

is an evil thing. The eruption of a volcano is an evil thing because it destroys many lives. An earthquake or any natural disaster is an evil thing. God takes full responsibility for natural disasters and for judgment day; God says He creates that kind of evil.

God does not create sin. Sin came out of the heart of man, completely. God could never have been the creator of sin. It is interesting and significant that when we pray:

*After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation [trial], but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (Matthew 6:9-13)*

The “*trial*” that we pray to escape, which is sometimes called “*temptation*,” is the trial of judgment day. In other words, it is a prayer for salvation. “*Deliver us from evil*” means that we are praying to be delivered from the evil of our sin, the evil of judgment day, and the evil of Satan’s tyranny. This is the prayer of someone who desires salvation on God’s terms.

**Caller:** If only those who are chosen by God are going to be saved, why did God create the others just to send them to hell?

**Mr. C.:** That is a very curious question that we might have in our mind. Every human being is created by God. No human being comes into existence just because of a biological union between a man and a woman. God works through the biological union to create the baby in the womb. God did not create the human race to go to hell. God created the human race, beginning with our first parents, Adam and Eve, to love God and to faithfully serve Him. Mankind was created in the image of God, in the likeness of God, and was absolutely perfect.

However, because we were created in the image of God, we are accountable to God. God had decreed that if we disobey Him, we are subject to the wrath of God.

Our first parents, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God, and they came under the wrath of God. Every human being is an offspring of Adam and Eve, therefore, we all came forth infected with sin, and we are all under damnation. By nature, every human being, from Adam and Eve on, is in rebellion against God.

God says that even the wrath of man shall praise Him. So, it is not like it is a totally lost cause.

Because man sinned, God had an opportunity to show His magnificent love. Think of what He had to do to save any one of us. He had to be damned in our place. He had to take upon Himself our sins, and He had to be found guilty for our sins. He had to endure the wrath of God equal to the wrath that those He came to save would have endured by being eternally in hell.

The fact that a person does not become saved, and ends up in hell, actually magnifies the love of God because it indicates the tremendous penalty that Christ had to pay for the sins of those He came to save.

Of course, it also demonstrates the perfect justice of God. Those who are not saved must continue to be under the wrath of God. Those who are saved could not be saved except for the fact that someone experienced God's wrath on their behalf, and that someone is God Himself.

We read in Romans 9:22:

*What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction [that is, those whom God created but had no plans to save].*

They are all the offspring of Adam and Eve, and God's plan was that they would come into existence, but they are infected by sin. Everything still praises God. God is absolutely true to all of His commitments.

**Caller:** When I hear you talk about God, I feel very frustrated. I feel like God is not caring and sensitive to the needs of humans. I mean, I feel like He is not good.

**Mr. C.:** We never want to say that. I will tell you what the problem is. It is like someone who has committed enormous crimes, and man, is he guilty! He is guilty, but he is arrogant. He determinedly insists that he has his rights. He thinks that the police, the prosecuting attorney, the judge, and everyone involved in the case are just a bunch of jerks. He complains, "They threw me into jail! How dare they do that!"

Well, who is speaking? The criminal is speaking, and of course, he has no understanding of truth. That is the reason why he has committed these crimes.

That is the way we are. By nature, we are vicious sinners. We are

in rebellion against God, and we hate God. We are ready to lash out against Him. We are not this way because there is something wrong with God; God is perfect. The fact is, there is something wrong with all of mankind.

We do not like to hear that God says there is something wrong with us and that He will punish us. The Bible says we are in trouble with God (II Chronicles 15:4, Psalm 31:9); God is not in trouble. God is absolutely righteous.

God is the creator of the universe. When we look at a little baby, or a kitten, or a lovely sunset, or we smell a fragrant rose, we know that God created them all. Look at your own life, or the life of any one of us, and you see sin and rebellion. God did not create us that way. It is our sin.

We might feel better by calling God bad names, but we are deceiving ourselves. Even though we have done all these bad and sinful things, God tells us in Deuteronomy Chapter 4, verse 29:

*But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.*

Wonderfully, God is merciful. If we seek Him with all our heart and soul, we can find Him. It is still possible to be saved.

## **The Love of God**

**Caller:** The Bible says that God is love, so why do you say that God hates some people?

**Mr. C.:** Let the Bible answer your question. We read in Psalm 5:5:

*The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.*

We read in Psalm 11:5:

*The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.*

Before we are saved, we are under the righteous wrath of God, the terrible fury of God's wrath because we have rebelled against Him. God's love is manifested in the fact that He so loved the world that He provided salvation. In I John 4, God describes what that love is. We read in I John 4:10:

*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

He is not the propitiation for the sins of every human being because then there would no one in hell. Those He came to save know the fantastic and marvelous love of God.

**Caller:** Is it true that God loves all of us and wants to save all of us?

**Mr. C.:** No. God loves those whom He came to save. We read in John 3:16:

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

The word “so” means “in this manner” or “in this fashion.” In other words, God’s love goes to those who become saved. On the other hand, we read in the Bible that God says He hates sinners. God hates sin and He hates sinners because they are in rebellion against God. Unsaved sinners are under the fury of God’s wrath.

Only when we become saved, do we come to know the love of God. This is stated very beautifully in the New Testament, in I John 4:9 and 10:

*In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation [covering] for our sins.*

God’s love is focused on those whom He came to save.

## **The Trinity**

**Caller:** What is the Biblical teaching about the trinity? Is it three in one or is it three different beings?

**Mr. C.:** “Trinity” is not a Biblical word, but it means “three.” The Bible is very mysterious about that. The Bible has a lot to say about God, but we cannot understand it all.

