

Lesson 23 - The Book of Romans

Last time I answered the question that Paul asks in **Romans 11: 1** where He asks “Has God cast away His people (Israel). and the answer is a resounding NO. Certainly not.

I would like to take just a moment to give some history regarding Israel to back up His answer.

Even though unbelieving Israel will be judged, there will always be a remnant that will be faithful.

Perhaps this will explain the scripture in **Romans 9-6&7** “for they are not all Israel who are of Israel.”

Paul first gives the example of himself. He does so with **Philippians 3:5** giving his own credentials with the conclusion that if God could save Paul, He could also save other Jews. **Acts 9: 22-26** (they were not sure he was a true disciple and still feared him)

Verse 2 of Romans 11 says “God has not cast away His people_whom He foreknew” Means knew beforehand, and loved without condition. His relationship with them will never be destroyed.

According to **Amos 3:2** – Israel is the only nation that the Lord “foreknew” “*You only have I known of all the families on the earth*” *Therefore I will punish you for all of your iniquities.*”

Jeremiah 31:37 “*Thus saith the Lord: If heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will cast off all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done saith the Lord.*”

Well, we know that this has not happened, nor will it ever happen.

Last time we covered Elijah’s ministry and his fleeing from Jezebel and how the Lord assured him that he was not the only one left.

Again, God’s answer to Elijah is in verse **4 of Romans 11** “I have reserved for Myself 7,000 men who have not bent their knee to the enemy.

And then in verse **5 of Romans 11** Paul states “even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

Paul added that Gods choice is totally by Grace, and has nothing to do with their works. That is his next point.

Israel sought God but failed to find Him (works) The gentiles on the other hand who were not looking for Him, found Him (faith). Israel was sincerely looking for Him, but were sincerely wrong. (That is what **Romans 10: 1-4** is teaching)

Verse 8 of Romans 11 says: “God has given them (the Israelites) a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, TO THIS VERY DAY.”

This hardening that they have received involves “spiritual drowsiness”;;

Isaiah 6:vs 9&10 make it plain- God tells Isaiah to *“go and tell this people “Keep on hearing but do not understand, keep on seeing but do not perceive, **verse 10** Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, And return and be healed.”*

Remember beloved, these folks knew their Old Testament and understood when Paul was quoting Isaiah.

In **Romans 11: 9&10** Paul is quoting from **psalm 69: 22&23** which is also predicting what was to come.

The word “table” in **verse 9** means the blessings from the hand of God, which should have led them to Christ. Further explanation of **Galatians 3:24** as the law being a tutor to bring them to Christ.

The Jews “bowed their backs because they refused to receive the truth about Christ. This was outlined by Jesus in **John 5:40** “you are not willing to come to Me to have life.”

Again, a side note here beloved, many churches today take the position that because Israel rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, that God is through with them as a people and the promises made to the Nation of Israel, now belong to the Church.

I urge all of us as we study the scriptures to remember that Israel is Israel, and the Church is the Church. Israel and the Church have different origins, and different destinies.

These folks, though may be well meaning, are just wrong. They take the position that it was the Jews who crucified Jesus. It was their fault that Jesus went to the cross and was crucified.

Beloved, if you are looking to blame someone for His crucifixion, look no further than me. It was my sin that sent Him to the tree. It was your sin that sent Jesus to be crucified.

During the period of the reformation, it did a great deal of uncovering what was taking place, but it did nothing to stop the Anti-Semitic beliefs. In fact, it encouraged folks to rile against the Jews. That was true then, and it is true today. The same feelings toward the Jews are again raising their ugly head. Interestingly enough, it is encouraged by many churches.

What Paul is outlining in **Chapter 8** is that there is no condemnation to us who are in Christ Jesus, and there is nothing that can separate us from Him. (Beginning and the ending of this important chapter).

Paul is using this example to explain what has and is happening to the Nation of Israel. Telling us how they “blew” it, and encouraging us not to fall into the same trap. These churches teach that the promises originally given to Israel, now belong to the Church.

