here we focus on the structure of the interrogative participle "**ee**" as it appears in conjunction with the adverb "**pos**" rendered "somehow" denoting "if" in some manner or "some way" Paul might provoke "some" (not all) out of them.

Next as we observe the historical aspect of scrutiny, it is evidenced by Paul's writing at this time that only a remnant of Israel could **possibly** be stirred or aroused because the rest were hardened and are in a slumbered condition. Now as we move forward in the context of this chapter, it becomes obvious and it is a fact that God will in the future awaken and save all of Israel who is indeed of Israel (Romans 9:6; 11:25,26).

Thus, when we have all the facts and we connectively put everything into the contextual aspect of scrutiny, it is important to observe that Paul does not say that he desires, somehow, to rouse up **all** Israel to be saved, but only "**tee• nahs ehx ahf• ton**", rendered "some out of them". Here the indefinite pronoun "**tee• nahs**" (some) denotes **certain** ones or **some** ones. Paul uses this same pronoun in I Corinthians 9:22, wherein he states (from the Greek Text) "I have become all things to all men, in order that by all means I might "save some". Paul made it crystal clear in this 11<sup>th</sup> and the two preceding (9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>) chapters of Romans, in his discourse of election; that God's current purpose (in this dispensation of grace) is to save "some" i.e. "a remnant", out of Israel.

Note as Paul looks back to the "some out of them" (Israel) who have been saved, he calls them "the elect" (Romans 11:7). Likewise (in his epistles) when he refers to all of those who are saved in this dispensation, he designates them as "the elect or the election" (II Timothy 2:10).

Now, with this knowledge in hand, we move to Romans 11:15, as we read first from the King James Version, "For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them be*, but life from the dead? Now from the Greek Text, "For if the casting away of them is reconciliation of the world, what shall the receiving of them be except life out from the dead? Now previously, the Apostle Paul spoke of Israel's fall as being unto the end of salvation of the Gentiles and the riches of the world (Romans 11:11-12). Now he utilizes the same vernacular (casting away of Israel); unto the end of the reconciliation of the world. Here we have a duplication of the same ideas and thoughts expressed in different terminology. The point is that if the fall and "**ahpo• vo• lee**", rendered "casting away" or "throwing away" of Israel results in the salvation and reconciliation of the "**kos• moo**" (world) i.e. of the Gentiles, then "what shall the receiving of them (the elect Jews) be except life out from the dead?"



Here Paul refers to the future age when God will take or receive unto Himself all Israel (who are really Israel). Note he refers to this as "**ee pros• leem• psees**", rendered "the receiving", "the taking" or "the acquiring" of Israel unto Himself as his special people (Titus 2:14). Thus Paul describes this receiving of Israel as nothing short of raising them out of spiritual death into spiritual life, or it may be interpreted as raising them out from physical death unto spiritual life, as both in reality is the case. Now before we leave this verse, note one little trivial matter for the sake of those who may look upon this verse (Romans 11:15) and wonder if the term "casting away of them" (Israel) does in fact conflict with Paul's statement in Romans 11:1, wherein he states, "Has God cast away His people (Israel) and the response is may it never be (God forbid/King James Version).

Now the difference in those statements Romans 11:1,11,12,15) is that the previous context in verse 11 speaks of the permanent positioning of Israel where the context before us in these latter verses speaks of the temporary setting aside of Israel in this age of grace.

Now for one to accept this explanation, one must also understand and accept the fact that the Kingdom (millennium) dispensation has been placed on hold (as pre-arranged) for a future age and that the gospel kingdom which was preached by John the Baptist, Jesus and his disciples, as well as the Apostle Peter at Pentecost, has also been put on hold as pre-arranged for a future era.

Now we move to Romans 11:16 as we read first from the King James Version, "For if the firstfruit *be* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*: and if the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches". Now from the Greek Text, "And if the first fruit is holy, also is the lump; and if the root is holy, also the branches". Now in order to understand Paul's usage of the terms "first fruit, lump, root, branches and wild olive tree" in this verse as well as the following eight verses (Romans 11:17-24); one must be fairly familiar with the workings of the economies under which Israel has and does even now abide. First, note, in the book of Leviticus chapter 23 (verses 10 & 11), we observe that the Israelites were required to offer to God the first-fruits of the earth in their raw state in a sheaf of newly reaped grain, signifying that God was to receive this offering first. Also, in Numbers 15:19-21, whatever they produced in a prepared state i.e. when they made cakes of dough, it was required that the first lump be an offering unto God as an heave offering. Next when we focus on the word "root", we notice that it is rendered "**shawrash**" in the Hebrew language and "**ree• zah**" in the Greek. It is a common figure in the Bible expressing either the origin or nourishment or stability of something. Sometimes it is symbolic, while other times it is metaphoric. In this context it is utilized to depict the root of a family or a people wherein its reference is to a progenitor (Abraham) whom God first established the relationship with. Thus Abraham or the relationship that God initiated with Abraham is the established basis for His covenant relationship with Israel. Then we focus on the word branch, as we note that there are several words in the Hebrew which, are so denoted (1.) **Zemorah**, which refers to a vine branch and (2.) **Yonegeth**, is used figuratively to refer to Israel, (3) **kip• pa**, references a palm –branch, (4) **nester**, literally means "a little shoot springing from the root and (5) **tes• mach**, which references the glorious branch of the Messianic Prophecy. In Isaiah 4:2, it states that "in that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel." In Isaiah 11:1 it states "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots" (referencing the Messiah). In Jeremiah 23:5; 33, reference is made to "a righteous branch". In Zechariah 3:8, there is the quote "My servant the branch", and in Zechariah 6:12, reference is made to "the man whose name is "branch". Actually there are a number of other words, though less frequently used, which convey the meaning "branch".