God insists there is one God, and yet, He clearly reveals Himself as three distinct persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

God says of the Lord Jesus in Colossians 2:9:

*For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*

Jesus says of Himself in John 10:30:

*I and my Father are one.*

He says in John 14:9:

*Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?*

We cannot reconcile and understand that language. Many theologians and Bible teachers have attempted to give the analogy of ice, water, and steam, which is all H<sub>2</sub>O, but the fact is that when steam is steam, it is not ice. So, the analogies always break down. We cannot make a good analogy, and we should not even try because we are talking about His infinite majesty who is greater than our minds can comprehend.

**Caller:** I have a question about the trinity. Jesus says in John 14:28 that

*... my Father is greater than I.*

If they are the same God, how can the Father be greater than Jesus?

**Mr. C.:** We read in Philippians Chapter 2, verses 5 to 8:

*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

In order to be the Messiah, Christ emptied Himself of His glory. He had to take on a human nature and humiliate Himself, and nothing could

be worse than identifying Himself with rebellious, sinful man. He had to be laden with the sins of those He came to save. God says in Galatians 3:13:

*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*

Christ became a curse for us. God the Father was not cursed, and therefore, in that sense, Christ became lower than the Father. We read in John 17:5, that Jesus prayed:

*And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

Jesus said that “*my Father is greater than I,*” nevertheless, from eternity past and eternity future, the Lord Jesus Christ is as glorious as God the Father.

## **The Will of God**

**Caller:** What is the perfect will of God?

**Mr. C.:** The perfect will of God is all that we find in the Bible. The Bible is the law book of God in which God declares how we are to live, how we are to relate to our fellow man, how we are to relate to our family, and how we are to relate to God. If we want to know the will of God, we should become as acquainted as possible with the Bible.

We are to pray that the Lord will give us obedience to the Bible.

**Caller:** How does God use sin to promote His plan? For example, when Jacob lied and stole his brother’s birthright, that was part of God’s plan, right?

**Mr. C.:** It was very grievous sin when Jacob lied and stole the birthright from Esau, although it was God’s intention that Jacob was to have the birthright. It was heinous sin for the brothers of Joseph to sell him into slavery in Egypt, but through it God provided for the nation of Israel. In these instances, God used sin to further His own plan.

We can look at it objectively. God is going to get His will done. He can work through our sins or around our sins or He can keep us from sin.

The fact that He works through our sins at times to get His will accomplished never condones nor nullifies the terrible nature of sin.

**Caller:** Is it God's will that everybody come into the knowledge of Jesus Christ?

**Mr. C.:** No. It is God's will that all those whom He elected to salvation be saved, and they will become saved. God's plan cannot be frustrated. He very clearly declares in the New Testament, for example, in Ephesians 1:3-6:

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen [elected] us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

In other words, if God has decided to save someone, no one frustrate His decision. God does all the work of saving us, and He will make sure that we get saved. Salvation is altogether God's business.

Our task is to be faithful witnesses because God works through His Word to save those whom He plans to save. He says we must believe, and He says we must repent and be washed of our sins, but, of course, no one can do that because we are all spiritually dead.

Here and there, someone does obey. Why? Because God is doing the work of saving that person.

**Caller:** In Exodus 4, the Bible says that God hardened pharaoh's heart. What would pharaoh have done if God had not hardened his heart?

**Mr. C.:** In the case of pharaoh, God was demonstrating His power. If God had not hardened pharaoh's heart, that does not mean that pharaoh would have become saved. We read in Romans 9:17:

*For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*

God normally restrains sin in the lives of the unsaved. You might have heard about the two boys who shot a bunch of their schoolmates, and we might say, “How could they have done that?” Do people realize that this is the essential nature of the whole human race? We read in Mark 7:21-23:

*For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.*

The only reason we do not see more of these things is that God restrains sin in the lives of people. Otherwise, the world would destroy itself very quickly. Every now and then, God removes His hand of restraint, and the result is terrible wickedness of various kinds, shooting other citizens, shooting school mates, building furnaces for the purpose of killing people in them, this is all what man does by nature. Our hearts are desperately wicked. We read in Jeremiah 17:9:

*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

The heart is desperately wicked until we become saved. When we become saved, we have a new resurrected soul in which we never want to sin again, and there is a very distinct change in the way we conduct ourselves in this world.

## **The Wrath of God**

**Caller:** Why is it that we are now under the wrath of God because we are sinners, but we also have to spend eternity in hell?

**Mr. C.:** The following illustration teaches this very clearly. Suppose a man commits a dastardly crime, and he has to go to trial so that his guilt can be determined officially and so that the penalty for his crime can be pronounced.

Meanwhile, he is put in jail because the authorities do not want him to flee the country. He is not yet under sentence, but he is in jail. When he goes to trial, if somehow it can be shown that he did not commit the crime, then he is let out of jail; he is a free man.

On the other hand, if he is found guilty, and sentenced by the law to 20 years in prison, or whatever the sentence might be, then he is put in jail for that period of time. He is now officially in jail.

That is exactly the way it is with all of us. By nature, we are sinners, and because we are sinners, we are under the wrath of God. We are not eternally under the wrath of God because we have not yet been sentenced; we have not yet stood for trial.

On the last day, if we have not become saved, we will stand for trial, and we will be found guilty, and sentence will be passed. We know what that sentence is: eternal damnation. Then we will be locked in hell forever.

