

Paul's Epistle to the Romans

Romans II

God's Righteousness Foreknew Israel's Failure
and Made a Way to Restore His Chosen

Romans 9-II: God's Sovereign Choosing

Context: Rom 8 How does God's "working all things together for good" for those "called according to His Purpose" apply to His Chosen Israel

I. Rom9 Is Israel still His Chosen after rejecting the Messiah?

- a. God's Sovereign choices are righteous even as a Potter has the right to shape Israel's clay in whatever way glorifies Him
- b. God in His sovereignty has chosen to show Mercy instead of wrath upon the nations and Patience upon Israel in their rejection
- c. God's Word to Abraham has not failed because He has chosen to keep His covenant with a Chosen Remnant out of Israel

Romans 9-II: God's Sovereign Choosing

Context: Rom 8 How does God's "working all things together for good" for those "called according to His Purpose" apply to His Chosen Israel

I. **Rom 10** Israel's zeal for attaining to the Righteousness of Law by works has blinded them to the Righteous One

- a. the Word of righteousness draws near to them by the Word but the cross of the Messiah is a stone of stumbling
- b. they have heard the word of Christ but reject His mercy and rely on their works
- c. they do not realize that the Messiah is the end (Gk.telos) = fulfilment, completion, goal) of the Law and has become our righteousness by faith

Romans 9-11: God's Sovereign Choosing

Context: **Rom 8** How does God's "working all things together for good" for those "called according to His Purpose" apply to His Chosen Israel

2. **Romans 10.18-21** The Gospel has gone out but not all have listened
 - a. v.16 Testimony of the Suffering Servant **Isa. 53** "who has believed the report?"
 - b. v.18 Testimony of Creation - **Psa 19.4** David declares that "Their voice has gone out to all the earth"
 - c. v.19 - Testimony of Moses **Deut 32.21** Moses prophesied in 1400BC that God would respond to their rejection by showing mercy to foolish gentiles
 - d. v.20-21 Testimony of Isaiah's prophecy **Isa 65.1-2** declared that God would be found by a people who neither sought nor asked but heard God Himself declares that for years He has extended His merciful hand to a disobedient and stubborn Israel

Perspective of Paul's strong rebuke of Israel's rejection of their messiah

‘A people disobeying and contradicting.’
So the Lord of Israel, through the prophet, has described the nation. Let us remember what a major feature in the prophecies, and indeed the whole Old Testament, such accusations and exposures are. From Moses to Malachi, in histories and songs and instructions, we find everywhere this tone of stern truth-telling, this unsparing detection and description of Israelite sin. And we reflect that every one of these utterances was the voice of an Israelite.”

HCG Moule Romans

Romans II God in Sovereign Mercy has not Rejected Israel

- 1. Rom II.1-10** God throughout history has always kept for Himself a remnant that He might fulfill His Purpose through them
- 2. Rom II.11-24** Gentiles who have been chosen in mercy must humbly understand their calling and relationship to Israel
- 3. Rom II.25-32** Mystery: God's Sovereign Way of Mercy
- 4. Rom II.33-36:** Doxology and Worship

Part One: **Romans 11.1-10** - despite the way things look at present, God in Sovereign mercy has NOT really rejected Israel

Rom 11.1-2a I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew.

1. Paul now decisively declares that God could never be righteous and reject His people even if they reject Him
2. The Jews have been God's chosen people since the days of Abraham
3. Paul includes himself among the chosen people from the seed of Abraham and the tribe of Benjamin
4. But this raises the question: what does He do when He foreknows His people and they reject Him?

Part One: **Romans 11.1-10** - despite the way things look at present, God in Sovereign mercy has NOT really rejected Israel

Rom 11.2-5 Rom. 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?


“Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE.”

But what is the divine response to him? **“I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.”**

In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant **according to God’s gracious choice.**

1. God cannot reject His chosen ones because His foreknowledge implies two things:
 - a. He has a glorious plan already at work re: them (promised, called, loved, kept, delivered)
 - b. He also foreknew they would be unfaithful
2. Paul recounts God’s Word to Elijah when he was in despair because Israel was worshiping Baal
 - a. God sovereignly “keeps for Himself” a remnant who stand in testimony for all Israel
 - b. This remnant is kept in order to reveal God’s mercies endure forever

the Divine issue



**A REMNANT, CHOSEN
BY GRACE**
ROMANS II:1-6

- 1 - if God is to demonstrate His everlasting love for mankind on earth there must always be a beloved people at any given moment in history**
- 2 - if God's people backslide and go into bondage, God "snatches" some of His people out of captivity and 'keeps' them pure before His Face**
- 3 - despite their small size this remnant is seen and despised by Satan, angels, the world and even the backslidden who try to destroy them, but God keeps them miraculously against great odds**