Also as we examine the term "wild olive tree" we observe that the term "olive tree" is rendered "**zay• yith**" in the Hebrew language and "**ahg•ree• eh• leh• os**", in the Greek. Here we note that the olive has all through Biblical history been one of the most characteristic, valued and useful of trees in Palestine. In Judges 9:8-9, it is the first named king of the trees. Also, when the children of Israel crossed over into the land of Canaan, they acquired or were given olive trees of which they did not plant (Deuteronomy 6:11; Joshua 24:11).

The beauty of this tree is referenced in Jeremiah 11:16, Hosea 14:6 and it's fruitfulness is mentioned in Psalms 128:3. We shall specifically elaborate on the term "wild olive trees" as we move into the context.

Now as we further exegete Romans 11:16, here we have a picture of the "ah• pah•r• khee", rendered "first fruit" or the first grain from a new crop which is kneaded into a lump of dough. Now the point here is that the characteristics of the first grain threshed; will carryover to the lump of dough made from it. Thus, if the first fruit is holy i.e., the election of grace, then it follows that the lump as a part of it will likewise be holy. Furthermore, as we follow the supervention "if the root is holy, also the branches; again the principle is that the qualities of the root will show in the branches. In other words, a holy root will produce holy branches. So from a holy remnant (those who are saved in this dispensation according to election) God will ultimately (in a future dispensation i.e., Kingdom) produce holy branches. Now we know that this is in conflict with most exegeses of this verse as many ascribe the designation first fruit to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But as we utilize the grammar, we note that the Greek noun "ah• pah•r• khee", is in the nominate case feminine gender and singular number and as expressed in Romans 8:23; 16:5; as well as the context of the content currently before us, it speaks figuratively of persons or groups as the first of a set or category as the first converts to be dedicated to God, thus the first to be blessed from a redeemed people.

Now as we move to Romans 11:17, we read first from the King James Version, "And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree". Now from the Greek text, "But if some of the branches were broken off, and you being a wild olive tree were grafted in among them, you were made a joint-partaker of the riches of the root of the olive tree". Now as we approach this verse, we do so with a given perspective; namely, that Paul is looking at Israel as an olive tree (Romans 11:24). Here when he speaks of some of the branches being "ehx• ehk• lahs• thee• sahn", rendered "broken off" or removed through breaking off, he obviously is referring to the non-elect Israelites who were left in their hardened condition (Romans 11:7). This is verified by the usage of the Greek word "tee• nehs", rendered "some", as it speaks of those who were not vessels of mercy (Romans 9:23).

Now to understand Paul's symbolic and metaphoric usage of the term "ahg• ree• eh• leh• os", rendered "wild olive", one must have some enlightenment of the process of planting or starting an olive yard. Here we observe that young wild olive trees or plants, which grew plentifully over many parts of the land or from the cuttings of other, yard, are planted and cultivated. When the young trees are 3 years old, they are grafted from a choice stock and after another 3 or 4 years, they may commence to bear fruit, but they take a decade or more before reaching full fruition. Much attention is however required. The soil around the trees must be frequently plowed and broken up; water must be conducted to the roots from the earliest rains, and the soils must be freely enriched with a kind of marl known as chuwwarah. Note, if the planting is neglected, the older trees soon send up great many shoots from the roots all around the parent stem. Now these must be pruned away, although should the parent stem decay, some of these may be capable of taking its place. But being however from the root below the original point of grafting, they are of the wild olive type with smaller stiffer leaves and prickly stems and need grafting before they are of use.

Thus Paul's use of the term "wild olive" or "wild olive tree" depicts the Gentiles (Romans 11:24). Now as we have observed, when Israel, due to its hardness of heart, refused to believe the gospel of grace, Paul turns to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46; 18:6; 28:28). Note the original intent seems to have been to provoke to jealousy Israel to the end that they might believe. And as a result of the gospel being preached to the Gentiles many believed and as wild olive tree branches they were "ehneh• kehn• drees• thees", rendered "grafted" or engrafted among the remaining branches on the olive tree, Israel. Note, this indicates that Israel, as the seed of Abraham (the principle of faith), is the first fruit, the root, and the foundation for the gospel of salvation in this age of grace (Romans 3:1-2,29-30; Galatians 4:4).