Of course, if we have become saved, we will not stand for trial because we have stood for trial in Christ. The gift of salvation is utterly fabulous; it is beyond our understanding.

We might wonder why people do not plead with God for the gift of salvation (only God can give it), but mankind is spiritually blind. Mankind wants some credit for being saved; they want to be in control of their salvation. They do not want to trust altogether that God would save them apart from anything that they do. Consequently, they repudiate and they turn away from God's wonderful gift of salvation.

## THE GREAT COMMISSION

**Caller:** What does it mean when Jesus told the disciples to occupy until I come? What is the significance of that?

**Mr. C.:** That has to do with bringing the Gospel to the world. When the first two missionaries were sent out, they were sent out by God Himself. Paul and Barnabas were sent by the church in Antioch, as we read in Acts 13, and it was the first official sending forth of the Gospel by the corporate body or the organized church. The two witnesses in Revelation represent the church. As we approach the end, the churches are falling away, but God does not seem to be saying that no one can present the Gospel. There will be a light in the world but it will not come from the organized church.

For example, here at Family Radio, we are sent forth directly by Christ as we endeavor to obey the command to go into all the world with the Gospel.

**Caller:** How can I be a witness of the Gospel?

**Mr. C.:** You can witness to your children, your neighbors, and your friends. You can join Family Radio where we pool our resources so that we can do together what we cannot do individually, namely, broadcast the Gospel.

When we make our wherewithal available to bring the Gospel to the world, we are being a witness. When we pass out “Does God Love You?” tracts, we are being a witness, and that is a marvelous way to witness. When we invite someone to listen to Family Radio, we are being a witness. When we talk to someone about the Lord Jesus, we are being a witness.

**Caller:** If there were ten men, and five were going to be saved and five were not going to be saved, would it be necessary for those five men who were going to be saved to hear the Gospel, since they, according to what you say, are going to be saved because God has predestined them to salvation?

**Mr. C.:** Absolutely yes! That is God’s methodology. Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. We read in Romans 10:13-17:

*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 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? 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! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

This is why Christ commands the believers, those who have trusted in Him, in Mark 16:15:

*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

We are to go into the world with the Gospel. God’s salvation still has to be applied to the lives of those He came to save. This is the reason why we broadcast the Gospel over the radio, we do so that we

can witness to as many people as possible. Jesus our Savior, who is eternal God Himself, says in Luke 19:10:

*For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

Christ works through the Gospel to find those whom He had planned to save. He seeks them out, and He saves them through the fact that they have been under the hearing of the Gospel. When we become believers, we look for opportunities to be obedient to the command to bring the Gospel to the world. Family Radio offers a fine opportunity for us to pool our resources and provide funds so that we can buy radio stations or buy time on radio stations to send the Gospel out into the world.

God the Holy Spirit chose the first two missionaries to go and preach the Gospel. We read in Acts 13:2-5:

*As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.*

The believers are to carry the Gospel into all the world, and God Himself will apply His Gospel to the hearts of those He came to save. In other words, God established a divine economy in that this is the way it will work.

When we become saved, that is not the completion of our salvation. One more act will happen, and it will happen on the last day. On the last day, we will receive our new resurrected, spiritual body; then our salvation will be complete in every sense of the word

## **Witnessing to Those in False Gospels**

**Caller:** Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons come to my house and confuse me. I do not know what to do.

**Mr. C.:** The Bible tells us that if someone comes with another gospel, as these people you mentioned do, we are to give them no greeting. Do not engage in conversation with them. Tell them, “I would be disobeying God if I talked with you.” Then close your door. God says in II John 1:9-11:

*Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*

These people know the verses they use but they do not know the Bible. They might seem convincing because they build their theology around the few verses they use. They do not consider many verses. We are not to try to witness to them. Of course, if they ask what you believe you can tell them, but they are coming as missionaries of their gospel.

**Caller:** I have two friends who attend a church that features signs and wonders. How can I explain to them that they should get away from that church and that false teaching without offending them?

**Mr. C.:** This is a very difficult matter. Your friends are in that church because they believe that is truth. Then you come along and say to them, “that is not truth,” but you cannot make them understand

They read the Bible in the light of their authority, which is a wider authority than the authority of the Bible alone and in its entirety. They do not listen to the Word of God in the same way that you listen to the Word of God.

However, the Bible is the Word of God, and you can point out to them the fact that we are not to add to the words of the prophecy of this book lest we come under the plagues written therein. That principle is stated in Revelation 22:18.

All you can do is show them this verse and then pray for them. You cannot change their minds, and I cannot, no one can. God is the only one who can change their minds. It is so marvelous that we can pray for our loved ones and our friends. We can pray that God will turn around those who are on a wrong path.

## HEALING

**Caller:** Does God still do miracle healings?

**Mr. C.:** We have to define “miracle healings”. When Jesus did miracles or the apostles did miracles, God gives us a lot of illustrations. Here’s a man with a withered hand that had never grown. It is a little, tiny atrophied hand. Instantly it is a whole hand. That is a miracle. That is not happening anywhere in the world today.

When God healed a leper, someone who had leprosy and many parts of their bodies were already being abused because of that leprosy and instantly he has skin that is like a baby’s skin. That is a miracle. That is not happening anywhere in the world today.

It is a fact that all healing comes from God. Sometimes a healing may come about a little bit faster than ordinary and so we say it is a miracle. No, it was not a miracle it was just that healing sometimes comes a little faster. There are no miracle healings if we are going to define miracle healings by the miracles that Jesus did. That is not happening.

