

I. The Natural Breakdown of the Bible

The Book of Romans is a very legalistic concept, trying to grasp all those terms and concepts. But the Book of Romans is much like that. What really makes this book easy is when you begin to understand that it has a natural breakdown. Every book of the Bible has a natural breakdown by which God has assigned to it.

I always tell you the story: when it comes to learning the Bible, the Bible is a lot like how you choose to go to St. Louis. If you choose to go to St. Louis this afternoon, you really have two choices. Basically, you have two. You can get on I-70 here and go east. In about three and a half, four hours, you're going to hit the outskirts of St. Louis and then go wherever you want to go from there.

The other option you have is to go west. You could go west through Colorado, through Arizona, and get onto the West Coast. Then you get your car on a boat someplace, a big old thing, and drive around all the way to China. Then you get off the shore in China, drive through China, Asia, get on the other side, go up through Europe, and then get someplace in France, get on another boat, and come back to the East Coast. Then you get your car off and then drive from New York or wherever you come in, Boston, and drive back that way.

There are two ways to get there. One's going to get you there probably in a couple of hours. The other one's going to get you there probably in a couple of weeks, if not much longer.

Approaching the Bible is the same way. You can go the easy route and learn it as quickly as you want to; that'd be God's way. Or you can come to the place that you can go by way of Canton, China, and get there, or never get there.

The Bible is not a hard book. The key to the Bible, and this has always been true, and it's something that I had to find out for myself and somebody let me in on a secret, so I'll let you in on a secret. The key to the Bible, no matter where you're at, is finding out how those books naturally break down. God designed them. He put them in there. Every word, we believe that every word in the Bible is there for an absolute purpose and a reason. Therefore, when God, who was the author of the Bible, wrote the Bible, He also put it in the context where He would put it and break it down in the natural division that would be easy for us to understand it.

That's the key to Romans. The Book of Romans, found out to be the so-called hardest book in the Bible, becomes really one of the easiest books in the Bible when you get those natural breakdowns. Today, as we get into Romans chapter 9, we're going to start the third section. We've already come through two sections in Romans, and I told you how Romans basically naturally breaks down into four sections. If you were here back then when we started, you should have those breakdowns in your Bible today. If you weren't here or you didn't get them down, we'll talk about them here briefly as we move into this third section today.

II. The Structure of the New Testament

Romans is the key, and the reason why it's so important is that Romans is the key to the events that are going on in our New Testament. If you look at your New Testament, you have Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John deal with the first coming of Christ, and basically what they do is they set a historical perspective for you and for me.

When I open my Bible up and I look at the New Testament, my natural breakdown, the way it's broken down, even the New Testament is broken down. These are the things that we're going to get into in June, July, and August when we come through that. But when I look at my New Testament, I see Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. I know that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John introduce me to the first coming of Christ. I understand that. But Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John also set up now a historical perspective of what's going on.

Then when we go through Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we find the next book will be the Book of Acts. The Book of Acts is really important. For those of you that are in Bible Institute, you understand that because we went through the Book of Acts. Basically, you're going to find that when you're coming from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John into the Book of Acts, you're going from the Old Testament to the New Testament. You're making basically a transition from the Old Testament up into coming into the New Testament. Basically, you're coming from God dealing with the nation of Israel to God's now opening up and beginning to deal with the church.

That's what the Book of Acts does for you. The Book of Acts shows you in chapter 1 and 2 the church being born. In chapter 11, you find them first called Christians. You find the church being formed. And then in chapter 12 through chapter 28, you find the church now is established. That's basically what it does.

Then the next book you have is the book that we're studying right now: the Book of Romans. Romans does something that no other book in the Bible does. Now maybe you can basically see how the structure is important.

- Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John give you a historical perspective coming from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from the Jew to the Gentile.
- Acts is the transitional book that shows you the birth of the church, the church being formulated, and then the church being established.
- The next book is the Book of Romans. In the Book of Romans, what he does in that book is now that the church has been established, now that the church has been formed, he now shows you and tells you what the church is to believe.

The great doctrines of the Bible, the foundation of what you and I believe as New Testament Christians, the very foundation that this church is built on, is found in the Book of Romans. That's why it's so important.

After that, we find what Paul does. From that point on, once you see the historical perspective, once you see the Book of Acts and how the church gets its birth, then you see Romans, the church gets its doctrine. Then what Paul does is the rest of the books he writes, he writes to

churches and he writes to individuals. He basically talks to the churches and shows them and keeps them accountable for what he has given them. But then he gives some great insight as he addresses the individual Christians like Timothy and Titus and Philemon, and how important those books are. That's basically how your New Testament breaks down.

Then, of course, after that, you have what we call the general epistles. Those are the books that are not written directly to the church but are written in the concept that gives you information and ideas and concepts on what God is doing. So the whole New Testament is built around basically the Book of Romans. You'll find that Romans, as you come through it, is placed after the Gospels and the Book of Acts but before he writes directly to the churches. The reason for that, as we've already said, is because Romans lays out for us what the New Testament church is to believe and sets the doctrine for our teaching. This is why it's such an absolutely crucial book when it comes to the Bible.

I want to tell you something, I'm not speaking to you guys because you're all here learning. But when I look out in the world today and I see what men are teaching and the guys who are held up as some kind of religious leaders or pastors or teachers or ministers or whatever, I want to tell you something. I wouldn't trust anybody when it comes to teaching the Bible if he didn't understand the Book of Acts inside and out and upside down and backwards. That's how crucial the Book of Acts is. You may know some things about the Bible, but you're not going to know the Bible and understand the perspective that you and I should have of the Bible, and you'll see this as we go through this today, until you realize and understand the importance of the Book of Romans in your life. Your qualification as a pastor, as a teacher, as a minister, rises and falls in what you understand about the Book of Romans. It's that crucial.

III. The Four Sections of Romans

These four breakdowns make it real easy. Again, I want to say this. People get intimidated by the Bible. A lot of you who have just been at this now for a short period of time, you want to learn the Bible, you look at that book. That book has 31,171 verses in it. It has 1,189 chapters in it. It's intimidating to look at it. 66 books. And yet, when you look at that, I mean, you can look at 2 Chronicles or 1 Samuel or 1 Kings, and you get into Matthew and John and then into Romans and then into Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians and the Book of Revelation. Man, you look at that and it overwhelms you with all the material that you feel like that you've got to learn.

Yet, your job and my job as a child of God is to master that Bible. Well, let me say it this way: you'll never master it, but your job and my job is to let it master you. Your job and my job is to come to the place where you have what I call a working knowledge of the Bible. What does that mean? It means that you have the ability to use the Bible that God gave you. You have the ability to not be intimidated by the books or the Bible itself. You have the ability, basically, to go anywhere in the Bible that you meet anybody, anytime, any place, anywhere that has a question about the Bible. That you have the ability to open up your Bible and explain to them in the right context, in the right frame of reference in time, and show them the Bible as it relates to them individually and their own personal life through what they're struggling with or what they're going through in their life or their marriage or whatever. At the same time, be able to lay that

Bible out and showing them the overall picture of God. The way you do that is to understand how the Bible breaks itself down. The way that you do that is you understand the single greatest book that is the reason why you and I, in this church, believe what we believe and stand on what we stand on. Every doctrine we teach, as far as in your life and my life and what we believe, can go back, and will go back to the Book of Romans.