Thus, as Paul continues to address the individual Gentile in this verse (Romans 11:17), he states, "And you were made a joint-partaker of the riches of the root of the olive tree". Here the Greek-participle "seeg•kee• no• nos", translated "joint-partaker" denotes one who shares with, who is a co-partner, or a co-participant of the riches which emanate from the olive tree Israel. Note, that in the gospel of John 4:22, Jesus makes the statement that (quote from the Greek Text) "salvation is out of the Jews"

Now as we move to Romans 11:18, we read first from the King James Version, "Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee". Now from the Greek Text, "Do not be arrogant against the branches; and if you were arrogant, you do not support the root, but the root you". Now with the information of the previous verse in hand, Paul now gives some very important advise to the Gentile believer. Here the Greek verb, "kah• tah• kahft• kho", rendered "arrogant", basically means to boast or vaunt one's self. Notice it appears that Paul is warning the gentile converts not to assume an arrogant attitude toward the national branches, i.e., elect Israel or those who are really Israel. Here we must keep in mind that Israel is the root which actually "vahs• tah• zees", rendered "supports" or "bears" or "holds us up" rather than vice versa. As Gentile believers, we need to recognize that God has turned to us in this age, at their (national Israel's) expense, thus we are indirectly indebted to Israel's temporary fall (because they are the true root and olive tree) for our salvation in Jesus Christ!

Now we move to Romans 11:19, as we read first from the King James Version, "Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in". Now from the Greek Text, "Therefore you say, the branches were broken off that I might be grafted in". Now as we continue to proceed in the thought progression of Paul's reasoning with the Gentiles with God's present day dealings with Israel, it is necessary for us to review certain facts, which have previously been conveyed. Note, as previously stated from the Hebrew language, that a branch references both Israel and a little shoot springing from the root (origin).

Next, from the Greek grammar, we observe the Greek noun "klah-thos", rendered "branch", which defines a young tender shoot, broken off for grafting. So as we form the picture we note that the Jewish Patriarchs are likened to a root as their posterity (remnant) are likened to branches. Here we follow the procession of the heritage beginning with the original Hebrew, Abraham, from which evolved the original Israelite, Jacob (Israel) from which evolved the original Jew and then Jadah, which culminated in the branches, the elect Jews (the remnant) of the grace dispensation, which are an intricate part of the body of Christ. Now it is into these holy branches that we, the elect Gentiles (the wild olive tree) are grafted in (I Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27-28; Ephesians 2:13-16; Colossians 3:11). So having declared that some of the branches were broken off of the olive tree, (Israel), and that believing Gentiles were grafted in, Paul predicts the reaction of some of the more haughty Gentiles. Now assuming an attitude of false superiority over the faithless Jews, certain ones will say that the reason some Jews were broken off was that (note the usage of the first person singular pronoun "eh• go", rendered "I"), I (a more important gentile) might be grafted in.

Here the insinuation is that some of the Gentiles, relishing in their relationship with Christ, but blinded by conceit, might think that God chose them over the Jews or Israel. This may be why some identify themselves as "Spiritual Israel".

Now as we turn to Romans 11:20, we read first from the King James Version, "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear". Now from the Greek Text, "Well, by unbelief they were broken off, but you by faith have stood. Be not high-minded; but fear". Now this verse opens with the Greek adverb "kah• los", translated "well", which conveys the thought that rightly, correctly and truly the faithless Jews were broken off. And the reason they were broken, however was not just to give the Gentiles room to be grafted in, but because of their unbelief. Here the Greek phrase "ah• pees• tee• ah", translated "by unbelief", indicates that by means of or in the sphere of unbelief they were extricated. There is no suggestion in this verse that the Gentiles

(themselves) had anything to do with Jewish branches being broken off from God's program, the Church. The fact of the matter is that those branches broken off were the non-elect, thus they never had a place in the body of Christ. Thus the actual reason for this breaking off was totally due to the failure of some Jews to believe on Jesus Christ as first their Messiah and more importantly (for those in this age) as head of the body.

As far as the Gentile converts are concerned, Paul says, "but by faith you stood". Here the Greek verb "ehs• tee• kahs", rendered "have stood" is in the perfect tense, which denotes that at a given point of time in the past they began standing and do in fact continue to stand. Note the Greek phrase "tee peest• ee", rendered "by faith" indicates that by means of or in the sphere of faith, they have their relationship with God in Christ (Romans 1; 5; 16:26; Galatians 3:8). Thus, in view of the fact that the Gentiles stand by faith, Paul states, "be not high minded, but fear". Now this statement must be understood in the light of God's sovereign love and mercy. Our relationship to God does not depend upon our own determining and running, but upon God's mercy, provision of His faith and the drawing of us to Himself through the Holy Spirit (John 6:44; Romans 9:16; Ephesians 2:).

Notice as Paul looks back and sees many Jews, the national branches, void of faith in Jesus Christ, hence, not a part of God's church program in the essence of Christ, he justly warns the believing Gentile not to be high-minded conceited and haughty. Instead we are to have an attitude of fear, awe and reverence toward God, realizing that He has the prerogative both to give and withhold.

Now we move to Romans 11:21, reading first from the King James Version, "For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee". Reading now from the Greek Text, "For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you". Now in one sense we observe that the corporate seed of the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob constitute Israel, God's chosen people. But, in another sense God is selecting individuals out of His chosen Israel during this present dispensation of grace (Ephesians 3:2), and making them members of the body of Christ, the Church. Notice, while Israel is a corporate group based upon blood -lines (even though all Israel is not Israel) on the other hand, the Church is a spiritual organism based upon the divine election of certain individuals both out of Israel and the Gentiles (Romans 4:23-24; 9:6-7; Galatians 3:29).

