

# THE PENTECOST

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# THE PENTECOST



Death is a topic that many people avoid. They often avoid this type of discussion because it is fearful to them. However, the Bible has much to say about death and, if we follow God's directions in its pages, what it says can take our fear of death away. We will also look at the 10th and 11th chapters of the Book of Romans in this March, 2014 issue of The Pentecost. God bless you.

**Shawn Stevens**

Death marks the end of life on Earth but the beginning of life eternally, either with God in Heaven or without Him, in hell. With so much at stake, it's important to look at death from the truth of God's Word. God bless you.

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## FACING DEATH

The following poem is apparently displayed on a tombstone in Indiana:

*Pause, stranger, when you pass me by  
as you are now, so once was I  
as I am now, so you will be  
so prepare for death and follow me I*

Everyone is dying. We are born as mortal creatures. Just as sure as we entered the world, one day we will leave it, as well. Many, perhaps most people, would prefer not to think about death. However, we really do not have the luxury of never thinking about death. Life is full of jarring experiences that remind us of our appointment with the grave. Sometimes, it is the death of a friend or of a family member which causes us to search out answers on this important topic. Perhaps that is why you are reading this now. There are answers for our questions regarding death and you are doing the right thing to seek them out. The first place to look is in the Bible.

From the Bible, we learn that when God first created man there was no such thing as death on Earth. God created man to be at peace with God, Himself, and with God's world. God gave man a command:

*The LORD God commanded the man, saying,  
'From any tree of the garden you may eat  
freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of  
good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day  
that you eat from it you will surely die.'  
Genesis 2.16-17 (NASB)*

Why did God give man such a command? It was so that man could demonstrate his obedience to God, and his love for God, as a free choice. Disobedience came with the penalty of death. Sadly, man chose to disobey God and mankind has been choosing sin and death ever since.

Even though mankind has been choosing sin and death, death has been defeated by one man, the man, Jesus Christ. Jesus is more than just a man; He is the Son of God and He came to this world to save and reclaim a fallen mankind. Jesus died for our sins and

then rose from the dead and, by so doing, defeated death. Now those who will come to God, through Christ, in repentance and faith, can share in this victory and have no fear of death.

The Bible uses different words to speak of the realm of the dead. In the Old Testament, we come across the the Hebrew word "sheol." In the King James Bible, it is translated "hell" 31 times, "grave" 31 times and "pit" three times. Because of these inconsistencies, some have argued that the word should only be translated as the "grave." Now, "sheol" can be translated as the grave but I believe that it is more than just the hole dug into the earth. In the Old Testament, I believe that it was the realm of the departed spirits, both good and bad. We read that it was here that people were reunited with their ancestors (see Genesis 49.33 and 15.15).

"Sheol" is an Old Testament, Hebrew word but in the New Testament we have the Greek word "hades." They are considered to be the same place. In fact, when the Old Testament was translated into Greek, "sheol" was translated "hades." This would suggest that they have the same meaning. Consider the word "hades" in Jesus' teaching in Luke 16.23-26:

*23 And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in  
torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and  
Lazarus in his bosom.  
24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham,  
have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he  
may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool  
my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.  
25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou  
in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and  
Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now  
here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish.  
26 And besides all this, between us and you  
there is a great gulf fixed, that they that would  
pass from hence to you may not be able, and  
that none may cross over from thence to us.  
Luke 16.23-26 (ASV)*

Here, the rich man is conscious and tormented.

This brings us to the discussion on what happens to a

man or woman who does not have a personal relationship with God, through Jesus Christ? We have just read of the rich man in Jesus' parable who was taken to a place of torment. This is hell, "hades" in this passage. The word "hell" is a translation for several words in the Greek. "Tartarus" is one word translated as hell. In 2 Peter 2.4 we read; "For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;" (ASV). The word "geena" or "gehenna" is another one used to picture hell. "Gehenna" was known to the Jews as a valley outside of Jerusalem where garbage was thrown and where human sacrifices had at one time been offered. "Geena" is also translated as the "lake of fire" in Revelation 20.15; "And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire." The other Greek word that is sometimes translated as hell is "hades," which we have discussed. <sup>2</sup>

While many go to hell, there are others who go to heaven after this life.