1. Section One: The Historical Section (Romans 1-5) This sets our perspective on God dealing with Gentiles and Jews. God shows you in this chapter, from a historical perspective, He shows you and tells you that in the Old Testament before the law, God dealt with the Gentiles on the basis of their conscience. Then He goes on and talks about in chapter 2, that now that we're dealing with the Jews under the law, God dealt with them by the law. The Gentiles had no law, so God dealt with them on their conscience. But when the nation of Israel came into being, God gave them a law. He's showing you the difference between the way Gentiles think and the way Jews think. Then He goes on in that section to show you that now because we are in the New Testament, now because the New Testament has come into being, and Christ now has died on the cross, that all that has changed. This is the introduction of Romans, really the first section. It's from a historical perspective, showing us that God dealt with the Gentiles one way, dealt with the Jews under the law another way, and now that we're in the church age, God is going to deal with us differently again. No longer is it going to be simply based on conscience. No longer is this going to be based on the law. Now what has happened, one has showed up who has fulfilled the law, the Lord Jesus Christ, who died on the cross, and now salvation and entrance into God's kingdom, and God's salvation is not based just solely on God dealing with a man in His conscience, or dealing with a man under the law. Now it goes back to the cross. Now there's a point of reference in time that every man and every woman in the church age will look back to. And that is the death of your Savior on the cross. That's what Romans chapter 1 in the first section tries to accomplish.
2. Section Two: The Doctrinal Section (Romans 6-8) We just finished the second section, by the way. This section is the great doctrinal chapters. I call these the great death chapters. Because it deals with, now that you and I are a Christian, what does all that mean in respect to the death of Christ on the cross, like we talked about? Here's where the real doctrine of what you and I believe as a church comes into play. Here's where you find the great terms that talks about the law of the spirit of life, the law of sin and death, and how the two go against each other. We find here the passage that talks about the baptism of Jesus' death, which, by the way, has nothing to do with water, and everything to do with understanding how the Bible lays itself out. We find here in Romans 7:1-3 the great chapter that talks about the flesh and the soul. We begin to see the great teachings of what really happened in your life, what really transpired the day you trusted Christ as your own personal Savior. There's a lot of Christians out there today. I guess they're Christians. There's a lot of people out there that claim to be Christians. If you would pin them down and ask them what really changed about them, the moment, the inkling, the second that they got saved, they couldn't tell you. You see, they've learned a terminology. They'd say, "Oh, well, I got saved." And I'd say that's good, but what changed about you? "Well, I got born again." Well, that's wonderful. But what really transpired inside your body the instant you trusted Christ as your own person? "Oh, I know. I got washed in the blood of Christ." Really? Did He spray paint you or big paintbrush? What

happened? You see, the difference of knowing things about the Bible and knowing the Bible. I know a lot of you are young Christians and you're trying to learn, and I'm with you. But in time, if you don't already know it, in time, you need to understand exactly what transpired between your body and your soul the instant you trusted Christ as your own personal Savior, because that's crucial in understanding how the Book of Romans and Christianity goes together. We saw these great chapters. If you ever want to expose a wannabe, if you ever want to, if you ever get somebody who pretends they want to know the Bible, if you ever want to expose them for what they are, just take, I mean, they may know lots of things about the Bible, be able to talk about the tribulation and all that and talk about the millennium and talk about all of the great things that everybody knows about, just drop them off in Romans chapters 6, 7, and 8, and turn them loose. And watch what a fool they'll make out of themselves trying to explain the baptism of Jesus' death. Explain why every chapter talks about death in some way, and it has nothing to do with dead and dying as you and I know it. Ask them the great concepts of being buried with Him in baptism, and it's not even talking about water. Ask them to explain how you reckon yourself to be dead based on Christ's death on the cross. You see, that's where Bible Christianity hits the road. That's where it really is. That's where you and I have to understand the basic things that happened in our lives.

3. Section Three: The Prophetic Section (Romans 9-11) This is the section we're going to start today. This is called the prophetic section. Basically, and we're going to come back to this in a moment, so we're not going to spend a lot of time on it today. Basically, this deals with God's future plans for the nation of Israel and how it fits into your life and to my life.
4. Section Four: The Practical Section (Romans 12-15) This is a great set of chapters. Romans 12, 13, 14, 15. In reality, these great practical chapters teach you and I how to apply what we've already learned in Romans to our everyday life in a practical way. It's one thing to study the Bible. I know a lot of people who study the Bible. It's something else to believe the Bible. I know a lot of people who claim to believe the Bible. It's something else to be able to teach the Bible. I know a lot of people that are good teachers. There's something else to be able to preach the Bible. I know men that are good preachers. But the real key to the Bible is none of that. That's all important. But the most important thing about the Bible in your life and my life is: do you take all that you know and apply it into your everyday life in a practical way? That's the key. What good is it if I can tell you all about the Bible and what it will do if it doesn't work for me? That's, I think, the downfall of Bible Christianity today. We're good at telling people what God will do for them. But we're short on telling people what God did for us. I think that's the real issue today that we have to get back to. How the Bible works for you in everyday life. How the Bible takes, you can take the principles and the promises of the Bible, which are defined throughout here and put them into your life. This great section talks about how you and I should have our perspective on our government. If there's ever a time that the government is completely upside down and out of control, it's the time that we live in today. But the Bible tells you how to deal with a government no matter where it's at in time. These great chapters talk about how you and I get along with unsaved people. How we are to deal and conduct ourselves with unsaved people. It also talks about saved people. It talks about the job of a New Testament Christian. If you're saved this morning and you're on your way to heaven, and you're working at building God into your

life, there's a specific job that God has for you as a Christian in relationship to other people. This is what that great practical chapter does. It also shows you how to get the help you need when you go through struggles in life. We all struggle. We all go through things in life. One of the greatest verses in this chapter, a verse that I never, never, never get far away from and always keep in the back of my mind if not in the front of my mind, and I think it's probably the single greatest chapter that sums up what you and I ought to be doing in our relationship with Christ in this thing called ministry, it's simply this: Romans 15:1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. What does that mean? "Ye that are strong," somebody who understands the Bible, somebody that has a practical handle on the Bible, somebody who realizes the Bible for what it is, and it's worked in their life. "Ought to bear the infirmity of the weak." What does that mean? Infirmity is a word we get a word, infirmity from. Inflammable. Those are all the root words. Something that is combustible, something that is a problem. An infirmity is something that we struggle with. It may be something spiritually, it may be something physically. It may be a bad marriage, it may be a problem with your children, it may be health issues. Paul had an infirmity that he called his thorn in the flesh. That wasn't a spiritual thing. From everything in the Bible it indicates it was a physical thing. Infirmities can be physical. They can be also spiritual. You may find yourself here this morning with physical problems. You may find yourself here this morning with spiritual problems. The job of this church, the job of every man and woman in this church that claims to be a Christian and claims to have a relationship with God and the Word of God, our job is one-fold. If you're strong, your job and my job is to bear the infirmities of the weak. What does that mean? You help them along. They don't go through what they go through by themselves. Most churches, most pastors, when somebody, you know, the pastors have a set of standards and a code that they want everybody to live by. What I do too, I think that if you're a Christian, you ought to act different than the world, you ought to not hang out with the world and you ought to not look like the world, smell like the world and do what the world does. I believe that. But if you have a spiritual problem or some kind of infirmity, most churches will, the pastor or the people in the church are up here on the top level and all these stairs going down to the bottom rung down here where your problem is, their idea of helping you is standing up on top and yelling at you to get up where they're at. Well, who doesn't want to get up where a strong Christian's at? I've never met a person that was struggling in something that said, "Would you like to be a strong Christian?" "Oh no, I just really like being miserable in life." Everybody wants to get through their infirmity. But the only way you can help somebody in your strength through their infirmity, it's not to stand at the top of the stairs and go down and yell at them to get up there. You have to go down those stairs and put your arm around them and walk them up one step at a time. One step at a time. I watch some of you grasp the concept of somebody that's struggling. The Bible says in that verse that "ye that are strong, ought to bear the infirmity of the weak," and here's the best part of that last verse, "and not to please ourselves." I think that's another problem we have in Christianity. We're in it for us. Now, you may have a job and you may work, and that work and that job you may do may be for you because you've got to make a living. I understand that. You may go to school and you may get an education because you want a better job, and that's for you. I understand that. But there's one thing that you get into that is