Now that we have looked at the corporate seed of Abraham according to the flesh, the olive tree with its natural branches, we next consider the statement: "for if God did not spare the natural branches". Here the Greek word, "eh• phree• sah• to", translated "spare" infers that God did not remove deserved judgment from most of the natural branches of Abraham. But on the other hand, through sovereign election, through making some vessel of mercy, He spared, removed and delivered some from eternal judgment, by putting them in Christ, who has been judged for them (Romans 9:23). Thus, God did not spare His own Son, in order that He might spare His elect chosen before the foundation (creation) of the world (Romans 8:32; Ephesians 1:4).

As Paul looked back and observed that the majority of the Jews, those who were God's chosen people, were not being spared from coming judgment through faith in Jesus Christ, he certainly had no reason to think that God would spare the Gentiles. So, the time had come in God's dealing with Israel that He left them to themselves in a state of partial hardness. Likewise, He predicts that the time will come when the Gentiles will not be spared from their deserved judgment, a time when the fullness of the Gentiles will be consummated (Romans 11:23).

Now we turn to Romans 11:22, as we read from the King James Version, "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. We now read from the Greek Text, "Behold then the kindness and severity of God. Upon those who had fallen severity, but upon you, God's kindness, if you continue in the kindness, since you also shall be cut off. Notice in this verse the Apostle exhorts us to "ee• theh", translated "behold", look at and consider the kindness and severity of God.

Here the Greek word "**khrees• to• tee• tah**", translated "kindness", basically speaks of God's giving that which is useful, which involves His kindness, goodness and beneficence. Now the most useful thing God can do for any man is to bring him into a living relationship with Himself. Notice Paul's emphasis is on God's kindness as seen in His making certain individuals the recipient of His mercy, faith and salvation in Christ. He has abundantly poured out His kindness toward us by making us alive together with Christ, raising us up with Christ, and seating us in the Heavens with Him (Romans 9:23; Ephesians 2:5-8).

Now having observed the kindness of God, Paul also speaks of His (here we have the Greek noun) "**ah• po• to• mee• ahn**", rendered "severity". This word basically means, "to cut off" or "cut from" hence, it indicates that God is also severe, sharp and unsparing in His dealings with those who justly deserve judgment. Apart from God's love and mercy, through which He calls out a people unto His name, all men would experience His severity and wrath against sin (John 3:36; Ephesians 5:6). On the one hand, severity is upon those who have fallen i.e., upon the Jews who have been cut off, left in their unbelief, and who reject Jesus Christ. On the other hand, the Gentiles whom Paul is addressing are the recipients of the kindness of God, i.e. they have been individually elected to occupy a place in the body of Christ.

So as we look at all men in the light of the truth presented in this context they fall into two categories; those who are obstinate unbelievers under the severity of God, and those who are genuine believers under the kindness of God. Since Paul never vouches for any person's relation to God, as to whether it was feigned or real, he adds the statement, "If you continue in the kindness i.e., if a believer was honestly endeavoring to live in accordance with the word of God, he assumed that they were of the elect, enjoying the benefits of the kindness of God (I Corinthians 15:2; Colossians 1:23).

Now we move to Romans 11:24, as we read first from the King James Version, "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree? Now from the Greek Text, "For if you were cut out of the wild olive tree by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a good olive tree, how much more these of like nature will be grafted into their own olive tree". Now, as we exegete this verse, we need to continually remind ourselves that Paul is primarily addressing Gentiles in this context (Romans 11:13). He is informing those whom he is addressing (the Gentiles) that God has not given up on Israel. They are not doomed to permanent unbelief, but the time will come when God will graft them into a relationship with Himself in the Kingdom.

Here he explains to the Gentiles that if God saw fit to cut them (as branches) out of a wild olive tree, and "**pah• rah phee• seen**", rendered "contrary" or beyond nature, to graft them into a good olive tree, then it would be very simple for Him to re-graft Jews into their own olive tree.

Thus God's design to give the Gentiles faith to believe the gospel was not because they were better than the Jews, contrariwise they were far worse (Romans 1:20-32), but His decision based on love prompted mercy (Ephesians 2:4). Also, God's plan to save Gentiles was designed to provoke the Jews to emulate the faith of the Gentiles (Romans 11:24). Paul's point is that if God extended His love and mercy to the Gentiles, who were practicing every conceivable abominable act, a people void of the disciplinary influence of God, and as such designed a wild olive tree, how much more will He extend to Israel, a people who had been disciplined and cultivated by His word; hence, a good or tame olive tree. Furthermore, grafting the Gentiles into the good olive tree was an act contrary to nature, whereas grafting the Jews in again would be rejoining that which belonged together. So what God has done for the Gentiles, a far off people, assures us of what He will do for the Jews, a near people (Ephesians 2:13).

And now we move to another section of Paul's discourse as we read first from the King James Version of Romans 11:25, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should

be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in". Now from the Greek Text, "for I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brethren, in order that you might not be wise among yourselves, for Israel has been partially hardened until the fullness of the Gentiles may come in". Now as we previously observed in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> verses of Romans chapter 11, some of the believing Gentiles were assuming a haughty attitude toward the unbelieving Jews.

