

New Testament Lesson # 32
August 12-18
Overcome Evil with Good
Romans 7-16
By Lenet Hadley Read

(This epistle sheds much light on the Love of God, as is manifest in His Wise and Loving Plans for Men)

I. This Epistle reveals the Love of God is so great, **He has prepared the way for us to become His heirs, joint-heirs with Christ. For we are His offspring!**

A. The saints of Paul's time already knew this doctrine, so it is only briefly referenced.

1. "As many as are led by the Spirit of god, **they are the sons of God...** The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, **that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ**" (Romans 8:14-17)

2. If we truly are in tune with the Spirit, we will not deny our potential, which means that because we came from Him, and are His offspring, we can fully become like Him.

B. He added, "...if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him" (v. 17).

1. If we are willing to suffer for Christ, we will be glorified with Him, which again shows blessings which come from works, enduring persecution for Christ's sake.

II. Many belittle members for believing we can become like God. And some members question it too. But there are *many* scriptures which verify this truth. See the Topical Guide, p. 307, "Man, Potential to Become like Heavenly Father," for a summary of scriptures, Biblical and other, which testify to this truth.

A. We should also remember that in the Sermon on the Mount, **Jesus commanded us to become "perfect" like God. God's perfection would be the hardest thing to obtain in becoming like Him, for He can easily give us all of His other powers.**

B. **So He is commanding us to be perfect for a reason --- to become like Him in every way.**

III. It is very important to know that through His Wide Love, the Lord provided the way that all --- both Israel and the Gentiles, could receive His Gospel. He just did so one after the other.

A. In this epistle, Paul says that ultimately there is, in God's eyes, no difference between the Jews and Gentiles. All that matters is their seeking God earnestly.

1. "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him (Romans 10:12).

B. In fact Paul tells the Gentiles that Israel was deliberately blinded so that the Gospel would then go to them, the Gentiles (Romans 11:11).

1. "rather through their [the Israelites] fall, salvation is come unto the Gentiles"

2. The Old Testament story of Ruth, in fact, was a foreshadowing that Gentiles would be allowed to "glean" after the harvest of the Israelites, that they too might receive the blessings of the Lord. This was shown by the figure of Boaz

who took Ruth, a Moabitess, as his wife, due to her faithfulness and belief in God.

3. The fact that she gleaned after Boaz' harvest, testified that the Gentiles would glean after God's first harvest of Israel.

C. But the Lord, through Paul, also warns the Gentiles, that if they also become disobedient, the Gospel will return in the last days to the House of Israel (Romans 11:17-25).

D. There is evidence and even admittance that there was indeed a falling away from true teachings of Christ through the centuries.

IV. Above all, we should not miss in this epistle, that Paul **testifies that the Restoration of Israel will occur after the Time of the Fullness of the Gentiles. For in the Latter-days it will return again unto Israel.**

- A. After talking about the "fullness of the Gentiles," Paul says, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:
"For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your [the Gentiles] sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes" (Romans 11:26-28).
1. In other words, Israel was forsaken, only temporarily, but would receive God's blessings again. The last Great Harvest would be of Israel again, but all of the Gentiles would also be invited to become part of God's Final Kingdom.
- B. In speaking of "the Deliverer," Paul is actually **prophesying of the prophet Joseph Smith.**
1. In the Book of Judges, Israel is *repeatedly delivered* from the powers of the Gentiles, to again become God's people. So Joseph Smith would likewise deliver Israel, as did Gideon and Samson. In fact my **Old Testament lesson # 19**, shows how those delivering judges foreshadowed Joseph Smith and the Restoration in the Last Days.
- C. Paul also says that only "the elect" of Israel actually accepted Jesus as Christ (Romans 11:7-10); the rest of Israel were blinded. [See my Lesson #31 to understand what Elect really meant].
- D. Paul is prophesying that Israel will not to be cast off forever, but that the Gospel will return to them in time.
- E. Thus Paul verifies that Israel was initially "elected or chosen" to receive the covenants and the Gospel. While they lost them for a time, those covenants and blessings will be offered again to them in the last days and time of the Restoration.
- F. Paul thus shows the enormous love and long-suffering of God, whose love provided for the salvation of all --- both Israelite and Gentile!**

IV. The Wonderful news is that the Lord truly is no respecter of persons. He loves all, and has provided for every man to receive His Blessings. It is only up to us to choose of refuse them.

- A. And the "Good Works" of the Latter-day Saints in the Last Days are to provide the final opportunity for all, Jew and Gentile, who live or who have died without

having these blessings, to still receive them, through Temple and Family History work.

B. For the Lord is Good. The Lord is Just.

C. All will eventually have the opportunity to receive all of God's Pure Blessings of Love!

V. In a very beautiful way, **Paul testified that God is a God of love!**

A. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ... Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:35, 38-39). [This is of course, if we accept and obey Him!]

VI. When we know that God the Father is the Ultimate Wise, Good, and Loving Being, who has planned carefully, and works tirelessly, to overcome Evil with Good, it is easier for us to do so too.

A. Thus the more we know about the true nature of God, the easier it is for us to want to become like Him

B. And it is then easier for us to actually do so.