**Caller:** Does the Bible say that the prayer of faith will heal the sick?

**Mr. C.:** You are probably thinking of James Chapter 5. You have to read that very carefully because otherwise, you can get a wrong understanding.

We read in James 5:14:

*Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.*

The Greek word for “sick” in this verse is *aesthenio*, which is used to speak of any kind of illness, physical, mental, or spiritual illness.

Why do they call for the elders of the church? The elders are not doctors; they do not come with medicine. The elders come with spiritual counseling. If someone is very sick and maybe dying, the elders come to check on the spiritual condition of that individual. This will be shown to be true as we go on. “*Let them pray over him.*” We read in Mark 9:29,

*This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.*

In other words, they pray that this person might be saved.

“Anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord” is not talking about physical anointing because you could pour all the oil you want on someone and it will not change anything. The oil that God is speaking about is the oil of the Holy Spirit. If we bring the Gospel to someone, and he becomes a believer, he is anointed with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit comes into his life and brings him salvation, and this is proven by the next verse, verse 15:

*And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

“Save” has to do with salvation, but the word “sick” here is a different word from the word “sick” used in verse 14, which could refer to physical, mental, or spiritual illness. This word “sick” is used very rarely in the Bible, and it is the Greek word *kamno*. When this word is used, it has nothing to do with physical illness; it has to do with spiritual illness, spiritual fatigue. If this person is sick spiritually, and we are all spiritually sick before we are saved, and if it is God’s intention to save this person, then as the elders visit, there will be salvation for him

This is proven as it goes along. “*The Lord shall raise him up*” means that he has been raised with Christ. The next phrase guarantees that we are on the right track. “*And if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*” Well, everybody is a sinner, but to have our sins forgiven means that we have become saved. It occurs at the moment we are saved.

Thus, if a man is physically or mentally ill, or whatever the illness might be, the elders come to him, and they bring the Gospel. Hopefully, through the Gospel, he will be saved. This person might die the same night, or he might die tomorrow, or he might become well again, but the elders are not there to pray for the physical health of that person. The elders are there to administer spiritual counseling and share the Gospel with him so that hopefully, he will become saved, that is, his sins might be forgiven if he had not already become saved.

If the nature of the Gospel was that people might have physical health, it would be a terrible catastrophe because everybody finally dies, and we usually die of an illness of some kind. If the purpose of the Gospel was to give us physical health, it would be a mockery. The purpose of the Gospel is to give us a health that is infinitely more important than physical health; the purpose of the Gospel is to give us spiritual health, eternal life. If we have been given eternal life, it can never be lost. Isaiah 53 talks

about the healing of our sin-sick souls. We read in Isaiah 53:5-6:

*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. 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.*

When we are saved, we are healed of our sins. We were under the wrath of God because of our sins, but when we have spiritual healing, we are no longer under the wrath of God. That is a big deal!

**Caller:** What does God mean by John 14:12? Is He saying that believers will be able to perform miracles like physical healing?

**Mr. C.:** We read in John 14:12:

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.*

Has anyone done greater miracles than Jesus? Absolutely not! No one has raised a stinking corpse from the dead. No one has walked on water. No one has fed 5,000 people from a few loaves of bread and a few fish. What does God mean that we shall do greater things than these?

What could it be? It is not miracles.

We read in Luke 4 that Christ came to bring the Gospel to the world. Jesus says in Luke 4:18-19:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*

Preaching the Gospel is the work that He assigned to the body of believers. Jesus preached the Gospel for three and a half years, and only a handful of people were saved. After Jesus went back to heaven, Peter preached one sermon, and about 3,000 were saved. Peter was doing the work that Jesus did, but it is greater work, and it has been going on ever

since then. Wherever the Gospel is clearly preached, people are being saved, and they are being saved in greater numbers than when Jesus brought the Gospel.

Insofar as miracles, no one has been able to do the miracles that Jesus did. The fact is that some churches have a gospel that is different from the Gospel of the Bible, and they believe in signs and wonders. Jesus warns that as we approach the end, and I believe we are near the end, false prophets will arise. We read in Matthew 24:24:

*For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*

A number of statements in the Bible are about churches doing signs and wonders near the end of time. In every case, it is talking about churches that are overrun by Satan. Signs and wonders are the hallmark of Satan's false gospels. Normally, in a church where there is an interest in signs and wonders, there is close at hand an interest in visions, voices, and tongues, which go hand in hand with signs and wonders.

Tongues is called a sign in the Bible. These kind of gospels have a different authority; their authority is not the Bible alone and in its entirety. These kinds of gospels are flourishing all over the world today, and the Bible says they will flourish. When we examine the doctrines of these churches, we find that their doctrines are alien to the Bible.

Jesus says in Matthew 12:38-40:

*Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

In other words, the great miracle is the atonement and not miracles of healing. Jesus says an evil and an adulterous generation will seek for these signs.

If miraculous physical healing were the nature of the Gospel, then the Gospel would be a disaster because even those who think they have experienced healing will die eventually. There are no exceptions, and ordinarily, they die of an illness (it might be the same illness or another

illness). So, if the Gospel brought miraculous physical healing, the Gospel would be a total failure.

Wonderfully, the Gospel is not a failure because miraculous physical healing and miraculous signs and wonders are not the essence of the Gospel. These things were employed for a little while by Jesus and the apostles, and during that time, many people experienced truly miraculous healing. After Pentecost, the apostles did signs and wonders for a little while, and Peter and Philip did signs and wonders for a brief period of time, and then we do not read about it any more.