So the reason Paul is telling these Gentile about the future that God has in store for the Jews is to prevent them from becoming "phron•ee• mee", rendered "wise" or "conceited" or "intellectually proud" among themselves. In other words, Paul is trying to keep them humble-minded, and from thinking that they are better than the unbelieving Jews. In fact, in this context, Paul is addressing those who were thinking (as some do even today); that they had replaced the Jews as God's chosen people. The thought was that they were assuming this intelligentsia attitude among themselves (ehn eahft•tees). Here Paul's method of combating this unjustified conceit was to give them knowledge regarding God's future plan for Israel. He literally tells them not to think that they are better than the unbelieving Jews, for God has a bright future for them. He is going to pour out His elective mercy upon them and graft them into a kingdom relationship with Himself (Acts 3:17-25). Note, Paul in this context, refers to the truth which he is sharing regarding Israel's future, as he looks at it from the vantage point of this church age, as "to meets• tee• reason" (the Mystery). Since nothing is revealed regarding the present church age in the Old Testament, and what Paul is saying here pertains to Israel during this church age, it was naturally a mystery or secret until revealed here by Paul.

But at this present time, "po• ro• sees ahpo mehr• oos"; rendered "partial hardness" or "hardness from part" has come to Israel. Notice this hardness will continue to blind the majority of Israelites "ahkh• ree oo to plee• ro• mah ton ehth• non ees ehl• thee", rendered "until the fullness of the Gentiles may come in". Now as we see it, the fullness of the Gentiles corresponds with the consummation of this church age. Note the fact that this hardness is partial means that some Jews will be receiving mercy and faith to believe today. But as for the Jewish masses, Paul gives us no reason to think that they will be ready to believe the gospel of the grace of God in this dispensation.

Now we move to Romans 11:26 as we read first from the King James Version, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:" And now from the Greek Text, "And thus all Israel will be saved; even as it is written, the deliverer will come out of Zion, he will turn ungodliness from Jacob;". Note when the fullness of the Gentiles has arrived, i.e. when the Messianic Kingdom is ready to be established, then "all Israel will be saved". Now this is according to Old Testament prophecy, not the Mystery. Therefore Paul corroborates it with a quotation from the Old Testament (Isaiah 59:20-21; Jeremiah 31:34). Here the Apostle Paul, in the context before us, leaves no room for believing Gentiles to think that they are superior to unbelieving Jews. For Gentile believers to assume a haughty attitude toward faithless Jews and for anyone to think that we have replaced the Jews in God's eternal purpose is to display crass ignorance if the scriptures. The Kingdom, which will consist of saved Israel, will be the core of Christ's Kingdom on earth.

Now as we turn to Romans 11:27, we read first from the King James Version, "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins". And now from the Greek Text, "And this is my covenant with them, when I have taken away their sins". Here Paul makes reference to the new covenant (Jeremiah chapter 31) that is with the house of Israel and the house of Judah (Jeremiah 31:31).

Now contrary to some doctrinal teachings, we herein make the emphatic statement that the new covenant of Jeremiah 31 is not made with the present day church in this dispensation of grace. Observe the reading of Jeremiah 31:31, (King James Version), "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah". Now notice there is a great distinction throughout this context between the commonwealth of Israel (house of Israel and Judah) and those who are members of the body of Christ. One should understand that

nowhere (not even in the Hebrew epistle) is the covenant prophesied by Jeremiah extended to the Church. No, the blessings of the new covenant are all **earthly**, whereas Ephesians 1:3 describes our blessings as being in the sphere of the heavenlies! Now since the quote of this verse (Romans 11:27) is merely an Old Testament quotation to confirm the fact that in the future all Israel (who are actually Israel, only God knows) will be saved; it is not our purpose in this context to examine all its ramifications.

A more accurate translation from the Greek may read, "And this is the covenant from me with them, whenever I may have taken away their sins", which emphasizes the fact that God is the one who will make the covenant and that it will be made in God's time **after** He has taken away their sins, which is **after** they accept Him.

Now we move to Romans 11:28, as we read first from the King James Version, "As concerning the gospel, *they are* enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, *they are* beloved for the father's sakes". Now from the Greek Text, "With respect to the gospel they are enemies on account of you but with respect to the election they are beloved on account of the fathers". Now in view of the grammatical construction of this verse, we note the obvious meaning of the particles "**mehn**" and "**theh**", which emphasizes contrasting thoughts in a sentence or phrase. Thus using this concept, an amplified translation of Romans 11:28 is, "on the other hand, with respect to the gospel they are enemies on account of you, but on the other hand, with respect to the election they are blessed on account of the fathers. Thus this verse indicates that God has a dual purpose, which He is accomplishing through Israel. At the present time they are unbelieving enemies of the gospel of God's grace. The reason is "**thee ee• mahs**", rendered "on account of" or "because of" or "for the sake of" the Gentiles.

Note there are two ways in which the Gentiles have been blessed as a result of the majority of the Jews being enemies of both the gospel of the Kingdom and the gospel of the grace of God. First, their rejection of the Kingdom presented in the Synoptic Gospels and the first seven chapters of Acts resulted in the ushering in of the present church age, the dispensation of grace in which believing Gentiles are equally blessed with believing Jews in the family of God (Ephesians 2:19). Second, when the majority of the Jews, particularly the leaders, rejected the gospel of the grace of God, Paul turned to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46; 18:6;28:28). This in turn had the positive effect of provoking some of the Jews to emulate the Gentiles to also believe.