characteristics of the remnant



A REMNANT, CHOSEN
BY GRACE
ROMANS II:1-6

- 1. comparatively small in number in relation to the whole yet individually faithful (7000 known only to God)**
- 2. wholehearted desire to serve and obey God rather than man (mal 3.16-17, ac 5.29)**
- 3. pursuit of holiness and a love for His Word (Jer 15.15-16)**
- 4. intercession and testimony 'in the gap' for the whole (1k 18.31)**

a history of the remnant

- 1. gen 12 Abraham and his seed chosen to bless all nations**
- 2. ex 32.26 Levites standing “on the Lord’s side”**
- 3. judges 7.7 Gideon’s 300**
- 4. 2 sam 23 David’s “mighty men”**
- 5. 1 kings 19 7000 who did not bow to baal**
- 6. 2 tribes out of 12 (Judah and Benjamin) faithful to Jehovah**
- 7. jer 35 Rechabites faithful Levites amid corruption**
- 8. ezra 1 a remnant of 50,000 who returned to Jerusalem**
- 9. rev 2-3 “whoever overcomes” out of the churches**
- 10. rev 12 the children in the wilderness hidden 3 1/2 yrs**

Part One: **Romans II.1-10** - despite the way things look at present, God in Sovereign mercy has NOT really rejected Israel

Rom II.5-6 In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God's gracious choice. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

1. So God sovereignly chose and saved Paul and a remnant of Jews to 'stand in' for Israel as those made righteous by faith in the Messiah Jesus
2. God looks upon this faithful remnant and remembers mercy in His judgments upon the rest
3. In the end, when Israel as a Nation will be saved, it will be in part because of the remnant's testimony

Part One: **Romans 11.1-10** - despite the way things look at present, God in Sovereign mercy has NOT really rejected Israel

Rom 11.7-10 What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened; 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.”
And David says, “LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP, AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM. LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED TO SEE NOT, AND BEND THEIR BACKS FOREVER.”

Question raised: What did God do with disobedient Israel who are not in the remnant?

1. Paul first quotes from **Isa 29.9-12** where we see that blindness, deafness and sleepiness is revealed in the paradoxical light of God's foreknowledge and Sovereignty
2. Paul quotes from **Psa 69.22-23** David's messianic psalm curses those opposing as enemies (**Rom.11.28**, cf. **Mt 27.25**)

2. **Rom II.II-24** Gentiles must humbly understand their calling and relationship to Israel

Rom II.II-12 I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!

Paul now opens the horizon of God's working for the Gentiles to gain a fuller understanding of Israel's present trouble

1. Israel's stumbling is both partial (not a 'fall') and temporary ('what will their fulfillment be')
2. With Israel's rejection of the Messiah, the Spirit was poured out upon gentile vessels by sovereign grace
3. If God made their negative failure the riches of Christ to gentiles, what will their positive restoration be?

2. **Rom II.II-24** Gentiles must humbly understand their calling and relationship to Israel

Rom II.I3-16 But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? If the first piece of dough is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too.

Paul explains his desire to see more of his fellow Israelites saved and his hope the gentile's blessings will make them jealous

1. Paul knows at present only “some” Jews (a mere remnant) will be saved
2. Yet a day of Israel’s “acceptance” will bring a seismic change in the kingdom when the Jews finally come home accepting their Messiah
3. Paul pictures Israel’s predestined foundational position in God’s full kingdom plan with two pictures illustrating how God is not yet through with Israel:
 - a. Israel is the original “holy” dough out of which the present holy lump has come
 - b. Israel (Abraham) is the holy root out of which the tree’s branches become holy too

2. **Rom 11.11-24** Gentiles must humbly understand their calling and relationship to Israel

Rom 11.17-18 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.

Paul now warns the gentiles not to become proud of their blessings but realize they have been grafted in to Israel's olive tree by God's grace alone

1. the Father (Husbandman) cuts off those branches that reject their Messiah (root)
2. wild olive branches (gentiles) have been grafted into this ancient "root of Jesse" by the grace of God through Jesus Christ
3. so the olive tree reveals God's Tree of life, bigger than just Israel though the original part of it

2. **Rom II.II-24** Gentiles must humbly understand their calling and relationship to Israel

Rom II.22-24 Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

Paul now reveals the kindness and severity of a Sovereign God

1. when God chooses a people He deals very strongly with his sons if they fall into worldly disobedience
2. but God also deals very kindly with those willing to follow and learn from Him
3. a Sovereign God can graft Israel back into His Kingdom tree if they repent and turn from their unbelief
4. if gentiles were grafted in "contrary to nature", how much more likely that the natural branches will be grafted into their original olive tree?