The Bible uses the word "heaven" to mean different things; it can mean the atmosphere and even the universe. However, heaven is another place also, the abode of God. It is where God resides and, because of what Jesus has done for us, men and women can go there, too. At death, the believer enters into the presence of God and is taken to a place of rest and peace. To the Apostle Paul, being with Jesus in Heaven is better than being on Earth. Heaven is better than any resting place. Heaven is better by far. We read:

*For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better;*

*Philippians 1.21-23 (NASB)*

Death is a hard thing for many to face, but how

much harder it seems when it is the death of a child. How can God allow the death of children? God loves children and knows what is best for them. He sees life from a different perspective than from what we can see. This is because God knows the future and we only see the present and the past. If you are grieving the loss of a child, I want to, first of all, say that I can't know how much that must hurt. I can only try to imagine. If this is you, then I would offer some solace by saying, "Imagine Jesus coming to your child, taking them by the hand and saying to them, 'I want to take you away from this world of suffering to a place of happiness and rest, where we will be together forever.'" That is a wonderful privilege for them. After a season of grieving, take time to be happy for them, for their happiness now.

Friend, if you are not ready for death, I am inviting you to consider it and all of its seriousness. I am not calling you to consider your own demise only but, also, the death of another person, Jesus Christ. It is through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that you can be made ready for both life and death.

I invite you to pray a prayer like this:

*Lord, open the eyes of my heart and soul to understand Your crucifixion and the cup from which You had to drink. I want to fully understand the reason for it and what it means for me. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

It is popular today to wear a cross as a pendant on a necklace or as earrings. You may even have one on a wall in your home or have one hanging from the mirror in your car. However, in the first century, there was nothing popular or pleasant about a cross. It was understood by all to be a sign of torture and death. There is no man who has endured so great a torture, even to the point of death, as Jesus Christ, Himself. The Bible tells us; "For the Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Mark 10.45 ASV).

In the last days before His crucifixion, the Bible

records Jesus sharing a final supper with His disciples. As they gathered around a table, Jesus proceeded to break bread, hand it to them, and say; "...Take, eat; this is my body." (Matthew 26.26 KJV). This broken bread symbolized His body which would soon be broken upon the cross. He next gave thanks and shared with them a cup of wine and said; "... Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins." (Matthew 26.27-28 ASV). The drink symbolized His precious blood. The bread and drink were to be a symbol to the disciples of what was about to happen shortly. Jesus and His disciples then went to a place called the Garden of Gethsemane. There, Jesus found a spot, alone, where He prayed to God, His Father, and reflected upon what, He knew, was about to happen to Him. The Bible says that He was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death; "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground." (Luke 22.44 ASV). Soon, armed soldiers came for Him. His disciples, it appeared, were prepared to fight. One of His disciples did act violently and, with a sword, cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest. Jesus interrupted at this point. In the Gospel of John, it is said this way; "Jesus therefore said unto Peter, Put up the sword into the sheath: the cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18.11 ASV).

Jesus was taken and tried by the Jewish leaders and Pontius Pilate and, at the will of the crowds of people, a death sentence was passed upon Him. He was blindfolded, beaten, spit upon, mocked and a crown of thorns was placed on His head. Despite the agony of His wounds, He was made to walk to a place called Golgotha, while carrying His cross, or a portion of it, for a part of that distance. Nails were driven into His hands and feet and His cross, with Him upon it, was erected for all to see. In His final hours, He granted eternal life to one of the two thieves who was also being crucified alongside Him. He prayed to God, His Father, asking God to forgive even the executioners who were doing this to Him.

His very words were; "... Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. ... " (Luke 23.34 ASV). He cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up His Spirit.

Dear reader, I wonder if you understand the cup from which Jesus Christ had to drink. For, remember, in the Garden of Gethsemane when His disciples, or at least Peter, would have fought for His freedom, He stopped them from doing any more than they did with these words; "... 'Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?'" (John 18.11 NASB). The cup, which symbolizes the wrath of God, was made for us as a consequence for our many sins. Jesus drank it instead, to spare us from this fate. Remember, He could have prayed for twelve legions of angels to deliver Him. However, that would have left you and me holding the cup, leaving us without hope before the judgment throne of God.

