

Romans: A Study on Reformation
Lesson 36 “God Is Better Than We Think”

- I. Introduction - We are in a series on **Romans** and I had something really awesome I planned to share today about the prophetic backdrop of **Romans 9-11** from **Isaiah 64-66**. As I prayed yesterday, I kept sensing I had the wrong message. What I had was super sophisticated and deep theologically, but it wasn't what God wanted to say today. Today, I believe the Lord wants me to share something really practical that will give you hope.
- II. Review - Paul wrote the church in Rome to **Romans** to reform the relationships between the Jewish and gentile Christians. The main issue Paul was dealing with was strife between the Jewish and Gentile home churches. They had so much strife and infighting they were turning the weapons of their warfare on one another instead of on the kingdom of darkness. (while living in the most influential city in world).

A. The main theme we've dealt in **Romans 9-11** is that God elected the Jews to bring the Messiah though hoping Jews would take this message to the gentiles.

1. Unfortunately, the Jews rejected Jesus, therefore God began to pursue the gentiles. He wanted to provoke the Jews to jealousy by pouring out blessing and favor on the gentiles. This led to a question, was God done with the Jews?
2. We've seen God was not done with the Jews. They were the cultivated olive tree that had branches broken off because of unbelief and the gentiles were the wild olive tree that was grafted in. Paul then said there would be Jews who would come to faith and they would be grafted back in again.

B. As we close out **Romans 11**, I want to show you that God is better than we think. And if He's better than we think, we need to change the way we think.

II. God Is Better Than We Think

A. **Romans 11:27-36**

1. **Verse 27-28** quotes **Isaiah 59:20-21** about the new covenant where God puts His spirit permanently in us. **Isaiah 59:20-21 AMP** The context of these verses is definitely about the Jews and possibly about the nation of Israel. Why? Paul says they were elected/chosen for the sake of the fathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob). This means the Jews hold a special place in God's heart.
2. **Verse 29** The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. God doesn't give up on us even when we give up on us. Ex: Paul's disobedience and restoration about going to Rome.
3. **Verses 30-32** God used everyone's disobedience to extend mercy to all; first the gentiles, then the Jews. Gives mercy to Jews because of mercy shown to gentiles.

4. **Verses 33-34** Paul quotes **Isaiah 40:13** and **Jeremiah 23:18** to reveal God thinks on another level. He's playing chess while everyone else is playing checkers. Who else would think of a strategy like this to reach the whole world?
5. **Verses 35-36** Paul closes this section of the letter by leading us to a place of worship and honor because of God's greatness, genius, and radical love that doesn't give up anyone. Quotes **Job 41:11**.

B. The Prophetic Picture of Peter - I want to look at a key even it Peter's life that is a metaphor for Israel. If anyone ever failed Jesus as much as Israel failed God it was Peter.

Jesus spent three years with Peter pouring his heart into him, training him, and then Peter boldly proclaimed he would die for Jesus if need be, but when the pressure was on, He denied him to a young girl.

1. The reason Peter failed Jesus is because He still lived under the Old Covenant and did not have a transformed heart yet. **Isaiah 59:20-21 AMP**.
2. Peter's bold declaration and willingness to grab a sword and cut off a soldier's was made in the flesh. He neglected Jesus's request to pray (spirit willing, but flesh is weak). From the time the law was given until the resurrection, Israel lived 2,000 years in the flesh. During the time of the judges and the kings they made bold commitments to God and failed him every time.
3. Peter's restoration **Mark 16:7** and **John 21:15-19** Jesus restored Peter to His calling of one who would feed sheep.
 - a. Do you agape (love me unconditionally) me? I phileo you (have kindness for you. Peter didn't make any bold professions.
 - b. **Verses 18-19** are a prophetic decree of what will happen in Peter's life because of the spirit. On the one hand, they aren't comforting, but on the other, with the shame Peter was dealing with, they are the most comforting words he could ever hear. You know he was wondering, am I gonna do it again? ex: Dean Smith - Michael Jordan 1982 championship.
4. **Acts 2:36-41** When the spirit pours out on the day of Pentecost, it's Peter that stands up and gives the sermon that leads 3,000 people to Jesus. Who would have thought that 50 days previously.
5. **Acts 3** after Peter and John heal a paralyzed man they are arrested them and through them in jail. They try to get Peter to stop preaching, but he won't because of the spirit (**Acts 4:17-20**). Later in the chapter, they pray and ask for more signs, wonders, boldness (the stuff that got them in trouble) and God fills them afresh with the spirit.
6. The same way God wasn't done with Peter and used him mightily, God is not done with the Jews today. While He doesn't have two brides, He is still grafting Jewish people into the body until the return of Christ. **Isaiah 66** even talks about a nation being born in one day, which happened with Israel in 1948.

III. Conclusion - God doesn't quit people. God's faithful to His promises and better than we think. This is why we need to change the way we think.

A. Pray Closing Prayer for fresh revelation of God's goodness and a fresh touch of the spirit.

B. Call Up Prayer Team