

Romans 11

Have God's Promises Failed?

“Romans: Great News from Rome to the Ends of the Earth”

Paul's Gospel for Jew and Gentile

1.1-3 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh

1.16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

3.21,22 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction

4.3,6“Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”... just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works

Chapter 9 Israel's FALL – God's Purpose of Election

Chapter 10 Israel's FAULT – God's dismay of Disobedience

Chapter 11 Israel's FUTURE – God's Wisdom and Generosity

2 Main Questions

v. 1 I ask, then, has God rejected his people?

v. 11 So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall?

Has God rejected his people? By no means!

v. 1 Autobiographical Reason – Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles

v. 2 Doctrinal Reason – God's Foreknowledge

For those whom he **foreknew** he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son (Romans 8.29)

Adam **knew** his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth (Genesis 4.25)

O people of Israel... “You only have I **known** of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities” (Amos 3.1,2)

vs. 3-5 Biblical Reason – Elijah and the 7000

vs. 5,6 Remnant of Grace - 1 GOSPEL for the 1 PEOPLE of God for ALL TIME

vs. 7-10 Result of Pride - “God is gracious to me BECAUSE _____”

Grace is not grace if we contribute anything to it.

Justified by Dying? “Now they have entered a better place!” Really?

“God helps them who help themselves”

“God helps them who help themselves” Benjamin Franklin

God helps those who CANNOT help themselves!

We must remember as well that “hardening” does not necessarily mean bitterness, wrath and hostility toward Christianity per se ... A hardened person is someone who is completely obtuse to the gospel of free justification and adoption... a person can be trying so desperately (earnestly) hard to please and serve God that he or she comes to vigorously resist the idea of grace... you conclude you must cleanse and purify your heart to approach him. You find any concept of “free total acceptance” as dishonoring to a holy God! Tim Keller

v. 11 So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means!

Is this falling away forever? Total?

11.11-16 - Stages of Blessing

v.11 Israel’s difficulties with the gospel led to salvation of Gentiles

v.12 Israel’s full belief will then bring greater blessing to world

v.13-14 Thru success of gospel to Gentiles, Israel will be won

v.15 If Israel’s unbelief benefits, imagine the benefit of their belief

v.16 As God drew some of Israel in, we trust He’ll bring the whole

And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith. Acts 6.7

When we had come to Jerusalem, the brothers received us gladly... Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present... And they said to him, “You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed...” Acts 21.17-20

11.17-24 - The Olive Tree

17 Gentiles = wild branch grafted into tree, Biblical religion of Israel

v 18-22 Don’t be arrogant! Jews who disbelieved broken off, so will Gentiles who disbelieve

Evidence of Salvation > Humble before God’s Kindness

Greek “fate” or Islamic “kismet” are quite different from Christian doctrine of God’s sovereignty... Our choices have consequences, and we are never forced by God to do anything other than what we want. But God works out his will perfectly through our willing actions. It is a marvel! Tim Keller

Long my imprisoned Spirit lay
 Fast bound in sin and nature's night
 Thine eye diffused a quickening ray;
 I woke — the dungeon flamed with light!
 My chains fell off, my heart was free,
 I rose, went forth, and followed thee!

Charles Wesley, "And Can It Be?" 1738

"If anybody is lost, the blame is theirs, but if anybody is saved, the credit is God's. This antinomy contains a mystery which our present knowledge cannot solve; but it is consistent with Scripture, history, and experience."
 John Stott

If we reject the idea of election, then we are forced to eventually say that one of the persons was humbler or more open to the truth or more virtuous in some way. Thus, the real differentiating factor, and the critical cause of one's salvation over others is something better in you. In other words, you are back into justification by works! Paul already mentioned that the doctrine of election is necessary to preserve the doctrine of justification. Tim Keller

vv. 22-24 Jews: don't be discouraged! Anyone who believes can be grafted back

1 Way of Salvation: Jew & Gentile enter by Repentance & Faith

v. 25-32: The Mystery

v. 25-26 - 3 stages of blessing

"all Israel will be saved" (v.26) What does it mean?

1. Who? "Israel" means ethnic Israel, not Gentiles.
2. What? "Israel" as a whole will experience salvation through Jesus Christ - Paul strongly encourages continued evangelization of Jewish people.

"since the holocaust, Jews have demanded an end to Christian mission activity among them... some Christians have developed... 'two-covenant theology' / two different salvation tracks -- Christian track for the believing remnant and Gentiles, and track for historical Israel that relies on God's covenant with them... Romans 11 stands in clear opposition to this trend because of its insistence on the fact that there is only one olive tree, to which Jewish and Gentile believers both belong."
 John Stott

3. How many? "All Israel" not "every Jew without exception"

vv. 28-29 Currently most of Israel rejects Gospel, and they are under his judgment, but God remembers his promises to their forefathers.

vv. 30-31 3 stages of blessing

v. 32 Jew & Gentile deserve damnation, both receive mercy.

11:33-36 - Doxology!

v. 33 God's wisdom: an infinite depth of richness

vv. 34-35 We completely depend on Him, for knowledge and grace

v. 36 God is creator, sustainer, and heir of all things.

11:33-36 Application: Worship

1. No worship without truth. Paul quotes Scripture as he praises God spontaneously. Worship is "mind filling" not emptying.

2. No teaching or study of truth without worship. Doctrine is a basis for praise. He uses truth to see God. Be disturbed, comforted, challenged by Truth - feel its power.

3. Doctrines that exalts God brings Joy. Praise comes as we see our weakness and dependence on him. We never gave God anything — he owes us nothing.

4. Mystery is not Troubling. "how unsearchable his judgments and how inscrutable his ways" (v.33 KJV) Worship does not require full understanding.

5. Declaration balanced with Devotion. Who and Why we Worship – We Love Him