

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

ROMANS 11-12

For centuries, the Jews were God's chosen people. Yet, Israel went spiritually bankrupt, belly up. Ironically, the Jews file for Chapter 11 in Romans [Chapter 11!](#)

Romans 9 opened with a list of privileges God gave to the Hebrew people. But they failed to receive the righteousness of God that's in Christ. Rather than trust in Jesus, they relied on their own good works - a self-righteousness rather God's righteousness. And it caused them to go bankrupt spiritually! A people who were once [elected](#) by God, became [rejected by God](#).

Yet [Chapter 11](#) reveals God's reorganization plan. For in the future all God's glorious promises to Israel will be fulfilled. In the end all Israel will be saved.

Romans 11 begins, ["I say then, has God cast away His people?"](#) Here's the big question on the minds of Paul's readers, ["Is God through with the Jew?"](#) And his answer is personal... ["Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew."](#) Paul was a Hebrew and he'd been saved.

Though God put the nation on the bench, salvation was and still is open to everyone who trusts in Jesus, Jew or Gentile... Paul's first argument for God's faithfulness to the Jew is personal, but his second is historical and biblical... For in verse 2 he declares, ["Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel,](#)

saying, “LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life”? Recall Elijah’s depression. He stood up to 400 false prophets, yet one woman scared him. He tucked tail and ran from the wicked Queen Jezebel. Elijah prayed, “Woe is me, I’m the only person left who’s been faithful to God.”

Have you ever felt that way - like you were the last Christian standing at your work, or school, or in the neighborhood... Yet Paul points out that God always has a remnant of believers - even among the Jews...

He writes in verse 4, “But what does the divine response say to him? “I have reserved for Myself 7000 men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” And Paul applies this to his readers, “Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.” At times it can be a skeleton crew, but God always keeps a witness. Don’t ever think God has abandoned you. There’s more of us than you think!

And according to verse 6 everybody who belongs to God is saved by grace! He writes, “And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace.-But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.” Apparently, grace and works are mutually exclusive - it’s one or the other.

Realize, grace is grace and works are work. G r a c e a n d works are like oil and water. They’re two distinct ways of approaching God. You’re either trusting in what you do, or you are trusting in what Jesus has done. And Paul is clear, we’re saved by grace, not works.

Verse 7, “What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” Paul divides the Jewish people into two groups - the believing minority and the blinded majority.

“Just as it is written (in Isaiah 29 and Deuteronomy 29): “God has given them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear, to this very day.” Paul brings up a concept called “judicial blindness.” To me, a frightening doctrine.

Natural blindness is the result of being born into sin, the plight of all men. But judicial blindness is a specific judgment from God. Harden your heart over and over, and eventually God lets you have your own way. Be stubborn enough and God will let you destroy yourself.

Paul supports this idea from Psalm 69. He quotes, “And David says: “Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a recompense to them. Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see, and bow down their back always.” Notice, David prophesies, “Let their table become a snare...”

This is what occurs at Passover in Jewish homes. The Seder is full of symbols that point to Jesus. The hidden matzo depicts His body. The cup of redemption speaks of His blood. Jews stare at these symbols year after year, yet don't see Jesus at their own table! Why? Because judicial blindness has happened to Israel.

On one of our tours to Israel we had a guide named "Amnon." He was a tank driver in the Yom Kippur War. The man had chutzpah, and could tell a good joke. Here's an Amnon joke... A rabbi and a cab driver die and go to heaven? The cabbie gets in, but the rabbi doesn't. And the rabbi wants to know why! The angel tells him, "When you preached you put folks to sleep, but when he drove he caused his passengers to pray."

At night we'd eat dinner with Amnon and share with him our love for Jesus. We took him to the OT and showed him how it identified Jesus as Messiah, but he never budged. Finally, I asked him, "Amnon, what do you think of Jesus?" His reply broke my heart, "I don't think of Him at all. I'm not allowed to think about it."

Amnon's rabbis told him it was a sin to even consider Jesus' Messianic claims. The joke he told was no joke after all. Today's rabbis have put the Jews to sleep.

We've all met folks whose unbelief was irrational. All their honest questions were answered, yet they still refused to believe. They suffer a spiritual blindness. You can open such eyes only through love and prayer.

Verse 11, "I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not!" Remember the famous commercial: the elderly lady fell to the floor, and you hear her high-pitched cry, "I've fallen, and I can't get up!" Well, the Jews had fallen, but they would get up!

