

Israel in God's Plan of Salvation

Romans 11

A. Introduction

- Wesley 2022 Sermon Series on The Letter to the Romans
- Romans 11 not covered at weekend services
- Not a discussion of the 20th / 21st cent. problem of land in Israel

B. Romans 11 in outline

1-11 Once Fallen, Not Always Fallen

1 God has not rejected the Jews. I am a Jew accepted by God.

2-4 I am by no means the only Jew who has been saved / accepted!

- 2-4 The 7000 who believed when Elijah thought he was the only one!
 - *Some* fallen, not *all* fallen

5-6 Many Jews now also are saved, by grace & not by works

- Language emphasizes Divine Grace (cf. verses 20-22 below)

7-10 Rejection of God by Jews / Israelites has occurred before

- 8 In the time of Moses (Deut 29:4) and also Isaiah (Isa 29:10)
- 9-10 In the time of David (Psa 69:22-23)

11 Once Fallen, Not Always Fallen

- There is hope even for those who have rejected Christ before

**Don't be
Condemning**

12-16 Good can arise out of Bad

12-16 Their Rejection has had a good Result

- 12 Jewish rejection had the good result of hastening Gentile belief
- 13-16 Hopefully Gentile belief will inspire more Jews to believe
 - 15 If Jewish rejection of Christ brought blessing to the world, how much more blessing will Jewish acceptance of Christ bring! (cf. already v12b)

**Don't be
Cynical**

17-21 Good can turn Bad (Once In, Not Always In)

- 17 Don't despise Jews who have rejected Christ
- 18-21 Don't be arrogant – you might be broken off too
 - 20-23 Language emphasizes Human Responsibility (cf. verses 5-6 above)

**Don't be
Conceited**

22-32 All can be saved (and all can refuse)

22-24 God is kind, but can also be strict

- If God has cut off and grafted in before, God can do both again
- 24 It will be easier to graft Jews into the true vine than it was for Gentiles

- 25 What a mystery! (the way salvation spreads)
- The stubbornness of Jews has ushered in many more Gentiles
 - Don't think too highly of yourself just because you have not rejected God's call (at the moment)!

26-27 "And in this way all Israel will be saved" (NIV)

- Cites Isaiah 59:20 & Jer 31:34 to reinforce the point that God's Messiah and forgiveness for sins has come from "Zion", the city of Israel's God.
 - The plan/process and desire that all might be saved
- 28 Jews may now be enemies, but are still loved by God
- a chosen people from Abraham, Isaac & Jacob.
- 29 God's gifts and calling remain unchanged.

**The mystery of
God's Grace:
disobedience &
mercy for all**

30-32 Disobedience & Mercy for all

- 30 Disobedient Jews produce disobedient Gentiles who receive mercy.
- 31 Merciful Gentiles produce Jews who receive mercy
- 32 And so, all have been disobedient, and all will receive mercy.

33-36 To God be all Glory!

- His wisdom and ways are beyond our logic!
- A doxology combining phrases found in OT scriptures: e.g. Psalm 92:5; Isa 40:13, 28

**The mystery of
God's Ways: out
of bad has come
good**

C. Additional Notes

1. Who constitutes "all Israel" in Romans 11:26?

Four views:

- Every individual of ethnic Israel.
- All the chosen from ethnic Israel alone (Wesley).
- "The nation Israel as a whole, but not necessarily including every individual member." (Cranfield)
- Spiritual Israel referring to Gal 6:16 (Augustine, Luther, Wright).
All the chosen individuals from the Jews and Gentiles (Calvin, Barth).

2. Is Rom 11:25-26 to be understood as

- a prediction/declaration or a process/desire of salvation? (cf. the conditional tone of verse 23)
- consecutive or continuous responses?

My current view: Paul was describing how "all" will be saved: by the mysterious and gracious way of God where both ongoing rejection and

acceptance inspires more and more to be saved.

3. Does Romans 9-11 address the 20th / 21st century problem of the Land in Israel & Palestine?

No, it doesn't! It certainly describes a deep concern and hope for the people of Israel to be saved, and a conviction that God's calling and gifts to them have not been revoked. But when Paul outlines what these gifts are in Romans 9:2-4, there is no mention of the land. {There is no mention of the promise or gift of *the land* in the whole New Testament cf. Acts 13:19 only as historical reference }

Romans 9:2-4

I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race, ⁴ the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption to sonship; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises.

The 3 main problems in the 20th / 21st century Israel-Palestine conflict are all related to *the Land*:

1. Palestinian refugees who fled from the Land before 1967 War
2. Jewish settlements in Land that UN designates as "*Occupied Territories*"
3. East Jerusalem (esp. *al-Haram al-Sharif* (The Noble Sanctuary) = *Har Habayit* (The Temple Mount)
 - Al-aqsa mosque (Muslim: The Prophet's "night journey" from Mecca to Jerusalem, before ascending to heaven; original direction of prayer before the change towards Mecca)
 - Dome of the Rock (Muslim: Prophet's ascent to heaven; Jews & Christians: Abraham's (almost) sacrifice of Isaac, and foundation stone of Temple)
 - Christians: Church of the Holy Sepulchre (East Jerusalem)