

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE *Romans*

2023

Lesson 14: *Israel and the Gentiles, Part 3* Romans 11:1-36

Israel's rejection

▲ **Israel's remnant received God's plan of salvation**

▼ **There is a faith-filled remnant now (Paul's day)**

Romans 11:1 I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin.

▼ **There has always been a faith-filled remnant**

Romans 11:2 God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed to God against Israel: 3 "Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me?" 4 And what was God's answer to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." (1 Kings 19:10-18)

▼ **There is a faith-filled remnant now (present day)**

Romans 11:5 So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. 6 And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

▲ **Israel's religious rebels rejected God's plan of salvation**

▼ **They were hard of hearing and hard hearted**

Romans 11:7 What then? What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened, 8 as it is written: "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day." 9 And David says: "May their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them. 10 May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever." (Isaiah 29:10; Deuteronomy 29:4; Psalm 69:22-23)

▼ **They were fervent but foolish and faithless**

Romans 9:30 What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; 31 but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. 32 Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the "stumbling stone."

Romans 10:1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. 2 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge.

Israel's root

▲ **The result of Jewish rejection is evangelism to the Gentiles**

Romans 11:11 Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles

▲ **The result of Gentile receptivity is envy among the Jews**

Romans 11:11 Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious.

▲ **The result of Jewish and Gentile receptivity is the eternal embrace of both Jews and Gentiles**

Romans 11:12 But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring! 13 I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry 14 in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. 15 For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? 16 If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches.

▼ **Consider God's olive tree of salvation – (1) the olive tree is holy, from the root to the branches – faith-filled Jews and Gentiles**

Romans 11:16 if the root is holy, so are the branches.

▼ **Consider God's olive tree of salvation – (2) natural branches were broken off because of unbelief – faithless Jews**

Romans 11:17 If some of the branches have been broken off, — 20 — they were broken off because of unbelief,

▼ **Consider God's olive tree of salvation – (3) wild branches have been grafted in – faith-filled Gentiles**

Romans 11:17 If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, 18 do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." 20 Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.

▼ **Consider God's olive tree of salvation – (4) the broken off natural branches can be grafted in again – faith-filled Jews**

Romans 11:22 Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. 23 And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!

Israel's redemption

▲ **Israel's redemption is promised by God to us**

Romans 11:25 I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. 27 And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins."

▲ **Israel's redemption is precious to God and to us**

Romans 11:28 As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies on your account; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, 29 for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable. 30 Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, 31 so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you. 32 For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.

Incomparable revelation

▲ **God is wondrous in his ways**

Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! 34 "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" 35 "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" (Isaiah 40:13; Job 41:11; Job 35:7)

▲ **God is worthy to be worshiped**

Romans 11:36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Romans 11:1-36

1 I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed to God against Israel: 3 "Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me"? 4 And what was God's answer to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." 5 So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. 6 And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace. (Psalm 94:14; 1 Samuel 12:22; 1 Kings 19:10-18)

7 What then? What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened, 8 as it is written: "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day." 9 And David says: "May their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them. 10 May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever." (Isaiah 29:10; Deuteronomy 29:4; Psalm 69:22-23)

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1. In Romans 9-10-11, the Apostle Paul expresses his wrenching heart's desire for Israel, his own Jewish people, to be saved by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 9:1 I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit— 2 I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, 4 the people of Israel.

Romans 10:1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved.

Romans 11:1 I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin.

2. Though the leadership and majority of Israel did not receive and believe in Jesus (John 1:11), there has always been a remnant who believed, including the 120 in the upper room (Acts 1:15), the 3,000 on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41), the 5,000 shortly thereafter (Acts 4:4), the many thousands in Jerusalem about 27 years later (Acts 21:20), the many Jews converted under Paul's ministry among the Gentile nations, and the many Jews who have believed throughout the centuries.

3. The Apostle Paul himself at first resisted and rejected the gospel, even to the point of persecuting the church. But when confronted on the road to Damascus, Paul believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and was saved. He became part of the believing remnant, and he was confident that God would save other Israelites who would not persist in their unbelief.

Romans 11:23 And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

4. There had always been a believing remnant of Israelites throughout the Old Testament as well. While many turned to idolatry and unbelief, there were always those among Israel who loved God, believed God, and were loyal to God. Paul provides the example of the seven-thousand-strong remnant in Elijah's day.

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5. Eventually, Paul prophesies that "all Israel" will be saved when they believe in Jesus. We believe this will occur at the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the Great Tribulation and the launching of Christ's Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 12, 19-20), when "every eye will see him, even those who pierced him" (Revelation 1:7; Zechariah 12:10). Zechariah 13:8-9 may clarify that this "all Israel" surviving to the end of the Great Tribulation will be a remnant of one-third after two-thirds of the Jews will have been destroyed before the flight of the remnant "into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days" (Revelation 12:6).

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Zechariah 13:8 In the whole land," declares the LORD, "two-thirds will be struck down and perish; yet one-third will be left in it. 9 This third I will bring into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are my people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is our God.'"

6. Paul preached the gospel boldly and unashamedly to both Jews and Gentiles, longing for all to be saved.

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

7. Jesus declared God's love for the whole world, both for Israel and for everyone outside Israel.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 10:16 I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.