We read that the Apostle Paul told Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake and his many ailments; in other words, he could use wine as medicine. Far more people were healed miraculously and experienced miracles before Christ went to heaven than after Pentecost. People today say, "Oh, this is Pentecost, and there will be signs and wonders."

This happens when people have a gospel with an authority that is different from the Gospel of the Bible alone and in its entirety. The moment they start to listen to voices, dreams, or visions and think it is from God, they have a wider authority than the true Gospel. Therefore, it is no longer the true Gospel. If it is not the true Gospel, it is a false gospel.

God carefully explained that this would happen in Matthew 24:24. God is describing the character of the church near the end of time: false prophets and false christs, that is, emissaries of Satan (who comes as an angel of light), come with signs and wonders. They think they are worshipping Christ but in actuality, they have been hoodwinked or conned by Satan; they are worshipping Satan. In the Bible, every reference to signs and wonders near the end of time is indicative of the activity of Satan. We want to stay a thousand miles away from that kind of activity and the whole idea of signs and wonders.

## HEAVEN

**Caller:** In Luke 23:43, Jesus said to the thief on the cross, "*To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*" Does this mean that he went straight to heaven?

**Mr. C.:** Yes. Paradise is heaven, where God is. The thief had become a believer right there on the cross, so when he died, his body was put in a grave, but in his soul existence, he went to be with God in heaven.

**Caller:** Is it true that there is no sin in heaven?

**Mr. C.:** It is true that there is no sin in heaven. Before Christ went to the cross, Satan, who had rebelled against God, still had access to heaven. At the time of the cross, Satan was driven from heaven. Thus, there are no beings in heaven that are involved in sin. From everything we read in the Bible, we have to conclude there is no sin in heaven.

**Caller:** Will you read I John Chapter 1, verse 3, and Luke 20:37 and 38? In these verses, is God saying that we will be known by our names, like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, when we get to heaven? Also, do these passages relate to the marriage relationship?

**Mr. C.:** We read in I John Chapter 1, verse 3:

*That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

God says in Luke Chapter 20, verses 37 and 38:

*Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.*

If we become saved, we will be with Christ for evermore. We could re-phrase the question this way: Do we lose our identity in eternity?

The best clue we have in answer to this question is by examining what happened on the Mount of Transfiguration. We read in Matthew Chapter 17, verses 1 through 3:

*And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.*

Moses and Elias (Elijah), who had lived and died on earth much earlier, and who ever since they died had been living in heaven, came from heaven and appeared before Jesus and the three apostles. Moses was still Moses, and Elijah was still Elijah, which means that in heaven, we will maintain our identity eternally.

Insofar as the marriage relationship is concerned, it does not exist in heaven. In heaven, they neither marry nor are they given in marriage. God says in Matthew Chapter 22, verse 30:

*For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.*

As a matter of fact, in heaven we are all the bride of Christ. How could we be married to someone else?

## HELL

**Caller:** Can you describe hell?

**Mr. C.:** Hell is eternal damnation. Hell is most terrible and most awful and the thought of it should strike terror in our hearts. The Bible uses many different phrases and sentences in order to give us an idea of the awfulness of hell.

No one has ever been in the place called hell because it has not yet come into existence. The Bible is our guide, and God speaks of hell as a lake of fire, a place of outer darkness, a place where the worm does not die, and where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Read Deuteronomy 28, from verse 15 to the end of the chapter, and you will see expression after expression of things that happen on this earth which are used to develop a picture of the awfulness of hell. Hell is the reason why we are so eager to share the Gospel. The only antidote for hell is the Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot be happier than when someone becomes saved.

**Caller:** Can you give some verses to prove that if someone remains unsaved, there is no hope for him, and he will go to hell?

**Mr. C.:** This is a terrible truth, and we might not like it, but it is true, and that is why the Bible says in Hebrews 2:3:

*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.*

We read in Hebrews 9:27:

*And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*

So, judgment and hell are altogether certain for the unsaved. God is talking about the end of the world in John 5:28-29, where we read:

*Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*

The only people who have done good in God's sight are those who have received the righteousness of Christ; while they were still living on earth, they became saved.

It is an awful thing to contemplate, but if we die unsaved, there is no hope and no possibility of salvation.

God gives us the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16. The rich man died and was in hell, and he asked Abraham to send a drop of water to cool his tongue. Abraham said there is a great chasm, and he could not send anyone. This is a dramatic picture of someone who hopes there might be a little mercy or a little Gospel after he dies, but there is none. If he dies unsaved, hell is a certainty.

These verses are God's Word to us, and we better listen very carefully. In our finite minds, which are very tiny compared with the infinite wisdom of God, we do not like what the Bible says, and we decide that there must be another way. Then, we try to design our own plan and that means we are not listening to God.

Frankly, I would not trust my mind for anything. I can trust only what God has to say in His Word, the Bible.

**Caller:** Will you comment on Luke 12:47-48?

**Mr. C.:** There we read:

*And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

Salvation is a gift. The same gift of eternal life is given to every believer. Hell is payment for sin. We read in Romans 6:23:

*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

The punishment has to be in proportion to the sin. Any sin is sufficient to put us in hell, and hell is enormously terrible even at best. Those who have known the Gospel, for example, and they have knowledge of the will of God and the law of God, are more guilty, and they will be punished more than those who have never heard the Gospel. Thus, there are different degrees of punishment, but even the least punishment is super, super terrible.

There is no comfort in this. God underscores that sin brings payment, which is enduring the wrath of God.

