

Romans 11

11:1

Paul makes an assumption from the previous chapter that his readers may have made and then says it is not true.

OT examples of God rejecting his people:

1. Judges 6:13,
Gideon says, "But
now the Lord has
abandoned us and
put us into the
hand of Midian."
(True, if
connected to
Judges 2:1-5)
2. 2 Kings 23:27 –
3. Psalm 44:9, 23
–
4. Psalm 60:1, 10 –
5. Psalm 74:1 – 6.
Psalm 78:60, 67
–
7. Psalm 108:11 – 8.
Jeremiah 7:29 – 9.
Jeremiah 31:37 – 10.
Lamentations 2:7 – 11.
Lamentations 5:22 –
12. Ezekiel 5:11 – 13.
Ezekiel 11:16 –
14. Hosea 9:17 –

Paul is going to make a point in the next verses about a remnant that appears to come from 2 Kings 21:14.

The OT also makes a point of the fact that God has not and will not reject Israel,

1. 1 Samuel 12:22 –
2. Psalm 94:14 – "For the Lord will not reject his people; he will never forsake his inheritance."
3. Psalm 95:3 –
4. Lamentations 3:31 -

Paul uses himself as an example of a Jew who God has not given up on and as proof of God's plan to continue to use Israel. Paul, the Jew, is an apostle to the Gentiles.

Paul reference to himself includes:

1. An Israelite – the chosen people
2. "Seed" ("spermatos", $\sigma \pi \epsilon \rho \mu \alpha \tau \omicron \sigma$) of Abraham

3. "Tribe" of Benjamin which would include Paul in the faithful tribe that stayed with Judah in the southern kingdom and is a contrast to the northern 10 tribes who quickly went astray.

So, Paul may be setting himself up to appear in a similar position as Elijah who is mentioned in the next verse. Paul would then be saying, "I am an Israelite who has remained faithful. If anyone is going to say Israel has been rejected by God it would be me (Paul) since I am the only one left!" But, of course, Paul knows he will be rebuked by OT verses, God's words to Elijah and the actual reality of what is happening in the history of salvation. So Paul presses on for the answer.

11:2

God can not reject his own plan.

This refers to the people of Israel as a nation and their purpose.

Amos 3:2 "You only have I chosen of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your sins."

"his people" is used in 11:2 just as it was used in 11:1. In 11:1 "his people" clearly refers to the nation of Israel. So, in 11:2 "his people" should also be understood as the nation of Israel as the people God foreknew. The phrase does not refer to some of the Israelites who God foreknew. God foreknew the nation, and many in that nation perished.

"whom he foreknew" refers to the fact that God knew the character of his "chosen" people before he chose them. Which means God foreknew their future unfaithfulness. Their choosing was based on grace, not Israel's ability to observe the "works" of the Law. This means Israel's unfaithfulness does NOT change the fact that they were chosen. Jacob was chosen and Esau rejected not because of what God knew they would do in the future.

1 Kings 19:10, 14 -

- Elijah pleaded with God against Israel and claimed he was the only one left faithful.
- There were 7,000 left. The point of the 7,000 was not that there were still 7,000 faithful men, but that God's plan was going to move forward through this remnant and leave the rest of the unfaithful in the wake of his judgment.

So, here, Paul introduces the concept of the "remnant" that will receive the blessing and fulfillment of the "chosen" people.

Within the whole of the "foreknown" and "chosen" people of Israel there was always a remnant that believed and remained faithful.

11:3-4

In the days of apostasy Israel still had a remnant then.

The same is true in Paul's day. Israel will never be left without a remnant for the future.

Throughout the OT and into Paul's day there was always a remnant of the chosen people who believed and received the blessing. This will be true of Israel in the future, also.

11:5

"outos oun kai en to nun kairo"
"thus therefore also in the present time"

- Notice Paul's use of THREE connectives in a sequence to begin this statement: "Thus therefore also". Any one single connective would have worked: "Thus", or "Therefore" or "Also". But Paul used three in a row.
- The use of THREE connectives is to point out that what proceeded is much more than a good point of argumentation, but is to secure the fact that God has used the "chosen by grace" and their "remnant" to fulfill his purpose many times in the past, and God is currently in the process of doing it again in a greater eschatological way in Paul's ministry.
- God's use of the remnant of the chosen is not a surprise to God or an adjustment to his plan, but it is actually how God foreknew his plan was going to be accomplished.
- Elijah's ministry experience was similar to Paul's ministry experience. One exception is that Paul understands what is going on in the historical plan of salvation. Elijah was confused and became depressed/hopeless, and, was rightfully rebuked by the Lord.