"(For) through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles." The Jews rejected Jesus, but God was still reaching out to the Jews.

Here, Paul introduces another concept. You've heard of mass evangelism, door-to-door evangelism, street evangelism, life-style evangelism... Well, God created another form of evangelism, "jealousy evangelism."

He saved the Gentiles to make the Jews jealous and cause them to desire salvation for themselves.

Let's say you coach a basketball team and your star isn't playing so well. He's lazy. What do you do? You bench him. You remind him "playing time" is a privilege not a right. A benching supplies a needed motivation.

And this was God's strategy with Israel. He benched the Jews, and filled His family with Gentiles, in order to make the Jews jealous of the salvation that's in Christ.

Verse 12, "Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them." There is a scientist in Naples, Florida who invented a new way to kill mosquitos. They're drawn to a trap by a tantalizing fragrance called "cow's breath." It's a chemical that mimics a cow's breath. Mosquitos love the aroma.

Well, we need to effect lost people, the way cow's breath effects a mosquito. Do we live an attractive life? Is there a bounce in our step - peace in our heart? We should make folks jealous of the joy we have in Jesus.

The Jews rejection of Jesus led to salvation for the Gentiles. Now Gentiles should be returning the favor. Paul flaunts their salvation to make the Jews jealous.

“For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?” The Jews will one day be accepted again.

“For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them...” God’s kingdom is like a tree. Natural branches or Jews were broken off, so that wild branches or Gentiles could be grafted in.

“And with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches.” Paul cautions the Gentiles about getting haughty or feeling superior to the Jews. Gentiles were grafted into promises intended for the Jews. All believers are part of the same tree - of the same stock.

It’s interesting that Paul calls the Gentiles “a wild olive tree.” We’re the original “wild thang.” (Clip) The Jews were domesticated - raised under the Law, seedlings in God’s garden. Whereas, the Gentiles were wild shoots - they lacked the moral foundation and godly upbringing of Jews. They were grafted by grace.

Verse 18, “But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.” Paul is worried about reverse discrimination. For centuries the danger was the Hebrews feeling superior to the Gentiles. But now Paul

fears the Gentiles are going to look down their nose at the Christ-rejecting Hebrews.

Paul worried the Gentiles would forget that they owed the Jews. Israel had given the world the Word of God - the Written Word, the Bible, and the Living Word, Jesus. God's Son was a Jew. The Gentiles owed Israel a debt of gratitude. How can we ever be anti-Semitic?

Yet, the last 2000 years of human history has validated Paul's concern. Sadly, the Church has been the number one enemy of the Jewish people. I love the quote, "How odd of God to choose the Jew. But not so odd, as those who choose the Jewish God, and hate the Jew." Christians should love, and support, and pray for, and witness to the Jews - at home and in Israel.

Verse 19 addresses Gentile believers, "You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.

For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off."

Rather than spurn the Jews, Christians need to learn from the Jews. The Jews failed to persist in their faith. They didn't continue in God's goodness. And if we repeat their mistake, we'll surely suffer their plight.

Paul is clear it's up to us not just to have faith, but to continue in faith. Belief is not a one time, sign-on-the-bottom-

line deal. We have to “continue” in faith if we expect to be saved, otherwise we’ll be “cut off.”

Once, a woman in Toledo, Ohio who was found guilty of manslaughter. It seems she shot her boyfriend. The report I read said it occurred as they were arguing over the Bible. And though it wasn’t stated in the article, I’m certain I know what the couple was discussing: [once-saved-always-saved!](#) The most hostile discussions I’ve ever had with other Christians were over this doctrine.

I’m going to tell you where I stand, but first I want to say good, Bible-believing Christians line up on both sides of the argument. It’s not a subject to divide over. At the end of the day, wisdom will agree to disagree.

So here’s my position... It’s nothing I do or not do that earns God’s salvation. Thus, there’s nothing I can do or not do to forfeit that salvation... God’s only requirement is faith! But if I renounce my faith - or no longer have faith - how can I expect to be saved? The bottomline: [You have to continue in your faith.](#)

Understand, faith is not a date on the calendar - or a contract you sign; then go off and forget about - it’s an attitude you grow and cultivate. Faith is like a plant. Starve it and it dies. Feed it and it lives, and bears fruit.

For the record, I do believe in eternal security. As long as I’m trusting in Jesus I’m eternally secure! The perseverance of the believer is taught throughout the Bible. For further study read [Colossians 1:21-23](#), [Galatians 5:1-5](#), [Hebrews 10:35-39](#), [1 Peter 1:8-9](#), etc.