The confusion about the Nation of Israel is what led to the holocaust, and it is raising its ugly head once again. The first holocaust killed one Jew out of every three, the next holocaust will kill 2 out of every three living on this earth, It is not me saying this, but **Zechariah 12 verses 8&9** tell us.

I want to further explain something I deem very important. When we come against the Jews and take on Anti -semitic type thinking it causes us to lose our Jewish roots. If you place your finger on **Genesis chapter 12** and your other finger on **Acts chapter 2** it is all about Israel.

When did Israel begin – According to **Genesis 12** Israel went down into Egypt as a family and came out as a Nation. They went into captivity as a Nation in approximately 1500 B.C. They were born as a family at the exodus in **Exodus chapter 4**.

Side notes here beloved, when the Temple was destroyed in AD 70 there was no place for the Jew to cleanse himself from his sin, and that is when they became a “works oriented” religion. Still that way today. They must earn their way into heaven and so many Christian religions have adopted this same mind set.

Ok, now we will look at the future of the Nation of Israel. We might begin with **Isaiah 65**. As we read **verses 1 & following**; *“I was sought by those who did not ask for me. I was found by those who did not seek me, I said, here I am, here I am. Who is He talking about here? To a nation that was not called by my name – who is this He is talking about? Correct – the Gentiles.*

We continue – **verse 2** – *I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good according to their own thoughts. A people who provoked Me to anger continually to My face who sacrifice to gardens and burn incense on altars of brick – verse 4 who sit among the graves and spend the night in the tombs, who eat swine’s flesh, and the broth of abominable things is in their vessels, verse 5 who say keep to yourself. Do not come near me for I am holier than you. These are smoke in My nostrils, a fire that burns all of the day.*

Verse 6 – *Behold it is written before me, I will not keep silent, but will repay – even repay into their bosom – verse 7 Your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers together, says the Lord, who have burned incense on the mountains, and have blasphemed me, therefore I will measure their former work into their bosom*

Verse 8 - thus saith the Lord” *As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one says do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it, so will I do for my servants’ sake, THAT I MAY NOT DESTROY THEM ALL.*

Beloved, who is He talking about here? Correct – His people Israel.

He will not destroy them all – there will always be a remnant out there. He will always set aside a remnant for His Name Sake.

Even though unbelieving Israel will be judged, He will always have a remnant.

Now, Paul deals with Israel's future. Their separation is not forever. It is not permanent. It is only until the "church" and the "bride of Christ" be fulfilled.

God will then go back to deal directly with the Jews. Israel is the total focus of the tribulation. It is meant for them and the rest of the world will be involved.

Romans 11:11 tells us that though they have stumbled, it is not a permanent fall. The NIV version of scripture says "*beyond recovery*"

Paul's response was "may it never be" - certainly not. Not a permanent fall, but a stumble. Why you ask did they stumble? Paul answers with – **1**. To offer salvation to the Gentiles and **2**. Make Israel envious, or provoke them to jealousy.

Paul further explains this situation in **Ephesians 2:11-13**- Read it for yourselves.

Paul's summarization is then in **verse 12**: "*now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness*"

ie. If we are blessed by their stumbling, how much more will we be blessed when they are restored? Not **if** they will be restored, but **when** they are restored.

Paul then reminds the churches at Rome (Gentiles predominately) that his calling was specifically to the Gentiles. He has compassion for the Jews, but was called as an Apostle to the Gentiles.

We would do well to understand what was driving Paul here. He loved His people the Jews, but knew He had been called to go to the Gentiles to preach Christ. His heart was with his countrymen.

When you look at verses **12** and **15** and read: "for **if** being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but *life from the dead*."

Again, here the word "**if**" is better rendered "since"

When we look at the term "life from the dead" verse 15, this has to do with the national identity of the nation. They are returning to the land as we speak, God will pour out His Spirit on these people in due course.

More next time.

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