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"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS
WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE
RIGHT HAND OF GOD." COL. 3. 1.

SOME HUMBLING THOUGHTS

ON

--
ROMANS 9 - 11.

An Address (revised) at

Aldgate.

6th May, 1927.

by

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DO ME HUMBLING THOUGHTS ON ROMANS 9 - 11.

An Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,
Aldgate, 6th May, 1924.

OUTLINE:-

1. The Ways of God and our Part Knowledge.
2. The Privileges of Prayer, Heart-sorrow, and Gospel Proclamation.
3. The "Alls" of 9. 6; 11. 26, 32.
4. Lowliness (11.25), Praise (11.33-36), and Practical Godliness (12.1).

Now, dear friends, by the grace of God we come to our topic:- Some Humbling Thoughts on Romans 9 - 11. The majority of believers are acquainted with these chapters, to a certain extent. But there are few who know Romans 9 as well as they know Romans 8, nor can we get away from the fact that a fair proportion are somewhat afraid of Romans 9. There is a hesitating, almost a feeling of alarm. Now what we want, beloved friends, is to have not only a frankness before God and one another, but a holy frankness as to the Scripture. There are some commandments which attract us at once, other commandments we almost fear. We think to ourselves, That commandment makes me tremble; and so is it with different aspects of truth. Let us be honestly frank before Romans 9. We accept what God says. There

is no question as to this if we have been saved by grace, and are brought with an unbiased mind to the Scripture. We accept what God says, and here we have put before us certain of the ways of God. To understand the ways of God fully, must ever be viewed as beyond us. These are parts of His ways. Asaph said, "I went into the sanctuary, then understood I"; and when Moses spoke he said, "Shew me now Thy way, that I may know Thee"; and the Lord explained in a very remarkable manner in response to Moses' request to know Himself. God said, "I will make all My goodness to pass before thee, and I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and show mercy on whom I will show mercy". Have you noticed the beauty of this unveiling of the Lord's way and glory? I will make My goodness - that includes God's way in providence, His tender mercies are over all His works. I will proclaim the Name of the Lord - this is shown in the next chapter where we read, The Lord, merciful and gracious; and the next verse adds, Bearing iniquity! - Incomprehensible, - unless you realise that the Lord becomes a Man bearing iniquity, implying that He Who bore iniquity on Calvary was the Lord. Deity and atonement are wrapped up in that word, and our English version has spoilt the fulness by rendering "Forgiving iniquity". Forgiveness is the effect. The word is "Bearing", and it implies the sacrificial aspect of Him Who became incarnate for that purpose. Then at once we read "That will by no

means clear". How can God bear, and yet by no means clear? Here we have the two aspects - atonement and righteous judgment. Then there comes the added statement "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy". Here is the third unveiling of God's glory, and to THAT Romans 9 definitely alludes. Hence we are right in saying, the ways of God are there set forth. He made known His WAYS to Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel. At the end of Romans 11, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto Him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things; to Whom be glory for ever, Amen! "

Though the ways are untrackable, nevertheless He makes known, and the ways include providence and goodness, the way of redemption by bearing iniquity, and the sovereignty of "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy". Our part-knowledge is by no means a reason for drawing back from praise. We are always reminded how little we know. The apostles of old were instructed that they spoke and wrote for OUR benefit (I Peter 1). Daniel was told that certain parts of his writings were sealed till the time of the end. We know in part; says I Corinthians 13 and I John 3 says, "We know

not what we shall be". Thanks be unto God we know not. The glory excels our knowledge. This is an encouragement, not a discouragement. The parts of His ways are so glorious, what will the whole be? It is delightful to realise that grace is not dependent on our realisation of grace, and the fulness of love is not limited by our knowledge of the love. We thank God for the dispensation in which we see through a glass darkly. The old dispensation was one of the veil, the present dispensation is not one of the shadow or the veil, but one of the reflection, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord. (II Cor. 3. 18.) The future - "Then face to face." There is a difference between the shadow and the reflection. The shadow is obscure. It tells of a light, but is not the light. The veil is obscuring. The veil tells me there is something real, but I cannot see through. On the other hand the reflection is not the darkened shadow though it falls short of the fulness of the reality. The dispensation of the glass is quite different from the dispensation of the shadow, but "face to face" is beyond the shadow, and if we know not now, we shall know hereafter. The Lord Jesus instructed Peter on this point not only with respect to the washing of the feet, but giving the general principle; - Be willing that the Lord should do what pleases Him, though you cannot understand Him to-day. "What I do thou knowest not now". The same Gospel says, "He Himself knew what He would do." It

