

Romans 11:7–10 Electing Grace vs Righteous Blinding

Monday, January 29, 2024 ▪ Read Romans 11:7–10

Questions from the Scripture text: With what question does v7 begin? What hasn't the nation of Israel obtained? But which Israel has obtained it? And what has happened to the rest? What had told about this already (v8a)? Who gave them over to what (v8b, cf. Isa 29:10)? Of what did this stupor consist (v8c–d, cf. Isa 6:9–10)? When does the apostle say that this continued to happen (v8e)? Whom does he quote now in v9 (cf. Ps 69:22–23)? Who had written that Psalm about whom? How does it relate to Isa 6:9–10?

What has happened to Israel? Romans 11:7–10 prepares us for the sermon in the midweek prayer meeting. In these four verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the blinded are receiving, even by hearing the Word, as they deserved for rejecting God and His Anointed (Christ).**

Israel vs Elect Israel, v7. Back in 9:6, the apostle's first explanation for so many Israelites not being saved was that "they are not all Israel who are of Israel." Now, v7 clarifies the distinction: Israel (the nation generally) has not obtained what it seeks, but the elect (the Israel of promise, cf. 9:8) have obtained it. Election is the difference-maker—not heredity, not effort, not sincerity, nothing at all in the man himself. The difference is unearned, contra-deserved, "election of grace" (cf. v5).

God Intentionally Hardening the Blind in Their Blindness, v8. Apart from election, "the rest were blinded" (v7). This is true of every sinner. Apart from electing redeeming grace, they have an incurable blindness. Even the same Word that God uses to give faith to the elect (cf. 10:14–17) actually solidifies (hardens!) the blindness of sinners apart from grace.

The apostle now quotes from the woe upon Jerusalem in Isaiah 29. There, He calls them Ariel (lion of God), but announces that both they and their preachers are spiritually blind and spiritually drunk (cf. Isa 29:9), because YHWH has (righteously, of course!) poured out upon them a spirit of stupor (v8, cf. Isa 29:10). The next two lines of v8 quote from Isaiah 6, where the prophet is told that his ministry of the Word will actually harden Israel (v8c–d, cf. Isa 6:9). God intentionally, and righteously, blinds the reprobate. Let those whom He brings to faith remember that this is what they deserved for Him to do to them as well.

God Righteously Hardening the Blind in Their Blindness, v9–10. How can it be right for God to give them over to such a thing? It is what they rightly deserve for rejecting Him and His Anointed. The apostle now quotes from Psalm 69:22–23. In that Psalm, the Lord's anointed (David) is overwhelmed by enemies, and he sings and prays v9–10 (among other things). For the Israelite, food on their table was to be received as an indication of God's favor. In this case, those who hated David were self-deceived to think that they had the favor of God. Many today, not understanding the things that we have seen in the last several passages, think of ethnic Israel as being a nation under the special favor of God. But just as Elijah in 1Ki 19 from v3, so now David from Ps 69 prayed against Israel as a nation for their rejection of the Lord.

In this, David was a type (a divinely appointed forerunner and example) of Christ. It was righteous of God, on account of their rejection of His Anointed, to give them over to self-deception to believe that they were under God's blessing when they were not. And yet, there is grace in God to be righteous and to redeem at the same time. And we will see the apostle's right response to that and imitation of that in the next passage. But for now, let us just consider that it is righteous of God to harden the unbeliever. It is righteous of God to act always for the sake of His Son, His Anointed (cf. Ps 2). So, let us trust in that Son and be saved from the hardening and wrath that we so rightly deserve!

If you are a believer, what has made that difference? What might God intentionally, righteously have done instead? What does His mercy toward you encourage you to pray and hope for others?

