

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Fourth Quarter 2017: *Salvation by Faith Alone: The Book of Romans*

Lesson 11 “The Elect”

Read for this week’s study

Romans 10, 11.

Memory Text

“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” (Romans 11:1).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Christ and the Law
- III. The Election of Grace
- IV. The Natural Branch
- V. *All Israel Shall Be Saved*
- VI. The Salvation of Sinners
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “This week’s lesson covers Romans 10 and 11, with a focus especially on chapter 11. It’s important to read both chapters in their entirety in order to continue to follow Paul’s line of thinking.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. The lesson covers 10:1-4, which is actually part of section 9:30-10:4. (Remember Cardinal Stephen Langton who divided the Bible into chapters?) The rest of the chapter (10:5-21) is not addressed.
3. In 11:1-7 Paul returns to the idea of remnant against the backdrop of the Elijah story. In the previous two chapters he has spoken of his constant sorrow and grief (9:1-3), of his desire to be cut off from the Messiah, if somehow that would help bring his fellow Jews back to salvation (10:1). Like Elijah, Paul was winning great victory over the pagan world. But when he looks over his shoulder he sees his own fellow countrymen in rebellion against the gospel and God who reached out to them in grace. It would have been easy for Paul, like Elijah, to sink into depression. But he allowed the gospel to inform and remold his thinking and emotions. God graciously called a new remnant. Even against the backdrop of universal sin, God found a way to do what he did in the time of Elijah—only this time on a grander scale.

4. In 11:7-15 Israel as a whole is now in the position of the older brother from Luke 15. The Gentile Christians (joining the minority of Jews who have accepted the gospel) are in the position of the younger brother. This is bound to cause jealousy as it did in Luke 15, or the Old Testament story of Cain, Ishmael, or Esau. But Paul shows that this jealousy can become a motive which may propel at least some more Jews into faith and salvation.
5. The 'stumble' of Israel has been used by God to bring Gentiles to the people of God, to the family of Abraham. Had Israel as a whole embraced the Messiah, it might have looked as though God's action in Jesus was reaffirming the special status of Israel and leaving Gentiles as permanent second-class citizens. But God always wanted them to be members with equal standing.
6. In 11:16-24 Paul uses a metaphor about two olive trees. However, unlike in real life, wild branches are grafted into the cultivated olive tree by an extraordinary miracle of grace. Therefore, there cannot be any room or right or reason to boast over the original cultivated branches which have now, for the moment, been cut out of the tree.
7. Paul sees God's people as a single family. The children of Abraham are redefined around Jesus the Messiah and marked out by faith in him. It was an easier task to graft the Gentiles into the tree from the outside than it was to graft the Jews back in. God will accomplish that task himself. He says in v. 23: they can be grafted back 'if they do not remain in unbelief'. The way back was outlined in 10:5-13 and there is no other way.
8. At the same time, Paul is issuing a serious warning to the Gentile Christians. They must not presuppose for a moment that they have 'replaced' Jews in God's plan, that the Church is now a 'Gentiles-only' family, or that God has chosen them precisely because they were Gentiles. That would be the same mistake the Jews had made – imagining that God's grace was tied to a particular ethnic group. The Roman church, composed of mostly Gentile Christians, must not pick up the attitude of the society all around them and join in the general anti-Judaism of the day.
9. In 11:25-32 Paul states and explains the 'mystery' of God's plan now revealed in Christ Jesus. How is God saving all his people, Jews and Gentiles alike? How will 'all Israel' be saved? (v. 26)
10. Paul is not indicating that it means 'all Jews' who ever lived, or all Jews alive at the end time. 'All Israel' means all the family of Abraham – and that includes believing Gentiles as well as believing Jews (4:16). Cf. Galatians 6:16 'Israel of God'.
11. If ethnic Israel had embraced the gospel from the very start, it would have been fatally easy for them to assume that they had always been entitled to it and that if any Gentiles came in, they would rank below the Jews. But then grace would no longer be grace. All humans, Jews and Gentiles are sinful (3:19-20; 3:23). Everyone who comes into God's family does so on the basis of grace and mercy alone.

12. This passage shows that the final resolution of the problem of unbelief will be accomplished when God acts for the salvation of the world through people who are themselves part of the problem, but also bearers of the solution.
13. Verses 33-36 are an expression of wonder and giving praise to God whose thoughts, plans and accomplishments are much deeper and greater than anything we could have imagined ourselves. It is about the saving, restorative grace of God. Though there are plenty of signs that all is still not well, the final completion is not in doubt. God will accomplish his purposes and we will stand in awe and breath-taking wonder at the scale and scope of it all.