is quite enough, dear friends, for us that He Himself knows. We know in part, but if He tells us that we shall know hereafter, let us not object to any arrangements in the present time because we cannot understand them. "What I do thou knowest not now" concerns doctrine as well as practice, and makes us willing for God's plan that we cannot fully doctrinally grasp. "What I do thou knowest not now". Let us be willing for God's will. I would emphasize this at the outset, for if I come to Romans 9 with a theory of my own, self-will must spoil the blessing. We must be content to accept what God says, even though we cannot fully understand.

We can next notice the Privileges of Prayer, Heart-sorrow, and Gospel Proclamation are all before us in this passage. I do think, beloved friends, we need to lay a stress upon this. Look at the beginning of chapter 9, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart". Who is the man who thus writes? One who has just said, "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". We are more than conquerors. We are reminded of the words of II Corinthians 6, "As sorrowful, yet always re-

rejoicing". The same servant of God elsewhere wrote, "Rejoice in the Lord alway". But here he could say truthfully, "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart". Why? There is a parenthesis. "For my brethren" is the next statement. There is to me no doubt that the expression "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ" is a mistranslation. That a servant walking with God in the present dispensation could wish to be accursed from Christ for others, would contradict the whole of Romans 9. In Romans 9 there is the special stress on approval of the will of God, and if Paul were to say at the beginning "I could wish myself accursed from Christ", and could wish that God altered His plan for His people whom He foreknew, he would contradict Romans 9, and contradict Romans 11. In Romans 11 he rejoices that God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew, "for I also am an Israelite". If he could wish himself accursed from Christ he would negative the position. But the word does not mean "I could wish myself". It is a parenthesis. It is the simple term "I used to wish"; i.e. before I was saved I used to wish myself to be in a position which I now describe as accursed from Christ. I have great sorrow for them, because I used to wish just what they now wish. They say, "Away with Christ, we do not want Him". "These unbelieving Israelites speak thus, but I used to wish the very same, and now I pray for them", - just as the saved drunkard prays for the drunkard with intensity,

and the saved infidel prays for infidels with an overflowing heart. I used to wish just what they wish, and I pray for them to be saved. I know their feelings, and the God who snatched me as a brand from the burning can save them. Hence after the brackets, - which please be careful to insert, - the apostle adds, "I have continual sorrow in my heart for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites." Here we see the deep sorrow that characterised God's servant. He goes on to tell us that the purpose of God, the will of God is still standing. He has no doubt as to this. Hath God cast away His people? No. "I am an Israelite" is a proof God has not cast away His people. But why was Paul saved? The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant. Was there not something of Paul? Not one whit. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then the flesh rises up and says, "Why not that same grace to every one? Why the grace EXCEEDING abundant to Paul, why not to everyone"? And the answer comes very definitely, Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? You can have grief for those unsaved, but do not question God's plan. God will use your grief to draw souls to Himself, but do not question God's plan, and seek after a man-made universalism. Universalism is impossible in the light of Romans 9 - 11, and let me say that, as there are possibly some beloved children of God who think they have difficulties as to election, actually there is no real