not never to be for you, and that's Bible Christianity. Oh, it's to you in a sense that you grow, but you don't keep it to you once you're strong, and you give it back out to other people that need it. You're not here to please yourself this morning. I'm not here to please Bob Alexander this morning. I'm not here to please anybody other than God and help anybody who's struggling with whatever circumstance they're in. That's the job of ye that are strong.

IV. God's Plan for Israel and the Church

We're going to talk about section three today. What I'm about to give you in this section is what God wants this church and every church to know and understand about God's dealing with the nation of Israel. We live in very interesting times today, and these chapters, Romans 9, 10, and 11, I want you to get some of this down. I'll tell you particularly what I want you to get down, especially those of you who are coming to our class on the Bible, because what I'm going to do in that time when we get together is I'm basically going to take the whole Bible. We talked about Romans breaking down into four sections. I'm going to show you how the Bible breaks down into about nine sections, and we're going to take it one section at a time, and when we're done with it, you're going to completely understand how the structure works. You'll never look at the Bible again and say, "Oh, I'm intimidated by that," "Oh, I'm overwhelmed by that." If you do your homework and you do what I tell you to do, and I'm going to have people there who are already committed to come that have been through it before and probably understand it as good as I do, I'm going to have people there that will help you throughout the month because you're going to have some homework you're going to have to do. And yes, there will be a test every time we come back. It won't be a killer test, but you've got to be accountable for this information. You can't do with this like so many of God's people do with everything in Christianity. You get all pumped up and excited about it, and then you go, and then by the time you get three or four weeks into it, something else has grabbed your attention now. There's something else out here that's brighter and shinier and fluffier, and that's where you're going. You'll never learn the Bible that way. You've got to come to the point where you realize that there is a process to break that Bible down. That Bible is not a hard book. Where did we ever get the idea that God wrote a Bible that was so unapproachable for man and so hard that man could never figure it out, yet someday God is going to judge you by everything that's in that Bible? The Bible's not hard. It's just, which way are you going to St. Louis this afternoon? You're going east or you're going west. Which way are you going to learn the Bible? The easy way that God has designed for you? Or are you going to take the tough route and go through Canton, China?

The importance of this doctrine. The blessings and the curses of God not only fall on nations but individuals who have the wrong concept of the nation of Israel. I can't overemphasize that enough. History, anybody who knows history, knows history is filled with the rubble of nations who took a stand against the people of God. This is why in the Book of Romans that deals with everything that you and I are to believe, this is why he took such three chapters to make sure that you and I didn't fall into that category.

In fact, take your Bibles and turn to Romans chapter 11. I want to show you the verse that these three chapters are really built around. This is really going to be the base text as we come through

this. Everything that we're going to study in chapter 9, 10, and 11 are going to come back and be built around this verse right here. This is the importance of it.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you and praise you today for the Lord Jesus. We love you. We thank you, Father, for the time that we've set aside to study your word. Thank you for those that have come out today to be here. We pray now, Father, that your blessings upon this time and this day and everything that we do and everything that we say will give you the honor and the glory and the praise today. And we'll thank you in Jesus name for a sake we ask it. Amen.

Now look at Romans chapter 11, verse 25. Here's your key verse. You want to mark this in your Bible in red, blue, green and yellow, every way you can. If you can put neon lights on it and find a light socket, put it on.

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 fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

I told you Thursday night when we got into this, and we got into some of this, become some of the questions that were asked, I explained to you what the fullness of the Gentiles are and what that concept means and how that triggers the rapture of the church and everything takes place from there. But the thing that I want you to see here in verse 25 is what Paul says this. He's speaking to Christians. Notice "brethren." And here's what he says. He don't want us to be ignorant of this mystery.

I don't know what you know about the Bible or how much you know about it, but let me tell you this. In your Bible, in the New Testament, there are seven things that you and I as the children of God are told not to be ignorant of. Most of you probably have all seven of those. You've been around here any length of time. But there are seven things. Paul tells you six times, and then Peter tells you one time. Seven things that that Bible says that you and I as a New Testament born-again, saved child of God is not to be ignorant of. I guarantee you those seven things that we are not to be ignorant of are exactly what God's people are ignorant of today.

Then he says, "ignorant of this mystery." There are seven mysteries in your Bible given to the church. We're told in 1 Corinthians chapter 4 that we are to be stewards of these mysteries if you're a pastor. We've laid them out many, many times. You can go into our tape library back there. We have books on it back there on the seven mysteries. There are seven mysteries that are given to the church. When I say they're given to the church, they're given to the true church. They're given to the church that has the right Bible, that has the right spirit, that has the right truth. God reveals himself through those seven mysteries and they're the things that the average Christian and the world has no idea of today.

You know why this country is in the mess that it's in? You know why this country is moving so rapidly toward the man of sin and all the things that's going to take place? You know why you can just about close your eyes and open up your Bible and put your finger down and any verse you find is probably going to show you we're in trouble and God's judgment is about to fall in this country? You know how you know that? You know that because of the truths of the Word of

God that God has laid out that is no, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out where we're at today because God's people have lost sight of the mysteries and they are ignorant of the very things that God says we're not to be ignorant of. And one of them is God dealing with the nation of Israel. This has caused a lot of problems today.

What I'm about to give you in this section is what God wants this church, wants you as a Christian to know and understand about the nation of Israel. He wrote it down in three chapters, Romans 9, 10, and 11.

Genesis 12:3 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.

God makes one of the first statements about the nation of Israel, even before the nation of Israel has been formulated. He says, "I'll bless those that bless thee and I'll curse those that curse thee." God says there's going to be something special about the nation of Israel and they're going to be my people. My blessings go along with your attitude about the nation of Israel. That's why Romans chapter 11, verse 25, Paul wanted to make sure that the church understood their perspective of the nation of Israel because the blessings or the cursings of God depend on our attitude about the nation of Israel as a nation and as an individual. We'll talk about that more as we get on. As I said, history bears this great truth out if you know anything about history at all.

V. Israel and the Church: Two People Groups

Understanding this concept brings us back to understanding the background of God and the nation of Israel. Here's the best way. I'm going to take a really hairy, deep doctrine and I'm going to make it so easy today that anybody here can grasp it. Believe me, if I can get it, you can get it. When you want to understand, I'm going to break your Bible down into two segments. This is why you want to remember this when we come back in June.

You look at your Bible and your Bible, it basically breaks down around two concepts. It breaks around the nation of Israel and the church. That's why if you haven't figured it out yet, you got an Old Testament and you got a New Testament. The Old Testament is written around who? The nation of Israel. The New Testament is written around who? The church. See, it's that simple. There you got your Bible divided for you right there. Now we're going to work that in June and we're going to learn this whole concept.