He was despised and rejected by men. He was oppressed and afflicted. He was silent before His accusers, like a lamb before his shearers. He was cut off from the land of the living.

We read in Isaiah:

*4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*

*5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

*6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*  
*Isaiah 53.4-6 (KJV)*

Jesus' death was for each of us, for our sins. Through His crucifixion, God has made a way for us to be saved. Oh, I pray that if you don't know this forgiveness that you will open your heart and come to faith in Jesus today. God bless you.

The account of the life of Jesus Christ does not end

with His death on the cross, but it climaxes with His resurrection from the dead. Before His death, Jesus repeatedly spoke about this great miracle that would occur:

*31 And he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all the things that are written through the prophets shall be accomplished unto the Son of man.*

*32 For he shall be delivered up unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and shamefully treated, and spit upon:*

*33 and they shall scourge and kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.*

*Luke 18.31-33 (ASV)*

This and other prophecies of Christ's death found their fulfilment in the crucifixion. Jesus' body was laid in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. The opening was sealed with a large boulder. A Roman garrison was deployed to guard the tomb. The world had to wait only three days for the greatest miracle and further fulfilment of these divine prophecies. At the appointed time, the ground shook with a violent earthquake and an angel descended and moved the boulder. We read:

*1 Now late on the sabbath day, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.*

*2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it.*

*3 His appearance was as lightning, and his raiment white as snow:*

*4 and for fear of him the watchers did quake, and became as dead men.*

*5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, who hath been crucified.*

*6 He is not here; for he is risen, even as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.*

*7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples, He is*

*risen from the dead; and lo, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.*

*8 And they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring his disciples word.*

*Matthew 28.1-8 (ASV)*

The resurrection of Jesus Christ has very important meaning. It was the final proof that everything He had said was true. Because He rose from physical death to life, then ascended to heaven, it proves He has the authority to grant spiritual life to spiritually dead men and women who are in need of it. His resurrection also is held out as proof that He will judge the world. The Bible says that God “... is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.” (Acts 17.30-31 NASB).

Friend, one day, around two thousand years ago, Jesus Christ drank a very bitter cup. It was the cup of God's wrath. He did not deserve this wrath, but drank it on your behalf and on mine. He was accused falsely. He was sentenced to death. He was mocked. He was whipped and beaten. He, Himself, carried His cross, or a portion of it, part of the way to Golgotha's hill. He was nailed to it. From the cross He did not utter threats or words of hatred. Instead, He offered words of hope and forgiveness. Now, that same forgiveness is offered to you. He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The atoning sacrifice has been made for our sins. If you don't know what it is like to have your sins forgiven by God, then come to Him today. All that is needed is your response and having the atonement applied to your own sins, personally. Heaven waits, God the Father waits, and Jesus Christ waits, for you to surrender your whole life to Him and His will, and for you to repent and put faith in Him and His sacrifice. Jesus has suffered for you and for me. We committed sin and He was totally pure.

Yet He suffered, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God; He suffered that we would be brought to God for forgiveness, restoration, healing, deliverance and for a new life of following Him. It is imperative for us to realize our guilt and sin and to cry out to God for forgiveness.

Friend, if you do not know the Lord's salvation and forgiveness, then it is time for you to pray. Call out to God in your own words.

I would like to pray for your soul:

*Lord Jesus, today we have come once again to remember Your sacrifice of love and atonement for us. Lord, You did not come to this world to be served but to serve others and to give Your life a ransom for many. Your blood is precious. The shedding of Your blood at Calvary was the only sacrifice worthy and sufficient to atone for human sin. Your blood washes sin away. Lord, I pray for this reader to be free from the curse of sin, guilt and judgment. They have gone astray; we all like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to our own way and the LORD has laid on You the iniquity of us all. Lord, the sacrifice of Your life was a substitution for ours. We transgressed, yet You were wounded. We committed iniquity, yet You were bruised. You were chastised for our peace. I pray for this soul, that they would know the peace of having their sins taken away, that they would know the peace of pardon. Lord, You are a very forgiving God. As they call out to You in surrender and ask for Your forgiveness, be merciful to their unrighteousness and remember their lawless deeds no more. Lord, You not only died, You rose again and conquered death. You won the victory over sin, death and evil and You are triumphant. As this one cries out to You, committing to repent of their self-rule and give their life to follow You, let faith rise up in them. Let this be the moment of faith and belief that You call for. Let this be the moment that You establish a relationship with them. May they never fear death again. You have suffered death for us. Hold them in Your arms and may they know in their heart Your great salvation. Amen.*

