

09-10-2017

Message: God's Redemptive Design for Church History

Text: Romans 11:11-36

Introduction

- A. Today we bring to a conclusion our study of Christ's word to us in Romans 9-11 which concludes,

Romans 11:33 **Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!** How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!³⁴ For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? ³⁵ Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN?³⁶ **For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.**

- B. All creation is to give God the glory He rightly and richly deserves. But Israel as a whole was failing to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus, failing to give Jesus glory as God. Therefore, Israel, except for a remnant, failed to obtain a right standing before God through faith in Jesus as their crucified, risen, reigning Lord. Their failure to obtain the covenant blessings God promised to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their descendants was causing some, and tempting others to deny giving God glory for His faithfulness to His promises to Israel, and for His mercy, justice and wisdom in controlling the eternal destiny of the Jewish and Gentile nations.

Romans 3:1 Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision?² Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.³ **What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?**

- C. So we see the Lord responding in Romans 9 to those questioning His faithfulness to His covenant promises by informing us that not every genetic descendent of the patriarchs is a child to whom His covenant promises were made.

Romans 9:6 **But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel;**⁷ nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "THROUGH ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL BE NAMED."⁸ **That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.**

- D. Another issue was causing or tempting some to withhold giving God glory for His mercy was human pride, which seeks its own glory rather than God's glory.

1. Jews boasted in being God's chosen people, entrusted with His law, yet were dishonoring God by breaking it.

Romans 2:17 But if you bear the name "Jew" ... ²³ **You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God?**

2. Gentiles were tempted to boast in obtaining a right standing with God that the Jews failed to obtain. This is obviously a concern of Christ for His church, given the repeated cautions and warnings which we looked at last week ...

Romans 11:18 **do not be arrogant toward the branches;**

Romans 11:20 ... **Do not be conceited,** but fear;

Romans 11:25 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;

Romans 12:3 For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you **not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think;** ...

Romans 12:16 Be of the same mind toward one another; **do not be haughty in mind,** but associate with the lowly. **Do not be wise in your own estimation.**

- E. Because God wants to deliver us from arrogance so we will glory in Him, He reveals to us in Romans 11 His plan for showing mercy to both Jews and Gentiles through His divine Son as He has promised.

Romans 15:8 For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision **on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers,** ⁹ **and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy;** as it is written, "THEREFORE I WILL GIVE PRAISE TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES, AND I WILL SING TO YOUR NAME."

I. Stage #1: God lets the nations/Gentiles go their own disobedient way, but calls Israel, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, to be His holy nation.

- A. God in times past let the nations go their own ways in ignorance. The result was a hopeless, godless, doomed existence.

Acts 14:16 "In the generations gone by **He permitted all the nations to go their own ways;**

Ephesians 2:11 Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh ... ¹² were at that time **separate** from Christ, **excluded** from the commonwealth of Israel, and **strangers** to the covenants of promise, **having no hope and without God in the world.**

- B. But Israel is the one nation foreknown, known by God - receiving His exclusive kindness and affection.

Amos 3:2 "You only have I known among all the families of the earth ..."

Romans 11: ... I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.² God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew.

- C. God chose to form a people for Himself, a holy nation, from the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, calling them out of Egypt to be His people.

Exodus 6:6 "Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.⁷ 'Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

Deuteronomy 7:6 "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

- D. While God has called individuals to himself through justifying faith in the Lord from the beginning of human history - look at Hebrews 11, with Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham - God first applies the word we translate "church" to the children of Israel after calling them out of Egypt, giving them His laws at Mt. Horeb that they might be His holy people who worship Him. This called out people He calls in Hebrew, the qahal (and edah), in Greek the ekklasia (and sunagoga), and we translate into English the congregation/assembly/church.

Deuteronomy 9:10 "The LORD gave me the two tablets of stone written by the finger of God; and on them were all the words which the LORD had spoken with you at the mountain from the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly (qahal/ekklasia).

Acts 7:38 "This is the one (Moses) who was in the church (ekklasia) in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai, and who was with our fathers; and he received living oracles to pass on to you.

II. Stage #2: God hardens all but a remnant of Israel, culminating in Israel's rejection of Jesus Messiah.

- A. God purposed to harden all but a remnant of Israel (and not simply predict Israel's hardening).