I want you to begin to see that the two main characters in your Bible that represent righteousness are God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Those are your two main characters that represent righteousness. It's no accident that within the Old Testament and the New Testament, God has two people groups. He has the nation of Israel, which we'll call the Jew. Then He has in the New Testament the church. We know it as the bride of Christ. That's you and I if you're saved here this morning.

Can you begin to see how that God has two identities? He's God the Father and then He also is the Lord Jesus Christ. As two separate identities, even though He's one, even though as two separate identities, He has two people groups. The nation of Israel is to God what the church is to

Jesus Christ. You know what the Bible says you and I are in the New Testament in the book of 2 Corinthians and it talks about this in the book of Revelation and it talks about this in the book of Ephesians. It says that if you're here this morning and you're saved, male or female, if you're here this morning and you're saved, someday you and I are going to be married to Jesus Christ. There's an event, we're going to learn it in June, there's an event called the marriage of the Lamb. Who's the Lamb? Christ. Who's He married? He marries a bride. You know who that bride is? It's you and me, the church. It's the true church.

In that concept, the Bible teaches that Christ has a bride. We saw it in the Song of Solomon when we studied on New Year's Eve, how that Christ is looking at the bride. Jared sings the song and when the camel train comes in out of Genesis chapter 32, 33 someplace back there in Genesis, how that Isaac goes, Eleazar goes out to find a bride for Isaac and the last frame of that song or the last puts it all into perspective because up to this point the song's been about Eleazar going out and looking for a bride for Isaac and that bride being Rebecca and bringing them back and they're living happily ever after. That's the story in the Bible. But all the spiritual application goes a little bit beyond that because in the last segment of that song it talks about the blessed Holy Spirit from the Father God above going out and finding a bride for His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. You know what that bride is? It's you. It's you. It's you. It's everybody in here that's been saved. Someday when Jesus Christ comes back, we're going to be married to Him spiritually. This is why in Ephesians chapter 5 it talks about husbands love your wives, does Christ love the church? It talks about, you know what, concerning marriage on earth. This is a great mystery but I speak concerning who? Christ and the church. Someday we're going to be married.

Romans 1:19-20 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

You ever remember when Jesus was trying to explain something and people are standing around and saying, "Well, I don't understand it." He'd say to this, he'd say, "Well, do you understand this?" And he'd use an example of something that everybody understood. Remember that? And then he'd say, "Okay, this is like this." That's one of the greatest tools you'll ever find in teaching or preaching. I use that all the time because it illustrates the people put it down on a level where they can grasp it. That's what Jesus did.

When you want to understand the concept of what's going to take place out in eternity, the day you and I are married to Christ, the day you and I become one with Him, He gave you an earthly concept of marriage and everything. I mean, I don't know who put the idea of wedding ceremonies together, but it's all the picture. Traditionally, and I know weddings are gone today. Years ago when you got married, it was pomp and circumstance. Today, it's just snap, crackle and pop. There's nothing really to it. But back when, when you got married, it was a cardinal sin for the bride and the bridegroom to see each other the day of that marriage. How many remember that? Now it doesn't matter, they say. But that's just fine. I don't care. But the bottom line is, back when you got married, back when, it was just unheard of. I mean, I'd see brides would go, "Oh,

he's here, he's here. Hide, hide, don't let him see me. Don't let him see me." What's the point? He's seen you for the last 15 years. Why is that? She don't know why. I know why. You know what it represents? Because it represents right now being separated from Christ.

Do you ever notice at the wedding? You ever notice at the wedding, the guy sits down, stands, in a traditional wedding. Now, I know they got all kinds. The guys parachuted, the one got killed, but that's okay. But in a traditional wedding, the groom stands down here, and the bride comes down to him. You ever notice that he doesn't walk back to her? She comes to him. You know why? Because that represents the rapture of the church when the bride, you and me, is going to come to him. And she's in white, represents the purity. Because look at the chart. We've already been to the judgment seat of Christ. We've been purged without spot, without wrinkle. We got the wedding garment on, and now we're going to meet our Isaac, our bridegroom, and then on our eternal honeymoon.

Christ has the church. It's called a bride. Now in the Old Testament, God the Father, he has a wife. That's Israel. You ever read the book of Hosea, the Mexican prophet? You ever read the book of Hosea? Hosea is told to take a wife of harlots. I don't know if you know that or not, but that's a violation of the Old Testament law. God just told one of his prophets to violate the law because it was a violation of the Old Testament Mosaic law to do that. But God is doing it for a purpose of illustration because Israel is violating the law all over the place and she has committed harlotry against God, her husband. So God tells his prophet to take a wife of harlots and then go down through that chapter and look at it sometime in Hosea chapter 2 verse 2. Or go to Malachi chapter 2 verse 14, or go to Ezekiel chapter 16 verse 32, or Isaiah 50 verse 1, or Isaiah 54 verse 1. And it talks about Israel is likened to God's wife. What Israel has done now, she has stepped out on her husband, God, and she's hanging out now with all the other Baal-worshipping religions. What does God do? God gives her a bill of divorcement.

This is stuff you've got to learn. God's plan for eternity is found around these two groups. Christ is going to get his bride and we're going to live, as every happy story ends, happily ever after. Don't you know that everything in life is built around the Bible? When you were a little kid growing up, who didn't like Snow White? You mean like pure? Well, what happened? A wicked witch gave her a poison piece of what? Fruit? And then she died? And she stayed dead until someday her prince would come? And he walks in there and she's dead laying on the thing there? What did he do? He leaned over and he kissed her on the mouth. Hard. He kissed her. What happened when he kissed her? She woke up. You know there was a day that you were without sin? And then one day sin revived and you died because somebody ate a forbidden fruit a long time ago? And you were dead! You were dead! Stone cold dead. And one day my prince came and he kissed my soul with a word of God. And I became alive, and you know what? We're going to get married someday and we're going to do what? Live happily ever after. Every story in the Bible. Mary had a little lamb, and its fleece was white as snow. You bet it did. You bet she did. She had a little lamb, and its fleece was white as snow because it was the sinless son of God. They all fit that way. They all fit that way.

I mean, you ever watch Boris Karloff in the great 1934-35 thriller Frankenstein? What's Frankenstein? You know what it is. A man creates life. And at the end of the movie, the life that

he created kills the man that created him. Whoa! You mean like God creating man? And then at the end, the creation killing the creator? You ever watch Tarzan? A man and a woman swinging through the jungle, living like they could. Got every nice big tree houses, and I mean everywhere they want to go. Ride Simba, go over here and do this. Everything's perfect. Where's that come from?

Christ, he has the church. God has his wife, Israel. What happened is this. God called the nation of Israel out. And when God called the nation of Israel out, he's established them as his people. And he said, "You know what? You're my wife, and anybody that doesn't take care of you, I'm going to take care of them. I'm going to bless those that bless you, and I'm going to curse those that curse you." Now you are my people. I'm going to discriminate, and I'm going to give you blessings and you things and you privileges that nobody else gets because you're my wife. What happened? What happened was that the other gods came in. Baal worship came in. You know why God told the nation of Israel not to marry people outside their race? It wasn't because God is a racist in the sense of black and white or yellow or purple, whatever color you are. It was in the sense that that nation was to stay pure, and he knew that all the other Gentile nations were amalgamated into the filth and the ungodliness that was going on in the world. Every time they did, every time their young men married their young gals and their young gals married their young men, they brought their gods in with them. And they destroyed Israel's relationship with God. So what did God do? God under the old law of Moses gave her a bill of divorce. She said, "I'm done with you for now."