**Shawn Stevens**

**ENDNOTES :**

1. Erwin W. Lutzer, quoting an inscription on a tombstone, *One Minute After You Die* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1997), 11.
2. Erwin W. Lutzer, *One Minute After You Die* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1997)

**REFERENCES :**

Lutzer, Erwin W. *One Minute After You Die*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1997.

Scriptures taken from the American Standard Version, the New American Standard Bible and the King James Version."Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation Used by permission." ([www.Lockman.org](http://www.Lockman.org))

## ROMANS CHAPTER 10

### OUTLINE :

I Paul's Burden For Natural Israel 10.1-2

II The Righteousness Of God Vs The Righteousness Of Man. 10.3-13

III Necessity Of A Messenger 10.14-18

IV Natural Israel Vs Gentiles 10.19-21

### I Paul's Burden For Natural Israel

*1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.  
2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.*

*Romans 10.1-2*

Paul's tenth chapter begins like his ninth. Though the natural Jews persecuted him, he prayed for them. We read; "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." (vs 2). They have zeal, or a passion for God, but not according to knowledge. In other words, they have not believed God and they have been wrong in what they know.

### II The Righteousness Of God Vs The Righteousness Of Man.

Natural, biological Israel has in large part chosen the righteousness of man. What kind of righteousness is this? It is self-righteousness. What is the result of this choice? They are ignorant. This means that they are spiritually blind. It is because they are ignorant of Jesus Christ, as the Messiah, that they are ignorant of salvation. They seek to establish their own righteousness. The statement they "... have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." (vs 3) suggests that this is rebellion on their part.

Why do people reject the Lord's offer of righteousness? Firstly, they reject it because they trust in their own self-righteousness. Secondly, they

reject it because they reject God's plan of salvation. Reliance on self and separation from God are our greatest problems. Many natural, biological Jews tried to fulfil the law through own their efforts. God's way for them is very different. God's way was that of Jesus Christ dying for us and giving us His righteousness. That is why Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. Salvation is for everyone who believes.

What is meant by "believes?" We shall see further down. (also see Romans 4.3). We read:

*6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)  
7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)  
Romans 10. 6-7*

Paul is writing satirically, as if it were possible for man to go and fetch Christ from some unearthly location. Perhaps a works-based religion would require such a retrieval, but no, Christ has died and resurrected from the dead. It is for man to repent and believe. It is for man to confess and believe. We read:

*9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.  
10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.  
Romans 10.9-10*

To "confess" is to declare your faith intention. Tell God your faith intention; establish it with Him.

There is also a call from Christ to confess Him before men. (See Matthew 10.32).

Believe. How does one believe? You believe in your heart. This means believing from the depth of your being. The confession must be coupled with faith in the heart. What is the result? The Bible tells us "...



thou shalt be saved.” (Romans 10.9). Faith in the resurrection of Christ is essential. There are many truths in the Bible but on this truth of His resurrection, salvation depends. His resurrection declares His deity as the Son of God. (See Romans 1.4). It declares His victory over sin, death and the devil. We read further; “For the scripture saith, **WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH ON HIM SHALL NOT BE ASHAMED.**” (vs 11). The phrase “ ... **SHALL NOT BE ASHAMED.**” means not to be made ashamed or disappointed. It is critical to believe in Jesus Christ and to stand before Him, one day, with faith in your heart.

### **III Necessity Of A Messenger**

Paul has this to say about the necessity of a messenger:

*14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?  
15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!  
16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?  
17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.  
18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.  
Romans 10.14-18*

Messengers are an important part of the spreading of the gospel. Messengers have already carried the gospel throughout the Earth and will continue to do so.

### **IV Natural Israel Vs Gentiles**

Lastly, Paul tells us of natural, biological Israel and the Gentiles. He says:

*But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.  
20 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.  
21 But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.*

*Romans 10.19-21*

Paul loves his kinsmen and kinswomen. He wants them to be saved. They will not be saved by following their own self-righteousness. A way for them to be saved, and for all men and women to be saved, has been made and that way is of Jesus Christ dying for us and rising again. By repentance, faith and confession a person accepts the righteousness of God.