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Recommended Listening: The entire series by Graham Maxwell on the book of Romans is available at <http://pkp.cc/MMROMANS66>

I believe that the essence of legalism is preoccupation with our legal standing with a legal, legalistic God. And so many Christians are preoccupied with their legal standing, because they don't really know God. They don't realize that he is a gracious God who is not preoccupied with our legal standing. Like the father of the prodigal son, he's very preoccupied with our welfare and whether or not we will come home. That's what God is preoccupied with. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #12, "God's Law is No Threat to Our Freedom" recorded April, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/12MMCAG>

He went on with the Beatitudes, commented on their being the salt of the earth, and the light of the world. He had to pause, sensing that their reaction was unfavorable to what he was saying. He said, "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them." Why would he need to say that in the middle of this presentation? Is it that what he had already said would not seem to be in harmony with the Old Testament?

Now, we need to pause on the meaning of "the Law and the Prophets." As you know, the Jews divided the Old Testament into three canons: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings, or the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. So that's the long name for the Old Testament—the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. Sometimes that was shortened to the Law and the Prophets. Sometimes it was shortened to just the Law, For example when they said, "You should not call yourself the Son of God; that's blasphemy," Jesus said, "Does it not say in your law, we are all

gods?” (little g). You know where that quote is? In the Psalms. So he called the Psalms “the Law.” They knew what he was saying when he did this. Jesus said, “Everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled.” They knew he was referring to the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament.

So this isn’t “Think not that I have come to abolish the Ten Commandments.” Sometimes we use it as a key text like that. No. “Think not that I have come to abolish the whole Old Testament. I haven’t. I’ve not come to abolish the Old Testament. I’ve come to fulfill it.” Well, we think of fulfillment as fulfilling predictions. That’s too limited. He had come to fulfill it in every appropriate way, like *explaining, telling them what it was all about*; but they did not like his explanations. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Matthew, recorded March, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/51MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/52MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Lou: Talking about fulfilled prophecies reminds me of a question from one of our listeners. He says, “What answer might I give my neighbor who believes that Israel will once again become a great nation? And there are many unfilled promises to Israel. He believes that these promises have yet to be fulfilled, and he bases his beliefs on Jeremiah 31:35, 36; Isaiah 2:2-5; Romans 11, and so forth, Isaiah 31.” He says, “God will keep his promises to Abraham.” Now, here’s someone who thinks that the things that are happening to the country of Israel must be tied in with the events that have to take place.

Graham: Well, what I like is his selection of verses. They are all excellent verses. And if one were to lay those side by side, all of them express some qualifications. For example, in Romans Paul says, “Not all the physical descendants of Abraham are real Israelites; only the children of the promise.” And Isaiah says that though the children be “as the sand of the sea for multitude, only a remnant will be saved,” because only a remnant will respond. And Jeremiah says, “Only those in whose hearts my law has been written will be my loyal children.” Every one of those writers suggests that many of Abraham’s physical children will not be among God’s loyal people. Then Paul goes on to say, “But those whose hearts are circumcised,” they will be regarded as true Israelites. So I think if one were to take the passages listed there, one would have the answer. I would not look to what’s happening in Israel today as an indication. God is looking at the people in Palestine today as he looks at all the other people in the world; if they trust him, all will be well. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #19 with Lou Venden, “How Soon Will the Conflict be Over?” recorded June, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/19MMCAG>

I will treat them as though they had always been my loyal children. That's all God has ever wanted. But he's had to add a lot of things, hasn't he? And that's Galatians 3. The law was added because of transgression, to be our guardian, our custodian, to bring us to Christ, to bring us back to the place where we say, "You be our God; and we'll be your people. We're willing to listen. We trust you." And God can save and heal all who trust him. If only we could understand that, we wouldn't need so many other aids. But God's a good Teacher. If we don't trust him, he'll lay hands on us; he'll discipline us; he'll raise his voice; he'll give us a thousand rules to protect us in our ignorance and immaturity. But all he wants in the end is that we trust him. The whole plan of salvation, the cross, everything, if it does not lead us back to trust him, it will do us no good whatsoever. God can only save those who trust him. The only people who are safe to save are those whom he can trust, and who will behave as described earlier in Jeremiah and all the other prophets. There's nothing legalistic about that. It isn't even a legal problem. It's a problem of trust, of honesty, integrity, humility, willingness to listen. And God, the Infinite One, has all the power needed to heal the damage done. He's not so concerned with forgiveness as with healing the damage done and restoring us to the condition we were in before sin ever came into the universe, when there was no need to mention law. It was written on the hearts of the angels. There's a magnificent description here of what God really wants. Are we emphasizing this at this present time? Are we known for this? Well, here's a way to test it. Look at Jeremiah 9:23 in the light of all this. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66 – Jeremiah & Lamentations*, recorded February , 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/35MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/36MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

