Essential Doctrines

Part 2 — Israel & the Mystery (Lessons 7–10)

A 4-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

These are Lessons 7–10 of Keith Blades' Essential Doctrines. Keith calls the subject essential doctrine number two, Israel and the mystery — the second of the six essential doctrines — identified from Romans 11:25; Lesson 10 is his final lesson on it. He also calls Romans 9, 10 and 11 the third cornerstone of the foundation for edification in this dispensation of grace, and dwells on Paul's warning "lest ye should be wise in your own conceits."

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Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
L7	Essential Doctrine Number Two: Israel and the Mystery — Romans 11:25; Romans 9–11 Surveyed; I Timothy 1 and 4; Romans 16:17; Ephesians 4
L8	Wise in Your Own Conceits: Knowing the Time — Romans 11:25; Proverbs 3 and 26; Romans 11–13; Romans 15; Ephesians 1
L9	Accursed from Christ: Romans 9 and 10 Surveyed — Romans 9:1–5; Matthew 3; Acts 1–9; Romans 9:6–10:21
L10	God's Zeal for Israel's Fulness — Romans 11: Not Cast Away but Blinded; Provoke Them to Jealousy; Redeeming the Time

Lesson Summaries

L7

Essential Doctrine Number Two: Israel and the Mystery *Romans 11:25; Romans 9–11 Surveyed; I Timothy 1 and 4; Romans 16:17; Ephesians 4*

Essential Doctrine Number Two (Romans 11:25)

- Lesson 7 begins the second of the six essential doctrines: the issue of Israel and the mystery, identified from Romans 11:25
- You need to understand how the dispensation of grace affects and impacts God's program with the nation Israel, gone over particularly in Romans 9, 10 and 11

- Ignorance of this doctrine causes problems in Christianity today — even for those who understand the dispensation of grace; Paul's concern for them is "lest ye should be wise in your own conceits"
- The particular aspect focused on is a blindness in part that has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in

Anticipated Misunderstanding: Biblical, but Not Dispensational

- Paul deals with the doctrine knowing misunderstanding will be common; "God forbid" is used throughout the three chapters, and a policy of evil is designed to produce misunderstanding about what God has done with Israel
- Keith pictures the truth of what God has done sitting in the middle of a block of concrete of misunderstanding
- The Satanic policy of evil seeks doctrinal corruption so members of the Body of Christ do not grow and mature: to have you be biblical, but not dispensational — all wrapped up in Israel's program
- Keith recalls calling this almost Satan's sugar stick doctrine; misunderstand what has happened to Israel and you will be enticed into doing things that come from Israel's program

Teachers of the Law and Doctrines of Devils (I Timothy 1 and 4)

- In I Timothy 1 the other doctrine Paul had in mind is taking the law from God's program with Israel into this dispensation of grace — what he calls vain jangling
- The law is the Word of God, but not the Word of God to us, for us and about us today in the dispensation of grace
- The doctrines of devils in I Timothy 4 are taking things from the Bible that do not pertain to this dispensation of grace and bringing them over to it — improper Bible handling

Isms and Schisms

- Many theological systems in Christianity today exist primarily because of failure to understand Israel and the mystery; the main issue distinguishing covenant theology is its anti-dispensational stand
- Keith names amillennialism, kingdom now and dominion theology, reconstructionism, Romanism, Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons; the disease is ignorance of the doctrine of Israel and the mystery

Divisions and Offenses vs. Knitting Together

- Those from the policy of evil produce divisions and offenses (Romans 16:17); corrupting the foundation of four cornerstones fragments the members of the Body of Christ
- Ephesians 4 ends with a knitting together, the exact opposite of what the policy of evil is after; unity comes by the communication of sound doctrine — doctrine unifies, service without sound doctrine divides

Wise in Your Own Conceits

- By Romans 11 you are doctrinally ninety-nine percent straightened out; that Paul deals with being wise in your own conceits twice, within two cornerstones, indicates a real problem — taken up next lesson

L8 Wise in Your Own Conceits: Knowing the Time *Romans 11:25; Proverbs 3 and 26; Romans 11–13; Romans 15; Ephesians 1*

A Common Problem amongst Grace Folks

- Being wise in your own conceits is a common problem among members of the Body of Christ who understand right division; at Romans 11:25 Paul emphasizes the essential nature of this aspect of the doctrine
- Paul sees the same problem again in Romans 12:16, in the fourth cornerstone; if you don't understand and operate on what he says, you will be wise in your own conceits

Conceit and Wisdom (Proverbs 3 and 26)

- It is a common potential fleshly problem dealt with a lot in Proverbs; Proverbs 26 brings it up three times in 16 verses
- Keith calls Proverbs 3:5–6 an interdispensational issue; being wise in your own eyes (verse 7) operates in opposition to trusting the Lord with all your heart
- Conceit is thinking more highly of yourself than you ought — not just pride, but thinking more capability for yourself and almost more right to things than you ought
- Wisdom is the application of knowledge to a situation; erroneous thinking about ourselves develops a bad form of wisdom, and out of it comes damaging conduct

