

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this series about sharing from our quiet times you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Two teachers will share from what they have learned from their quiet times. Every day during the past week we had a quiet time from a passage in the New Testament. Once a week we come together to share with one another what we have learned. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. We will share the important truths and lessons from our quiet times and try to answer some difficult questions. Today's topic is A DISCIPLE SHARES WHAT HE LEARNS FROM ROMANS 9:1 – 12:21.

(S) **POINT 1. SHARING FROM ROMANS 9:1 – 12:21.**

This past week we have read, meditated and prayed from Romans 9:1 – 12:21. Now we will use our quiet time notes to share truths and lessons from the assigned passages and discuss some questions.

**Sharing quiet times from Romans chapter 9.**

(T) I want to share from Romans 9:6-16 about God's election. This passage teaches how people become children of God or, to put it in another way, how people become part of "the true Israel". First. In Romans 9:6-9 we read that *people do not become God's children by physical descent, but only by God's sovereign promise*. The Bible says, that not all people, who are descended from Israel, are the true Israel! ... It is not the natural children who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise." For example, God made a promise to Abraham and Sarah and their son, Isaac. He made no promise to Abraham and Hagar and their son, Ishmael. Second. In Romans 9:10-13 we read that *people do not become God's children by their own merit, but by God's sovereign election and calling*. The Bible says, "In order that God's purpose in election might stand: not by good works, but by him who calls". For example, God chose Jacob and not Esau in order to realise his sovereign plan. He said, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." The word *hate* does not speak of God's feelings, but rather of God's choice and behaviour. Third. In Romans 9:14-16 we read that *people do not become God's children by their own desire or effort, but by God's sovereign mercy and compassion*. The Bible says, "It does not depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy." For example, God had mercy on Moses, but not on Pharaoh, who was the king of Egypt.

God's election functioned in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. In Romans 8:29-30 we read, "For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified." First. The word "foreknowledge" does not mean a passive foreknowledge as if before creation God foresaw who were going to believe and who were not going to believe. It means God's selective knowledge that regards a person with favour and makes him an object of love and care. Second. The word "predestination" means "to pre-determine the purpose" or "to decide something beforehand". And in 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 we read, "From the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." *God elects people before history began. And God calls people through the gospel during history.*

(S) I want to share from Romans 9:17-18 about hardening of hearts. "The Scripture says to Pharaoh, 'I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth'. Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden." *God's election or rejection of people does not exclude human responsibility*. For example. When I read the book of Exodus about Pharaoh, I see how Pharaoh hardened his heart continually against God and God's words. In Exodus 7, Pharaoh saw that his magicians had magical power and so he hardened his heart and would not listen to God. He refused to let the Israelites go. In Exodus 8, Pharaoh saw the relief from the plague of frogs and yet he hardened his heart and would not listen to God. Even when his own magicians warned him that "this was God's finger", he hardened his heart and refused to listen to God. Pharaoh acted deceitfully by breaking his promise to let the Israelites go. In Exodus 9 and 10 his heart was unyielding and he only showed hypocritical repentance. He did not fear God and refused to humble himself before God. Pharaoh was personally responsible for hardening his own heart! Several times in the Bible we read that *God hardens the hearts of people who have persistently hardened themselves against God. The two causes of hardening are to continue to live in sin and to continually refuse to listen to God's word*. Hebrews 3:13 says to us, watch out "that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness." And Hebrews 3:7 says, "Today, when you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts."

**Sharing quiet times from Romans chapter 10.**

(T) I want to share from Romans 10:4-7 about God's righteousness that is made available through Christ. These words are difficult to explain. The passage contrasts the alleged righteousness that comes by keeping the law of the Old Testament and the righteousness that comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

First. The Old Testament in Leviticus 18:5 said, "The man who does these things will live by them." It does not mean that a person is justified by keeping God's law. But it means that living within the framework or sphere of God's laws, is real living on earth as well as the only kind of living that pleases the holy God. However, no human being has been able to keep all the demands of God's law except Jesus Christ. *Jesus Christ fulfilled the requirements of God's law and thereby became the Source of God's righteousness for all who believe.* Jesus Christ completely fulfilled all the demands of the law through his death and resurrection. And every human being who believes in Jesus Christ has a share in Christ's perfect righteousness. God declares every human being who believes in Jesus Christ 100% righteous on the basis of Christ's righteousness.