Now as we focus on God's elective purpose in relation to Israel, Paul states that from the point of view of election, they are beloved on account of the fathers. Here the Greek word "**ehk• lo• yeen**", translated "election" is derived from the Greek preposition "**ehk**" prefixed to the verb "**leh• go**" and literally means to "speak out", "pick out" or the "act of choosing or selecting people". Paul's point is that when it comes to God's determining whom He will choose and select, the Jews had an edge. They are "**ah• gah• pee• teh**", rendered "beloved" on account of or because of the fathers, namely Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, etc. Note in the light of God's present intertwined purpose to bless the Gentiles through the enmity of the majority of the Jews toward the gospel, there is not favoritism in election during the church age. However, when the Messianic Kingdom is established, every true descendant of Abraham will be saved. God will keep all His promises made unto the fathers, which involves esteeming their offspring as beloved ones, the recipients of ultimate mercy and election (Deuteronomy 7:8;9:15;10:15).

Now as we move to Romans 11:29, we read first from the King James Version, "For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance". We shall now read from the Greek Text, "for the gifts and the calling of God are not repentable". Note the thought in this verse is that what God has given to the fathers and the distinct calling which He had called them unto (Genesis 12:1-3). These are "**ah• meh• tah• meh• lee• tah**", rendered unrepentable i.e., God is not able to repent neither for what He has given nor for whom He has called. Here the Greek word "**ah•meh• tah• meh• lee• tah**", translated repentable is derived from "**ah**" and "**meh• tah**" and "**meh• lo• meh**", and means that God

does not regret, rue or change His thoughts regarding the promises and oaths He has given to the fathers. God being God, who has a panoramic view of eternity past and future would have no reason to regret what He did at any point in time. Furthermore, the moral character of God would be violated if He did not fulfill His promises and oaths. Therefore, Paul could confidently affirm the descendants of the fathers were blessed ones, with a top election priority.

Even though this verse has reference to the gifts and the calling of God given to the fathers of Israel, it sets forth an important principle relating to God's dealing with all His elect. If a sinner exercises God-given faith in Jesus Christ, thereby verifying the fact that he is one of the elect, it follows that nothing can break his God established relationship, not even God Himself. God's call to salvation, apart from which no one can be saved, is totally the work of God through the Holy Spirit. Thus, in bringing sinners to Himself God first selects (Ephesians 1:4), next He predetermines (II Timothy 1:9), then He calls justifies and ultimately glorifies (Romans 8:30). All that is involved in making a sinner into a saint is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8). Thus it is irrevocable, unalterable and eternal!

Now as we move to Romans 11:30 we read first from the King James Version, "For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief". Now from the Greek Text, "For even as you once were disobedient to God, but now you have been given mercy by the disobedience of these". Now as Paul continues to address Gentile believers, he reminds us that "po• teh", rendered "once" i.e., at one time, in the past, we were disobedient to God. Here the Greek word "eepee• thee• sah• teh", rendered "disobedient" is frequently used as a synonym of the Greek verb rendered "not to believe" or "to •these words, there is an interchange between unbelief (ah•peest•ee• o) and disobedience (ah•peeth•ee• ah). Likewise the Jews who were in a state of unbelief were also in a state of disobedience (Romans 11:20,30). Unbelief in itself is both an **act** of disobedience and it **leads** to disobedience.

To refuse to believe God is tantamount to refusing to obey Him, therefore these two words are used synonymously.

So disobedience was once the lot of the Gentiles. But Paul states, "Now you have been given mercy (ee• leh• ee• thee• teh) (notice this Greek word) is in the passive voice and aorist tense. This means that at a given point in past God gave and extended to them mercy. He made them vessels of mercy, those who had believed, individually calling them out of (ehk) the Jews and Gentiles (Romans 9:23-24). Here the concepts of mercy and election are inextricably tied together. Now because some (not all) sinners are part of God's elect, they receive mercy with all it entails. As a result they exercise faith in Christ and as such Paul speaks of them as the elect. Thus Paul refers to those who have believed as the elect.

But how did the once disobedient Gentiles receive saving mercy? Paul's answer is by the disobedience of the Jews. Now it is impossible for our finite minds to fully grasp how the disobedience of the Jews produced such a great outpouring of the mercy of God upon individual Gentiles, but it has. As we have already suggested, this disobedience ushered in the Church Age, a time when "the fullness of the Gentiles" is taking place. Furthermore, in the process of proclaiming the gospel to the Jews, note their rejection of it resulted in a turning to the Gentiles (again read Acts 13:46;18:6;28:28). Of course behind all this God was fulfilling His sovereign purpose i.e., provoking Israel to believe (Romans 11:11).

Now as we continue, we move to Romans 11:31, reading first from the King James Version, "Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy". Now from the Greek Text, "As also these now have been disobeying for your mercy, in order that they themselves might now be given mercy". Now there seems to be a difference of opinion (among some Greek scholars) as to the best way to translate this verse. However, we believe that the strict constructionist should always follow the grammatical construction, thus flowing with the context in order for anything to make proper sense. Note in this verse (Romans 11:31) the statement "as also these now have been



disobedient", is written to believing Gentiles pertaining to unbelieving Jews. Here the Greek verb "**ee•pee•thee•sah**", translated "have been disobedient", is in the aorist tense, which means that in the present dispensation of grace they had manifested their disobedience to the gospel.