**Caller:** Where is hell located?

**Mr. C.:** Hell does exist today. Hell is the condition of being under the wrath of God. Every unsaved person, in that sense, is in hell. That is where God finds us when He saves us. He finds us under the wrath of God and brings us out from under the wrath of God, that is, He brings us out of hell and into eternal life.

On the last day, there will be an official arraignment, an official trial, of all the peoples of the world to discover if they have sinned. Of course, everyone who stands for trial will be found guilty of sin, and then they must endure the wrath of God forever.

But God has other plans for this present universe. It is going to be destroyed by fire and re-created a new universe, a new heaven and a new earth, where Christ will dwell eternally with all the believers, which means He has to find another place for the unsaved who are under the wrath of God forever. Wherever that is, we do not know. God has to make that place, and it will be called hell forever.

Hell will be outside the new heaven and the new earth. The unsaved can never have identification with the new heavens and the new earth. Hell will be a place of super-terrible torment. The language of hell is ugly.

We read in Revelation 14:11:

*And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night.*

Matthew 8:12 tells us:

*But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness [hell]: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

God speaks of hell as a lake of fire in Revelation 20:10:

*And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

**Caller:** Does the word “hell” mean “grave”?

**Mr. C.:** The word “hell” in the original Hebrew of the Old Testament and the original Greek of the New Testament can mean the “grave,” but the definition depends on the context. If the context is about something that is for evermore, then it is talking about being under the wrath of God forever in hell.

Hell is also called “*a lake of fire*” (Revelation Chapters 19 and 20), a place of “*outer darkness*” (Matthew 8:12, Matthew 22:13, Matthew 25:30), and a place where there is “*weeping and gnashing of teeth*” (Matthew 25:30, Luke 13:28).

The Bible also talks about the “grave,” and normally, the context will indicate which word is in view, but, occasionally, the usage and the context of the word do not tell us whether God is talking about the grave or eternal damnation.

We know that the grave is associated with hell in the sense that if we die unsaved, the next thing we will know consciously is that we have been resurrected to stand for judgment, and we will be cast into hell. Thus, there is a very intimate relationship between the grave and hell.

## Purgatory

**Caller:** Does the Bible talk about purgatory?

**Mr. C.:** It is not found in the Bible. Purgatory is a doctrine taught by the Roman Catholic Church. Purgatory means to be purged, and it is taught that purgatory is a place people can go when they die and somehow get purged of their sins. The Bible says it is appointed unto men once to die and then the judgment.

When we die, our eternal destiny is absolutely determined. If we are a child of God when we die, our soul leaves our body and in our soul we go to live and reign with Christ in heaven. If we are not saved when we die, we go to a place of silence to wait for the resurrection of the last day

at which time we will stand before the judgment throne. Purgatory is not a Biblical idea at all.

## HOLIDAYS

**Caller:** Is it wrong for people in church to celebrate Halloween? This year Halloween is on Sunday, and some people want to have a Halloween party at the church.

**Mr. C.:** I would never encourage anyone who believes in Christ to celebrate Halloween. I do not know if Halloween is celebrated in other countries, but it is widely observed in the United States. It has degenerated into a day of worshipping and adulating Satan. The whole business of Halloween (the masks, skeletons, goblins, witches, and so on) eulogizes Satan.

**Caller:** What does the Bible say about celebrating holidays, for instance, Christmas?

**Mr. C.:** In every nation but particularly in Western Civilization, we tend to make a big thing of Christmas. On that day, we say we are celebrating the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is very significant that God does not give us the date of the birth of Christ. Mankind has named December 25<sup>th</sup> as the day to celebrate the birth of Christ, but that date is simply out of the minds of men. That date is not indicated anywhere in the Bible.

When we examine the Bible very carefully, we know that the likelihood is that Christ was born around the first week of October. That time fits the Biblical language more accurately than December 25, but God does not give us the precise date.

There is no command in the Bible that says we are to celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus. So, we wonder, “Why do Christians do this? Are they going contrary to the Word of God?”

We must bear in mind that we are created to bring praise and glory to God. There is no command in the Bible that says we are not to celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is very important. We are not commanded to celebrate the birth of Christ nor are we commanded not to celebrate the birth of Christ.

We are commanded to praise and glorify His name. So, there are those who wish to celebrate the birth of Christ by focusing attention on the Savior on a particular day. It is not necessary that it be the actual day

when Christ was born, since we do not know that date. On Christmas day, we focus our attention on the fact that Christ was born to be our Savior; this is a very beautiful way of carrying out the command to praise and glorify God.

Unfortunately, of course, the world has something to say about the celebration. The unsaved of the world do not care about Christ, but they like the idea of a celebration, so they have substituted Santa Claus and a whole lot of other things that have nothing at all to do with glorifying and magnifying the Name of Christ. It is their good pleasure to do that. Christmas is not a holy day; it is not a day set apart by the Bible. Christmas is a day to praise Him for those who want to glorify Christ.

At Christmas time on Family Radio, for example, we have a few days of just Gospel music, Christmas music, which focuses on the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ has come as our Savior. This is another way of bringing the Gospel to the world.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

**Caller:** What is the Holy Spirit? Do we worship the Holy Spirit?

**Mr. C.:** The Holy Spirit is God Himself. The Bible reveals God as one God and yet as three distinct persons. This is an enigma; this is a puzzle that we cannot figure out because our human minds were not created to be able to do that. God is infinite; He is revealed as God the Father, God the Lord Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, and the Heavenly Father is God, and that is a divine mystery.