Second. The quotation about "going up to heaven to bring Christ down or going into the deep to bring Christ up" is from Deuteronomy 30:11-14. In that context, Israel was about to enter the Promised Land, Canaan. They would enter it only through the mercy and grace of God and not by their own merit or effort. God's law was given to Israel in that context of grace and not as a means to enter that grace. Paul uses this Old Testament example to show two things. Entering the heavenly Canaan or eternal life is not based on human merit or effort, but only on God's mercy and free gift of salvation. And keeping God's law is not the means of entering the heavenly Canaan. Jesus Christ came from heaven and suffered the agonies of hell on earth in the place of his people. *Jesus Christ did all the hard work of salvation by taking on the human nature, by suffering, by dying on the cross and by being resurrected again.* Salvation is only by God's grace. Therefore we should not attempt to save ourselves by trying very hard to keep God's laws. Salvation by keeping God's laws is not only impossible, but also completely unnecessary. Every human effort to save himself is a denial of what Jesus Christ already accomplished once for all time in human history.

(S) I want to share from Romans 10:8-17 about God's righteousness that can be obtained simply by faith. Romans 10:8 says that to be saved requires no effort, but only a response of faith. Romans 10:9-11 says that whoever believes in his heart and confesses that faith with his mouth will be saved. Romans 10:12-13 says that there is no difference between a Jew and a Gentile in the way they are saved. And Romans 10:14-17 says that it is therefore important to accept the messenger of the gospel as well as the message of the gospel. There must be a messenger to proclaim the message of the gospel. The message must be heard and received by faith. Finally, the only appropriate way to express that faith in his heart is to call on God by prayer and by confessing Jesus Christ to be his Saviour and Lord.

(T) I want to answer the question whether there is no difference between a Jew and a non-Jew (Gentile). It is true that the Bible makes no difference between a Jew and a Gentile in any way. Romans 2:11 says that God shows no favouritism to the Jews. *The Jews as a natural and national people are not God's special people.* Only the Christian Church, which consists of saved Jews and saved Gentiles, is God's special people on earth! Romans 2:28-29 says that being a true Jew does not depend on outward descent, but on inward rebirth by the Holy Spirit! The word "Jew" means "praise" and refers to those who receive their praise from God and not from men! Only people who are born again will receive praise from God. Romans 3:9-24 says that Jews and Gentiles are alike under sin. Romans 3:29 says that God is the God of both the Jews and the Gentiles. Romans 3:30 says that both the Jews and the Gentiles are saved only by faith in Jesus Christ. *God does not have another programme of salvation for the Jews in the future.* Romans 4:9-12 says that the blessing of forgiveness is for Gentiles and Jews who believe in Jesus Christ, regardless whether they are uncircumcised or circumcised. Romans 9:24 says that God calls both Jews and Gentiles to become his people. Romans 9:27 says that only a remnant of the Jews would be saved. Romans 9:17-18 shows that not all Gentiles would be saved. Galatians 3:28-29 and Colossians 3:11 say that *in Jesus Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek. After the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Jews have become like any other nation on earth.* All God's promises to Israel in the Old Testament have either been fulfilled in Jesus Christ or will in the future only be fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

#### **Sharing quiet times from Romans chapter 11.**

(S) I want to share from Romans 11 about the olive tree and its branches. I noticed that there is only *one olive tree*. In Jeremiah 11:16 the olive tree is a picture of God's people during the Old Testament period and in Romans 11 the olive tree continues to be the picture of God's people during the New Testament period. The *root* of this olive tree can represent no one else than Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament God promised to the patriarchs (vs 28), Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that Jesus Christ would be "the seed" that blesses all the families on earth (Genesis 12:3). The New Testament clearly teaches that this seed is Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:16). Today, God's people consist of Jews and non-Jews (Gentiles), who live all over the world and believe in Jesus Christ. They are called "the Church" or "the kingdom of God". The *branches* of the olive tree represent individual believers in Jesus Christ. All Jews, who claimed that they were God's people, but rejected Jesus Christ, were broken off from the olive tree. They are longer regarded as God's people! And all non-Jews

(Gentiles), who began to believe in Jesus Christ, were grafted into the olive tree. They became a part of God's one people in this world. In Romans 11:22, the apostle Paul warns that the Gentile branches, who do not continue in God's kindness, but fall away from the faith in Jesus Christ, will also be cut off from the olive tree. And in Romans 11:23, he promises that the Jewish branches, who do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted back into God's people when they believe in Jesus Christ.