Part 3: Mystery: Sovereign Way of Mercy - Romans 11.25-32

Rom 11.25-26a For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery — so that you will not be wise in your own estimation — that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved

1. the olive tree in the OT is a picture of God's Kingdom rooted in Abraham and the source of anointing oil for the Messiah in His kingdom building work (Zech.4; Rev.11)

2. Paul used the Olive Tree as a parable of the Kingdom mystery to reveal how God is using mercy and discipline to bring His children to Sonship

a. at the present time God's mercy is toward the Gentiles and then by His discipline Israel will be saved until there is one kingdom tree

b. Paul also is revealing the mystery of Living a "Hybrid" Life where we abide in Christ's life to bear fruit in the Kingdom

Part 3: Mystery: Sovereign Way of Mercy - **Romans 11.25-32**

Rom 11.32 For God has shut up all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

Olive Tree Mystery revealed: all saved by Mercy

3. Paul is using this parable to show how the Sovereign God of election unites both Jews and gentiles into one olive tree by His Mercy alone

a. Rom 11.30 Gentiles who were once disobedient sinners were shown mercy as He sovereignly opened the way through Israel's disobedience

b. Rom 11.31 then Israel who was disobedient will also be shown mercy that His mercy might be given all by grace alone and by no merit or boasting

4. Rom 11.22 This is what being Chosen in God's Sovereignty means: called to be a testimony of Jesus the Messiah and disciplined by God's Sovereign mercy by the "kindness and severity of God"

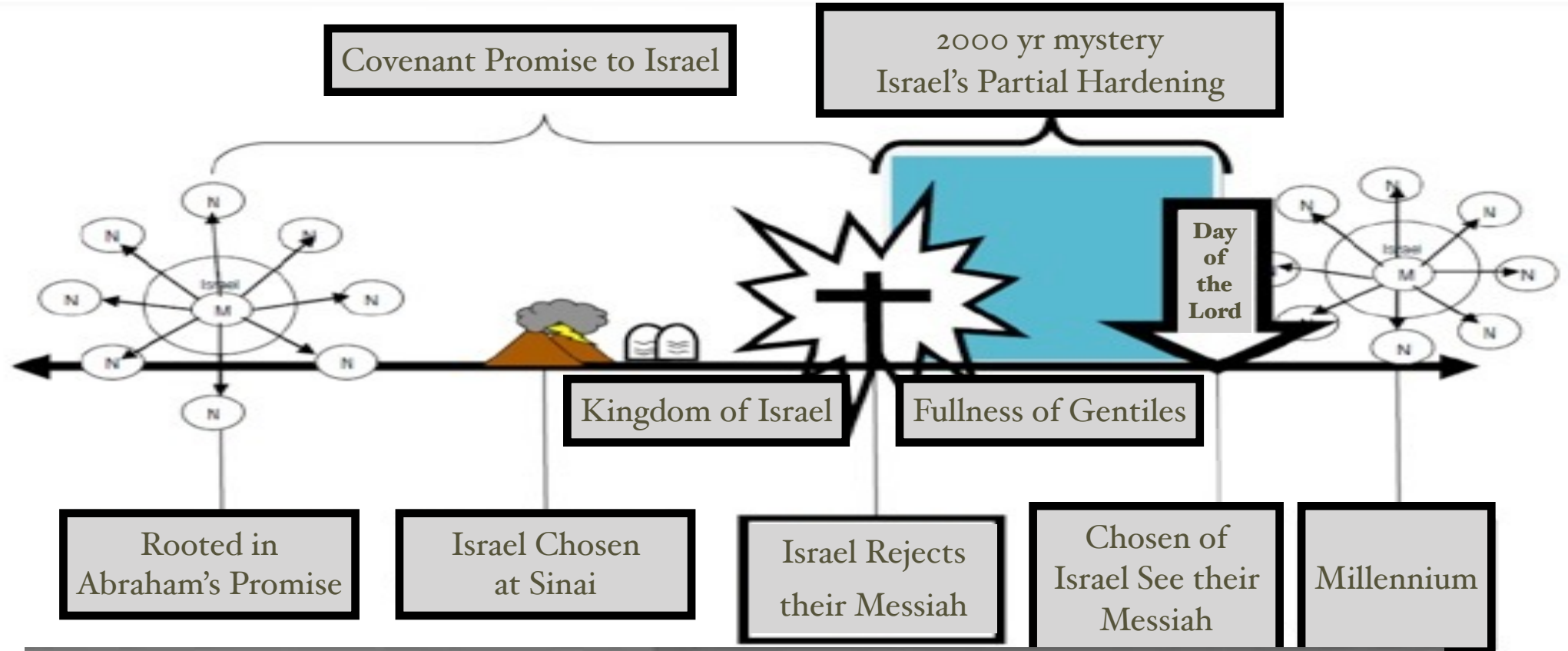
Part 4: Romans 11.33-36: Doxology and Worship

