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War in Israel—A Biblical Perspective, Pt 10

Selected Passages

Keywords: Israel, Hamas, War, End Times, Eschatology, Salvation, Romans 9-11

PowerPoint Presentation included: none

SermonAudio Blurb: In this series we explore the biblical theology behind the attack by Hamas upon Israel and answer the question of why it matters. Why is Israel so important in the flow of human events? How should we view Israel? Why do so many in the Church seem to dismiss the nation of Israel? Should we? All of this is driven by certain theological convictions of which most are unaware of. This is a rather technical series that seeks to explain and answer the whole issue of Israel and the Church. In this final message we see the Apostle Paul carefully and systematically show the sovereign purposes of God in both choosing Israel, hardening Israel, and then saving Israel and how Gentiles are the recipients of saving mercies in all of it.

I. Introduction.

- A. Romans 9.
- B. In this final message regarding Israel we should pause and come to a sense of how much we have done together.
 - 1. We learned about the various approaches toward war that Christian developed over time ranging from Pacifist to the popular Just War Theory.
 - 2. We saw how there are various theological camps that approach Scripture in various ways. And that theological conviction then colors how the bible is understood. Especially when thinking through the place and value of Israel as well as the role the Church ought to play in war and violence.
 - 3. Together we saw the birth of Israel and the promises, known as covenants, given to Israel that are constantly pointed to throughout the bible. These promised that God would bless and care for this nation.
 - 4. We looked at common passages used by others to try to make Israel somehow mean the Church. We saw them in their context and why they are really being interpreted by many through a theological lens rather than what is actually stated.
 - 5. Then we considered how the Old Testament from the book of Deuteronomy to Zechariah state over and over again that though God is judging the nation of Israel; nonetheless, He will restore and save Israel, not merely spiritually speaking, but in a very physical manner of gathering

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them from the ends of the earth and bringing them into their land and that the Messiah would rule over them in Jerusalem.

6. Finally, we saw last week that the New Testament picks up this same teaching and moves it forward. Israel continues to be Israel and the bible continues to promise their restoration. This was all seen in the gospels.
- C. Today we will look at what is the most detailed, theological discussion on the current state of Israel and its future restoration and salvation.

II. Israel's Role in Redemption of Sinners.

- A. The heart of Paul for Israel (1-5).
 1. Note the fervency of his concern for the salvation of his fellow countrymen (1-3).
 2. Do you see the connection? (Before I answer it just think about that question while we unpack the next few verses.) Why is he so burdened for Israel? People whom he calls his kinsmen, his brothers? He would, if it was possible, take their place and be the one who is under God's curse (3).
- B. The ultimate reason anyone is saved (6-33).
 1. Here we now see the reason behind the burden. It has to do with the faithfulness and truthfulness of God.
 2. Did God lie to Israel?
 3. The point is that the mere fact one is physically part of Israel and the Patriarchs does not mean you receive the blessings and promises of God. You must be rightly related by faith.
 4. So Paul shows through various examples how the promises flowed **through** the sovereign choice of God rather than man.
 5. (14) Perhaps we decide this is unfair. But that is simply because we don't understand fair. If God is fair then no one is saved. No one is forgiven.

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Jesus Christ doesn't enter humanity and suffer and die for sin. That is the fullest expression of unfair, that an Innocent One should die for the sins of others.

- a. The response is a hard no.
- b. He shows that mercy flows from God but it comes not because of us but because of God's sovereign choice.

6. In vs 24 we then begin to see the plan of God in redeeming sinners and making them His people.

- a. God's sovereign calling is out of (*ek*) from the midst of both the Jews and Gentiles.
- b. What follows is simply him showing this from the Old Testament prophets. And notice that in each of those quotes it is fulfilled literally. No deeper, spiritual meaning discovered. And certainly not something new.
- c. Vss 30-31 then brings this all to an initial conclusion. Two groups with two different outcomes.

d. And so vss 32-33 say they stumble. Why?

7. So, we see the introduction of faith bringing salvation but how and why?

C. The means of salvation (10:1-17).

1. Paul again makes it clear what his burden is, that Israel would be saved (1).

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2. What is holding back any Israelite from being forgiven and saved? What is the necessary conviction by faith that a Jew must come to? It is found in vss 9-10.

 3. 11-13 makes Paul's central point in light of God's sovereignty in and over all things, including the saving mercy upon a sinner.

 4. 14-18 gives the **means** by which a person is saved. And what is it? Simple that someone tells them. Jew or Gentile, if they do not know about Jesus then they cannot believe and they will not be able to believe.

 5. 19-21 gives us a series of Old Testament quotes that simply show that the Jew were not lacking the truth of God's workings. God had spoken and God had given them prophets and the Word of God. They were well taught.
- D. The purpose of the hardening of Israel (11:1-24).
1. (1-6) Here we find the question raised again. If this is true (that they are disobedient and obstinate), then does it mean that God has rejected Israel? And Paul's answer is, "Absolutely not!" And he gives a series of reasons for saying this:
 - a. First:

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- b. Second:
 - c. Third:
 - d. But this was all by God's grace, not because of their efforts, their birthright, or their own choice.
2. (7-10) And now he returns to all that he taught in chapter 9 about God being the active person in both salvation and rejection. Look at vs 7 and work through what is said:
- a. And here we must be humble and quiet and simply let the text speak for it is God's word. This is not a place where you or I sit in judgment over God for that never ends well.
 - b. The question is this, how did Paul find saving mercy. How did Elijah or Moses or the 7,000 men who did not bow to Baal?
3. (11-24) Another question: Did they stumble so as to be destroyed and hardened forever?
- a. The stumbling is because they transgressed. They stepped over the line and in doing so they tripped over it. (11).
 - b. Now he begins to talk to the Gentiles by way of warning (12-24).
 - (1) vs 12 makes the point that we should not be dismissive or unloving toward Israel.

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- (2) So what was Paul's motivation to lead Gentiles to saving faith? (13-14)
 - (3) He speaks of the root and the first piece of dough (16) and this is speaking of the patriarchs.
 - (4) And what happens to individual branches does not change the roots.
 - (5) Then comes the warning of arrogance by Gentiles toward Israel.
- c. His final point here is that if we can be saved, how much more natural will be the salvation of Israel (24). This sets us up for the incredible end.
- E. The ultimate salvation of Israel (25-32).
1. So Paul does not want us to be ignorant.
 2. Why? So we are to be humble rather than prideful. But why?
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3. So what happens when the Gentile nations have heard the gospel? What happens when those God has called unto salvation have come and believed? Does the end come and we enter into eternity?

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III. Conclusion.

- A. The doxological nature of redemption (33-36).
 - 1. To His glory. To cause us to sit back and marvel at the vastness, the complexity and yet simplicity of His ways, the depth of His mercy and the terror of His wrath.
 - 2. It is all about God.
 - 3. We cannot put our words and plans upon God (34-35) but rather we must simply hear, see and entrust ourselves to what He has done and shall do.
- B. So as a people, let us worship the Holy One of Israel, the Savior to the Gentiles. Let us teach our little ones of His glory. Let us tell others of His saving grace.

Benediction

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord cause His face to shine upon you and give you peace. Amen.