difficulty as to election, nor have I yet found the child of God who really has a difficulty as to election. The difficulty he thinks is as to election. Actually his difficulty is as to the absence of universalism. Let me put it very plainly. That is your difficulty. If you have a problem at all, election is no problem, but the absence of universalism may be a problem to some. O, but you say, why? Election is my problem, it stands in the way. In the way of whom? Election never hindered one soul from coming to Christ. Do you think men are eager for salvation and election comes in the way to hinder them. Men are dead in sins, and not one would be saved but for election. Election cannot do harm to any. It can only lay hold of poor guilty sinners and bring them to the feet of the Lord Jesus. But for election you who have a difficulty as to it, would not be here, if you are among the called of Jesus Christ. Your very acceptance of the position of salvation is because God is stronger than your freewill, for the Scripture is definite. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. Children of wrath even as others. Ye will not come to me that ye might have life. This is the testimony of Scripture. Moreover, do you recognise the foreknowledge of God? You say, Yes. Then God knew from the beginning all that would happen? Undoubtedly. You recognise the power of God? Undoubtedly. Well then, dear friends,

election will be no difficulty to you. The fact that may be a difficulty is that God from the beginning knew, and having all power displayed that supremacy of power in snatching some, but only some, from the utter ruin in which all were found. You have no objection to Him snatching some, surely? Your objection is. why did He not snatch all? In other words. every believer I have met who has any real difficulty has a problem as to why there is not universalism; but when you are faced with that thought, surely if you are humble-minded, in the light of Scripture you are compelled to say "To plead for universalism would be to overturn all the Scriptures . Therefore if I cannot understand fully, I will praise God where I can understand. I will praise God where I cannot understand. But I will be willing to acknowledge that the ways of God are untrackable in their fulness." If you can measure the heavens for height, if you can understand the past eternity of God, - a far greater mental problem than the future eternity - if you can comprehend the Triune nature of God, then I may expect you to know fully the methods of Divine dealing in grace. But while the nature and eternity of God remain beyond your knowledge, are you surprised that there are other parts of His plan which you only know in part? Would you drag down the Scripture to the level of the human understanding? Do you not rather rejoice that Scripture bears the stamp of One Who is Greater than you, even as nature bears the stamp? Are you not thankful for the

problems that give scope for faith? If they were removed you would lose precious training. Never complain of a difficulty. Praise God for it, and you will find in the praise a fuller understanding, and at the same time a fuller joy in recognising His full understanding.

I said just now that we have brought before us the privilege of heart-sorrow. The tenth chapter begins with the privilege of prayer. "Brethren, my heart's desire and PRAYER to God, is that they might be saved". Here we have a definite concern. My prayer to God is that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. Do you not see the same thought as in chapter 9? "Not according to knowledge" is an echo of the words "I did it ignorantly in unbelief". Paul looked upon those zealots of Israel, and he said as it were, "They make me praise for unmerited grace, for I was just like they are, they make me pray, they remind me of prayer". Oh beloved friends, it is deeply important to see in all circumstances requests for prayer. "They make ~~me~~ pray". There is another thought as well. "Brethren, I pray for them for I bear them record that they have a zeal not according to knowledge", means they are unsaved, therefore I pray for them. In the present day, many teach salvation by sincerity, and that religiousness is a proof men are accepted before God. Paul says, "I pray that they might be saved, for they have got a zeal but not according

to knowledge. Zeal does not prove a man is saved or approaching salvation. If there be such zeal as this, not according to the knowledge of God it proves a man is unsaved. The apostle's argument is not that these dear men searching after God will at last reach Him, that they are true seekers after God and therefore they will attain to that which they seek. Nay. He says, "I bear them record that they have a zeal for God not according to knowledge, and therefore I pray for their salvation because through all their zeal they will never find Him. Israel are brought before us in 9. 31 as not having attained to the law of righteousness because they sought it by the works of the law, they stumbled at that Stumblingstone. The Stumblingstone was Christ, because Christ humbles us to the very dust. "To him that worketh NOT, but believeth on Him That justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness". "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money". The sinner is not too poor for Christ but too rich. He that hath NO money. God has a welcome for helpless, empty ones. None of the men that were bidden shall taste of my supper. But bring in hither the poor and maimed and halt and blind. Not the poor and the maimed - only one Greek article. They have all these four disabilities together, and they have no abilities, but in their utter negative there is the Lord's

