

Romans: A Study on Reformation  
Lesson 34 “Awakening”

I. Introduction and Review - We are continuing our series on **Romans** today. Our focus in this series reformation, specifically reforming our relationships.

A. The first thing we need to reform about our understanding of **Romans** it isn't just a letter about how we are justified by faith. While that's true, but only the context of the letter is human relationships and bringing together different people groups with different belief systems around the centrality of Jesus.

B. Paul wrote this letter to the church in Rome to reform it in 57 A.D. prior to his trip to Jerusalem. He wrote to deal major issues the church in Rome was having issues which related to the banishment of the Jews from Rome in the year 49 A.D.

1. When the church in Rome began it was mostly comprised of Jews who converted to Christianity. The church culture was very much in line with Judaism (keep the law of Moses, focus on circumcision, keep the feast days, etc.)

2. In 49 A.D. the Roman Emperor Claudius banished all the Jews from Rome because of their religious and political disturbances. **Acts 18:1-2**. The Jews were banished until 54 A.D. when Nero became Emperor and said they could return.

3. When the Jewish Christians were banished, the only Christians left were Gentiles (the heathen). They were now in charge in the church in Rome and the culture of the church was completely different. Modern example would be if all of the traditional people were banished from town and the church was turned over to Millennials/Gen Z who brought in a more contemporary vibe to service.

4. Each side had an aura of superiority. The Jews thought they were better because they were God's original chosen people and the Gentiles thought they were better because they were the replacement of the Jews since they rejected Jesus.

C. Last week we zoomed out to look one of the big picture narratives of **Romans** and of church history and saw that those who are bound in legalism, hypocrisy, and tradition often fight against the current move of God. In this case it was bringing gentiles into the family of God.

1. The Jews were attempting to get them to go back under the law which would have effectively shut up the open heaven they were living under.

2. The minute a person gets saved God opens heaven over their life and the more we free ourselves from legalism, hypocrisy, and tradition we will see our influence expand and effectively expand the open heaven we live under. When we chose to not rid ourselves of these things, God will reduce our influence.

II. Awakening - Today we are going to talk about how God would awaken the Jews after he put them into a deep sleep.

A. Why did God do this? Have you ever been around a grumpy 2 year old. You may love the child, but when they are exhausted they become irrational. The only solution is to put them to sleep for a time so they wake up refreshed and their heart is open to the instruction you want to give them. We are going to find that this is what God did with the Jews and what He has done to hypocritical, legalistic people throughout church history.

### B. Romans 11:7-15

1. **Verse 7** Israel has not obtained what it seeks through works, but the elect have obtained it. According to **Isaiah 45:4** Israel was God's elect to bring the Messiah through, but because they of their disobedience and not receiving Christ as a whole, God moved on to the gentiles. Establishes principle of free will.
2. **Verse 8** spirit of stupor - **katányxis**, idea of falling asleep/lethargy.
  - a. Quotes **Deuteronomy 29:4** and **Isaiah 29:10**.
  - b. The outworking of **Isaiah 29:10** is **Isaiah 29:22-24** when the people are awakened then learn doctrine.
3. **Verse 9** quotes **Psalms 69** which has seven messianic prophecies. **Psalm 69:22-23** let their eyes be darkened. **When people oppose God's plans He will darken their eyes and harden their hearts if He has to in order to bring about His purpose in the earth.**
  - a. Modern Example - John Wesley - Was a part a priest in the Anglican Church which focused on rules and not relationship. Had no personal assurance of his salvation. Did works hoping to be saved. Came to America on boat with Moravians and a storm hit. The Moravians had peace and worshipped, while Wesley fretted. Brought conviction to him. His time in America was a disaster (caught up in lawsuit, etc) because God wasn't going to bless the message he was bringing. When he came back to England, he read Martin Luther's commentary on Romans and that the just live by faith. When he read that he said, "that this heart was warmed and he felt Christ was his savior.
  - b. He immediately began to preach this message of free grace and was kicked out of the Anglican Church. Wesley then went to the fields and said all of the world was his parish. God anointed his work because he now had the right message and thousands of people came to hear his preach in the fields. This awakened many who were asleep. (By the way his meetings were wild - people falling down, trances, yelling, screaming, etc). When people really get a hold of freedom in Christ though grace is often promotes an emotional response.

4. *Verses 11-13* God then provoked the Jews to jealousy by bringing salvation to the gentiles.

a. **Acts 13:42-47, verse 45 NLT**

b. The apostle Paul reminds me of John Wesley because God pricked his heart through the stoning of Steven, but it took some time for him to come to salvation after that.

c. He then took the message of grace out and was persecuted.

5. *Verse 14-15* They key to the religious Jew or the religious Christian with a legalistic spirit to be grafted back into the move of God if for us to live so well our light shines before men so they glorify the Father. God wants the legalistic back in and big part of what does it is for them to see so much victory in our life they become jealous. Ex: All Christians revere Wesley today because he had the goods to back up his message. We must have the goods not just positionally, but we must live it.

III. Conclusion - The power of grace awakens people.

A. I want to close today, by praying 2 things.

1. That the power of grace would transform all of us who are believers to where our light would so shine before men, people would be provoked to jealousy and glorify the Father. Ex: Herbert , John Wesley

2. That God would awake the sleepers.

B. Call Up Prayer Team and Pray Closing prayer