Sample prayer: Father, thank You for Your eternal, electing love, in which You determined to save us from our sin. Thank You for taking away our blindness and deafness. Please spare those dear ones of ours who have thus far rejected Christ. Indeed, grant that a great multitude from the nation of Israel would be saved by Your grace, through faith in Christ, in Whose Name we ask it, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP69C "O Let Their Table Be a Snare" or TPH517 "I Know Whom I Have Believed"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 11 verses 7-10. These are God's words. What? Then? Israel has not obtained. What it seeks. But the elect have obtained it and the rest were blinded. Just as it is written. God has given them a spirit of stupor. Eyes that they should not see and ears. That they should not hear.

To this very day. And David says, let their table become a snare and a trap. A stumbling block and a recompense to them. Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see. And bow down their back. Always. So far, the reading of gods inspired. And an errant worked.

So, the Apostle asks, Now that he Uh, gone over. The, the Lord. Is redeeming for himself, a Remnant and how Israel has throughout their history. Actually, not properly responded to him. Uh, or to his word. And yet, at every stage he preserved for himself or he Preserved. The remnant whom he had reserved.

Uh, for himself. The Apostle turns back to the question. What is happening spiritually, what is going on with those Israelites who are ethnic Israelites? Uh, but are not believing in the Lord Jesus. And the answer is, they're not. Uh, Have not obtained righteousness. You remember, all the way back at the end of, uh, chapter nine.

He said Israel pursuing the law of righteousness. Has not attained to the law of righteousness, so they were pursuing righteousness as if it was by works. Uh, and yet, God only gives righteousness to something. That is counted to men through faith in Jesus Christ, both by the grace of what Christ has done, and the grace that gives them Faith to be United to Christ.

And so Justification, right standing before. God is all by God's grace, and not at all by our work. If if you ever find yourself or if even now, You are trying to keep right with God make yourself feel right with God by what you do stop. It is not by works.

It is by grace. Uh, and he returns then to the thought from the end of chapter nine, what then Israel has not obtained. What it seeks but The elect have obtained it. So there are actually Israelites, like Paul. Who are running after it as if it were by works.

And then God, literally friend Paul's sake. In Paul's case, literally knocked him down. And caused him to come to. To righteousness only by faith. In the Lord. Jesus Christ. Only by Grace. Uh, and so There are those Israelites and the way that those are differentiated from the other in verse verse 7 tells us is they are the elect, the elect have obtained it.

So Israel has not obtained what it seeks. But the elect Uh, have obtained it and that's what makes the difference. And so he's he's giving us This answer that he has been giving us not just from the end of chapter nine, but from the beginning of chapter nine where he says in verse 6, but it is not that the word of God has taken no effect for.

They are not all Israel who are of Israel. And then in verse 8, the children of the promise are counted as the seed. So that's that's the difference there has always been The distinction between. Ethnic Israel. For all Israel to use the language of 9 verse 6. Or in this case in 11 7.

Just Israel referring Uh, to Israel generally or ethnically, there's always been a difference between ethnic Israel and elect Israel Israel has not a team, do what it seeks, but the elect have obtained it when he says the elect. He means elect Israelites. He means Israelites like himself. Like he's just been discussing in the first six verses.

Of the chapter. And so those who do not like to make this distinction, simply do not like to agree with the Apostle. Do not like to agree with the Holy Spirit are not even understanding. The First Kings.

Uh, where Elijah was obviously making that distinction as well as the Apostle. Was referring to here. So the first thing to see is the difference between Israel visibly, And covenantally in that external. Um, Covenant Administration under Moses and the elect within Israel, And it's important distinction for us because the visible invisible Church.

Distinction continues. There are many in the visible. Who are counted among the people of God? And who are called Christian by the Church of God. Who are yet not elect not believing in the Lord. Jesus Christ, not made not made right with God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so we must rest not upon our covenant membership. But upon Christ himself. And what what is the case with those who do not believe in Jesus, they're blinded. They're rightly blinded God doesn't owe them. Uh, to remove their blindness. In fact, Justice would demand that they be given over to their blindness.

And this is what God had done. He had declared in Isaiah 29 that he had given them a spirit of stupor. Or would give them over to a spirit of stupor. And the Apostle immediately quotes that just as it is written, God has given them a spirit of stupor.