This is why Paul wrote Romans 9, 10, and 11. This is why he says you don't get wise in your own conceits. This is why you and I as the church need to understand about the nation of Israel that blindness in part has happened to the nation of Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles come in and then the next verse says, "and then all Israel shall be saved." You know why? Because God has put them off, but God's going to restore them and bring them back. You got to know that. God called out his wife, took care of her, loved her, gave her everything she wanted, and then she'd get him wrong. And God said, "Come on." He gave her 500 years to get it right. Finally he said, "You know what? You're just going to have to learn the hard way. So you go do your deal, and while you're out there doing your deal, I'm going to get a bride for my son." And then the New Testament starts and he went to the Gentiles. That's where you and I got in.

Any moment, any moment. Rapture's going to take place. And I'm getting out of here. The moment I get out of here, God says, "All right, I got Bob. Forget the rest of them." And you ought to be saying, "He got Ralph, he got Tom, he got Jane, he got Mary. Forget Bob. He got me." We're out of here. And now God says, "My son's got his bride, but I still don't have my wife." So what happens then is God takes Israel, puts them through the most horrendous time on planet earth called the Tribulation Period. It's during that period of time that Israel, just like when you and I get away from God, and God has to take all the blessings out of our life. You know, you start out with God one day with a Bible in your hand, and the next day it's a beer and a cigarette, and God's all gone again. And then what does God do? God takes away all the blessings that he gave you. I think the old expression is that I even heard growing up, God has to sometimes put us down so far we can't look anywhere but up. That's what he does with Israel.

And in that seven year Tribulation Period, Israel says, "Boy, we screwed up. Big time." And God says, "Yeah, you're right, but there's a way out." "Okay, I want out." "Okay, let's go." At the end when he comes back, takes Israel out. It's incredible. It's incredible.

You see, Romans 9, 10, 11, represent that. You got to get this. Put this someplace in Chapter 9, 10, or 11.

- Romans 9: He wants us to understand how blindness in part has happened to Israel. He wants us to understand so we don't become wise on our own conceits, that we don't think God is finished with Israel because it looks like he is. But we know our Bible, we know that he's not because God has a wife and Christ has a bride. Right now, God is focused on getting a bride into his Christ. As soon as that takes place, he's going to go back to getting his wife back. This is what Paul wants us to know.
- Romans 10: He's going to show us temporarily how that it goes to the Gentiles. When you and I win somebody to Christ and we're going to sit down with an open Bible and bring them through, where do we go? Romans 10. Romans 10 is the greatest chapter in the Bible on winning somebody to Christ. You know why? Because that chapter in the whole scheme of things in the book of Romans is when God now has put away Israel temporarily and turned his attention to the Gentiles.
- Romans 11: God goes back and restores the nation of Israel.

You see that thing? 9, 10, and 11. 9, they get screwed up. 10, it goes to you and me. 11, they get back in. You want to put that in your Bible? That's exactly what you've got. It's those three chapters show us that exactly what God is doing.

When it comes to Israel, there's a word we need to understand, and it's the word covenant. I know you hear a lot of non-biblical things today. Let me just straighten you out on something. You and I as the church have no covenants. We don't as Christians have a covenant with God. The covenant in the Bible, you never find Paul using that term except one time in Galatians I do think, and he's talking about the Judaizers that have killed him and screwed up the guy and tried to put him back under the covenant. You're not under a covenant. I'm under the blood. That's not a covenant. God made a covenant with Israel all the way back in the early part of Genesis, chapter 12, 13 and 14. That's where God made his covenant with Israel. That covenant was given to them because of the fact that God had chosen them. But because they went to unbelief, because they rejected God and did their own thing and turned their back on God. God temporarily has taken that covenant away from them, but he's not broken that covenant to them. You'll find in Hebrews chapter 8 along with Jeremiah chapter 31, 31 and Isaiah chapter 2 verse 18, you'll find that God will tell you right on uncertain terms that that covenant, a new covenant is coming back right after the church goes out. God's got a new covenant for them. He hasn't forsaken them. He hasn't forsaken them at all.

But you see, this is where it talks about us not becoming wise in our own conceits because man who doesn't understand the Bible, man who doesn't understand the book of Romans, man who doesn't understand the issue of God's wife and the bride of Christ, he doesn't understand that. He sees God finish with Israel, so he thinks that God finished with Israel and he's taking their place.

And boy, that's a bad place to be in. That's what Paul talked about wise in our own conceits. "Blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles come in and then all Israel shall be saved," the Bible says. See, it's not hard. It really isn't.

VI. The Devil's Hatred of Israel

I've got to show you another part of the puzzle here. Turn back to Revelation chapter 12, and this is important. You need to see this. Now we're going to start to bring it up where you and I live today. This is where it gets good.

Revelation 12:1-5 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

Now let me break this down for you very simply. This verse one here, this woman clothed with the sun, moon under her feet and twelve stars, that's defined for you. You don't have to worry, you know most people in the book of Revelation say, "Oh that means some, it means this, it means that, the woman's Mary or this or that," no, no, no, no. Go back to Genesis chapter 37:9-10. This thing is defined for you back there. The woman is Israel and the twelve stars are the twelve tribes. The great red dragon down in the next verse there in verse 7, the great red dragon, it tells you he's Satan. This is the picture of Satan persecuting the woman, Israel. Why? Because the woman brought forth a man child, that's Christ. Notice it says it was caught up to his throne. You notice there where it says in the great dragon tried to devour that child as soon as it was born. You see that part right there? That's Herod. He was born, Herod had all the babies killed from what, two years old down to three years old down? That's what it's making a reference to. But this child, this man child, no, no, he didn't get him and someday he's going to be caught up to the throne in heaven. But this is why the devil hates Israel.

How do I put this in terms to make you grasp it in an easy way? I'll just tell you a nice little story and it'll work that way. You know one time, a long time ago Genesis chapter 1:1, and most of you know this, some of you don't. You know the devil wasn't always the devil. There was a time in history of the Bible where he was called Lucifer. You'll find this in Ezekiel chapter 28 and Isaiah chapter 14. You'll find that there was a time when he wasn't the devil, he was Lucifer. And some way, some shape, some form, he would have charge of everything that God did. And he had a throne. And that throne obviously from those passages was on earth. And God said, "You take care of everything. You watch over everything." You know what the Bible says that Lucifer at that point, he wasn't satisfied with that. He said in his heart, pride lifted up who he was. The number one problem that you and I have in life in our sin world is the same number one problem he had. It was pride. And he lifted him up. Then he said, "Well you know what? I can be like

God." And so he led a revolt. The Bible tells you right there that his tail drew a third of the stars, stars in the Bible are angels. A third of the angels decided to go with him.

Now you want your Bible real simple? That's Genesis chapter 1:1 and 1:2. You want your Bible real simple from that point on? Everything from Genesis 1:2 right up to Revelation chapter 22 is short and dry and simple. It's this: God moving on with his plan and the devil trying to get back what he had and what he lost. That's all it is. I know that the devil has some kind of an affinity for Jerusalem. The devil wants Jerusalem. He wants Palestine. He wanted to keep the Jews out. He wanted to get Christ killed because he knows Christ is the rightful heir and someday in the millennium Christ is going to reign on the throne in Jerusalem as king of kings and the lord of lords and that's what the devil wanted to do. He wants Jerusalem just like God says my son is going to get it. And all the Bible is a battle back and forth. God and the devil. God saying my son is going to get it. The devil is trying to figure out the way to get it. Of course he's never going to. But it makes for interesting reading. It made history pass a little quicker.