Romans 9:27 Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "THOUGH THE NUMBER OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL BE LIKE THE SAND OF THE SEA, IT IS THE REMNANT THAT WILL BE SAVED;

Romans 11:7 What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened;⁸ 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."**

- B. Without the undeserved favor and grace of God's transforming, indwelling Spirit, Israel would reject the Lord's outstretched hands to her with an arrogant and obstinate heart.

Romans 9:31 but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law.³² Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone,

Romans 10:21 But as for Israel He says, "ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE."

III. Stag #3: God, through Israel's hardness, opens up to the nations/Gentiles inclusion in the people of God, the church, with title to all of the covenant promises and blessings made to Abraham and his seed.

Romans 11:11 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.

Romans 11:30 For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience,

- A. Gentiles through faith in Christ become fellow heirs with Jews who have faith in Christ. They are no longer 2 distinct trees, 2 distinct peoples, but one new humanity in Christ.

Ephesians 2:11 Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, ... ¹² remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,¹⁵ by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace,

Galatians 3:29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

- B. Yet we Gentiles, looking at Israel's now being "far off" and strangers to the covenants, ought not to become conceited, but fear.

Romans 11:17 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,
¹⁸ 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.¹⁹ You will say then, "Branches

were broken off so that I might be grafted in."²⁰ Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. **Do not be conceited, but fear;**

IV. Stage #4: Israel, due to the mercy shown the nations/Gentiles, will be provoked to a jealousy that leads to a national revival and its re-inclusion in the church.

- A. The Gentiles' receiving the blessings of Abraham is not an end in itself, but is intended to provoke Israel to a jealousy that leads to Israel's salvation.

Romans 11:11 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.** ... ¹³ But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, ¹⁴ **if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them.**

- B. This mystery appears to indicate that Israel will one day receive Jesus as its God, Savior, Messiah in some way commensurate or inversely proportionate with its present day rejection of Jesus Christ.

Romans 11:12 Now if their **transgression** is **riches for the world** and their **failure** is **riches for the Gentiles**, how much more will their **fulness** be!

Romans 11:15 For if their **rejection** is the **reconciliation of the world**, what will their **acceptance** be but **life from the dead?**

- C. The Gentiles ought not to gloat over their superior numbers in God's church, for God will some day bring the masses of Israel back in to the church, and reveals this mystery to destroy Gentile pride.

Romans 11:25 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;** ²⁶ **and so all Israel will be saved;** just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB."

- D. The way God restores Israel also destroys Jewish pride.

1. How humiliating, humbling, what shame to dishonor God by their disobedience and to put to death the Son of God whom came to them as their Messiah.

Acts 3:14 "But **you disowned the Holy and Righteous One** and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, ¹⁵ **but put to death the Prince of life,** the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses.

Acts 4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, **"Rulers and elders of the**

people, ... ¹⁰ let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of **Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified**, whom God raised from the dead— ... ¹¹ "**He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you**, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone.

2. How humiliating, humbling to be excluded from the people of God, from their centrality in the church of the living God, and to have God use the despised Gentiles to restore them.

Romans 11:11 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.

Romans 11:31 so these also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy.

- D. God is working all things according to the counsel of His own will to destroy all boasting in self and magnify God's wisdom, faithfulness, and mercy through Christ among the nations.

Romans 11:32 For God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all.

Romans 15:8 For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers, and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, "THEREFORE I WILL GIVE PRAISE TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES, AND I WILL SING TO YOUR NAME." ¹⁰ Again he says, "**REJOICE, O GENTILES, WITH HIS PEOPLE.**"

Conclusion: What should be our present response?

- A. Genuine Humility, submission, trust, and thankfulness before God and His Christ.

Romans 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

Romans 15:17 Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God.

- B. Love making Christ the center of our lives. Do not live to make life center around ourselves, our children, or any created thing. Do not live to glorify ourselves, our children, or any created thing, but live to give glory and centrality to the only true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Psalm 115:1 Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to Your name give glory because of

Your lovingkindness, because of Your truth.

Romans 11:33 **Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!**

How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! ³⁴ For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? ³⁵ Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN?

³⁶ **For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.**