### **Shawn Stevens**

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Scriptures taken from the King James Version.

## ROMANS CHAPTER 11

### OUTLINE :

I God Stretches Out His Hands To Natural Israel As Evidenced By Individuals 10.21-11.6

- 1) Evidenced by Paul's conversion 11.1
- 2) Evidenced by the 7000 men 11.2-4

II God's Sovereign Dealings With People 11.11-29  
There Has Been Both Human Unbelief And Faith In Him.

- 1) God's sovereignty relating to believing Gentiles
  - A) God revealed salvation to Gentiles. 11.11-12 (also see Acts 13.46-52)
  - B) God grafted Gentiles into the olive tree. 11.17
  - C) God warns the Gentiles not to be proud. 11.17-22
- 2) God's sovereignty relating to Israel
  - A) God cut off some because of unbelief. 11.20
  - B) God reminds Israel that when they believe they will again be grafted in. 11.23-24
  - C) God reminds Israel that their Deliverer will come. 11.25-27
  - D) God reminds Israel that His gifts and calling are irrevocable. 11.29

### I God Stretches Out His Hands To Natural Israel As Evidenced By Individuals

Firstly, this is evidenced by the Apostle Paul's conversion. He says; "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). It is also evidenced by

the remnant of 7000 men. We read; "But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." (vs 4). The term "answer of God" is all one word in the Greek, "chrematismos." This originally meant a business transaction or political negotiation; it also was used for a decree. 1 The remnant of 7000 men did not bow to Baal. Baal was God's main rival in the Old Testament. The worship of him was forbidden. (See Exodus 20:3-4). We also read; "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." (Romans 11.5).

Remnant, here, is "leimma" (or limma) in the Greek. It only occurs in the New Testament. It means "what is left." 2 Jesus' little flock is a remnant. Whether you are a part of the remnant or whether you are hardened to God is determined by whether or not you choose to believe.

### II God's Sovereign Dealings With People

#### There Has Been Both Human Unbelief And Faith In Him.

In God's sovereign dealings with people, there has been both human unbelief and faith in Him. These verses show God's sovereignty relating to believing Gentiles:

*11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.  
12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?*

*Romans 11.11-12*

(Also see Acts 13.46-52).

In verse 13, Paul magnifies his office. We read; "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:" Most translate "diaconia" as "ministry" rather than "office." 3

God grafted Gentiles into the olive tree; “And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;” (vs 17). The olive tree may represent salvation, the church or even Christ. Gentiles are the wild olive tree. Wild, or foreign, might also hint at manner of life. In horticulture, a cultivated branch is normally grafted into a wild tree or vine. Here, Paul turns this around in making an illustration.

God warns the Gentiles not to be proud. We read:

*17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;*

*18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.*

*19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.*

*20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:*

*21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.*

*22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.*

*Romans 11.17-22*

Paul is concerned about the Gentile's attitude towards the natural Jews who had not yet believed in Jesus. In verse 17 we read; “... partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;”. The oldest known Greek manuscript, Papyrus 46, and a few others, omits the words “root and”.<sup>4</sup>

In Romans, Chapter 11, we learn of God's sovereignty relating to Israel. God breaks off some of natural Israel because of unbelief. We read; “Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:”

(vs 20). However, God reminds us of some encouraging things concerning natural Israel. God reminds us that if natural Israel believes they will again be grafted in (see vss 23-24). God reminds us of Israel's Deliverer. (See vss 25-27). God reminds us that His gifts and calling are irrevocable (see vs 29).

Jake Balzer has said; “God's dealings with us are unsearchable and cannot be fully understood. Therefore, it is our responsibility to submit to Him in faith and obedience.”<sup>5</sup>

All remnant Jews and new-branch Gentiles have submitted to God in God's way which is the way of salvation by faith.

**Shawn Stevens**

#### **ENDNOTES :**

1. Ralph Earle, Th. D., *Word Meanings in The New Testament, Vol 3* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1974), 207.
2. Ibid., 208.
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