It is most significant to know that the word salvation means, essentially, healing. To be saved is to be healed. In one very legal understanding of the plan of salvation, to be saved is more to be forgiven; almost to have your fire insurance paid up, so you can be admitted.

In the trust-healing model, salvation means healing the damage done. This is made plain in many places in Scripture. Look at the next two examples on the list, of Luke 18:42, in two different versions. Jesus said to the blind man: "Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee." That's the *King James Version*. But the *New International Version*, right underneath: "Receive your sight; your faith has healed you." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Conversations About God, #14, "God Can Completely Heal the Damage Done"* recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/14MMCAG>

Further Study with Ellen White

In the person of Christ we behold the eternal God engaged in an enterprise of boundless mercy toward fallen man. {FLB 98.3}

Satan's enmity against the human race is kindled because, through Christ, they are the objects of God's love and mercy. He desires to thwart the divine plan for man's redemption, to cast dishonor upon God, by defacing and defiling His handiwork; he would cause grief in heaven and fill the earth with woe and desolation. And he points to all this evil as the result of God's work in creating man. {GC 506.1}

It is the grace that Christ implants in the soul which creates in man enmity against Satan. Without this converting grace and renewing power, man would continue the captive of Satan, a servant ever ready to do his bidding. But the new principle in the soul creates conflict where hitherto had been peace. The power which Christ imparts enables man to resist the tyrant and usurper. Whoever is seen to abhor sin instead of loving it, whoever resists and conquers those passions that have held sway within, displays the operation of a principle wholly from above. {GC 506.2}

The gifts of Jesus are ever fresh and new. . . . Each new gift increases the capacity of the receiver to appreciate and enjoy the blessings of the Lord. He gives grace for grace. There can be no failure of supply. If you abide in Him, the fact that you receive a rich gift today insures the reception of a richer gift tomorrow. . . . {AG 104.2}

In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe. All who choose to breathe this life-giving atmosphere will live and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. {SC 68.1}

As the flower turns to the sun, that the bright beams may aid in perfecting its beauty and symmetry, so should we turn to the Sun of Righteousness, that heaven's light may shine upon us, that our character may be developed into the likeness of Christ. {SC 68.2}

Jesus teaches the same thing when He says, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. . . . Without Me ye can do nothing." John 15:4, 5. You are just as dependent upon Christ, in order to live a holy life, as is the branch upon the parent stock for growth and fruitfulness. Apart from Him you have no life. You have no power to resist temptation or to grow in grace and holiness. Abiding in Him, you may flourish. Drawing your life from Him, you will not wither nor be fruitless. You will be like a tree planted by the rivers of water. {SC 68.3}

Many have an idea that they must do some part of the work alone. They have trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sin, but now they seek by their own efforts to live aright. But every such effort must fail. Jesus says, "Without Me ye can do nothing." Our growth in grace, our joy, our

usefulness,—all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly,—by abiding in Him,—that we are to grow in grace. He is not only the Author, but the Finisher of our faith. It is Christ first and last and always. He is to be with us, not only at the beginning and the end of our course, but at every step of the way. David says, “I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.” Psalm 16:8. {SC 69.1}

Jesus loves to have us come to Him just as we are, sinful, helpless, dependent. We may come with all our weakness, our folly, our sinfulness, and fall at His feet in penitence. It is His glory to encircle us in the arms of His love and to bind up our wounds, to cleanse us from all impurity. {SC 52.2}

Christ bound them to His heart by the ties of love and devotion; and by the same ties He bound them to their fellow men. With Him love was life, and life was service. “Freely ye have received,” He said, “freely give.” Matthew 10:8. {Ed 80.2}