Ε ν τ ω ν υ ν κ α λ ρ ω
 "In the present time"

Five times " ν υ ν κ α λ ρ ω " occur together in Paul's writing:

- Romans 3:26 – "He did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus."
- Romans 8:18 - "sufferings of the now time"
- 2 Corinthians 6:2 – "I tell you, now is the time of God's favor"

"Remnant chosen by grace" - This is in contrast to "works of the Law". They are still God's chosen people, or covenant people. There is a remnant in existence in Paul's day because of the same principle they began with in Abraham's day.

God's grace chose them, it was NOT their works that made them God's people.

Micah 5:7-8, "Then the **remnant of Jacob** shall be in the midst of many peoples like dew from the LORD, like showers on the grass, which delay not for a man nor wait for the children of man. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among the flocks of sheep, which, when it goes through, treads down and tears in pieces, and there is none to deliver."

Zechariah 8:12 referring to the exiles who had returned from Babylon, "But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days, declares the LORD of hosts. For there shall be a sowing of peace. The vine shall give its fruit, and the ground shall give its produce, and the heavens shall give their dew. And I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. And as you have been a byword of cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing. Fear not, but let your hands be strong."

11:6

Grace introduced in Romans 1:5 and 3:24 (12x in 3:24-6:15)

The remnant Jews became Christians in Paul's day. Those without faith were left behind.

"Works" refers to the "works of the Law". The context does not support the concept of "good works", but is still a reference to the legalistic "works" of the Jews in demonstrating their "chosen-ness" and "election" by keeping the Law of Moses.

Faith in Jesus Christ was a return to the grace of being God's chosen people. The faith of Abraham. Rejection of Jesus Christ was a continuation of rebellion to God's election by replacing it with self-centered religious "works of the Law".

Paul uses the word "grace" ("charis") 4x in 11:5-6.

If works is even an option then there is no reason to use the word "grace" since the definition of "grace" would have to change. "Grace" would no longer mean "grace."

11:7

This verse is a restating Romans 9:31 by rephrasing the thought.

9:31- "dioko" is replaced in 11:7 with "epizateo"

9:31- "phthano" is replaced in 11:7 with "epitugchano"

"But the elect attained it" of 11:7 restates 9:30

Before in 9:30-32 hardened Israel was contrasted with the believing Gentiles. Here hardened Israel is contrasted with remnant Israel.

What is sought and not obtained is NOT election itself (which refers to the initial acceptance by God). What is sought and NOT obtained here is the benefits of a sustained covenant relationship.

Israel sought it, but only the elect of Israel got it.

Hardening is caused by people who reject God: Pharaoh, Romans 1, 2.

- The word for "hardened" is "*poroo*" which comes from the word "*poros*" which is a kind of marble. The basic meaning is "petrify". It was used in medicine as "causing a stone to form in the bladder or a callus on the hand."
- Used as a metaphor in the NT in:
 - Mark 6:52- "And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened."
 - Mark 8:17- "And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember?"

- John 12:40 (Isaiah 6:10)- “Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:
 “Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.”
 Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him. Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue.”
- 2 Corinthians 3:14- “But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. ***But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.***”

11:8

From Deut. 29:4 and Isaiah 29:10

11:9, 10

Psalm 69:22, 23

Originally referred to David’s enemies and applied to Jesus’ enemies.

Paul is sees it here as applied to those who reject God and are hardened.

“their table” would be the temple furniture and ritual.

The sacrificial system revealed Jesus but for them it was a reason to reject Christ and stumble.

The table of showbread and meals that were regularly part of the sacrificial system.

The Jews who trusted in the Levitical system rather than on the Christ it revealed would be stumbling over the table and the meals just like they stumbled over the stone. The Jews with hard hearts were more concerned with maintaining religious purity than on believing the promise revealed in the rituals they practiced.

“backs bent” could refer to slavery, a heavy burden, shrinking back in fear, slumped in grief, weakness, groping in blindness. In any case the condition is opposite freedom found in Christ.

