

Eternity Daily Bible Study

Romans 9-16 The Implications of Salvation

Number: 598

Verses: Romans 11:1-5

Topic: Israel Has Not Been Rejected

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Romans 11:1-5 MKJV *I say then, Did not God put away His people? Let it not be said! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. (2) God did not thrust out His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture said in Elijah, how he pleaded with God against Israel, saying, (3) "Lord, they killed Your prophets and dug down Your altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life." (4) But what does the Divine answer say to him? "I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." (5) Even so then, also in this present time a remnant according to the election of grace has come into being.*

Paul then asks "Are all the Jews rejected by God?" and firmly answers "No, and on two counts". Firstly Paul himself is a Jew and is saved - and secondly, that God always preserves a saved and faithful remnant.

The illustration of this is that even during the worst time of Jewish apostasy, during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel, when Elijah thought that he alone was left, God had in fact kept seven thousand who had not bowed their knees to Baal. That is, no apostasy is so bad, or so total, that God cannot preserve a faithful remnant for Himself (which is encouraging news given the falling away from the standards of godliness we see today!)

Paul says emphatically: *God did not thrust out His people whom He foreknew.* Paul always sees God as coming into the world to save sinners. The gospel is more inclusive than it is exclusive. The New Testament is full of terms such as "everyone", "whosoever", and "all" making out that salvation, prayer and the Holy Spirit are widely available by faith to all genders, classes, ethnicities, and language groups.

So we can see that God's salvation is more inclusive (including of others into the family of God) than exclusive (shutting people out) and even the most unlikely people and worst sinners (such as Saul the persecutor) can be saved. I am certain that God will not shut the door on the humblest person who truly believes:

Matthew 12:20 MKJV *He will not break a bruised reed, and He will not quench a smoking wick, until He sends out judgment to victory.*

As the old hymn goes:

There's a wideness in God's mercy
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in his justice,
which is more than liberty.
There is welcome for the sinner,
and more graces for the good;
there is mercy with the Savior;

there is healing in his blood.....

For the love of God is broader
than the measure of man's mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more faithful,
we should take him at his word;
and our life would be thanksgiving
for the goodness of the Lord.

Words: Frederick William Faber, 1862;

The wideness of God's mercy and the "narrow gate" seem ever at odds with each other, but the condition of mercy is calling on God in repentance and faith. The wide mercy of "whosoever" is always coupled with a conditional verb such as: "calls on", "believes" or "confesses":

John 3:15 MKJV *so that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

John 12:46 MKJV *I have come as a Light into the world, so that whoever believes on Me should not remain in darkness.*

1 John 4:15 MKJV *Whoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him and he in God.*

Romans 10:12-13 MKJV *For there is no difference both of Jew and of Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call on Him. (13) For everyone, "whoever shall call on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

Romans 1:16 MKJV *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

Therefore God did not reject the Israelites, in fact if any of them repent and believe they will most certainly be saved. They are His people, who He foreknew. God has attached himself to Israel but Israel through its unbelief has detached itself from God. Yet even this refractory stubbornness is not final - for God is able to rescue a remnant:

Or do you not know what the Scripture said in Elijah, how he pleaded with God against Israel, saying, (3) "Lord, they killed Your prophets and dug down Your altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life." (4) But what does the Divine answer say to him? "I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." (5) Even so then, also in this present time a remnant according to the election of grace has come into being.

My great-grandmother was from an exceedingly wealthy Jewish family and became a Christian as a teenager, through the witness of her nanny. Later she married a Scottish doctor and went as a missionary to China alongside Hudson Taylor and his famous "70". She was of course disinherited by her family for this! So my great-grandmother was part of God's remnant among the Jews. There will always be some Jews who find faith in

Jesus Christ for the sake of His promises with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

From the days of Paul until now only a relatively small fraction of the Jewish population has even been saved (despite some major efforts to convert them) - *in this present time a remnant according to the election of grace has come into being.*

This remnant is God's gracious act to choose some for salvation despite the deep resistance of so many Jewish families to the gospel (we will look further at why this remnant is 'of grace' in the next study).

So modern-day Israel has not been abandoned by God, nor is it a nation full of Christian believers. It is a largely unbelieving nation, that has some, a holy remnant, who have found faith in God. This will be so until the "time of the Gentiles" finishes and the gospel has been preached as a witness to all nations (Matthew 24:14), then the Jews shall all be saved (Romans 11:25-28), and the end shall come (Matthew 24:14).

Blessings,

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