When we worship God, we are worshipping God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We read of Jesus in Colossians 2:9,

*For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*

We read of the Holy Spirit in John 4:24,

*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

**Caller:** Can you give some references in the Bible that say the Holy Spirit is God?

**Mr. C.:** John 4:24 says:

*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

In other words, He is the very essence of God: He is the Holy Spirit. We read in Acts 13:1-4:

*Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost [Holy Spirit] said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.*

The Holy Spirit commanded the church at Antioch to send out Saul of Tarsus and Barnabas as the first missionaries. The Holy Spirit is eternal God.

**Caller:** Will you comment on the “*Holy Ghost*” and the “*Spirit of truth*” in John 16:13 and John 14:26?

**Mr. C.:** We read in John 16:13:

*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

Then we read in John 14:26:

*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have told you.*

When the Bible says, “*he shall teach you all things,*” it means all of those things that God wants us to know. We read in Deuteronomy that the secret things belong to God. Deuteronomy 29:29 says:

*The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever; that we may do all the words of this law.*

The Holy Spirit does not teach us, for example, about the very essence of God, or how He can be present everywhere, or how He is from everlasting, or how He could speak and bring this world and universe into existence. God is very mysterious. It is beyond our human minds to comprehend God.

On the other hand, God the Holy Spirit gives us understanding so that we know we are sinners and that we need the Savior. God the Holy Spirit applies His Word to our hearts so that we begin to trust in Jesus as our Savior. God the Holy Spirit teaches us many things, but it is not God's good pleasure to teach us some other things.

In fact, when we study the Bible, we find that we are always learning. No matter how long we study the Bible, there is still a lot that we do not understand. As we continue to study and pray that the Holy Spirit will give us wisdom, and that He will enlighten our mind, from time to time, we learn something more. There is no end of learning because the Bible is the revelation of the infinite mind of God.

You have to remember that the Holy Spirit is eternal God, and there is a lot we do not understand about God. For example, the Bible speaks of the "*Spirit of Christ*," which we read in I Peter 1:11:

*Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.*

God also speaks of Christ being the Father. There is a lot of mystery about the Godhead, and we can learn certain things, but there is a great limitation of what we can know.

## ISRAEL

**Caller:** Could you please explain Romans 11:25 and 26?

**Mr. C.:** This passage, Romans Chapter 11, verses 25 and 26, has been more widely misunderstood than almost any other passage in the Bible.

In fact, it is amazing to me that so many Bible teachers try to make Romans 11:25 and 26 say just the opposite of what it says. This is terrible because they are saying, “Thus saith the Lord,” when the Lord has not said that.

The setting of Romans Chapter 11 is that God is explaining that most of the people in the nation of Israel were blinded, but there is a remnant, chosen by grace, who have become saved. Paul used himself as an example of those who have become saved. Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, says in verse 5:

*Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*

Then he says in verse 7:

*What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.*

Spiritual blindness was the condition of national Israel throughout its history and is still the condition right up to the present day. They absolutely do not want the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. They do not want Him as their Messiah.

In verse 25, God begins to bring the first 24 verses of this chapter to conclusion. It is addressed to the Gentile world so that we will have an understanding of how national Israel fit into God’s salvation plan. God says in Romans Chapter 11, verse 25:

*For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel [verse 7 says it happened to most of national Israel], until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*

“Until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in” means that national Israel will continue to be spiritually blind, except for a remnant chosen by grace, as long as there is one Gentile, or non-Jew, anywhere in the world, who is still to be saved.

In our generation, Israel has been a nation for over 50 years, and they are as adamant about their opposition to Christ as the Messiah as they were at any time in their history. There has been no change, and there will be no change. God says that their condition will remain the same until the last person who is of the elect of God becomes saved.

When the last Gentile has become saved, it will be the end of the world. The world will continue to its predetermined end, but before the world can end, all those who have been elected to salvation will have become saved.

Then we read in the first part of Romans 11:26:

*And so all Israel shall be saved. . . .*

All kinds of Bible teachers do terrible violence to this verse. They understand this verse to say, “And then all Israel shall be saved.” In other words, they change the word “so” to “then.” They teach that after the Gentiles have been saved, God is going to do a work in national Israel. First of all, that does not make any sense because national Israel, that is, the blood descendants of Abraham, have been on earth for 4,000 years. What about all the Jews who lived and died unsaved during the past 4,000 years? They are part of national Israel. They are not going to be resurrected and have a second opportunity.

More than that, the word “so” does not mean “then.” “So” is not a chronological word. “So” means “in this manner,” or “thus,” or “in this way.” In what way? In what manner? In the manner in which God describes in Romans Chapter 11, namely, that most of national Israel is blinded, but there is a remnant chosen by grace. In this manner, all Israel that is to be saved, shall be saved.

This is not talking, in any sense, about a future change in God’s plan. It simply ties back into everything that has gone before, as God has reported in the previous 25 verses.

God explains why His salvation can come to the remnant of national Israel that is chosen by grace. He says in the second part of Romans 11, verse 26 and verse 27:

*. . . 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.*

When Christ came and took on a human nature, to whom did He come? He came to the Jews. He was born in Bethlehem, a Jewish city. He was reared in Nazareth, a Jewish city. He was crucified in Jerusalem, a Jewish city. For three and half years, He ministered mainly around the Sea of Galilee, a Jewish area. He came to the nation of Israel, and a remnant of national Israel was chosen by grace. Later, He told the disciples that they were to go into all the world with the Gospel because salvation was to come to the Gentiles as well.