Romans 11 and 12: Not Thinking Improperly about Ourselves

- Paul deals with not thinking improperly about ourselves in Romans 11 as believing Gentiles and in Romans 12 as members of the new creation
- For saints to grow up together and be knit together, you can't have saints wise in their own conceits; the biggest test of agape love is dealing with a weaker brother
- The wisdom that comes from conceited thinking is not God's wisdom but a fleshly wisdom the satanic policy of evil delights in; on the basis of it come divisions, offenses, intoleration of weaker brothers and an intoleration of Israel
- God's program with Israel is not over; through the olive trees Paul explains God's capacity to restore Israel to their original position

Knowing the Time

- This dispensation of grace isn't a permanent situation; you have to understand what Paul teaches here so that you have the proper viewpoint about the time you're living in
- Israel's program is temporarily set aside, not abolished, so you don't have the guarantee of another day; God could end this dispensation of grace any moment
- Keith notes four passages on the time — Romans 13, I Corinthians 7, Ephesians 5, Colossians 4; Romans 9–11, especially chapter 11, makes you understand the time you have is precious

Learning from Israel's Program (Romans 15; Ephesians 1)

- Another detriment of being wise in your own conceits is failing to gain the benefits of understanding Israel's program; things "written aforetime" were "written for our learning" — not for our obedience
- We learn about the character and essence of God from Israel's program; one of the greatest areas of weakness amongst grace believers today is Israel's program
- You can't understand the dispensation of the fulness of times without Israel's program; there God has purposed Christ as the one imperial head over all things in heaven and earth

L9

Accursed from Christ: Romans 9 and 10 Surveyed *Romans 9:1–5; Matthew 3; Acts 1–9; Romans 9:6–10:21*

Something Has Happened to Israel (Romans 9:1–5)

- In the first five verses of Romans 9 Paul sets forth that something has happened to Israel; in the first three he expresses his commiseration over it
- Being "accursed from Christ" is Israel's situation in this dispensation of grace: a cutting off of Israel from God's dealings
- To Paul God revealed a new dispensation of Gentile grace, the mystery of Christ, and the temporary suspension of His former program with the nation Israel

The Adoption and the Glory

- What God promised and covenanted is summarized by "the adoption, and the glory" — Keith puts both under one heading: the establishment of the kingdom of heaven on this earth
- Christ came to confirm the promises made unto the fathers as "a minister of the circumcision"; that is not what He is now, with the dispensation of grace in effect

The Kingdom at Hand

- John could say "at hand" because a series of time schedules had been given to Israel — a particular one to Daniel at the beginning of the 5th course of punishment
- By the time of the Messiah's rejection, 98% of that time schedule had been fulfilled; in Mark 1 the Lord says it is fulfilled and the kingdom is at hand
- In Matthew 3 John gives an outline for the remainder of the program; the axe laid to the root shows how close it was
- Israel's prescription for cleansing has three baptisms, outlined in Ezekiel 36; the second took place on the day of Pentecost, the third — the baptism of fire — is in the Lord's day of wrath

The Extension of Mercy and Forbearance (Acts 1–7)

- Following the rejection of Christ, Israel was given an extension of mercy and forbearance — three honest opportunities in the opening seven chapters of Acts to change their mind
- After the third and final opportunity, Stephen sees the Son of Man no longer sitting but standing, in readiness to judge His people and begin His day of wrath

The Epoch-Making Event (Acts 9)

- In Acts 9 He leaves the Father's right hand, confronts Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus and sits down again; Paul is raised up as a brand new apostle, not to replace Judas
- God cuts off His dealings with Israel, but not permanently, and turns to the Gentiles — putting Jew and Gentile at the same level and forming a new creation, the church: the mystery of Christ, kept hidden since before the world began

Romans 9:6–10:21: Anticipated Misunderstandings

- From Romans 9:6 Paul deals with anticipated misunderstandings in incremental steps; thinking God's word took none effect is, Keith says, the foundation of covenant theology
- God deals with us Gentiles today not on the basis of merit, but mercifully and

graciously

- Romans 10 shows Israel responsible for their own stumbling: they heard, and they knew; they refused to believe

L10

God's Zeal for Israel's Fulness *Romans 11: Not Cast Away but Blinded; Provoke Them to Jealousy; Redeeming the Time*

The Special Aspect: God's Zeal for Israel's Fulness

- Lesson 10 is Keith's final lesson on essential doctrine number two, focused on a special aspect of the doctrine in Romans 11
- God has not changed His mind: "the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance." The church, the Body of Christ, is for a secret purpose — not a replacement for His program with Israel
- Israel's fulness is yet to come, and God has a zeal for it; we need the same zeal for what He does today and will do when He resumes Israel's program