Arise and go to your Father. He will meet you a great way off. If you take even one step toward Him in repentance, He will hasten to enfold you in His arms of infinite love. His ear is open to the cry of the contrite soul. The very first reaching out of the heart after God is known to Him. Never a prayer is offered, however faltering, never a tear is shed, however secret, never a sincere desire after God is cherished, however feeble, but the Spirit of God goes forth to meet it. Even before the prayer is uttered or the yearning of the heart made known, grace from Christ goes forth to meet the grace that is working upon the human soul. {COL 206.1}

Sin had become a science, and vice was consecrated as a part of religion. Rebellion had struck its roots deep into the heart, and the hostility of man was most violent against heaven. It was demonstrated before the universe that, apart from God, humanity could not be uplifted. A new element of life and power must be imparted by Him who made the world. {DA 37.1}

With intense interest the unfallen worlds had watched to see Jehovah arise, and sweep away the inhabitants of the earth. And if God should do this, Satan was ready to carry out his plan for securing to himself the allegiance of heavenly beings. He had declared that the principles of God’s government make forgiveness impossible. Had the world been destroyed, he would have claimed that his accusations were proved true. He was ready to cast blame upon God, and to spread his rebellion to the worlds above. But instead of destroying the world, God sent His Son to save it. Though corruption and defiance might be seen in every part of the alien province, a way for its recovery was provided. At the very crisis, when Satan seemed about to triumph, the Son of God came with the embassy of divine grace. Through every age, through every hour, the love of God had been exercised toward the fallen race. Notwithstanding the perversity of men, the signals of mercy had been continually exhibited. And when the fullness of the time

had come, the Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or withdrawn till the plan of salvation should be fulfilled. {DA 37.2}

Through the plan of salvation a larger purpose is to be wrought out even than the salvation of man and the redemption of the earth. Through the revelation of the character of God in Christ, the beneficence of the divine government would be manifested before the universe, the charge of Satan refuted, the nature and results of sin made plain, and the perpetuity of the law fully demonstrated. Satan had declared that the law of God was faulty, and that the good of the universe demanded a change in its requirement. In attacking the law, he thought to overthrow the authority of its Author, and gain for himself the supreme allegiance. But through the plan of salvation the precepts of the law were to be proved perfect and immutable, that at last one glory and love might rise to God throughout the universe, ascribing glory and honor and praise to him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever. {ST, February 13, 1893 par. 12}

Well, then, might the angels rejoice as they looked upon the Saviour's cross; for though they did not then understand all, they knew that the destruction of sin and Satan was forever made certain, that the redemption of man was assured, and that the universe was made eternally secure. Christ Himself fully comprehended the results of the sacrifice made upon Calvary. To all these He looked forward when upon the cross He cried out, "It is finished." {DA 764.4}

The Lord God through Christ holds out His hand all the day long in invitations to the needy. He will receive all. He welcomes all. He rejects none. It is His glory to pardon the chief of sinners. He will take the prey from the mighty, He will deliver the captive, He will pluck the brand from the burning. He will lower the golden chain of His mercy to the greatest depths of human wretchedness and guilt and lift up the debased soul contaminated with sin. But man must will to come, and cooperate in the work of saving his soul by availing himself of opportunities given him of God. The Lord forces no one. The spotless wedding robe of Christ's righteousness is prepared to clothe the sinner, but if he refuses it he must perish. {TMK 235.2}

The heart of God yearns over His earthly children with a love stronger than death. In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift. The Saviour's life and death and intercession, the ministry of angels, the pleading of the Spirit, the Father working above and through all, the unceasing interest of heavenly beings,—all are enlisted in behalf of man's redemption. {SC 21.2}

Through creation and redemption, through nature and through Christ, the glories of the divine character are revealed. By the marvelous display of His love in giving "His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," the character of God is revealed to the intelligences of the universe. Through Christ our heavenly Father is made known as the God of love. {ST, December 15, 1914 par. 5}

Infinite love—how great it is! God made the world to enlarge heaven. He desires a larger family of created intelligences (MS 78, 1901). {1BC 1081.2}

All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of man. Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made “in the image of God,” and it was the Creator’s design that they should populate the earth (RH Feb. 11, 1902). {1BC 1081.3}

Had God the Father come to our world and dwelt among us, humbling Himself, veiling His glory, that humanity might look upon Him, the history that we have of the life of Christ would not have been changed. . . . In every act of Jesus, in every lesson of His instruction, we are to see and hear and recognize God. In sight, in hearing, in effect, it is the voice and movements of the Father. {TMK 338.4}