absolute positive, and where sin ABOUNDED and every hindrance was found, it is not Call in hither, but bring in hither. None of the men which were BIDDEN shall partake, but all the men that are BROUGHT shall partake. Yet there is room. COMPEL to come in, that My House may be filled. A glorious compulsion. Those who were bidden held aloof. The one who is compelled cannot hold aloof. O, you say, "I object to election". Do you, beloved friends? I do not object to compelling grace. Do you say, "I believe in man's freewill?" I am afraid of man's freewill. Ye will not come to Me. I do realise man's freewill. I believe in the existence of it, and I am thankful there is only one thing that can conquer it, and that is God's power because of God's electing grace. And if it were not for God's electing grace, if we all believed in freewill only, hell would be full and heaven empty. Thanks be unto God there is another freewill. Do not simply urge the freedom of man, it is the freedom of a slave. Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. Remember there is another will of which we read, "Having made known to us the mystery of His will, predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. I believe in God's freewill. If not, I should not be here to-night. There would be no gospel to preach, there would be no saved ones to praise. Thanks be unto

God where men were DETERMINED in their will, there is a mightier will that snatches brands from the burning. Election is not the refusal of candidates who are willing, but it is the compelling to come in of those who would never come otherwise. None of the men that were bidden shall eat of my supper, for they all with one consent began to make excuse, - but beyond man's one consent, there is the purpose of God, whereby a great number whom no man can number shall be gathered around the Son of His love, that He may see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, and thus predestination to life stands forth in all its glorious freshness for those who are dead in trespasses and sins.

But we have seen that the apostle did not say, - "Because of election I shall give over grieving, because of election I shall give over praying"; nor did he say, "I shall give over preaching". The same chapter emphasizes preaching. And so we read in 10. 14 "How then shall they call on Him on Whom they have not heard? and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 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". Here is an encouragement. Here is a call to the testimony of the Gospel. How shall they call on Him, in Whom they have not believed. Here

is the sphere of the preacher, provided he has beautiful feet, not simply a beautiful mouth. The question is, how does he walk with God, not how does he talk. How beautiful are the FEET. The feet must be shod with the alacrity of the Gospel of peace. "I made haste, and delayed not to keep Thy commandments". Oh, beloved friends, if you want to preach, do not say, "I want to be prepared in my head, I see I must learn this study, and go in for that work and so forth, in order that I may preach more eloquently". No, dear friends, the Lord uses the mind but beware of exalting this. If you want to preach it is not preaching from the head. See to the feet. That is the Holy Spirit's arrangement. Preachers want training as to their feet. How beautiful are the feet. The college is needed for the foot, and the Lord tells us about that college. I have given you an example. Ye ought to wash one another's feet. That is the college for the feet. Are you willing for a brother to point out your mistakes, and wash your feet? How beautiful are the feet. Are you willing for the defilement of the pilgrim path to be washed off, or are you too proud? Are you ^{un}willing to acknowledge this. The Lord wants washed feet, and then He will have servants who can preach. Ye ought to wash one another's feet. That is the training for a preacher. How beautiful are the FEET of them that preach the Gospel of peace, that bring glad tidings of good things.

"But they have not all obeyed the Gospel".

Personally I should incline to render this, "But none of them obeyed the Gospel". The Greek will bear out that rendering also, and it seems to me as they all with one consent began to make excuse, none of them obeyed the Gospel. I would maintain very definitely the preaching of the Gospel. I have not the slightest hope that the preaching of the Gospel will in itself bring any result. "They have none of them obeyed the Gospel". I accept in its literal fulness the word of the Lord Jesus as to its proclamation - "I HAVE SPENT MY STRENGTH - IN VAIN AND FOR NOUGHT". You know that the Servant in the parable I have just brought before you, in Luke 14, represents the Holy Spirit. It is not the servants, but the Servant; and the Servant goes forth at supper time, and not a single one accepts the outward testimony even of the Holy Spirit. "Ye uncircumcised", says Stephen. Uncircumcised in what way? In heart, he says, Ye do ALWAYS resist the Holy Spirit. They all with one consent began to make excuse. Christ's testimony, He Himself declares was in this sense in vain and for nought, if we view it thus detached. The Holy Spirit's testimony is in the proclamation, "They all with one consent begin to make excuse". Go back to the time of the flood. The Spirit of Christ in Noah preached, when the ark was a preparing, as I Peter, 3 puts it, Do not read that Christ preached to the spirits in prison when they were