That land of Palestine once had some connection with Lucifer before he fell. Jerusalem had some kind of connection before he fell. He desperately did not want Israel to get into that land. So everything that he did, he tried to stop them. He put them into bondage with Pharaoh in Exodus so they would wipe them out. What did God do? Bring them out. While they were in there for 430 years what did he do? He ringed that promised land with all the nations, 50 million of them that were going to keep Israel out. What did God do? God says, I mean those spies went over there you know and crossed over Jordan. Pull back them bushes and looked out and said, "Whoa man," he came back there and he said, "We can't take those guys in." You know what? Some of those guys out there, some of those goers over there, they're 40 feet tall. They're like grasshoppers in their sight. God says, "You want me to be a little grasshopper?" He said, "Grasshoppers." He said, "Don't worry about that. Here's what I'll do. I'll give you guys supernatural power and one of you guys has got the strength. One of you guys has got the courage. One of you guys has got the guts to stand for my word." It's save spit. I don't want it to tell you. One of you guys who got the determination to stand for me. I'll have one of you guys put 10,000 of them to flight. Remember a couple of weeks ago we talked about David's mighty men of valor? One guy killing 900 men? One big Egyptian out there with a spear like a weaver's beam and one little guy went up and didn't have anything and the guy with the spear said, "Oh I'm going to stick you like a frog," and he went down to stick him and the guy jumped aside. Oh, took that beam and boom, boom, boom and he said, "Here comes, boom, enjoy your steak." It's the same way today. What are you afraid of? Why do you let the world intimidate you? You can have that same kind of spiritual power spiritually and take on the whole world as those guys had it physically to knock 9,000 of them out. It's fear. The devil wants the land. He wants Jerusalem. He wants the crown. He wants the crown. Christ is the real heir and the devil knew that the real heir was coming through Israel. His plan was simple. Wipe out the nation and the heir will never come. He failed in both points. He failed to wipe out the nation and the heir did come and he's coming back.

VII. Israel in Human History

Because of that, all of man's human history is built around, I told you this Thursday night, five concepts about the nation of Israel. You want to get these down. We're going to use these that Saturday morning or maybe not the first one, but we'll use them.

- The calling out of Israel
- The formulation of Israel
- The establishment of Israel
- The fall of Israel
- The restoration of the nation of Israel

You and I are living in times today where everybody on this planet is against the nation of Israel. They are surrounded now just like they were surrounded back there by the same people. The United Nations is against them. The Protestant churches are against them. The Muslims are against them. The only two nations that have halfway stood by the nation of Israel has been England who reneged on the Balfour Declaration and turned her back on them. The only one left that stands as Israel's light in the darkness is the United States of America. But I showed you Thursday night. I took you to Daniel chapter 2 and Daniel chapter 7. I showed you Thursday night how that Daniel covers the expanse of the Gentile nations and it shows you that in clear terms that America will turn against the Jew and America will be the shoehorn by which the Antichrist takes over this world.

I'm not political one way or the other. I could care less. I'm like the newspaper guy one time that wrote an article in his paper and it says, "Half the politicians of this town are crooks." Boy, he got a million emails and phone calls. They demanded he retract that statement. So the next day he did. He put in big bolder letters, "Half the politicians in this town are not crooks." That's where I'm at with it.

Don't you find it strange that when Barack Obama, excuse me, Barack Hussein Obama, when he was running for president, if you said Hussein or brought the point, the fact that he was a Muslim, you were a racist and you were clobbered by everybody. But see how convenient it is once he's president that he goes to the Muslim nations and presents himself as one of them.

If I was the president of the United States, I'd change some things. I'd change some things. I've told you this before, things that bother me. Bother me to death. Why in the world do you park in a driveway and drive in a parkway? I don't understand those things. I'm confused. But if I ever went over to the Muslims, I would just open up my old black back 66 right here. And I'd say, "Boys, I'm glad to be here today and I want to let you know that I am the president of the United States. And I just thought you'd know that we're going to set a national policy. And here's the national policy. So I wanted to come in person so you would misunderstand. I don't want to get you through anybody else but me. Here it is. Galatians chapter 4. God himself said, the land belongs to the Jew. Isaac, not Ishmael. The promises, the promises are in the Bible, not to Ishmael, to Isaac. Now I know you've taken the Koran and you've chained those promises around, but that Koran was written 1500 years after the event took place. Now I don't know how to say this. And I come here as an ambassador of peace. Because if you don't mess with us, we're going to blow you up and there's going to be pieces over here and pieces over here. But I don't

know what to do because as president of the United States, which is a Christian nation, I'm in a dilemma because I'm either going to have you mad at me and all the Muslims in the world mad at me and terrorists coming down and trying to threaten to blow us up and kill us and kidnapping people all over the world and talking about what all they're going to do. I'm either going to have to be afraid of all of that or I'm going to have to be afraid of God. Now let me think for a moment. Time's up. Based on what I know and who I know and what he just told me, you do your best. Because greater is he that's in me that's in this world. You want to take a shot at the United States of America who believed this book? Let me tell you something. When Israel believed it, there wasn't a man or a nation on this planet or how many conglomerates they got together that could ever stand before God, Israel in this book. So I'm going to go back, resign as president now and turn it over to somebody else and I'm just going to start preaching around the country what we need to do. And the Bible says what do we do with Palestine? Kick you turkeys out, put the free woman in. Thank you for being here today."

I'm telling you, that ain't going to happen. We're right on schedule. God's plan's right on schedule. My point is simply to get you this. This is why he said what he said. This is why Paul did what he did in Romans chapter 9, 10, 11. This is why he said that blindness in part that we don't become wise in our own conceit. This is why I say it all the time. Every child of God, everybody in Israel, if you're saying you ought to know where you are at today in relationship to his coming. If for no other reason, how many brides here when you got married, you were out doing something else because you forgot it was your wedding day today. I know there were some bridegrooms that do that. I never know the bride. That she said, "Oh my goodness, I'm getting married in an hour. Silly person I am. Today's my wedding day." You got it on the calendar. You got it on the walls. You got it when you look in the mirror and brush your teeth in the morning, the day's you don't forget your wedding day. That's the most important day in your life. Once you know he's committed to you, you're going to lock him up. You ain't losing that one. He says, "I will," you say, "I do," and you're done. Come on, we're in this thing. That's your day. It always amazes me how you can get so excited about that and you should. But there's no excitement about that day. I can't speak for you. I'm speaking for me. I'm excited about it. I'll tell you what, I live my whole life for it. It's all I care about. It's all I look forward to.

I'll tell you what, everybody on this planet is against the nation of Israel. The cults are, the Muslims are, the British Israelites are, the Aryan Brotherhood is, the Ku Klux Klan is, all the Protestant churches are, the Roman Catholic Church, well the Roman Catholic Church and Vatican II just forgave Israel for killing Christ about 12 years ago. Wasn't that big of them? I got news for anybody here who doesn't understand this. The Jews didn't kill Christ. The Jews had no power over anything God did. You know who killed Christ? I'll tell you who sin killed him. Your sin and my sin put him on that cross and that's why God killed him. Israel had nothing to do with it. Israel may have rejected him but my sin killed him. We get weird ideas don't we? Weird ideas.