Again the question, "Why were these Jews disobedient? Here Paul explains it was to "**ee•meh•teh•ro•ehl•eh**", rendered "for your mercy". Note that the case used here is as a dative, which means that the Jews' disobedience was for or with reference to the Gentiles being given mercy. So Jewish disobedience directs divine mercy toward Gentiles in this age.

Thus, we observe that the purpose or reason the Jews were disobedient was that the Gentiles might be given mercy, and this in turn, in order that they, the Jews might now be given mercy. In God's sovereign saving of the Gentiles and Jews, first He uses the disobedience of the Jews to bring the Gentiles to Himself, and having accomplished this, He is now in a position to extend mercy to the Jews. This statement involves God giving mercy to individual Jews in this church age as well as to every true (those under promise) descendants of Abraham when the Messianic Kingdom is established.

And now we move to Romans 11:32, as we read from the King James Version, "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. Now we shall read from the Greek Text, "For God has shut up all unto disobedience that he might extend mercy to all". Here the Greek word "**seen•ehk•lee•seen**", translated "shut up" conveys the thought that He shut up together or locked up together all men, both the Jews and Gentiles, in the sphere of disobedience. Now this is an interaction of the truth set forth in the third chapter, verse 9, wherein Paul states, "For we before proved that both Jew and Greeks are all under sin".

Likewise, in Ephesians 2:3, Paul speaks of both Jews and Gentiles; here he states "that we all once were doing the will of the flesh and of the mind and we were by nature children of wrath as also the rest". The reason God has shut up all men in the category of disobedience is so no one can boast that he has saved himself by his works (Romans 3:27-28; Ephesians 2:9).

Now the reason God locked all men under disobedience was "**ee•nah**", rendered "in order that", he might have mercy on all. From the foregoing context we know that God will have mercy on all the Jews who are Abraham's descendants after the close of this church age (Romans 11:25-26). Here Paul speaks about a glorious future for the Jews, but after the fullness of the Gentiles has arrived. We have no reason to expect a great outpouring of mercy upon them (the Gentiles) as some teach. Now there is no question about it, all men are shut up together unto disobedience and hence are potential candidates for receiving mercy. But there is no basis for saying that Gentiles are the recipients of God's mercy until after we see the results of that mercy, namely their salvation.

Now we need to keep clearly in mind that God has only one way of saving sinners and that is by His mercy. His redemptive purpose operates according to election, initiated by love, and activated by mercy. According to the ninth chapter, divinely distributed mercy is the key ingredient in determining who will be saved (Romans 9:15-18,23). According to Ephesians 2:4-6, love prompted mercy made us alive with Christ. It raised and seated us in the heavenlies with Him. According to Titus 3:5, God saved us in accordance with His mercy. The mercy of God provides all that is necessary for the saving of God's elect.

Now as we move to the last four verses of Romans chapter eleven, we note that this context is sometimes viewed in a general sense and is used by some to magnify the power and wisdom of God in creation. Now while much of what Paul is conveying can certainly be attributed to His power to create, Paul in the context of these verses is actually extolling the attributes of God as it relates to election.

As we move to Romans 11:33, we read from the King James Version, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out". Now from the Greek Text, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways cannot be tracked out". As the Apostle Paul reflects back on what he has written regarding God's sovereign method of bringing His elect, both Jews and Gentiles into a living relationship with Himself, he pens the majestic words in this verse.

Here we observe how Paul is struck with the "vah• thos" (depth), i.e., how deep and how immeasurable are the riches which belong to the wisdom (so• phree• ahs") and knowledge of God. Note the Greek word "so• phree• ahs", translated "wisdom" is used some 16 times in the New Testament pertaining to truth revealed for the body of Christ. Here Paul states that this wisdom and knowledge (gnos• eh• os) belongs to God, have their origin in God and are a part of the Mystery Truth (Romans 11:25), which is truth for the Church.

Continuing in the same vein, Paul states, (Greek Text), "How unsearchable are the judgments of God". Note the Greek word "ah•neh• xeh• rahv• o• tan", translated "unsearchable" is derived from three Greek words and literally speaks of that which cannot be searched out or cannot be interpreted or cannot be scrutinized. Now this is the only time this word is used in the New Testament. As far as all that was written is concerned, what Paul has said about God's "tah kree• mah• tah", rendered "judgments", "determinations" and "manner" of executing the salvation of Jews and Gentiles, can not be searched out in the Old Testament nor otherwise. Since this truth was a secret in the mind of God prior to the Apostle Paul, it is now called Mystery Truth, even though it is now revealed. In other words, truth, which God formerly kept a secret and mystery, is now named by its former description. So that which was previously described, as that which was a mystery, is now **known as the Mystery**.

Also, Paul states that it is impossible to follow the tracks of God's ways. Here the Greek word, "ah• neh• xeekh• nee• ahs• tee", translated "cannot be tracked out", connotes that the tracks of His (God's) ways cannot be followed and cannot be tracked. Now the only other time this word is used in the New Testament is in Ephesians 3:8, where Paul declares that it was given unto him "to preach to the Gentiles the untrackable riches of Christ". The immediate context in this third chapter of Ephesians makes it crystal clear. Paul is declaring that the wisdom and knowledge of the Mystery cannot be tracked or traced out in neither the Old Testament nor any other body of literature. In this 33<sup>rd</sup> verse Paul is emphasizing God's sovereign purpose in soteriology, truth that had not been revealed in the Old Testament namely, that Israel has been partially hardened until the fullness of the Gentiles may come in (Galatians 1:12; II Timothy 1:9-13).