11:11-31

There are now two groups of Jews

- a) believing Jews and members of the church
- b) non-believing Jews who as a result of rejecting Christ have been hardened.

This next section focuses on the non-believing Jews.

Yet Paul is talking to Gentiles (11:13) The hardening of Israel is not permanent.

There is a two-fold process:

- a) Israel rejects Christ and so refuses to go to the Gentiles with the good news. This results in the good news being brought directly to the Gentiles while by-passing the Jews.
- b) Next, Israel will respond to Christ. The results are the end time resurrection.

Five sections here:

11-12

- a) trespass of Israel
- b) salvation for the Gentiles
- c) better things when Israel responds

15

- a) Israel's rejection
- b) Reconciliation of the world
- c) Israel's acceptance be life from the dead

17-23

- a) natural branches broken off
- b) wild branches grafted in
- c) natural branches grafted back in

25-26

- a) Hardening of Israel
- b) Fullness of Gentiles
- c) all Israel will be saved

30-31

- a) Disobedience of Israel
- b) Mercy for Gentiles
- c) Mercy to Israel

11:15

"rejection" refers to a throwing away or a loss of salvation through Jesus. The Jews did the throwing away.

11:16

The dough is the Jewish people.

The first fruit offering is the believing remnant of Paul's day (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:15; 2 Thes. 2:13)

11:17

The tree represents the kingdom of God

Olive trees were the most cultivated tree in the Mediterranean world The wild olive tree was very unproductive.

11:20

Jewish believers became proud of their place in God's plan, but were unproductive. Gentiles also need to fear both their arrogance and their lack of productivity.

Romans 11:25-32

Paul is going to review salvation history concerning Israel one more time in 11:25-32.

11:25

This verse begins with "for" which ties it into the verses before it concerning the olive tree.

"Mystery" is "**mysterion**" and does not mean the unknown.

It refers to God's activity in history concerning man's salvation that **has** been revealed to man.

The use of mystery refers to things that had been hidden in the past.

It is a technical term used in Jewish apocalyptic verses where God reveals his set purpose to mankind through a prophet.

Daniel 2:17-18, 27-30, 47

Matthew 13:11 (Mark 4:11, Luke 8:10)

Romans 16:25

1 Corinthians 2:1, 7

1 Corinthians 4:1

1 Corinthians 15:51

Ephesians 1:9

Ephesians 3:3, 4, 9

Ephesians 6:19

Colossians 1:26, 27

Colossians 2:2

Colossians 4:3

1 Timothy 3:9, 16

Revelation 1:20

Revelation 10:7

Revelation 17:5, 7

The mystery concerning Israel is immediately stated by Paul:

- a) Israel is the chosen nations
- b) Israel has experienced a hardening in part until Gentiles have come in
- c) Israel will be saved.

"Conceited" lines up with 11:17-21

The hardening is:

- a) partial
- b) temporal
- c) And a response to Israel having rejected Jesus in Mt. 12 and other places.

This hardening will serve as discipline and eventually bring Israel to God.

In the OT the Gentiles were in darkness and the Jews had God's revelation.

In the NT the Jews are in darkness and the Gentiles walk in the light.

In the End the Jews will need to turn to God out of darkness just like the Gentiles have in the church age.

"Full number" means also "Complete Number"

11:26

Israel's restoration promised:

Deuteronomy 30:1-5

Jeremiah 23:3

Ezekiel 11:17

Ezekiel 36:24

Micah 2:12

Zechariah 10:8-10

"And So" is "houtos" or "in this way"

This can mean:

- a) this is the result, "all Israel will be saved"
- b) this is how it happens, or, to explain the manner of how all Israel will be saved just as the prophets said or just as Paul has explained.

"All Israel" "pas Israel"

Israel can mean:

- a) the community of believers both Jew and Gentile
- b) the nation of Israel
- c) the believers within Israel

In 9-11 Israel has always meant the nation of Israel.

Notice 9:6, "not all who are from Israel are Israel" Paul writes "all Israel" not "every Israelite"

"Salvation" is "sothesetai"

11:27

The quote from Isaiah 59:20, 21 and 27:9 shows to Paul's readers that even the OT predicted these things: a)

God will send a deliverer

- b) Israel will be godless

- c) God will take away their sins
- d) God has a covenant with Israel

11:28

11:29

11:30

11:31

11:32