(T) I would like to answer a question in Romans 11:25-27. What is the meaning of "the full number of the Gentiles" and "all Israel will be saved"? God does not have two different plans of salvation. He does not have one plan of salvation that brings the full number of Gentiles into the kingdom of God and another plan of salvation that brings all Jews into the kingdom of God. *God has only one plan of salvation, which includes both Jews and Gentiles.* First. The apostle Paul shows how *there is an inter-dependence between the hardening of Israel and the salvation of the Gentiles.* In verse 11 and 25 he says that the stumbling of the Jews in their sin and the hardening of their hearts against the gospel, caused the salvation of the first Gentiles. In the book of Acts, we read again and again how the apostles preached the gospel first to the Jews and how some of them believed but many others persecuted the apostles. Then we read how the apostles turned away from the Jews and went and preached the gospel to the Gentiles and how many Gentiles believed. Of course, there were also Gentiles who refused to believe and persecuted the Christians. Second. The apostle shows how *there is an inter-dependence between the salvation of the Gentiles and the salvation of Jews.* In Romans 11:11 we read that when the Jews saw how the Gentiles turned to Jesus Christ and how their lives were transformed, they became very jealous. In Romans 11:14 we read that this caused many Jews to convert to Jesus Christ and be saved. From the first coming of Jesus Christ right up to the second coming of Jesus Christ the gospel will be preached to both Gentiles and Jews in the world and a great number of Gentiles as well as a great number of Jews will believe. Only when the full number of Gentiles as well as the full number of Jews has been saved will Jesus Christ return to this world. *"The full number of Gentiles" consists of the number of Gentiles that God has sovereignly elected to be saved throughout the history of this world. "All Israel" likewise consists of the full number of Jews that God has sovereignly elected to be saved throughout the history of this world.* "All Israel" or "the full number of Jews" that will be saved in history consists of the sum total of the elected remnants of Israel throughout history. For example, during the time of the patriarchs, God elected Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but not Ishmael and Esau. During the time of Elijah, God elected 7000 that had not bent their knees to idols. And according to Romans 11:5, during the time of Paul, there was another "remnant" of Jewish believers that were chosen by God's grace.

#### Sharing quiet times from Romans chapter 12.

(S) I want to share from Romans 12:17-21 about revenge or forgiveness. First. Revenge is a basic characteristic of a non-Christian. The non-Christian often looks for revenge when another person has caused them to feel hurt or ashamed. They say that they feel that they have "lost face" in front of other people and they must restore their personal honour or the honour of their family. So, when they murder the offender, they set themselves in the place of God. In Romans 12:17-21 God says, "Do not take revenge, but leave room for God's wrath. For it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay' says the Lord. On the contrary, 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.'" The Bible forbids revenge, because that is the prerogative of God only! If the offender deserves punishment, then God will punish him in his own time! Second. Forgiveness is the basic characteristic of the Christian! The Christian CAN forgive, WANTS TO forgive and WILL forgive, because God has forgiven him all his sins. Hebrews 7:27 teaches that Jesus Christ sacrificed his life for our sins once for all. Hebrews 8:12 teaches that he forgives all our sins. 1 John 1:9 teaches that if we confess the sins we do after we have become Christians, Jesus Christ will continue to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Third. Christians have the responsibility to forgive their offenders and enemies, even when their offenders do not acknowledge their wrongdoing! Matthew 18:21-35 teaches that when Christ has forgiven the Christian all his sins, then he requires the Christian to forgive all the sins of those that do wrong against him. And in Matthew 6:14-15 Christ warns that if we do not forgive other people, he will also not forgive us! Forgiveness sets us free from our enslaved emotional focus on the wrongdoer and sets us free to serve God by loving God and even loving our enemies. The only religion in the world that proclaims the message of forgiveness and experiences real forgiveness is the Christian religion!

#### (T) POINT 2. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. Divide Romans 13:1 – 16:27 into seven passages. Every day have a quiet time from one passage. Record the meditations of all your quiet times in a notebook. Once a week meet with a friend or with a house fellowship or discipleship group and share from your quiet times.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and make disciples" and Internet on www. Etc

Third. Listen on short wave radio from SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY to "Discipleship training on the air."