Now moving to Romans 11:34, we read from the King James Version, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counselor? Now from the Greek Text, "For who has know the mind of the Lord/ or who has become his counselor? Now after having affirmed in Romans 11:33 that the particular truth he is talking about cannot be traced out in the Old Testament (Paul now quote from the Old Testament) to corroborate a universal truth about God. In Romans 11:32, He has just concluded how incomprehensible God's wisdom, knowledge and ways are, and now he adds the weight of the Old Testament to his argument. Notice how he does this in the form of asking two questions: (1) "Who has know the mind of the Lord? (2) "Who has assumed the position of being his counselor? Now the obvious answer to both of these questions is (1) No one has ever known the mind of the Lord apart from what God may have been pleased to reveal. (2) No one has ever counseled and deliberated with Him as to what he should or should not do (Isaiah 40:13; Jeremiah 23:18).

Now moving to Romans 11:35, we read from the King James Version, "Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? Now from the Greek Text, "Or who has first given to him, and it shall be repaid unto him again? Here in further emphasizing God's wisdom and knowledge, and His unsearchable judgments and untraceable ways, Paul quotes the first part of Job 41:11. His purpose is to emphasize that everything belongs to God. He is the one who initiates and gives all things and He does not do this in response to what man has done. We must understand that the

manner in which God operates is beyond human comprehension; i.e., it cannot be searched or tracked out. Thus human reasoning and human input have no place in God's work as to His purpose nor His will. Man is absolutely excluded from both the design and execution of God's plans. That which He gives to men is according to His sovereign will, and not as a repayment for something any man may have done.

Now as the Apostle Paul closes out the final verse of Roman's chapter 11 and thus his discourse on the subject election, note his reference to God being the cause and reason from which all things emanates. Here we read Romans 11:36, first from the King James Version, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen". Now from the Greek Text, "Because out of him and through him and unto him are all things". This verse begins with the Greek conjunction "o-tee", which according to the context is more accurately translated "because". It may also be rendered, "for that", expressing **why** or the **reason** he stated what he did in the preceding verse.

First note the phrase "eh ahf• too", rendered "out of him", is in the ablative case, which means that God is the source of all things, the one from whom everything comes, the origin of all. According to Colossians 1:16, God the Father in conjunction with God the Son, "created all things in the heavens and upon the earth" (John 1:3; Ephesians 3:9; Revelations 4:11). Next we note that the Greek phrase "thee ahf• too", rendered "through Him", declares that all things were brought into existence through the agency of God. Colossians 1:16, likewise, speaks of all things being created "thee• ah" (through) Jesus Christ. These passages indicate that both the Father and Son were active agents in the creations of all things (Hebrews 1:2:2:10).

Lastly, the Greek phrase "ees ahfton", rendered "unto him", denotes that the end or object of all things that have been created is God Himself. Again, we observe that God the Son shares with God the Father as the end and object of creation according to Colossians 1:16 as well as Hebrews 2:10. All of creation, as originally created, had as its purpose the glorification of God the Father and (or even) the Son!

Now as the Apostle Paul closes his discourse regarding how God in His sovereignty brings dead sinners to Himself through His elective purpose (Romans 8:28; 9:11), and as we have demonstrated in chapter 9-11, he exclaimed, "to Him be the glory forever. Amen". Now these three chapters (9,10 and 11) of Romans make it very clear that apart from God in His sovereignty choosing and imbuing sinful men with faith, no one would ever believe and no one would ever be saved.

Without a doubt, God is calling individual Jews and Gentiles unto Himself in this present church age, apart from all human merit. He alone is to be glorified and credited for performing the total work of your salvation. He is not just responsible in part, but in total; not only for the call, but also He is the cause. It is because He loved us from the beginning that we are Sons of God!

We will now conclude this presentation of our discourse on the doctrinal subject of "Election". Now obviously there are yet inexhaustible **volumes** of material on this subject matter that have not been covered. But as it is in all the salvation workings of God, **all** of eternity will be required to give proper text to the glorious spiritual blessings of God.

Now it has been our aim to bring illumination and elucidation to this blessed benefit, which God bestowed upon those who He loved before He ever created mankind. Now those of us who occupy the position of Sonship i.e., those through adoption who are placed as members of the body of Christ, must rest in the fact that the original idea of selecting us was enacted in eternity. It occurred in a point before creation and time when God, who was alone i.e., by Himself, thus in pre-creation formulated His plan, purpose and will for all the ages to come.

God is sovereign, He has the absolute right to perform that, which pleases Him, and it has pleased Him to choose, select and call out some, (not all) **some**, according to the pleasure of His good will

(Ephesians 1:5). Now we must remember that all things move according to God's preplanning and pre-purpose, thus His will **cannot** and **will not** be denied. Accordingly those of us who abide as His elect designees must rest confidently in knowing that everything that He decrees, **will come** to pass.