Rom 11.33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

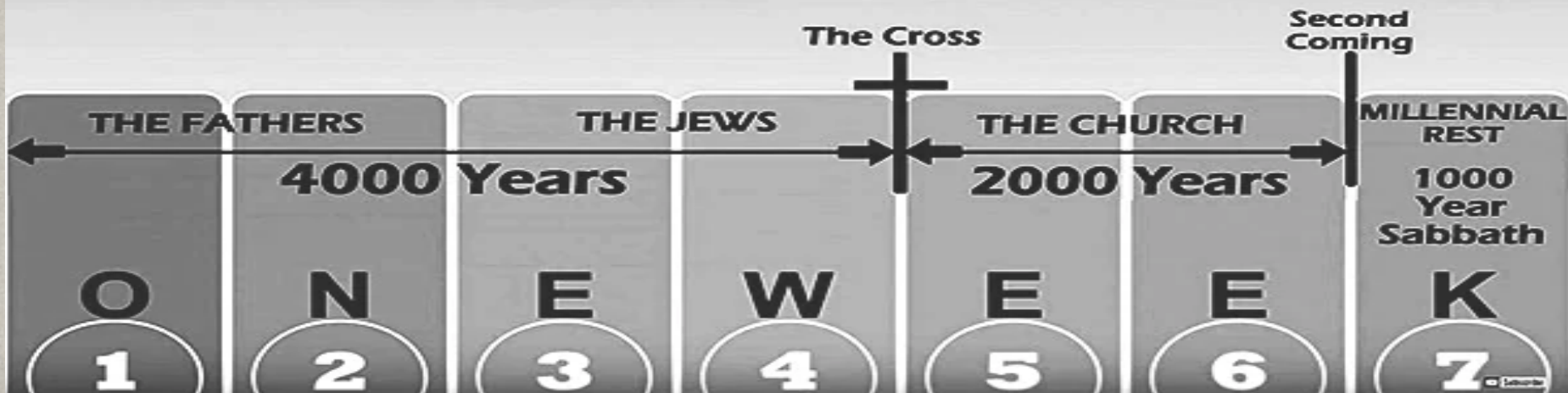
Paul has just revealed a great mystery of God's Mercy with a spiritual wisdom which the world cannot understand

- I. **Rom 11.33** Paul ends these three chapters with a praise doxology to God
 - a. It was a revelation of the “**riches of God's Mercy**” that caused Paul to humbly worship a God of such unsearchable wisdom and mysterious ways
 - b. It was a revelation of how God will redeem Israel even though the **severity** of His methods seem to contradict His **kindness and mercy**
2. **Rom 11.34-35** Paul adds to his doxology quotes from other worshipers who saw the Sovereignty of God's Mercy (**Isa.40.13; Job 41.11**) and declared that no one is able to give God counsel or tell Him what to do
3. **Rom 11.36** All Wisdom comes from God as the source, agent and purpose behind “**all things**” and so all the glory belongs to Him now and forever

A 2,000 YEAR BIBLICAL MYSTERY



Millennial Week "One day is as a thousand years" (2 Peter 3:8)



Romans 11.15-36: Lessons from this Mystery

1. God's Wisdom works in time with eternity in view

2. God's Kingdom is greater than either Israel or the Church

a. Israel in their pride thought being the Chosen people made them greater than the nations

b. Christians in their pride think once saved they can now boast that God loves them even though despising discipline

3. God works all things together for His good

a. His kindness will turn to severity in order to produce sons for His Son's Kingdom

b. God can even use our disobedience to open the way for others to find mercy

4. God's way with all his children is to remove all grounds for boasting and as He joins them together as one on the basis of Mercy alone

5. There is still more to be known about these mysteries which are yet hidden to us: (what is "partial hardening"? what is "the fullness of the Gentiles"? what does "all of Israel will be saved" mean?)



Paul's Epistle to the Romans

- next time: Rom 12
- Responding to the Mercies of God