Verse 23, “And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.” Here’s good news! Even if you were cut off, return to faith and you can be grafted in again. As long as you are breathing there’s hope, especially for Israel.

“For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?” A horticulturalist will tell you it’s far more difficult to graft a wild branch onto a vine than it is to re-graft a natural branch that was formerly broken off.

God did the hard work of saving the Gentiles, thus it’ll be much easier to bring home the Jews. I like the quote by CS Lewis on the salvation of the Jews. He explains, “In a sense, the converted Jew is the only normal human being in the world. Everyone else is a special case dealt with under emergency conditions.”

Verse 25, “For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.” A biblical “mystery” is a truth we learn through revelation not investigation. We wouldn’t know it if God didn’t reveal it – a mystery is a sacred secret.

In the OT the Church was a mystery. God began salvation with Israel, and He’ll end salvation with Israel. But today is an anomaly. The Jews have been cut off, and God is grafting in non-Jews, or the Gentiles.

But notice verse 25, Israel's blindness is temporary. For when **"the fullness of the Gentiles has come in,"** God will re-engage the Jews. And I believe the phrase, **"fullness of the Gentiles"** refers to a specific number.

When the last Gentile gets saved - at that exact moment - the Lord Jesus will come in the clouds and snatch away His Church... That means if you're the last holdout, you need to get with it! Please, give your life to Jesus. The rest of us are ready to head home!

Verses 26-32 are prophetic of the future. **"And so all Israel will be saved..."** When **the fullness of the Gentiles** is in, and the Church has been raptured, God will turn His attention back to the nation of Israel. He'll use seven years of great tribulation to purify the Jews.

"As it is written (in Isaiah 59): "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins." The Jews will be forgiven. Every Hebrew alive when Jesus returns in power and glory will put their faith in Him and be saved. The Bible teaches, one day **all Jews will be Jews for Jesus!**

Zechariah 12:10 tells us how it'll happen. The Lord says, **"I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they have pierced; they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son..."** When Israel sees the Savior's scars they'll realize their mistake. They executed their Messiah. They'll repent of their sin, and put their trust in Jesus.

In a sense, Thomas is a type of the End Times Israel. Thomas refused to believe until he saw Jesus' scars. Likewise, this is what will convince the Jews.

Verse 28, "Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." God's promises aren't like a gallon of milk. There's no expiration date.

Israel rejected God's blessings, but God didn't take them off the table. To the contrary, the gifts and callings of God are irrevocable! Rather than "for a limited time only" - they're available until the end of the age.

"For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all." All mankind, Gentile and Jew, has been in God's doghouse. No one can get the bighead. If we receive anything from God or become anything for God, it's due to His marvelous mercy.

For three chapters now Paul has pounded out some mind-crunching theology, yet he closes his theology with doxology. We go from head-scratching to toe-tapping - from pondering to praise. Verse 33, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!" If you think you've got God wired; you've got the wrong God. St. Jerome once

said, “The Bible is shallow enough for a babe to stand in without fear of drowning, yet deep enough for a theologian to swim in without ever touching bottom.”

The Bible is a reliable record of God's dealings with humanity, but if you've got to have every question answered, and every nuisance explained before you'll believe; then you'll never believe! Think of it, if we can know all there is to know about God with our little pea brains, He isn't much of a God. Faith in an infinite God requires a certain amount of mystery. I love the ole adage, “What's over my head is still under God's feet.”

And verse 34 stretches our understanding of the greatness of our God. He has no colleagues, no counselors, no creditors! God alone calls the shots! "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?" "Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?" God has no peer... He needs no help... He owes no one anything!

God is in a class all by Himself... This is a problem for the proud, but it's a comfort for the humble. Romans 9-11 closes, “For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.”

Chapter 12, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God...” For eleven chapters Paul has been flaunting the "mercies of God" and by this point we're in awe! We're justified and redeemed. Salvation is God's to give... and He's chosen to give it to us! But in light of God's love and grace; how are we to live?

Well, here's the first step... “That you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your

reasonable service.” The Levitical sacrifice of the OT was a butchered carcass burned on the altar. But in the NT God no longer likes His sacrifices well done. Today, he orders them rare. He wants a sacrifice that’s alive. He wants a sacrifice that’s still kicking and mooing on the plate. God is now into **living sacrifices!**

Abraham's son Isaac, was a living sacrifice. He willingly offered his body to God, and allowed old Abraham to bind him to the altar. Isaac had no plans of his own - nothing he had to do - no place he had to be. He was available to whatever the Father had in mind.