spirits in prison, but He preached to those who were spirits in prison at the time Peter wrote. "WHEN the ark was a preparing". And how many of them believed? None, from the multitude. "Few, that is eight souls were saved through water", and the rest became spirits in prison. Christ's proclamation was rejected then. None of them obeyed the Gospel. "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed". They have not believed what they heard of us, but if the arm of the Lord is revealed, there is something beyond mere proclamation. And so Romans 10 adds, "None of them obeyed the Gospel, for Esaias saith, "Lord, who hath believed our report?" So then the faith cometh by hearing, but THE hearing through a spoken word of God, - not through a word of a preacher, but (mark this) a spoken word of God. "They went forth, the Lord working with them". We preach, that is an outward proclamation, but there must be the Lord's inner working else not a single soul will come. "Everyone that hath HEARD and learned of the Father cometh unto Me". That is Christ's testimony. Beloved friends, the preacher is told to go forth to preach and yet none of them obeyed the Gospel. Oh, you say, if God would save them without the preacher, why should he go forth? Beloved friends, the sovereignty of God in saving, and the sovereignty of God in commanding, are both to be emphasized. God works through means. You pray, "Give us day by day our daily bread".

You do not stay at home and refuse to work. If you are a farmer you do not say, "I will not sow because God will give the daily bread". God works through means. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it", and except the Lord work with the preacher, the preacher preaches but in vain, and the proclamation will not quicken a dead soul. But THE hearing comes through a SPOKEN word of God. You have the contrast in Romans 10 between "the words" and "A spoken word"; "the hands" and "the hand". "I have stretched forth My Hands", no one believes, but beyond this there is the reminder of Isaiah 53, the arm of the Lord is revealed. The hands stretched out are a welcome. But no one comes to the welcome. The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed. He laid hold of poor lost souls. That is the glorious might of saving grace. Oh, you say, what about this stress on the preaching? Is the preacher necessary? Not absolutely. The Holy Spirit does not say so. You remember in Psalm 6 we read, "For in death there is no remembrance of thee, in the grave (or in Sheol) who shall give thee thanks? And we have seen before how the psalmist did not understand what Sheol was, but he was inspired, therefore he did not say, "In Sheol no one will give thee thanks", but put it in the form of a question, as he did not know. He was inspired to put a question, which would remain true when what he did not know was revealed. So here, we do not read, "They shall not hear without a preacher,

but, how shall they hear without a preacher. The Lord can make them hear without a preacher. "But how shall they hear" is to give our responsibility aspect. Here then is the call to the redeemed, but beyond this there is the Lord's working. Well then what shall we do? We shall pray, we shall have sorrow in our hearts, we shall preach; yet over and beyond this, "faith cometh through hearing, but the hearing through a spoken word". He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast. That was true when He said, "Let there be light, and it is true to-day beloved friends, for God has commanded the light to shine out of darkness in our hearts, and He still gives the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. When God commanded the light to shine out of darkness in Genesis 1, He said, "Let there be light, and there was light". In like manner it was not that we had an inner light. We were once darkness. There is no inner light in man. Man was dead. "You hath He quickened". God does not develop souls. Evolution in science is a common theory because evolution in salvation was a theory first. Religious theories are the cause of many scientific attacks on Scripture. Men do not realise that evolution and development has been leavening the doctrine of man against the Scriptures for many years. We rejoice to believe in those wondrous words, "If any man is in Christ there is a new creation", and a new creation looks back to the sinner's

