

ROMANS: TRANSFORMED BY GRACE

(Romans 11:1-1)

Have you ever been at whit's end in parenting? Just want to give up? Kid beyond your help? What do you do?

Theme of Chs. 9-11: **God's sovereign faithfulness in His redemptive purposes first to the Jews and now to the Gentiles too:**

Chps. 9-11 fill out one complete passage dealing with God's Covenant people Israel. Their past salvation and their current salvation. And how the gospel now relates to the Jews/all people.

Paul is making an argument to the Jews that even though they *have been* the Covenant people of God (that they have always/only been saved by **Faith** in the One true Covenant God & through belief in the coming Messiah) –For ethic/national Israel, **NOW their situation=changed/evolved**. (Paul refers to a ***Spiritual Israel*** within Ethic Israel = The Elect/Saved & the *rejecting* nation)

-Ch. 9: God's Sovereignty in Election; Predestination, Foreknowledge, & God's passing over others

-Ch. 10: God's gracious giving of the gospel; calling; Evangelism; Church = share gospel faithfully

-Ch. 11: SO what about Israel? Fate of Jews (O.T.); Fate of Jews (N.T.), **Now**, & in the **Future**.....

READ Romans 11:1-11 [10:21 But as for Israel, He says, "I have spread out My hands all day long to a disobedient and obstinate people."] 1:1 I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? Far from it! [may it never happen] For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. ² 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 pleads with God against Israel? ³ "Lord, they have killed Your prophets, they have torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life." ⁴ But what is the divine response to him? "I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." ⁵ In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to *God's* gracious choice. ⁶ But if *it is* by grace, *it is* no longer on the basis of works, since *otherwise* grace is no longer grace. ⁷ What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but ⁸ those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened; 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." ⁹ And David says, "May their table become a snare and a trap, And a stumbling block and a retribution to them. ¹⁰ May their eyes be darkened to see not, And bend their backs continually." ¹¹ I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? Far from it! But by their wrongdoing salvation *has come* to the Gentiles, to make them jealous."

Two main lenses within Church (two principle theological positions) to read/interpret Ch. 11:

A. Covenant Theology – a framework to interpret the divine/human relationships in the unfolding of redemptive history-That God speaks to humans and forms eternal bonds with them through the use of Covenants (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, & the New Cov.), Because the Bible is a history of Covenants, it needs to be read covenantally. God's one, eternal plan is progressively unveiled/revealed through the biblical covenants =all of God's promises are fulfilled in Christ & applied to the Church as God's new covenant people. **Jesus=fulfillment** ***For most Covenant theologians: today's Church is the fulfillment/'replaces' OT Israel** (or the "Church" has always been in the O.T. & now the Church is the Cov. fulfillment of all Israel's prophecies). =God's One Cov. People Jew/Gentile. **Continuity!** Thus, circumcision in OT Israel & *now* baptism in NT signify God's Cov. People =**paedobaptism**: ***Prog. Cov.=Jesus is True Israel**

B. Dispensational Theology – similarly, this is a framework that divides redemptive history into various dispensations where God accomplished salvation for His glory in different ways. Significantly, concerning Israel, Disp. theologians hold that today's Church and Israel are distinct entities, & that ethnic Israel will still have a real future, fulfilling 500 unfulfilled proph.

Cov. Theologians tend to be Amillennial; **Disp. Theologians tend to be pre-millennial** (believing that Revelation is still real, future & not just symbolic. =Israel will be restored phys. during the actual millennial reign of Christ and Israel (Jews) will acknowledge Jesus as Messiah and all five hundred unfulfilled prophecies given to Israel by God will be fulfilled under Christ's reign.

C. Remnant Theology -throughout redemptive history, there has always been a faithful remnant to God, believing Him & trusting God with their lives by faith. Even though many peoples, cultures, ethnic Jews have failed God throughout history, God has always kept for Himself the elect, those who have faithfully followed & honored God as King and Savior. = A true Israel within Apostate Israel; An Elect/Spiritual Israel within National/Ethnic Israel. **Saved Jews in NT** (i.e. **Noah; Abraham/Lot; Elijah & 7k; those saved in Babylonian Capture: Nehemiah** etc.)

-Ezekiel 6:7-9 "The slain will fall among you, and you will know that I am the Lord.

⁸"However, I will leave a remnant, in that you will have those who escaped the sword among the nations when you are scattered among the countries. ⁹ Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations to which they will be taken captive, how I have been hurt by their adulterous hearts which turned away from Me, and by their eyes which committed infidelity with their idols; and they will loathe themselves in their own sight for the evils which they have committed, for all their abominations. = Rescued to repent & witness

-Romans 9:27 "Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "Though the number of the sons of Israel may be like the sand of the sea, *only* the remnant will be saved."