Once a little girl sat at the end of the row in church. When the offering plate passed - she sat it down in the aisle, and stepped into the plate. An usher said, **"What are doing?"** She replied, **"I learned in Sunday School we should give ourselves to God."** She’s right! After all God has done for us, it’s **“our reasonable service.”**

The first step in living for God is to **give your body**. The second step is to **renew your mind**. Verse 2, **“And do not be conformed to this world...”** I love the Phillips translation, **"Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold."** Resist the pressure to go with the flow. Hey, toilet paper goes with the flow, not Christians. Rather than blend in we should stand out.

A Christian is either a **thermometer** or a **thermostat**. Some believers are **thermometers** - they conform to room temperature. They try to "be cool" or gravitate toward "what's hot." The crowd dictates the life they live. But God wants us to

be a **thermostat**. Rather than register the temperature - we should be setting it!

Paul continues, “**But be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**” And here’s the key to living a transformed life... “**renewing your mind.**”

Jesus changes our heart, but we have to change our way of thinking. It’s up to me to put on a new identity, and cultivate character... I put off the old logic, sinful perceptions, ugly habits - and put on a new way of life.

To walk worthy of God’s mercies give your body, renew your mind, and third, **humble your heart**.

“**For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.**” “**Soberly**” means “**as it really is.**” The idea is objectivity. Humility is seeing myself not as others see me, or as I see myself - but I see me as God sees me.

“**For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.**” Here, the church is compared to a body. If you're an adult of average weight, its amazing what your body does every 24 hours: “**Your heart beats 103,689 times, your blood travels 168 million miles, you take 23,040 breaths, you inhale 438 cubic feet of air, you eat 3.25 pounds of food, you drink 2.9 quarts of liquid, you lose 7/8 of a pound of waste, you**

move 750 muscles, and you exercise 7 million brain cells.” No wonder you feel tired!

Your body is made up of several trillion cells all linked together, functioning as one unit. And so is the Body of Christ. We’re many members, but one body. We’re a blend of unity and diversity, working as one.

And each member of the body contributes to the whole by using the gift God gives them. Verse 6, “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them...” Upon his death, the famous violinist, Paganini, donated his instrument to the city of Genoa. But with a stipulation - his violin was never to be played... Yet when Jesus died He too gave gifts to His Church, but He intends for us to use them!

The Holy Spirit imparts to every Christian at least one of the spiritual gifts listed in verses 6-8. Here are supernatural enablings - not learned skills or natural abilities - but these gifts are God-given motivations. It’s our gift that helps shape and empower our ministry.

First is prophecy, “If prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith...” Often prophecy is associated with fore-telling, but its primary meaning is forth-telling.

It’s been said, “A prophet was not known primarily for his hindsight or his foresight, but his insight.” Here’s a person who boldly speaks the message God gives him.

Second in the list is **ministry**. He says, “**let us use it in our ministering...**” This is a supernatural knack for helping the cause of Christ in practical, tangible ways.

This person preaches sermons through sweat.

Third on the list is **teaching**, “**he who teaches, in teaching...**” This gift helps earthly minds understand heavenly truths. A good teacher puts the cookies on the bottom shelf. He can make complex truths simple.

It’s been said, “**A teacher's task is to take a roomful of live wires and see to it they are properly grounded.**”

The fourth gift is **exhortation**, “**he who exhorts, in exhortation...**” The gift of teaching instructs us what to do, whereas exhortation encourages us to do it!

I refer to this gift as the spiritual jumper cables. It jump starts brothers or sisters with weak batteries.

The fifth gift is **giving**, “**he who gives, with liberality...**” Every believer should develop the discipline of giving a portion of their resources to God - but the person with this gift has a special knack for opening their wallet to bless others and further God's work.

I'll never forget the guy who came to our church and gave **\$100 handshakes**. He'd shake your hand, and slip you a crisp new \$100 bill. I never missed shaking that fellow’s hand on a Sunday AM! He had this gift.

The sixth gift, “**he who leads, with diligence...**” The gift of **leading** is **spiritual management**. It’s said, “**Don't agonize - organize.**” This gift strategize in godly ways.

1 Corinthians 14:40 instructs the Church to function “**decently and in order.**” This gift helps us do just that.

And the final motivational gift is **mercy**, “**he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.**” Mercy has been defined as “**Two hearts tugging at the same load.**”

Again, we all should show mercy, but the person with the gift of mercy is given by God an extra helping...