lost condition, and the word "lost" means "destroyed". "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was destroyed". That is the Divine statement. I am inclined to think even Zacchaeus thought he could co-operate a little; "Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor", but the Lord said, "To-day is Salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he is a child of Abraham. For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost". The expression "child of Abraham" tells of grace. "For verily He taketh not on Him angels, but He taketh on Him the seed of Abraham". "Taketh on Him" - why? To redeem them. Our version says, "Taketh on Him the nature", but no, it is took not on Him angels to redeem. Angels who sinned are left in sin, but He taketh on Him the seed of Abraham. A remnant according to election of grace, for they are not all Israel who are of Israel. And we come back to Romans 9. Gal. 4 says, "Ye, as Isaac was, are the children of promise; and the children of promise are counted for the seed. Now we have a key to a passage in a later epistle:- The promise of eternal life which God gave before times of the ages, But to whom did He give it? We were not living then. No man was living, but the beloved One in Whom there is saving grace was the ever-living One. "I am He That liveth and became dead", and the promise was given to Him. And we are the children of promise, and all who are the children of promise, they are the ones, says Romans - 9 who shall reach the glory. "All that the Father giveth Me

shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out". And thus grace comes in on the dark background of a ruined world, to show that God is not defeated, and that in Christ Jesus we are lifted higher than we could be apart from the very over-ruling of the sin which made it possible for the Son of God's love to die representatively. He could not have died unless there were those for whom to die, nor could we have been united to Him unless He had died for us. The very union with the Son of God's love is the overruling of the fact that we were dead sinners. Thus was it made possible for the Holy One to die, for in righteousness the Holy One dare not die unless there is something for which to die, unless there are THOSE for whom to die, - and thus where sin abounded grace overflowed, and God displays the riches of His grace in His kindness on to us in Christ Jesus. And so we see parts of His ways. Look at that which seemed the greatest failure, when Christ was crucified through weakness, and yet behold that was the great triumph, the great salvation of a great number whom no man can number. Look back to Eden and its ruin; it seemed that God was defeated, but was it so? The promise of Christ was given there, and the coats of skin still make manifest that there shall be something beyond what Adam possessed, and therefore that flaming sword is not to block up the way of the tree of life but to KEEP the way of the tree of life, and it is kept. Adam had the way of the tree of life, but lost it, but God intended it

should be kept, and it could not be kept only by the exclusion of men dead in sins, but by a Saviour meeting the sword and removing it in a manner that shows wondrous love. The way was not simply kept but kept with a view to opening- and an assured salvation. God does not give a second chance, but something infinitely better. The tables of stone were given to Israel and broken, and God did not give them another chance, any more than to Adam. To Israel the tables were given as the garden was given to Adam, but when there was the sinning God appointed not another chance, but another Man, and instead of the first Adam, the Last Adam, the Second Man, the Lord from heaven, and instead of giving tables of stone the second time, to the people, He appointed an ark and gave them to the ark, and thereby shows the way of salvation, and the glory of Christ. When we reach the time of the kingdom they are still in that ark. They are kept, even as the way of the tree of life was kept and is kept, and grace has reigned and still reigns to the salvation of a great number whom no man can number. Oh, beloved friends, what objection have you to electing grace? If it were not for that grace there would not be a single saved soul. What objection have you to electing grace? God cannot take in hand and lose, God cannot falter. God will not change. True the words ring out concerning the outward testimony, even when perfect. - "I have spent My strength in vain and for nought", but thanks be unto God He did not

spend Himself in vain and for nought. "The Son of God saved me and gave Himself" not only His strength but Himself, and that was not in vain and for nought, but it is written "ALL that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me" - that in the ages to come He might show, - let me repeat the words - the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness on to us through Christ Jesus.