Not Cast Away, but Blinded (Romans 11:1–10)

- "Cast away" in verse 1 is cast away in the sense of disgust; the misunderstanding is that we in this dispensation of grace are in some manner or form the assumers and fulfillers of God's program
- Keith calls this "spiritual larceny," based on ignorance of Romans 9, 10 and 11; the promises and covenants pertain to the remnant, not to you in the dispensation of grace
- God has not cast them away — He has blinded them, which is far different; while this dispensation of grace is in effect they will not see the fulfillment of His program with them

The Last Piece of Concrete: a Temporary Program

- From verse 11 down to verse 29 Paul makes sure we understand this dispensation of Gentile grace is only a temporary program — not that its results are temporary, or our membership in the Body of Christ

Provoke Them to Jealousy (Romans 11:11–15)

- Provoking Israel to jealousy shows she has not stumbled so as to be unable to get up again, and underscores that the things that belong to them are still theirs
- God would be unrighteous to provoke jealousy for something they never could have; He hasn't lost any of the zeal to give them what He has promised and covenanted with them
- If God had zeal for riches of the Gentiles through their fall, "how much more their fulness?" The riches don't reach their apex by the dispensation of grace

The Olive Tree and "all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:16–29)

- The firstfruit guaranteed the acceptance of the culmination: Israel's program started, has been suspended, and its culmination is yet to come; in the tree illustration the Lord Himself is the root
- Paul looks at Gentiles as a whole, not at anybody's personal salvation; boasting against the branches is beginning to develop that high-minded attitude, and you become wise in your own conceits
- "Fear" means a healthy fear for this dispensation of grace, recognizing it isn't going to go on forever; it is natural for God to return to His program with Israel
- The blindness in part is only temporary; when the fulness of the Gentiles comes in, we are taken out of here and Israel's program resumes. Paul's "all

Israel shall be saved" is the program salvation

The Sluggard and Redeeming the Time

- Being a sluggard is a common hallmark fruit of being wise in your own conceits; such a one won't fear or recognize that the cutting off could come at any moment
- Look at the time as something to be redeemed — bought up, purchased to God's honor and glory; you need to spend time in Romans 11 in particular and make sure you have God's attitude

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Israel's Program vs. the Dispensation of Grace

Keith says Romans through Philemon is the portion of God's Word dealing with this dispensation of grace; Hebrews through Revelation follows Paul's epistles in connection with the yet-future resumption of Israel's program. The law is the Word of God, but not the Word of God to us, for us or about us today in the dispensation of grace. We are not spiritual Israel nor the fulfiller of Israel's promises and covenants; the church, the Body of Christ, is for a secret purpose not spoken of in ages past — not a replacement for God's program with Israel.

Cast Away vs. Blinded

God has not cast Israel away; He has blinded them, which is far different. Israel's program is not abolished but temporarily set aside. This dispensation of Gentile grace is only a temporary program — Keith does not mean its results are temporary.

For Our Learning, Not Our Obedience

Things written aforetime pertain to God's program with Israel; they were written for our learning, not our obedience — the program is different. We learn from Israel's program about the character and essence of God, not by being obedient to its promises, commands and instructions.

Divisions and Offenses vs. Knitting Together

Keith says it is a farce to talk about service unifies, doctrine divides: doctrine unifies; service without sound doctrine divides. On the basis of a conceited, fleshly wisdom come divisions, offenses, intoleration of weaker brothers and an intoleration of Israel; for the knitting together to take place, you can't have saints wise in their own conceits.

Key Scripture References

Proverbs 26	Wise in your own conceits three times in 16 verses; the sluggard, a hallmark fruit of it
Matthew 3:10–12	In Israel's program: John's outline for the remainder of the program; Israel's prescription for cleansing
Acts 7:51–56	Israel's third and final honest opportunity; the Son of Man standing in readiness to judge His people
Romans 9:1–5	Something has happened to Israel: accursed from Christ; the adoption and the glory
Romans 9:6–33	Anticipated misunderstandings answered in incremental steps
Romans 10	Israel responsible for their own stumbling
Romans 11:1–10	God has not cast away His people; He has blinded them
Romans 11:11–15	Provoke them to jealousy; how much more their fulness
Romans 11:16–24	The firstfruit and the olive tree; a healthy fear for this dispensation of grace
Romans 11:25	The verse of essential doctrine number two: blindness in part until the fulness of the Gentiles
Romans 11:26–29	All Israel saved — program salvation; the gifts and calling of God without repentance
Romans 12:16	Be not wise in your own conceits — the problem again, in the fourth cornerstone
Romans 13:11	Knowing the time — founded on Romans 11
Romans 15:4	Written aforetime for our learning, not our obedience
I Timothy 4:1–5	Doctrines of devils: bringing what does not pertain to this dispensation of grace into it