

In View of God's Mercy - Week 12

Romans 10:17-11:36

Pastor Matt Dean

Main Idea: God's sovereignty over salvation

In Romans 9 Paul deals with Israel's past, in Romans 10 Paul addresses Israel's present, and in Romans 11 Paul speaks to God's promises and faithfulness to Israel's future.

Landing Point: Romans 11:36 - For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever.

Romans 10:17 Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of of Christ

Romans 10:18-21

- 18 - Paul addresses the gospel and its rejection in the world
- 19 - Paul focuses on Israel's rejection, jealousy and anger
- 20 - Paul quotes Isaiah to illustrate God's saving power among the nations
- 21 - Israel is described as a disobedient and contrary people

Paul is making the point with sadness – that Israel's rejection of the gospel is because they pursued a saving righteousness by adherence to the law instead of through faith in Jesus the Messiah – but God is not done with Israel.

We will see today in Romans 11 – three major ideas – and only one appropriate response:

- God has Preserved a Remnant Among the Jews (vv. 1-10)
- God is Now Grafting in the Gentiles (vv.11-24)
- God Will One Day Bring Many Jews Back to Him (vv. 25-32)
- God – to you belongs all praise and honor and glory.

1. God has Preserved a Remnant Among the Jews (vv. 1-10)

The remnant theme was a familiar one to Jews. When the majority in Israel turned to idolatry, God always preserved a remnant of the faithful for himself. The same was true in Paul's day. Though most Jews rejected Jesus as the Messiah, a remnant did not. Paul himself is one example. So were all the apostles and many other Jews. Far from rejecting the Jews, God turned many of them to faith in Jesus.

Read Romans 11:1-10

Has God rejected his people? By no means!

Tony Merida¹ makes these observations: *“Paul is a personal example – he is an Israelite and embraced Jesus as the Messiah, that because “God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew” this foreknowing involves God’s choosing; it involves a relationship of love, it involves God’s commitment to his people; God cannot “unknow the people whom he knows are his, Paul reminds the Romans that God is working out his electing purposes in history”*

We see in 11:3-5 Elijah feels alone like the only one faithful that is left, but God say I have kept for myself 7000 men who have not bowed the knee to Baal” Paul says – SO TOO, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. Paul’s point – let grace be grace.

2. God is Now Grafting in the Gentiles (vv.11-24)

While there was a remnant, most Jews of Paul’s day rejected Jesus. Time and again, Paul was thrown out of synagogues, run out of town, beaten, or stoned at the hands of angry Jewish mobs. While a few Jews would believe Paul’s message, he found a warmer welcome among the Gentiles. Paul understood these experiences to be part of God’s larger plan to speed the gospel to the ends of the earth. Just like God used Pharaoh’s rejection to display his glory among the nations, God is using the Jewish rejection to bring all nations into his new covenant family.

Read Romans 11:11-24

Did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means!

How much more will the fullness of Israel’s inclusion mean?

Do not be arrogant - stand fast through faith, do not become proud, but fear (holy fear) God HAS THE power to graft them in again.

3. God Will One Day Bring Many Jews Back to Him (vv. 25-32)

Though Paul does not say when or how, he indicates that one day many Jews will acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah and put their faith in him. Now is the time for the ingathering of the Gentiles. But one day, God will, in his mercy, remove the partial hardening and draw many Jews back to himself. In verses 12 and 15, Paul seems to indicate that this will happen near the return of Jesus.

Read Romans 11:25-32

This mystery – a partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in (this is why evangelism and reaching all peoples and nations matter)

¹ Merida, Christ Centered Exposition - Romans

This chapter is difficult for many people. I think it's important to acknowledge the range of views among people, even some Christians, when it comes to Israel, questions like who or what actually is Israel? Is it the community of the elect people of God, including both Jews and Gentiles? Is it all Jewish people? Is it the geopolitical nation of Israel? At all times or at a specific time in history? Is it the elect within Israel? Some have even suggested that Christians should not share the gospel or evangelize Jewish people. This is the complexity of chapter 11.

Paul deals with this in Romans 9 – for not all who are descended from Israel belong Israel, there are Jews who trust in Jesus and those who don't, there is a true Israel and there is an ethnic Israel, but in Romans 11 we see that among ethnic Israel, among those whose hearts have been hardened, there will be a future salvation of Jewish people through faith in Jesus the Messiah.

All of Romans speaks to this – that a righteousness with God by faith has now been revealed, that God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do, that now by grace through faith in Jesus, anyone and everyone, both Jews and Gentiles are made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ.

>> John Piper was asked this question in an interview²:

“What about Jewish people today who are waiting for a Messiah but, in the process, they are not believing Jesus is the Messiah? That is exactly the situation in which John the Baptist found himself in his question in Luke 7:19. He said, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” So, that is John the Baptist’s very question. And Jesus answers him by pointing to his miracles and the uniqueness of his preaching to the poor. And then he says in Luke 7:23, “And blessed is the one who is not offended by me” – because Jesus didn’t look like how they expected the Messiah to look. And so, they stumbled over the stumbling stone (cf. Romans 9:32–33). And he said: Only those will be blessed who don’t stumble over me. And that blessing is valid for all who embrace Jesus – and the opposite will be condemnation.

So, over and over again Jesus tells us in the Gospels, he tells the Jews that, if they reject him, they reject God the Father. If they don’t love him and welcome him as Messiah and Son of God, they don’t love the Father. They don’t welcome the Father. And so, let me just give a few of those, because they are really the very essence of the matter.

John 14:7, “If you had known me [Jesus], you would have known my Father.”

John 5:23, “Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father.”

John 5:42–43, “I know that you do not have the love of God within you. I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not receive me.”

² <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/will-every-jew-be-saved>

John 8:42, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here.”

1 John 2:23, “No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.”

John 6:45, “Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.”

It is just hard to imagine how Jesus could make himself clearer that to reject him and wait for another Messiah is to show you do not have a saving relationship with God. That is true for Gentiles, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, secularists. Jesus is the only way to God because he is the incarnation of God.”

Application: In View of God’s Mercy::: A heart moved by the grace of God is humble – and eager for all people to know this kindness and love of God. Let this be true of us. As we hold dear to the promises of the gospel, may we also hold dear to the promises of God for his children of promise among all the nations, among Jewish people, among those who have yet to hear – He is the God of salvation.

Our only appropriate response (vv.33-36)

Read Romans 11:33-36

The depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God.

How unsearchable are HIS judgments.

How inscrutable are HIS ways.

For who has known the the mind of the Lord.

Who has been his counselor?

Who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him the glory forever.

God from You – is everything.

God from You

- Life and breath
- The universe and all that we can see
- Mercy and grace
- Salvation and redemption
- Eternal life
- All wisdom and power
- All glory and honor
- All purpose and plans

God through You

- Only then does life make sense
- Only You can hold all this together
- Only You can save those whom you have chosen
- Only You can strengthen the weak, set captives free, give sight to the blind
- Only You can redeem what is lost
- Only You can keep every promise
- Only You can fulfill every covenant
- Only You can rescue us from rebellion
- Only You can sanctify those who trust in you
- Only You can keep those who belong to you
- Only You can build your Kingdom
- Only You can save people from every tribe, tongue, and nation

God to You

- To you belongs our highest praise
- To you we give our greatest allegiance
- To you we give our sincere worship
- To you we look for life itself
- To you we look when we don't understand
- To you we look when we can't see how
- To you we look with our hope for eternity
- To you we offer our very lives
- To you we give our first and best
- To you we give our hopes and dreams
- To you – belongs all the glory.