Time frames are always important in the Bible. You ever notice them? You talked about that day. That's a particular day. The day of the Lord. That's a particular day. You talked about the day of Jesus Christ. That's a particular day. That's a different day than the day of the Lord. I'll just give it to you. The day of the Lord is always the second coming of Christ. The day of Jesus Christ is the

rapture. You ever notice how Jesus said, when he said, "Come on we'll do this, we'll do that," he always said, "My now is not yet come." He was on a time frame. On a time frame. You think I'm just saying things to be poetic in my messages when I talk to you about the last grains of sand coming through the great hourglass of God when time, hey he said, he said, he said in Romans "until the times of the Gentiles be come in." It's on a time schedule. You know what time it is? You know what time it is? We're living in a time period of the restoration of the nation of Israel. What have you been reading? What have you been doing? What have you been thinking? What has preoccupied you? This thing's been going on now for over a hundred years. Don't you know what happened in 1900? Don't you know that for what? For four thousand years Israel had no homeland? They were vagabonds, they had nowhere to go. They were kicked out of every country and they settled here and they settled here. Wherever they went they were persecuted. They were looked down on. Don't you know that all began to change and the sun began to come up around 1900 with a little guy by the name of Theodore Herzl. He wrote the first papers, talked about the Zionist movement. Zion? You mean like Mount Zion? You mean like where he's coming back into second coming? The modern day movement of Zion that got Israel to where they're at was started by that one little Jew.

Then God got involved. He took a little guy by the name of Weizmann who took some kind of stuff and made some kind of fantastic gunpowder out of it that helped England win World War I. The British were all excited. I said, "Oh man, he did a very good job with us. We had a due reward to chap for something. Don't you think so?" "What did I say?" "Yes, I think we do. I think we do." "You know what? I'm a good man, Lord Allenby. He just kicked the Arabs out of Jerusalem. You know we have Jerusalem now. I've got a great on chapel. What? Why don't we do this? Why don't we just put a proclamation out and give that land back to the Jew? We all know from the Bible anyhow it belongs to them." A guy by the name of Lord Balfour. He stood up and he said, "I say, oh man, that's a very good idea. Pip pip and all that. Cheerios. No thanks. I never drink milk on my Cheerios. But thank you anyhow." You know what they did? They put out the Balfour Declaration. 1917. You know what the Balfour Declaration said? It said that that Jew belonged back to the land. And they said, "We're going to give that land back." England now had possession of Palestine. Jerusalem. Lord Allenby had just kicked them out. Great prophecy fulfilled back there. And you know what? They decided to give it back.

Then through some time the old guy from Arabia, the old grand Mufti from Arabia came over and he said, "Hey I heard some talk about you're going to give the land back to the Jew." And they said, "Yes we are. Yes we are." He said, "Well you know what? I don't know if you've looked around here or not. But England is an island nation. And you really don't have any oil. And the oil you get comes from us. You give the land back to them and you'll never get another drop of oil for your fleet, for your nation, for all the things that you do. So think about it, okay? Think about it. Think about it." Well they had a series of what they called the White Papers. Three of them in fact. The guy that they come back for a vote. And the guy that turned the vote was the guy that we all know in history, little Winston Churchill. And because of that they reneged on the Balfour Declaration. That was about 1936, 1937. You know what happened in 1939? God said to Adolf, "I've got a job for you." Flat in London. Now boy I'll tell you what. When Herman Goering's Luftwaffe was done with England and Dunn's going to battle the Briton

down today. You know at the end of World War II, England may have won the war, but she was bankrupt. And she never recovered from that. You know why? Because the principle still stands. "I'll bless those that bless thee and I'll curse those that curse thee."

You realize that when they reneged on the Balfour Declaration and decided to get that land back, Sir John Howe, who was in British Parliament, who was a born again, saved man, stood up in Parliament with tears running down his face and read out of Amos Chapter 9. And with tears running down his face, he said, "Gentlemen, this country has made the biggest mistake it has ever made in the history of its country because today we turned our back on God's people." He was right. Now you go to history class and you learn about history and learn about that. You've got to see God in his timeframe. I look back on that and I see how that thing goes. And I've told you this before, this is not new. But when you look back at that now, when you put God in the Bible and perspective of history, you know what God did? God got the land ready for the Jew in World War I and then World War II when they went into Europe after the Balfour Declaration, he got the Jew ready for the land in 1945. And what happened in 1948? They went in and became a nation. That thing was moving, man. That thing's moving. God is not finished with a nation of Israel. God is going to restore them. This is what Paul wants us to know in Chapter 9 and Chapter 10 and Chapter 11. The blindness in part has happened to Israel.

As far as our church stand on it is simply this. We as a church, we are for Israel's national policy. We do not believe that any church, any organization, any individual has ever or will ever take the place of the nation of Israel. We believe that they're God's people. We believe that God has called them out. God has set them up. And God now has put them on the back burner. But God is going to bring them back and restore them. And God is going to put them back in the homeland. Today we believe that it's right on target that Jews are exactly where they need to be. We believe that Jesus got it right. The Jews that he went to at Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were the right Jews and everything is right there. No Gentiles from Europe or the British Isles have ever made a claim nor will they take the place of the nation of Israel. That's our position.

When it comes to the Muslim race and the Muslim religion, it's real simple. It's another satanic religion just like everything else. It has one design and one purpose and that is to stop God's people from getting back in that land. And it ain't going to happen. Now there's a lot of Gentiles that don't understand that. A lot of Gentiles today that believe that Israel is not the right Israel. In fact, we had a guy who came to this church, somebody invited about a year and a half ago. Nice guy. They're always nice guys. He came to this wrong. He came around for a little while, and he showed it. He talked about how much he enjoyed the Bible and Bible studies and Sunday morning. And then one day, and I'm kind of checking this guy out. One day, he says, "Can I make an appointment with you?" And I said, "Oh, here it comes." I said, "Absolutely." So he comes over to my house and he said, "Now here's what he believes." And this is what a lot of people believe. A while back there was a guy by the name of Ted Garner Armstrong. Maybe you never heard of him. Maybe you did. He's called British Israelism. What Ted Garner Armstrong put out was the fact that the Jews in the homeland over there are not the real Jews. That somehow, someway, some shape, some form, the Jews got down into the British Isles and down into Australia. And that's where the real Jews are. And now the real Jews are represented in

America by us. We're the real Jews. We're the real Jews. The Jews over there are not the Jews. That's where he came from. And they just have so much. And there's those little cute little kids playing with the Bible like little Maddie and Kenzie playing with little tinker toys. He comes over and he says, "I noticed when you talk about Israel," he says, "you call the Israelites and Jews in the same, like they're the same." And I said, "Yeah, that's right." He said, "Do you believe they're the same?" I said, "Absolutely." He says, "I don't believe that." That's exactly what I did. I didn't give him an answer. My look was, "What, are you stupid?" He says, "What basis do you think that a Jew and an Israelite are the same person?" I said, "It's the Bible. It's a big black book with gold pages on it. Did you ever read it?" He said, "Well, where in the Bible?" And I said, "Well, how about Paul?" Paul and I took him in the Bible and showed him one place Paul says, "I'm a Jew." Another place I took him, Paul says, "I'm an Israelite." I said, "On that basis." You see, you don't mess with the book. The book either is what it says it is and it stands by itself. You can't make up what you want to believe and survive with that book. That book crosses every T and dots every I. That book will nail you down and ferret you out and find where you're at and nail you every time.

