

The Hope of Israel

Romans 11:1-10

Main idea: God's covenant faithfulness has proven personally, historically, and judicially, displaying that God's saving grace is also a preserving grace. Yet, God will deal justly with those who do not believe.

Our present age: Israel, politics and our extremes

Their age: Israel is spiritually lost, the church is isolated and confused

"Paul's seemingly discouraging assessment of the past and present of Israel's spiritual life now changes tempo to an upbeat prediction about her future—all Israel will be saved!"

One central Question: Is God done with Israel?

God's Covenant Faithfulness Proven Personally (11:1–2a)

- The personal preservation of the Jews
 - See handout
 - Jeremiah 31:35–37
- The personal salvation of Jewish believers - **v.1**
 - Paul = Exhibit A
- The personal gathering of God's church
 - The first disciples - Jesus' mission - The early church
- Romans 1:16; Luke 24:44–49

God's Covenant Faithfulness Proven Historically (11:2b–6)

- God foreknows his beloved people - **v. 2**
 - Foreknowing involves God's choosing. It involves a relationship of love. It involves God's commitment to his people.
 - **Romans 8:29**
- God's past grace points to his future grace - **vv. 3-5**
 - The example of Elijah
 - God has always preserved a remnant for himself
 - In Elijah's day: Has not Israel rejected her God? (**1 Kings 19:10-18**)

■ In Paul's day: Has God rejected his people Israel? (**Romans 11:1,5**)

- God's love and faithfulness is amazing grace - v.6

"The cross purchased not only your past forgiveness but all the future grace you will ever need." John Piper, Future Grace

- **Romans 8:32**

God's Covenant Faithfulness Proven Judicially (11:7–10)

- God is faithful to His own justice
- The high cost of stubborn unbelief

So What?

- Our personal testimony is proof of God's amazing grace!
 - Who I was before Christ
 - How I encountered Christ
 - What Christ has done in my life
- What do we do when we feel as if we are making no gospel impact?
- Will I resolve to be faithful to a God who has always been faithful to me?

Now What?

Read Mark 4:1-20. Then focus your attention on v.13. What did Jesus say about the parable of the sower that instructs us about all other parables?

- The parable of the sower is a key to understanding every other parable. Why?
- The condition of our hearts determines how we receive and respond to God's Word.
- “ And that key appears to have to do with the way spiritual truth is received and held onto (something that the disciples would need in order to understand the other parables)—and the reason Israel could not receive the spiritual truth Jesus was giving them.
- Truth is received in direct correlation to the condition of the heart-ground it falls upon.
- Truth is maintained in direct correlation to the defensive methods (against trials, temptations, and the Tempter) employed to ensure its taking root and bearing fruit.”

Why do four different people hear the same Word of God but respond so differently?
(Jeremiah 17:9; Ezekiel 36:26–27)

- What is making the difference: the soil or sower?
- “There are different levels of fruitfulness—“a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown” (Matt. 13:23)—based on the condition of the heart-ground and the diligence in bringing the seed to fruition.
- As Luke’s account records, “the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop” (Luke 8:15).
- But if a person is like Israel, blinded to spiritual truth to begin with, then the seed might just as well have been sown on the sidewalk.”

According to this parable, what are the greatest obstacles that keep people from bearing spiritual fruit today?

Jesus identifies three dangers:

- Satan stealing the Word (vv. 15)
- Trials and persecution (vv. 16–17)
- Worldly cares, riches, and desires (vv. 18–19)

Which of these are the biggest obstacles in your family and friend groups?

What does genuine faith produce? (v.20)

- John 15:1–8; Galatians 5:22–23; James 2:17
- Is fruit the evidence or the cause of our salvation?
- How might I cultivate my own heart to receive God’s Word so I can bear more fruit in my life? (Psalm 1:1-3)
 - Hear and understand God's Word consistently? (Do you have a translation you understand?)
 - Treasure it deeply? (What does it mean to treasure something?)
 - Guard it from distraction? (Can my peers/friend groups distract me?)
 - Bear increasing fruit for His glory? (Just start helping one person know and follow Christ)