*Controversial Lens, whichever you choose: Spirit filled; gracious; open; discussion; whole Bible

Vs. 1: I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? Far from it! [may it never happen]

*Israel's cycle of sin (Blessing, Apathy, Idolatry, Warning, Punishment, Repentance, Restoration)

-Time & time again God punished His rebellious people: **Canaanites; Philistines; Egyptians; Assyrians; Babylonians; Persians' Greeks; Romans; Nazi's? Antichrist** in End times/Rev.12

-Though God has punished His Cov. people severely – they have all not been cut off: **Remnant** Paul: **For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.** Paul, of all Jews, should have been cut off: blasphemer, persecutor of Church, murderer) = BUT saved/grac

Vs. 2: God has not rejected His people whom He **foreknew**. (fore-chose; fore-loved; loved from eternity =emphasis on a future loving relationship with divine privilege and promise). Or do you not know what the Scripture says in *the passage about Elijah*, how he pleads with God against Israel? ³ "Lord, they have killed Your prophets, they have torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life." ⁴ But what is the divine response to him? "I have kept for Myself (reserved) 7k men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." =remnant (Elijah had no idea; he thought he was the ONLY one faithful; only one left. = we are not alone!)

Vs. 5: *In the same way then*, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God's gracious choice. Jews in first cent. Part of God's elect; Saved by grace/Messi

Vs. 6: But if *it is* by grace, [their salvation was based on grace] *it [salvation] is no longer on the basis of works*, since *otherwise* grace is no longer grace. ⁷ What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained [righteousness through works/Law], but those who were **chosen** obtained it, and the rest were **hardened**; =God's sovereignty: God's Election of some & hardening of others

Vs. 8: just as it is written: "God gave them a spirit of stupor [non-alertness; apathy], Eyes to see not and ears to hear not, down to this very day."

Vs. 9: And David says, “May their table become a snare and a trap, And a stumbling block and a retribution to them. =Israel’s blessings & God’s gracious provision backfired on them; Israel became too comfortable with their blessings; became proud; fell into Idolatry & false worship
***Is there a lesson for us here too?** That we can be so distracted by our blessings/comfort that we FORGET gratitude; we worship the gift over the Giver. Forget why we have been blessed=to bless others=gospel! Lord, help us to see w/ your eyes our own hearts. Repent!!!
-Luke 12”48 “To whom much is given, much is required/expected”

Vs. 11: I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? Far from it! [Paul, was their sin in vain? Has God not used their rebellion? If He has not completely rejected them forever, then what is God doing with them?] But by their wrongdoing salvation *has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous.* =God used their rejection of their Messiah Jesus – to prompt God’s eternal plan (mystery/unseen in OT) to bring gos. to Gentiles, & Gentiles (Ch.) in God’s family!
***We, as Gentiles have been blessed through their rebellion & partial rejection/hardening.**

SO WHAT now for the Jews?=Dispensation of the Church Age: Jews can be saved, but hardened
Hardening is for a season/not permanent. “Until the times of Gentiles is fulfilled” -Ro. 11:25

***Did Israel forfeit their rights to Cov. Promises/blessings bc their disobedience? Yes, partially!but**
=God has always had an eternal plan for those He has Elected & predestined to be His: **Sp. Israel**

God’s Remnant (the faithful, those reserved by God for His glory, His elect) =many Jews in **O.T.**
-In **N.T.**, the Apostles, Paul = Jewish believers who accepted the Messiah (thousands in Acts)
-**Today**, there are Messianic Believers, “Completed Jews,” Jewish culture/heritage=foll. of Jesus
-In the **Future**, God’s plan is to bring to fulfillment His Cov. Promises to Israel=Jesus/&Physical

APPLICATION: (To you and me):

- 1. God keeps His promises;** He is the ultimate Promise-Keeper: On the one hand, the covenants reveal our triune Creator-covenant Lord who makes & keeps His promises to Israel & to us!
As God initiates covenant relationships with His creatures, he is always the faithful partner
-Heb. 6:17-18 “In the same way God, desiring even more to demonstrate to the heirs of the promise the fact that His purpose is unchangeable, confirmed it with an oath, ¹⁸so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to hold firmly to the hope set before us.”
- 2. Our only ever hope is found in the Person of Jesus.** Jesus fulfilled everything ever promised and Jesus will not abandon us; He will never leave nor forsake us; ALL our hope is tied to Him!
“For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.” -2Cor. 1:20
- 3. God has never left Himself without a witness** throughout all of history. Even today if you are paying attention. God wants to show off; demonstrate His loving providence over your life!
- 4. God has always kept for Himself a remnant**, of faithful followers who give Him glory. Are you part of His elect, His remnant, saved by God’s gracious choice? In a culture that is anti-God; in a “Christian” and “post-Christian” culture – are you part of God’s faithful; bought w/His blood?
- 5. We are to share the gospel with Jews.** And gentiles. And everyone. We are to pray for Israel. No one can go to heaven apart from a saving faith relationship with Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12). Are you prayed up? Prepared to share? To give your life away for His sake!