

## Supporting Notes & Questions

Week beginning Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

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### Background

This week, Paul gives some testimony about the problem he had with obeying the Jewish Law, the Torah. N.B. He sometimes uses the word “flesh” to denote an ego driven by selfish desires. Paul was born a Jew, he became a Pharisee, zealous to preserve traditions. He persecuted Jewish Christians, punishing them and jailing them. You have read in Acts how Jesus met Paul on his way to Damascus and how he became a Christian. Having rejoiced about the blessings of being “in Christ”, Paul next turns to his concern for the Jews who reject Jesus as their Messiah or would exclude Gentiles who fail to observe the Jewish Law.

### Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> Romans Chapter 7

VV1-6 As Christians, having “died” in Christ (see Friday 15<sup>th</sup>), we are no longer married to our master, sin. So sin has no more authority over us. But are none of our thoughts, words and deeds sinful any more?  
VV7-13 The Law is inherently good. Even so, Paul found that in spite of its aim to produce goodness, it actually deceived him and he died spiritually. Does this explain his previous persecution of Christians?  
VV14-25 Paul realised that because he wanted to do good, it had to be sin living in him that did wrong. No matter how much he delighted in God’s Law, sin imprisoned his mind. Who could set him free?

### Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> Romans Chapter 8

VV1-4 “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because ... the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.” Does V3 mean the end of the Old Covenant?  
VV5-16 If the Spirit of God lives within, spiritual death is replaced by life. The blessings of the spirit-led life; “...those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God”. Are you alive in the Spirit?  
VV17-30 The Christians experienced persecution, but as children of God they should expect to share both Christ’s suffering and glory. He points to the glory to come when creation itself is put right.  
VV31-39 “If God is for us, who can be against us?” Paul finds it impossible to believe that any enemy or disaster is able to separate us from the love of Christ. Has that been your experience?

### Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> Romans Chapter 9

VV1-5 Paul expresses his anguish that many of his fellow Jews do not accept Jesus as their Messiah and some Christian Jews deny that Gentiles have any part in God’s kingdom. Who would you exclude?  
VV6-33 The Jews wrongly believe that their descent from Abraham and obeying the Torah bring God’s blessings. Their own scriptures warn that God’s blessings are for non-Jews as well. Paul concludes that the Gentiles’ faith in Jesus brings them into God’s kingdom, but the Jews’ self-righteousness, born of their observing the Law, keeps them out. Will doing good works alone create God’s kingdom on Earth?

### Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> Romans Chapter 10

VV1-13 Jesus is the fulfilment of the Law. Don’t go into heaven or across the sea to find God’s truth; it is in your mouth when you say “Jesus is Lord”, whether you are a Jew or a Gentile. Is that your testimony?  
VV14-21 No-one hears the Gospel unless someone is sent to proclaim it. But even though the Jews heard God’s truth from the beginning, they ignored it. How hard of hearing are you?

### Friday 26<sup>th</sup> Romans Chapter 11

VV1-10 Has God rejected the Jews? No, but their “blindness” and “deafness” to the truth are stopping them enjoying God’s grace. How blind and deaf are you to the offer of God’s grace?  
VV11-12 The fact is that God’s inclusion of the Gentiles in his plan was designed to make the Jews jealous.  
VV13-16 Paul is hoping through his ministry to the Gentiles to bring some of his fellow Jews into the fold.  
VV17-24 Using a picture of the olive tree, Paul warns the Gentile Christians not to feel superior, because if they fail to be faithful, they too will be pruned out. The question raised is how complacent am I?  
VV25-36 Although things seem bleak, scripture convinces Paul that his nation will turn to Christ one day.