

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians

by Oliver B. Greene

Copyright @ 1963

The Gospel Hour, Inc., Greenville, South Carolina

CHAPTER TEN -

THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD BREAKS DOWN RACIAL BARRIERS

Ephesians 2, verses 11-13

"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the Blood of CHRIST."

Up to verse 11 we have dealt with individuals - either as sinners, or as sons . . . saved, or lost. But here we pass into a deeper truth: We see clearly that the Blood of JESUS CHRIST breaks down all racial barriers . . . Jew and Gentile become one in the Body of CHRIST.

Certainly the Blood of JESUS CHRIST saves the individual, and salvation is an individual act; but it goes beyond that.

JESUS certainly died for the individual - but His command is, **"the Gospel to every creature... Jew, Gentile, rich, poor, bond or free."** He **"hath made of one Blood all nations of men."** In CHRIST we have a new society.

I know of no chapter in the Bible that more clearly points out the grace of GOD to all people than does John chapter four. Study the entire chapter. The Samaritan woman met JESUS at the well, and He asked her for a drink. She could not understand His being a Jew - yet asking a Samaritan woman for a drink. JESUS said to her, **"If thou knewest . . . who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water."**

The beautiful picture of salvation continues here, until the woman who came to the well, bringing an empty water pot, returned to the city with wells of living water flowing forth from her innermost being. So . . . in this marvelous Dispensation of the Grace of GOD, it is no longer Jew or Gentile: It is ALL nations, one in CHRIST . . . that is, all who believe. There is no difference.

Paul reminds the believers at Ephesus (and you and me, and all other Gentiles) that in time past

we were strangers to GOD's covenant, aliens from the elect nation Israel. We were Gentile "dogs." Even the disciples were instructed to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and were commanded NOT to go into the way of the Gentiles. The same command was given to the seventy; and when the Syrophenician woman (a Gentile) came to JESUS He informed her that the bread was for the children, not for dogs.

The woman recognized the fact that she was a Gentile, and she reminded the Master that even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the children's table. The literal translation from the Greek in this particular verse is "the little dogs . . . or, the puppies"; and this dear woman, for the sake of her daughter, was willing to take a puppy's place to receive the blessing from the Lord JESUS, the LAMB of GOD. JESUS told her in so many words, "Because of your faith, Heaven is at your disposal" (Matthew 15:22-28).

Yes, Paul reminds us that we were Gentiles in the flesh, we belonged to the great mass of lost, hell-bound humanity. Whether a small tribe in a remote jungle, or a giant nation in the flourishing cities, ALL natural men upon the face of the earth corrupt themselves with lust, immoralities, and the things of the devil. Without GOD and the miracle of His grace, the individual, the tribe, or the nation follows the flesh and dies IN the flesh, eternally lost!

According to Romans chapter one and 2:1, we know that all men are inexcusable in their ignorance of GOD. There is no excuse, because our first parents (Adam and Eve) knew GOD and later Noah and his family (the only living souls on this earth) knew GOD. But as men multiplied they refused to glorify GOD AS GOD. They changed the truth of GOD into a lie. They did not like to retain GOD in their knowledge; therefore they became darkened in their intelligence, depraved in their souls. Read Romans 1:21-32 and you will find a sad catalog of sin: that brought multiplied millions of heathen into existence upon this earth.

In Ephesians 2:11 the Jews referred to the Gentiles as "**the Uncircumcision.**" They regarded Gentiles as entirely outside the mercy of GOD, without any right, any hope or standing. Spiritually they were to them as "dogs"! But Paul uses a phrase that lowers the Jews to much the same level:

While the Gentiles were "**Gentiles in the flesh,**" the Jew deserves to be called "**Circumcision in the flesh made by hands.**" This was a mere cutting of the flesh, and the ritual had lost its spiritual import of the symbol of circumcision about the heart, to effect a separation unto GOD.

If you will take into consideration the statement Paul makes here to the Gentiles, in a city where there were also Jews other than himself, you will see that he was a preacher with a backbone. He put the Jews in the same category with the "Gentile dogs." Oh, yes - the unregenerate Ephesians were Gentiles in the flesh, but Paul declares here that we are ALL (Jew or Gentile, bond or free) in the same category. Read Romans chapter 3 very carefully.

In Paul's day, the Jew was very bitter toward the Gentile; but Paul warned the Jews that their formalism which did not change the heart nor add righteousness to the inner man, was the thing that caused racial hatred. The Jews refused to hear JESUS when He announced that He had come to save sinners . . . Jew, Gentile, or whomsoever.

The racial bigotry and race hatred in the heart of the Jew rejected their MESSIAH, refused to accept the Gentile as a brother, and finally nailed their CHRIST to a Cross!

In our present passage of Scripture Paul tells us that we were "**without God in the world.**" Yes, we were without GOD, and we were also without (on the outside) so far as the Jew who professed to know GOD was concerned. He refused to reach out his hand to the Gentile dog and say, "Come, my friend, into the family of GOD!" Instead, he refused to have any dealings with the Gentiles, and it is said that the Jew prayed at the beginning of the day that GOD would deliver him from seeing the face of a Gentile. I suppose there is no hatred on earth today quite so deep as the hatred the Jew had for the Gentile when JESUS came into the world to pay the sin-debt.

But Paul tells us in Romans that "**through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles.**" GOD can bring blessing out of tragedy.

We were definitely out . . . we had more than three strikes against us. We were without CHRIST, the MESSIAH Who came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, we were without a place among GOD's covenant people, alienated from the nation to which GOD gave the Law, and to whom He had sent JESUS, their king. We were strangers to His covenants of promise. GOD had pledged Himself to Israel, had given His promise to Abraham, and GOD could not and would not break His word. As Gentiles we were without GOD in the world, having many gods, but only gods who do not hear and speak . . . gods who could not help us. Yes, we Gentiles who are members of the body of CHRIST should shout the praises of GOD because of His grace which permitted JESUS CHRIST to taste death for Gentile "dogs."

I am so thankful today that I can tell ALL men - regardless of their race, regardless of their social standing - that JESUS died on the Cross for the sins of the whole wide world! Up to His death, the message was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but in John 10:16 JESUS said, "**Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold.**" He declared that He would make all sheep ONE fold. Up to the crucifixion, JESUS had a flock of sheep made up only of Israelites; but on this side of the Cross, the "**other sheep**" have been incorporated into the fold of GOD, and now there is ONE FOLD made up of Jews, Gentiles . . . and "**whosoever will.**"

The miracle of the one fold is summed up in three words: the "**Blood OF Christ**" "**BUT NOW IN CHRIST JESUS YE WHO SOMETIMES WERE FAR OFF ARE MADE NIGH BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.**"

Through the inspired pen of Paul The HOLY SPIRIT sets forth this inescapable contrast:

"**In time past . . . at that time . . . BUT NOW . . .**" Again, "**Ye WERE . . . BUT NOW . . . ye... ARE!**" We clearly see what we were as Gentiles, alienated from GOD, and we see what we are "**in Christ.**"

There was only one way known to GOD . . . it HAD to be "**by the Blood of Christ.**" Even Jehovah GOD could provide no other way:

"**When I see the Blood, I will pass over you.**" "**Without shedding of Blood is no remission.**"

"The Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

"Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

All born again believers are Blood kin . . . brothers and sisters because we are all under the Blood of the Lord JESUS. Through the power of the Blood we are all in CHRIST, one family, Blood-bought and Blood-related to GOD. We were purchased by the Blood of GOD (Acts 20:28).

~ end of chapter 10 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