And so we come back to this ninth chapter of Romans and we have brought before us that some did object to the words of verse 11, "That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him That calleth. Of Him That calleth. And whom did He call? Jacob. "What shall we say then, adds verse 14, Is there unrighteousness with God? and the startling answer of verse 15 is introduced with the word "for" He saith to Moses. Why "for"? FOR He saith to Moses. There cannot be unrighteousness, FOR He saith, "I will have mercy". There cannot be unrighteousness FOR there is mercy. You What does that mean? Mercy is for those who need mercy. You cannot have unrighteousness with God. Unrighteousness implies man deserves something. He does not. We were children of wrath, even as others. That is the fundamental objection. The only problem you have is this. Why are we children of wrath? Behold I was shapen in iniquity, says Psalm 51. Ye are of your father the devil, Why? Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Leave God's silence and admire what He reveals. Go

into the sanctuary, understand what He sets forth there, and if you only know in part, be willing like Daniel to hear the Divine statement "Go thy way, thou shalt rest, - rest from anger, rest from reasoning, thou shalt rest, - and stand in thy lot, a trophy of Christ, in the end of the days. Deal with all the problems like that. Go forward, go and do some work for the Lord, do not spend your time arguing, "Thou shalt rest, do not worry do not speculate. . . Accept what God reveals in the Holy Spirit but do not argue. Thou shalt stand in thy lot, saved by grace. Praise for the grace that has saved you, and snatched you as a brand from the burning. Do not object to God's election nor His silence, nor His sovereignty but rejoice in that which has secured your salvation, and leave Him to explain the rest. For He saith, "I will have mercy, I will have compassion". "So then it is not of him that willeth, (for man's will is wrong) nor of him that runneth, but of God That showeth mercy". Ah, it is all mercy..For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee, and that My Name might be declared throughout all the earth". "I raised thee up" - Pharaoh was not left an insignificant man, a subordinate - He was raised up to high position that there might be a display more fully of what man is when he does according to his own will. You say, I believe in man's freewill. I know a man who will display his freewill. The king of Daniel 11. 36 who shall do according to his will, is

the king Antichrist, of Daniel 11. That is man's freewill, when pride blossoms; and if you believe in man's freewill you believe in Antichrist. There we behold man's freewill blossoming, and bitter is the fruit. But thanks be unto God, for those who have been brought down and been brought to realise it is not of him that willeth, but that God does according to the counsel of His will, the mind of the Lord, as we have brought before us in the eleventh chapter. Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy. That changes them, because they deserved misery if they need mercy. "And whom He will He hardeneth". Hardening is dealing with what is already there on the line of its character. Mercy is dealing with that which is without preparation for it, or likeness to it. So it is not that election removes goodness from any, but brings goodness to some. Men may contend, but let the potsherd contend with the potsherd of earth, that is the testimony of Isaiah 45. Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? We were all, in the words of verse 21, as potter's clay. Hath not the potter power to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath (not which He prepared to destruction, but) fitted to destruction; but in verse 23, not prepared for glory, but which He prepared unto glory. Thus we have brought before us that He endured with much

longsuffering the vessels of wrath. Longsuffering tells of what is in man, but oh, thanks be unto God, He did not endure the vessels of mercy, He made them vessels of mercy. He prepared unto glory. Oh, you say, I cannot understand it. God has all power. God can do all that He pleases, yet He endured the vessels of wrath. Why did He not change them? Beloved friends, it is not for us to argue. God declares He endured the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction. Are you willing to accept this? Oh, you say, I cannot understand it. Can you understand the nature of God? There are some dear children of God who, when you speak of precious prophetic subjects, reply, "How can these events be known? If you expect these then you cannot be expecting the Lord, and so forth". And we answer, Beloved friends, we do not look for events but for the Lord beyond events, and if you can explain God's nature, and God's eternity, and the Person of Christ and the manner of election, and the way of redemption, then we will expect you to understand all else by human logic. Till then, learn that there is such a thing as faith, and that by faith we understand that which is revealed in its gracious measure to those who praise God for what they know, and are willing to leave the fulness of His ways which are past finding out, as this very chapter reveals. But what is the goal? For our time is gone. The goal is the outburst of praise, in verses 33 - 36 of chapter 11. They come after verse 32, for God hath con-

cluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all, not universalism of all or of all ages, for we read, "So all Israel shall be saved" alluding to Isaiah 59. In the light of the earlier Scripture we say "God will pardon those whom He reserves". Would not this signify that all who are preserved will be blessed? So it is appointed that He will have mercy upon all, that is, that no one will be saved except on the ground of mercy. "That He might have mercy upon all". Then no one has merit. That is the argument. Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, let us adore. No one will get into glory but by mercy. And the apostle therefore praises, of Him, through Him, and to Him are all things, to Him be glory. I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service; and be not conformed to this age. If you believe in that sovereign grace that snatched you as a brand from the burning, walk in the spirit. Present your bodies to the Lord. You have no standing by nature, but all is in mercy. You and I ought to as it were, to be in hell now, - hell for ever. Then that body which you have, present it to the Lord, and oh that I may do the same. You say, "I want this". YOU want this? You are bought with a price. Your Lord claims the whole. Let us not be conformed to this age. Shall I say, - "I do not want to be peculiar, I do not like to be too strange and too narrow".

Oh for grace to be ashamed of such objections. Why do we hold back? Shall I say - I do not like other people to think me out of date! If I am a little different from the fashion, what will others say? May we have a victory by grace over all such thoughts and be not conformed to this age, but walk in the Spirit.

Oh beloved friends, the Lord claims the whole of those whom He bought, and He claims; and as you and I have no right of our own outside Hell, why do we desire to draw back from devoted love to Him. Present the whole. He claims it. God's electing grace calls for the devoted humility of a blood-bought people who are willing to be outcasts of men, and the offscouring of all things for the sake of Him Whose Name they bear. Of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, and the grace that saves us out from a ruined world, snatches us from the bonds of custom and self-will, and causes us to realise we have not two masters, that we cannot serve alike, but ONE is our Lord to Whom we owe everything. We are not our own. We are not debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh, but as we have been delivered, and as the strong man of selfwill has been bound, and all the different parts of the goods have been taken, let the house of our bodies be manifestly for the Lord. If we can present our bodies as a living sacrifice and our members as weapons of righteousness in the Lord's warfare against the flesh and against the world and against the Devil, how great

is our knowledge, we are not of the world but chosen out of the world. If the world hates us, it hated Him before it hated us, that we should not come down to meet men on their own level. Present your bodies a living sacrifice, that ye may prove, adds verse 2, what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. We have just seen in chapter 9, it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth. Your will was a wrong will, but now that God has saved you in His own freewill, do you not want to know His will? Then do not spend your time simply in arguing. Go and present your body and you will know the will of God. I want to speak to myself and to you. Does some one say "I cannot understand election"? The Reason is not because you have not a number of books in your library. May it not be because you are not presenting your body? If you want to understand the things of the Lord Jesus more, the pathway is not by a clever head but by washed feet. The pathway is not by saying, I want to have spiritual time of heavenly ecstasy for one self but I cannot come down to these little things of daily life." You must present your body in the little things of daily life. Holiness is not merely hymn-singing, it is not something internal, putting aside the body, - it is presenting the body. Oh, but you say these things are so menial, - just to give up this tiny thing and that tiny thing, - I do not see how such actions will lead to understanding the will of God. But holiness is via little things.

Even by talking of spirituality, or by saying, Lord, Lord, or by speaking of His presence, you cannot understand His will. Many will say, "We have eaten and drunk in Thy PRESENCE;" they will talk of the Lord's presence. The Lord does not want that, dear friends. He does not want the lips, He wants the feet, He wants the body as a whole presented with all its members, and that there may be a walking in the Spirit, not simple^y a talking in the Spirit, - and then there will be the understanding more of that good and acceptable and perfect will of God, and one will not complain of the election and will of God that snatches souls from the burning! Then we shall not complain of the will of God that marks out a narrow way, and we shall not complain of the will of God that allows difficulties; but rather our hearts will say, O^E Him and through Him and to Him are all things. O^E Him - there is grace to me, and through Him, is strength to me, for He giveth more grace, - and to Him are all things, to the praise of the glory of His grace wherein He graced us in the Beloved!

Further literature, concerning the Lord, gladly sent (international) to exercised believers for personal perusal, and **passing on** to God's glory, some also in German, Spanish, Russian, Polish, Czech, Romanian:

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