In fact, one of the mechanisms by which God gave them over to the spirit of stupor was precisely the same preaching. If by God's grace, he had blessed it to them. Would have brought them to Faith. So we just heard, not too many were, uh, not, uh, too many verses ago.

Faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of God. Uh and yet here, he quotes now, not Isaiah 29 but Isaiah 6. Where God says he's going to send him says send Isaiah as a preacher to Israel but what's Israel going to do? They're going to have eyes, but they won't see.

They're going to have ears, but they won't hear. They're gonna have Hearts but they won't understand. They won't turn. In fact, Isaiah, who immediately before that had said here, am I send to me? He hears what the response is going to be in large part to his preaching and he says, oh Lord, how long And so, we ourselves must remember, always whenever we are reading the Bible, whenever we're coming into preaching that we need God to soften our hearts, to open our eyes, to give us true hearing to turn our hearts towards him.

Because the same word that God uses to save the elect. Is a word by which he actually blinds and hardens. Those who are not elect. And this is exactly what they deserve because they have rejected God and they have rejected Christ and that's where the quote in verse 9 and 10 comes from it's from Psalm 69 in which David is writing and he is writing as God's anointed.

And he is writing in response to those who have rejected him as God's anointed and he cries out let their table. Become a snare and a trap. A stumbling block and a recompense to them, let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see. And bow down their back, always The table, of course, being something that is a blessing and not just a blessing ordinarily, where you eat at your table every day and you enjoy the, the fruit of your labor and there are many self-deceived who are not trusting in the Lord Jesus.

They work as if they are earning the reward of Of. Of their labor from God. Whereas we are taught to ask God for our daily bread, which doesn't mean don't work. It just means don't think that the bread you get from working with something you deserved. It was something that God gave you by Grace.

It was something that God gave you by Mercy, the Overflow of his goodness to you. Uh, but there are those who think that their food is being given to them as an Evidence of God's favor towards them, God's Redeeming justifying favor towards them. Uh, but it's actually a trap, it's a snare.

And a stumbling block because they think they can have the blessing of God while rejecting the anointed of God. And so David, in Psalm 69 had prayed this in. In solemn and serious curse against those who thought that they had the blessing of God while they rejected David, the anointed of God.

And now, here is Israel as a whole, considering themselves to blessed people with the great blessings that show that they are the favored ones of God. All the while rejecting Christ. They are being blinded as they deserve to be. For rejecting the Lord. That's that is what is happening with Israel at the time.

And of course, if we were to go on, we would Be well, worn does the Lord. If he spares To get there into verse 11 and following, we would be warned, not then to be hostile to Israel or to consider this the last word about Israel. But to desire all the more That God would redeem them from such a terrible estate as being.

So self-deceived, As to be blinded into thinking, they are favorite of God. While at the same time, rejecting rejecting Christ. Uh, they're, they're delusions of favored status apart from trusting in. Jesus are a spirit of stupor. It is the blindness of eyes that don't see is the deafness of ears that don't hear, their table has become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block.

To. Even as they rightly deserve. And so when we pray for them to be saved, we're not praying Lord. Give them as they deserve. We're praying that God would overflow in forgiveness, and Grace and mercy. And change them. And give them as according to Christ's deserves, give them according to what Christ deserves by bringing them.

To Faith in him. Hey man. Let's pray. Our gracious. God and our heavenly father, we pray that you would Help us to remember that. You are making us, right? Was all righteous with yourself was all by your electing. Love by your grace by what Christ has done and even our faith in him, Is a gift that you gave us over against what we were over against what we deserved.

And we pray, Lord for all those. Who are not believing in him, that you would indeed bring them to Faith. And we pray, especially for those. Who think that they are your favorite ones. Apart from Resting entirely only upon who the Lord Jesus is, and what the Lord Jesus has done.

Have mercy o God and deliver them from their Spirit of stupor. And yet, we confess you just To have given them over to it. Uh, we pray that Justice and mercy would kiss at the cross. And that you would glorify yourself in redeeming them. We ask it in Christ's name, amen.