Of course folks ask, “**How do I discover my gift?**”

Let's say my granddaughter came down the center aisle carrying a potted plant she made me in Sunday School. But she slipped, and it dropped. Crash! Dirt and pottery spill everywhere. **How would you react?**

If you start looking for a broom to clean it up you have the gift of **ministry**... If you pull out your wallet to pay for the pot your gift is **giving**... If you say to the little girl, “**Young lady be warned. Thus saith the Lord, there'll be many opportunities to stumble in life!**” That’s **prophecy**... If you show her a clever foot maneuver to right herself the next time she slips then your gift is **teaching**... If you think, “**Let's rearrange the chairs so this doesn't happen again,**” that's **leading**... Or if you'd give a pep talk, “**You'll do better next time!**” That’s **exhortation**... Or if you run to the child hug and cuddled her - obviously you have the gift of **mercy**.

But understand there'd be seven diverse reactions among the people in this room - and all would be valid, God-ordained

responses. This is why we need each other. We need all the gifts. A healthy church appreciates its diversity - as it works to show its unity.

For the rest of Chapter 12 understand Jewish rabbis had a teaching-style called “stringing beads.” As a lady would place beads on a necklace one at a time, a rabbi liked to teach by stringing together random truths...

This is what Paul does for the remainder of the chapter. Verse 9, “Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.” Often, you learn what a person loves, by noticing what they hate. We need to hate what God hates and love what God loves.

“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another, not lagging in diligence (or being lazy), fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation...” Horse racing fans will recall the famed thoroughbred, Secretariat. In the Kentucky Derby, a one-mile race, Secretariat clocked a faster time in each successive quarter mile. The horse got stronger as the race progressed. And this is how God wants us to run!

He uses tribulation not to wear us out, but to make us stronger! Through various trial we grow endurance.

“Continuing steadfastly in prayer...” The greatest gift you can show a friend is to pray for them. But that’s not all you can do. Also “Distributing to the needs of the saints...” We need to see needs and then meet needs.

Paul goes on, “given to hospitality...” A man named John Thomas wrote an interesting letter to Dear Abby. “I’m presently

completing the second year of a three year survey of the hospitality, or lack of it, in churches. To date, of the 195 churches I've visited I was spoken to by someone other than an official greeter only once, and then it was to ask me to move my feet."

I hope John Thomas never visited Calvary Chapel. There's only one thing better than Southern hospitality, and that's Christian hospitality! Let's be known for both.

Paul is stringing beads, "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse." There's a Chinese proverb, "If your enemy wrongs you, buy each of his children a drum." That's a funny idea - your gift actually a curse. But we march to a different drummer. We'll turn our enemies into friends through blessing them!

"Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." It's been said, "A sorrow shared is but half a trouble. A joy shared is a joy made double." Real fellowship divides our grief and multiplies our gladness.

Verse 16, "Be of the same mind toward one another." Don't play favorites or be bias. Treat everyone equally.

"Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble." Don't just hang out with people who make you look good, or who occupy the next rung on the social ladder you're trying to climb - the in crowd.

"Do not be wise in your own opinion." Be rock solid in your beliefs and convictions, but keep your personal opinions flexible and open to new input.

Verse 17, “**Repay no one evil for evil.**” This doesn’t mean let people push you around. No, when men do evil to you, fight back - defend yourself and others - but with love. Don’t fight evil with evil - fight evil with good. “**Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.**”

Verse 18, “**If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.**” At times our stand for righteousness in a hostile world makes peace impossible. But make sure the problem is truth - not your pride, or ignorance, or prejudice, or inflexibility.

“**Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.**” The Law of Moses specified “**an eye for an eye**” - and why? Because the human tendency is to one-up the person who harms us. Punch me in the jaw... and I’ll try to crack your jaw and kick you in the shins. I’m going to try to do one better.

This is why God is the only person we can trust to dish out vengeance. He handles all the paybacks!

Here’s what we should do. “**Therefore “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.”**”

In ancient times folks didn’t have a pilot light on their furnace. If their fire died out they went next door to retrieve hot embers to relight their fire. They carried it back on their head. “**Coals of fire on his head**” was a kindness. Thus, we should be kind to our enemies, not vengeful. “**You never win by trying to even the score.**”

Paul isn't saying if you're attacked just sit there and take it - fight back, but not with evil! Retaliate in kind and you're no better than your enemy. Verse 21, **“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”**