

Title: The Future of Israel, Part 1

Passage: Romans 11:1-15

Summary:

Question: Has God rejected Israel?

- I. God has not rejected Israel (v.1-6)
- II. But God is hardening Israel (v.7-10)
- III. God will save Israel (v.11-15)

Key Truths:

- God's opinion is the only one that matters. He is the only reality no matter what the world is shouting.
- Beware of heresy of looking within oneself to what make one right before God (ex: it is my faith that makes me right before God). It is really only by the grace of God that we are saved by faith.
- God's sovereign plan and purpose will be done and will unfold accordingly for Israel.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What commitment has God shown to the Jews?
- By what means other than grace do people try to please God?
- What hardens a person's heart against God?
- What can you do this week to avoid the influences in your life that could harden your heart against God?
- What next steps will you take in response to the truths you have been exposed to?

Introduction

Romans 8:38-39

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Question: If nothing can separate us from the love of God, what about Israel?

Genesis 12:3

I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Deuteronomy 7:6

“For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

Isaiah 49:16

Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me.

Zechariah 2:8

For thus said the LORD of hosts, after his glory sent me to the nations who plundered you, for he who touches you touches the apple of his eye:

Numbers 23:19

God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?

Psalms 106:44-45

Nevertheless, he looked upon their distress, when he heard their cry. For their sake he remembered his covenant, and relented according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

1 Kings 8:23

and said, "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to your servants who walk before you with all their heart;

Jeremiah 31:36-37

"If this fixed order departs from before me, declares the LORD, then shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation before me forever." Thus says the LORD: "If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done, declares the LORD."

Overview

Question: Has God rejected Israel?

- I. God has not rejected Israel (v.1-6)
- II. But God is hardening Israel (v.7-10)
- III. God will save Israel (v.11-15)

Passage:

Romans 11:1-15 (LSB)

"I say then, has God rejected His people? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. GOD HAS NOT REJECTED HIS PEOPLE WHOM HE FOREKNEW. OR DO YOU NOT KNOW WHAT THE SCRIPTURE SAYS IN the passage about Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? "Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE." But what does the divine response say to him? "I HAVE LEFT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL." In this way then, at the present time, a remnant according to God's gracious choice has also come to be. But if it is by grace, it is no longer of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but the chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened; just as it is written, "GOD GAVE THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR, EYES TO SEE NOT AND EARS TO HEAR NOT, DOWN TO THIS VERY DAY."

And David says, "LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP, AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM."

“LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED TO SEE NOT, AND BEND THEIR BACKS FOREVER.”

I say then, did they stumble so as to fall? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fullness be! But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?”

EXPOSITION

Context of Passage:

Romans 9: Not every Jew is saved, because

Romans 10: Jews rejected God.

Romans 11: But because of God’s sovereign grace and His electing love, not every Jew is lost.

Romans 11:1

“I say then, has God rejected His people?”

Jeremiah 31:37

Thus says the LORD:

“If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done, declares the LORD.”

If the cosmos implode, I will reject Israel. If not, I have not. I will restore her fortunes.

Jeremiah 33:20-21

“Thus says the LORD: If you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that day and night will not come at their appointed time, then also my covenant with David my servant may be broken, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and my covenant with the Levitical priests my ministers.

May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

- Has God replaced Israel with the church? No!
 - Paul rejects “replacement theology” (Israel has been replaced by the church)

Romans 11:2

“GOD HAS NOT REJECTED HIS PEOPLE WHOM HE FOREKNEW. OR DO YOU NOT KNOW WHAT

- God does not reject those whom He foreknew.

THE SCRIPTURE SAYS IN the passage about Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel?”

- Even in Elijah's day, Israel was steep in apostasy. (Israel's king was Ahab and its queen was Jezebel)

Romans 11:3

““Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE.””

1 Kings 19:10

He said, “I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.”

- Elijah had given up on Israel. He thought he was the only one left.
 - He was suicidal with fear.

Romans 11:4

“But what does the divine response say to him? “I HAVE LEFT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.””

