

Justification by Faith Reconciled with the Faithfulness of God

Romans 11

- Paul has not been to R when he writes, in Acts 20:2-3. He makes it there ~4yrs later
- Church comprised of Jewish Christians & Gentile Christians – clash of cultures now one in Christ
- Ch. 10 poses question: “Had God no longer any interest in those who had once been His covenant people?” Ch. 11 answers question.

1. The Jews Not Rejected by God – Romans 11:1-6

- 1: Ps. 94:14 quoted; rejected by and large but kept small remnant; proof: Paul an Israelite
- 2-3: most Jews had not met God’s qualifications
- 4: not the end of the story – 1 Kings 19:18; 7,000 (20,000? women/children); 3,000 Pentecost
- 5-6: remnant: GK: that which is left; remnant always saved: Noah, Sodom & Gomorrah, Jews returning from captivity

2. The Hardening of the Jews – Romans 11:7-10

- 7: hardened: to make hard/render insensitive, God hardens heart of those that already have
- 8: proof: Deut. 29:4 plus Isa. 29:10
- 9-10: Ps. 69:22-23 – David asking God to take action against the Jews

3. Jewish Rejection & Gentile Reception – Romans 11:11-16

- Theme of rest of chapter: God was extending to them the opportunity to repent and turn to Him
- 11: NIV: “beyond recovery” added; good result of falling: salvation to Gentiles, Jews jealous, want to come back
- 12: fulfillment: fulfilling God’s purpose
- 13-14: specifically to Gentile Christians through end of Ch.; no reason for pride as Jewish rejection was not final
- 15: Jewish rejection provided a time for Gentile preaching
- 16: 2 metaphors: 1] ceremonial illustration: lump holy [dough from first fruits offered to God]; 2] agricultural illustration

4. The Jews Grafted Back In – Romans 11:17-24

- Gentiles had no reason to feel proud – they did not deserve what God had done for them

- 17: olive tree: foliage seen everywhere around Med. Sea; oil for cooking, medicinal benefits; grafting: joining 2 types of plants; wild trees hardier; would graft branch from cultivated [Sm.] one to make wild stronger > more olives, Lg.; Jews: broken off branches; you – Gentiles
- 18: application: don't be arrogant; by grace, God grafted
- 19: some Gentiles thought Jews were broken off in order to make room > not true
- 20: GK: mind not high things
- 21: P issues a warning: God not 'spare' them
- 22: Emphasis on saving faith having "from the heart obedience"
- 23,24: "if" – free moral agents with the ability to choose; Gentiles had no right to be arrogant; situation could easily be reversed

5. Jewish Rejection Not Irreversible – Romans 11:25-32

- 25,26a: fulness not a ref. to full of Gentiles; does not teach Pre-Millennialism; Jews might be moved to accept Christ
- 26b,27: Isa. 59:20-21 – to Zion, foretold Deliverer would bring Israel back
- 28,29: Jewish mob killed Jesus; God's choice – choosing Israel to be the nation through whom He would fulfill plan
- 30,31: Mercy – 4x in 30-32
- 32: Shut up: McCord: God imprisoned everyone in disobedience; does not teach universal salvation

6. Doxology: the Mercy of God – Romans 11:33-36

- Should be read aloud – several times
- 33: rare glimpse into the minds & methods of God; so deep: cannot comprehend; Isa. 55:8-9
- 34: Isa. 40:13: Counsellor: Advisor [McCord]; praise prompted by what we do not know about God [Morris]; [1] cannot know everything about God
- 35: [2] can never put God in our debt; Job. 41:11
- 36: [3] know God is marvelous beyond Words
- Difficult section, Chapters 9-11, ends on a note of confidence

Lessons:

1. Just as the Jews were not rejected by God, today we are not rejected by God. Instead, people turn their backs on God and things then go awry.
2. Today, both Jews and Gentiles have been grafted together in Christ in the Church. We are not groups but a unified group.
3. There are some things we will never know about God on this side of eternity. If we have the ability to ask questions on the other side it will be irrelevant. Instead of getting bent out of shape over what we don't know, focus on what we do know. 2 Peter 1:3.

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