We believe that the Jews are God's people. We believe this not because we've got on a website or some book or some pastor or some teaching or some tape. We believe it because we believe the book of Romans. We believe it because Romans is the book, the foundation of what we believe as a church is built on. It tells us when you read in Romans chapter 1, verses 9, verses 1 through 5, which we will next week when you read Paul's statement about the nation of Israel. That's my statement. Our job is to bless them, pray for them, ask God to defeat their enemies and to give them the power and for God to restore them. And oh, yeah, Lord, get me out of here so this thing can get over with. The book of Romans chapter 9, 10, 11, Paul writes those things that I might have the right perspective that I may be able to teach this church the right perspective. So when we begin to lay out Romans chapter 9, 10, 11 next week, this prophetic section, we need to remember these things.

VIII. Understanding and Applying the Bible

I've said this before. There's two problems you and I have. I have it just like you have it. Mine may be on a different level, but we all have it. You know what it is? And there are two problems that are probably the easiest problem to fix. I have people all the time and they're reading the Bible. And they're saying to themselves, "What in the world am I reading? I'm coming through here in Ezekiel 41, 42. I know it's God's word, but God, what in the world? What in the world are you saying here? What in the world? What in the world is all this about? I'm over here in Matthew. What in the world is all going on here? I'm over here in Romans. What in the world? Who are you talking to? What are you saying?" You see, the first problem we all have, and it's on different levels. But the first problem we all have when we read the Bible, we don't know where we're at. We don't know what we're looking for. I've had people say, "Well, I try to read the Bible, but I hate to say this. I hate to say this, and I don't mean this in a bad way, but boy, I get bored reading it real quick." Well, you know what? I would too. Why would you? You know what? Why don't you just read the phone book? At least it's in alphabetical order. But when you want a phone number, do you just say, "Well, there's the phone book. Okay, I'm going to find it. I know

their name's in here someplace." Two days later. "Man, I just know it's got to be in here someplace." Is that how you find a number? No. It's in alphabetical order completely. You want to find somebody whose name starts with M, go to the M's. If it's M-A, go to the M-A's. And just come down through that line, and there is a big old thick book with 10 billion names in it that you make it so easy to find a person you want just by going through a structure in an order that somebody put in that phone book that makes it easy. Well, let me ask you a question. Come on. If an unsaved man can figure out how to take 10 billion names in a phone book and make it so you can find the name in 15 seconds or less, you think of an almighty God can't write a book that we can get the same thing out of it. There's a system to the phone book. There's a system to this. Learn the system.

Your goal ought to be to come in life, and my goal to help you to get there in life is that you know where you're at in your Bible 90% and 8% of the time. Or when you read something in the Bible, you say, "How do I apply this to where I'm at today?" If I have a, if I have a, you know, I give out these little books and we have them back here and you can have one because they're good for young Christians to start out with. And you know, if you have a trouble in your life, you know, it's got like 200 problems you can have in your life. Major, you know, like, you know, depression, bitterness, anger, worry, all those things. And when you come down here in the front of it, you find, "Okay, here's worry. I'm a worry ward. I need to stop worrying." So you come down here to find worry. And you go over here and it says page 206. And then you go to 206. You know what you got? You got nine verses laid out for you on worry. You know what somebody's done? Somebody's taken the subject worry, put it there with a reference to a page and then taken the time to look up nine verses for you to give you. And every subject in the Bible can be that way. And we give those out for people to help. But you know what? At some point in your life, you ought to be able to do that for yourself. If you've been saved a year, two years and on your way and learning this thing, you ought to be there isn't a problem either you have or somebody else doesn't have that you don't need that book. You can go right down through it and figure that thing out for yourself. That's our goal. That ought to be your goal.

You have to get the context behind what you're reading. In time, I want to show you how to break down every chapter, every book. But on June 20th and July 18th and August 22nd, I'm going to take the Bible itself. We're going to start with there. Remember last week I talked with you about Ephesians chapter 4. And I told you that there were three phases of your Christian life. And when you come in here and start in this church and start to pick up your Bible, you begin to work through these phases.

Ephesians 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

He says in Ephesians chapter 4 that the job of the church is threefold. It says, first of all, perfecting the saints. Second thing it says, the work of the ministry. And the third thing it says, edifying the body of Christ.

- Perfecting the Saints: When you come in here, you have maybe issues in your life. Maybe there's things that you have to work through. Maybe you've had some bad experiences.

Maybe you just don't know anything about the Bible. Maybe you've been saved for a long time and you just never got plugged in. Anybody could ever help you. Maybe you just got saved. Maybe you're going through a rocky marriage or a bad relationship or something like that. And right now what needs to happen to you is you need to lay a foundation. You need to begin the perfecting process. It doesn't mean you're perfect. It means that every day in your life you begin to bring things into focus. You begin to look at the circumstances one over time and get the principles applied to them. You begin to take the things and the issues in your life and deal with them, work through them. And you perfect yourself through the issues in your life as you take the principles and apply them to your life. That's what we're here for. I'll help you. There's a hundred people here that will help you. That's our job.

- **The Work of the Ministry:** There's a goal of that. And it takes you, perfecting the saints, takes you into the next phase for the work of the ministry. The work of the ministry is giving back to people what someone has given to you. The work of the ministry is taking what God has given to you and taking the application that you've made with them in your life and then giving them to somebody else. I look at so many of you. Now we've been here, what? Every anniversary. Sunday's coming up here in a little bit. We've been here for six years. And I remember some of you the first year and the second year that we came. And I look where you're at now, the people that you've worked with, that how I could just about put any scenario or circumstance into your care and keeping and know you know how to handle it right. Why? Because you perfected yourself. You did. You changed what needed to be changed. You fixed what needed to be fixed. You got through. And almost every one of you had some kind of issues or problems that you've dealt with. But you worked through them and you got to the place now where the work of the ministry. That's the second phase, being able to take what you've learned and apply it to your own life first and then help somebody else with it.
- **Edifying the Body of Christ:** The last part of it, the last phase for the edifying of the body of Christ. Understanding that the inner workings of a New Testament local church, that's what you need to get to. You don't have that doesn't happen overnight. You have to be around and see how things go. You have to realize that not always what's on the outside is what's really working on the inside. There's a goal here. There's a method to what we do. And everything that we do is to help people wherever they're at in life. I don't care if it's playing softball or volleyball or playing golf or whatever the point. The bottom line is, it's to reach out and that take people where they're at that are hurting and bring them up. Our job is to help not hurt. Our job is to build up, not tear down. Our job is to help people get to the place in their lives where sin has overtaken them that they can cast it off, perfect themselves, become part of the ministry and then become the most valuable part of any church. The one that edifies. We don't do each other any favor by not edifying each other.

I go back to my last verse. We started with Romans 15:1, "bearing the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves." There's a little rule I always keep in my life. It's so simple and so basic. It comes down to everything that I try to do in simple list. God first, me second. And then everything else to others. I become the last one. I said it backwards. God first, others second and me last. I'm the last one. I'm the last one. You get in right under God. You get what you need because that's the job of the church, the edifying of the body of Christ. That's why you have to

learn Romans. That's why you have to learn the Bible. That's why you have to get it to the point in life where you grasp the concepts that make that Bible come alive. That's what we're going to do as we come through the Book of Romans.