1 Kings 19:18

Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

- But God actually had reserved a remnant - 7,000!
- Truth: God's opinion is the only one that matters. He is the reality.
 - No matter what the world is shouting.

Romans 11:5

“In this way then, at the present time, a remnant according to God's gracious choice has also come to be.”

Elijah vs. prophets of Baal

1 Kings 18:38-40 (Mount Carmel)

Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, “The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God.” And Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape.” And they seized them. And Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slaughtered them there.

- Victory at Mount Carmel was great.
 - But the Victory on Calvary was even greater!
 - Death of sin (vs. death of false prophets)

Romans 11:6

“But if it is by grace, it is no longer of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.”

- Only by God’s sovereign grace and His electing love, there has always been a saved Jew on Earth.
 - If it was left by man’s free will, Israel would have been completely faithless.
 - By by God’s free will, there will always be a saved Jew.

II. BUT GOD IS HARDENING ISRAEL (v.7-10)

Romans 11:7

“What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained,

- What is Israel seeking? (Romans 9:11)
 - Seeking a law by which obtain favor from God.
 - They are looking within themselves what makes them right before God.
 - Caution: this same heresy can exist in the church (it is my faith that makes me right before God).
 - It is only by the grace of God that we are saved by faith.

but the chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened;”

- The nation of Israel is split:
 - The elect (chosen by God’s grace and saved)
 - The rest (hardened by their own free will and doubly hardened by God)

Romans 9:18

So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

God is saving Israel

- Meaning = not save every Jew who ever lived
 - Ex: Judas Iscariot who died in disbelief
- Meaning = not mean Israel has a second chance.
 - Ex: Judas Iscariot was younger than Jesus and refused to repent and believe.

Romans 11:8

“just as it is written, “GOD GAVE THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR, EYES TO SEE NOT AND EARS TO HEAR NOT, DOWN TO THIS VERY DAY.””

Deuteronomy 29:4

But to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.

Romans 11:9-10

“And David says, “LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP, AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM.” “LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED TO SEE NOT, AND BEND THEIR BACKS FOREVER.””

Psalms 69:22-23

Let their own table before them become a snare; and when they are at peace, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, so that they cannot see, and make their loins tremble continually.

- What binds them?
 - Their table where they feast.
 - Their law written on rock.
 - The law where they think they get their righteousness.

III. GOD WILL SAVE ISRAEL (v.11-15)

- God will save a future generation of Israel completely.

Romans 11:11

“I say then, did they stumble so as to fall?”

- Has Israel done? There is still a pulse however things look.

May it never be!

- The thought that God is done with Israel is anti-Biblical.
 - Clear contradiction to Scripture.
- Statement reserved for certain issues that are clear cut.

But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous.

- Why were Gentiles (non-Jews) saved?
 - Temporarily and partially Israel is hardened whereby some Gentiles are saved.
- While we praise God for His sovereign election of Gentiles, we also pray for the salvation of Israel.

Romans 11:12

Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fullness be!

- If a hardened Israel means some Gentiles are into the kingdom, how much more would it be for Israel to be saved?!

Romans 2:4

Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

Romans 9:23

in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—

Moses' closing psalm:

Deuteronomy 32:43

“Rejoice with him, O heavens; bow down to him, all gods, for he avenges the blood of his children and takes vengeance on his adversaries. He repays those who hate him and cleanses his people's land.”

Deuteronomy 33:29

Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, the shield of your help, and the sword of your triumph! Your enemies shall come fawning to you, and you shall tread upon their backs.”

Romans 11:13-14

But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them.

- Paul is echoing the father's love who is welcoming the older son to come in to join.

Luke 15:31-32

And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

Romans 11:15

For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?”

- If Israel's rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?!
- God has always chosen a remnant.
- God had exiled the entire nation from its land.

Habakkuk 2:3

For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.

Isaiah 66:10

“Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice with her in joy, all you who mourn over her;

- God’s sovereign plan and purpose will be done and will unfold accordingly for Israel.
- Question: How can we ever fully anticipate and imagine what life is after Christ’s return?

1 Corinthians 2:9

But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”

Revelation 14:7

And he said with a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”