These verses are easy to understand if we read them carefully. We cannot superimpose something we have been taught upon these verses. God does not have a future plan for national Israel; that idea is not found anywhere in the Bible. The Bible indicates that we are in the last days; we are headed right toward the end of time. When the last Gentile has become saved, that will be the end of the Gospel era. It will be the end of the world.

**Caller:** What is the meaning of Romans 11:25? I have heard that it means the nation of Israel will convert to Christianity after the last Gentile is saved.

**Mr. C.:** Those who teach that idea are not reading the Bible carefully. Romans Chapter 11 deals with national Israel, and in verses 5 to 7 we read:

*Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election [the remnant chosen by grace] hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.*

We read in Romans Chapter 11, verse 25:

*For I would not, brethren [this is to the Gentiles], that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel [which we read in verse 7], until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*

This verse means that spiritual blindness will remain upon national Israel, except for the remnant chosen by grace, until the last individual in all the nations of the world, who is to become saved, has become saved. The “fulness of the Gentiles” means that everyone who is to become saved has become saved. When they have all become saved, the task of bringing the Gospel to the world will end. The whole world will have heard the Gospel, and all the elect will have been brought into the kingdom of God, and then Christ will return.

We read in Matthew Chapter 24, verse 14:

*And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

Theologians try to make Romans Chapter 11, verse 26, say what they want it to say. God says in this verse:

*And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.*

Theologians change the word “so” to “then,” that is, “then all Israel shall be saved.” In the Greek, the original language of the New Testament, the word that is translated “so” cannot be translated “then.” The Greek word means “in this manner,” or “thus,” or “in this fashion” all Israel shall be saved. In what fashion?

A remnant chosen by grace will be saved and the rest are blinded. The remnant will be saved, as God explains in verse 26, because out of Zion will come the Deliverer or the Savior. We read in Romans 11, verse 27:

*For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.*

Who is the Deliverer? The Lord Jesus Christ is the Deliverer; He is the Savior. To whom did Jesus come? He came to the Jews. He was born a Jew. He lived in Nazareth, and He preached in Galilee and Jerusalem, and He died there to pay for the sins of those He came to save. There is a remnant chosen by grace out of national Israel because Christ came to save those individuals from their sins.

“*And so all Israel shall be saved*” means that, “all of Israel that is to be saved will be saved in this way.” There is no possibility that this passage can be saying that at some future time, God will do something more with national Israel.

What is the nation of Israel? What happens if we take “*all Israel*” very literally? If you try to make the word “all” include all the blood descendants of Abraham, that would include all of the Israelites who went through the wilderness after they came out of Egypt. The Bible says in Hebrews Chapter 3 that they perished because of unbelief. A couple of million people died in the wilderness without salvation, and they are part of Israel.

In the Old Testament, how many Israelites became saved? Most of the time, Israel was in rebellion against God, and yet, they are all part

of national Israel. They are all blood descendants of Abraham. When Christ came, how many people of the Jewish nation claimed Christ as their Savior? A tiny remnant. Most of the people were ready to shout, “Crucify Him!”

If “*all*” Israel in Romans 11, verse 26, encompassed all of national Israel, that would mean that God would have to “back up” and save the people who came out of Egypt 3500 years ago. God would have to back up and save all the Jews who lived during the time when the Bible was being written. He would have to save all the people of the nation of Israel who lived from the time of Christ to the present time. Of course, we know that is all impossible.

When we recognize the fact that the word “all” is conditioned by the context in which it is used, then we have no problem. “*All Israel*” that is to be saved, will be saved.

**Caller:** Does the Bible prophesy anything about the modern-day nation of Israel that was begun in 1948?

**Mr. C.:** The only passages that relate to the fact that Israel became a nation again are Mark Chapter 13 and Matthew Chapter 24. God says about the same thing in these two passages. We read in Matthew 24, verses 32 and 33:

*Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it [Christ] is near, even at the doors.*

When we study the phrase “*fig tree*,” we learn that it relates to national Israel. This passages prophesies that someday, the fig tree would be in leaf again. In a sense, it is a miracle that Israel is again a nation. In A.D. 70, Israel was destroyed by the Roman Titus, and they did not have a homeland again until 1948. In 1948, they became a nation, that is, the fig tree is in leaf; it looks like a viable fruit tree, but there is no fruit. It is in leaf, but it is not in fruit.

In one incident, Jesus cursed the fig tree. We read in Matthew Chapter 21, verses 18 through 20:

*Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever.*

*And presently the fig tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!*

This indicates that national Israel will never again bear fruit; as a nation, they will never turn to Christ, but there is a remnant chosen by grace. I believe that the prophecy of the fig tree being in leaf has been fulfilled in our day. It is a dramatic sign that we are close to the end of the world.

## **The Israel of God**

**Caller:** Will you explain Romans 2:28-29? Who are the real Jews?

**Mr. C.:** We read in Romans Chapter 2, verses 28 and 29:

*For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

In the Old Testament, God commanded that all the male blood descendants of Abraham were to be circumcised (Genesis 17:4), and that law is still followed today by the Jews. Everyone who is a blood descendant of Abraham is a physical Jew.

The Jew that God talks about in this passage is the person who has come to trust in the Lord Jesus. God says in Galatians Chapter 3, verse 29:

*And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

If someone is Christ's, it means that he has become saved.

We can be a Gentile and belong to the Lord Jesus, and then spiritually, we are of the seed of Abraham, that is, of the lineage of Abraham. We are the true Jews, which God speaks of in Romans 2:28 and 29. We are a Jew inwardly.

“Circumcision is that of the heart” means that our sins have been cut off. It has nothing to do with physical circumcision.