

Take heart in the proven grace of God
Romans 11:1-10
Ken Lewis, Senior Pastor
Lord's Day, February 25, 2018

Big Idea: God is faithfully at work saving and preserving his people by grace.

Two questions concerning the character of God:

1. Has God's Word failed (9:6)?

Jer. 21:45 Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.

2. Has God rejected His people (11:1)?

God has not rejected his people (Rom 11):

- I. God's rejection of Israel is partial rather than total (11:1-10).
- II. Israel's rejection of Christ actually serves a merciful purpose (11:11-24).
- III. Israel's rejection of Christ is only temporary (11:25-32).

I. The rejection of Israel is partial rather than total (11:1-10).

A. God has not rejected His people (11:1-6).

1 Samuel 12:22 For the LORD will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you a people for himself.

Psalms 94:14 For the LORD will not forsake his people; he will not abandon his heritage;

Two examples (vv. 1c-6)

(1) Paul (v. 1c)

▪ **His ancestry (v. 1c; Phil 3:3-6)**

▪ **God's mercy (1 Tim. 1:12-16)**

1 Timothy 1:12-16 I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, 13 though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. 16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

(2) Elijah and the seven thousand (vv. 2-6; 1 Kings 19)

▪ **God has not rejected his people whom He loves (v. 2a).**

“foreknew” means “to forelove” – It carries the idea of intimacy characterized by devotion and love.

Amos 3:2 You [people of Israel] only have I known of all the families of the earth.

- **In the midst of great national apostasy God kept a remnant for Himself (vv. 2b-4).**
- **The remnant was chosen by God's grace (vv. 5-6; 9:10-11, 15-16, 26-28).**

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

B. God has hardened those who sought righteousness apart from faith in Christ (11:7-10).

- **Israel sought a righteous standing before God through keeping the law (vv. 7ab).**

Romans 9:30-32 What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; 31 but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. 32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,

Romans 10:2-4 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

- **God has saved a remnant but those who did not believe He hardened (v. 7c).**

Romans 9:18 So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

Romans 11:25 25 Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

- **The Old Testament bears witness to God's judicial hardening (vv. 8-10).**

(1) Deut. 29:3-4; Isa. 29:10

8 as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day."

(2) Psalm 69:22-23

9 And David says, "Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them; 10 let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs forever."