

ISRAEL'S FUTURE RESTORATION
A BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S PLAN FOR ISRAEL
PART 1
ROMANS 11:1-15

Introduction:

We've seen how that *Chapter 9* deals with *Israel's Past Election*, *Chapter 10* deals with *Israel's Present Rejection* and now we'll see that *Chapter 11* deals with *Israel's Future Restoration*.

Tonight we're going to look at **PART 1** of a two-part message on: "*A Biblical Understanding Of God's Plan For Israel.*" This is the theme of all of *Chapter 11*.

Although there are several lessons for us from this *chapter*, there are **two main points that the APOSTLE PAUL makes:**

- 1. GOD HAS NOT COMPLETELY REJECTED THE NATION OF ISRAEL!**
- 2. GOD HAS NOT PERMANENTLY REJECTED THE NATION OF ISRAEL!**

Even though the **CHURCH** [which is composed mostly of non-Jews or Gentiles] is the main instrument **GOD** is using now, **GOD STILL WILL USE THE JEWISH PEOPLE AS HE PROMISED!**

We need to know why it is important that **BELIEVERS** understand **GOD'S PLAN FOR ISRAEL**.

There are **PRACTICAL** and **IMPORTANT REASONS** for having a **BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING** of **ISRAEL'S PRESENT** and **FUTURE** in **GOD'S PLAN!**

For instance, **our UNDERSTANDING** of **GOD'S PLAN** for **ISRAEL** greatly affects certain aspects of our **THEOLOGY**. One area of our **THEOLOGY** that is affected is our view of **ESCHATOLOGY** or the **END-TIMES!** How we **VIEW** and **UNDERSTAND** the **END-TIMES** will be affected by how we **VIEW** and **UNDERSTAND** **GOD'S PLAN FOR ISRAEL!**

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IF GOD IS FINISHED WITH ISRAEL, as some people falsely teach, then the 144,000 witnesses from the **TRIBES OF ISRAEL** who go through the **GREAT TRIBULATION** in the **BOOK OF REVELATION** must be **SPIRITUALIZED** to represent some other group.

On the other hand, **IF GOD STILL HAS A PLAN TO USE THE NATION OF ISRAEL IN A SPECIAL WAY**, then there is not a problem in believing that the 144,000 are **LITERAL JEWS!**

Something else, our understanding of GOD'S PLAN FOR ISRAEL also affects OUR TRUST IN GOD'S FAITHFULNESS!

If **GOD** is through with **ISRAEL**, then what about **HIS UNCONDITIONAL PROMISES TO ISRAEL?**

Could **GOD** be considered **FAITHFUL** and yet **NOT DO** what **HE PROMISED** with the **NATION OF ISRAEL?**

A BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S PLAN FOR THE NATION OF ISRAEL ALSO AFFECTS OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE JEWISH PEOPLE!

As a **CHURCH** we are very much **PRO-ISRAEL!**

We are very **SUPPORTIVE** of the **JEWISH PEOPLE** and the **NATION OF ISRAEL**, but this support is not based on political ideology, rather it is based on a **BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S PLAN FOR ISRAEL!**

Without a **BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S FUTURE PLAN FOR ISRAEL**, **BELIEVERS** tend to be either **NEUTRAL TOWARD ISRAEL** or in some cases even **ANTI-SEMITIC!**

I've made these few points so that we all can understand the importance of this subject.

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Read Verse 1.

Has **GOD** reneged on **HIS PROMISES** to the **NATION OF ISRAEL**?

Has he said, "*Enough is enough, I am through with you!*"?

In one respect, it **APPEARED** like that is what had happened. After all, it's largely a **GENTILE CHURCH** who are called **GOD'S ADOPTED SONS**, who are **PROMISED ETERNAL GLORY** and an **INHERITANCE**, and who are being used by **GOD** to show the world **GOD'S CHARACTER and WAYS!**

These things were **PROMISED** to **ISRAEL** and yet it was largely the **GENTILES** who were experiencing them according to **PAUL**. It certainly seemed like **GOD** had broken **HIS PROMISE** and **REJECTED** the **JEWISH NATION OF ISRAEL!**

However, **ISRAEL WAS CHOSEN FOR A CERTAIN POSITION** and **EQUIPPED TO FULFILL THAT POSITION**, but they had not responded appropriately, so **GOD** is now using the **GENTILES** in their place. They were pulled from the starting position, **BUT THEY WERE NOT COMPLETELY REJECTED BY GOD!**

GOD IS FAITHFUL to **HIS PROMISES TO ISRAEL**, even though the **GENTILES** might have the **PROMINENT POSITION** now. This is why **PAUL** answers the question, "*Hath God cast away his people?*" with a firm "*God forbid!*"

GOD HAS NOT COMPLETELY REJECTED THE NATION OF ISRAEL! How do we know this is true? **First, PAUL points to himself as evidence that God is still using the Jewish people, albeit in small numbers.** After all, **PAUL** says, "*For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*" **PAUL** is saying, "*I am Jewish and God has saved me and is using me, therefore we cannot claim that God has completely rejected the Jewish people.*"

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The very fact that there are some **JEWISH BELIEVERS** indicates that **GOD HAS NOT COMPLETELY REJECTED HIS PEOPLE!** Now there were not many **JEWS** who were **BELIEVERS** in comparison to the **GENTILES**, but this small number of **FAITHFUL JEWS** among many unfaithful was nothing new and hardly indicative of **GOD COMPLETELY REJECTING HIS PEOPLE.** **PAUL** uses the **OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY OF ISRAEL** to point this out.

Read Verses 2-4

GOD knew ahead of time how **ISRAEL** would reject **JESUS** because of their **PRIDE**. This did not catch **HIM** by surprise, but **HE CHOSE THEM** and **GAVE THEM PROMISES ANYWAY!**

There had been many times in **ISRAEL'S HISTORY** where it seemed that their **REBELLION** had been so **COMPLETE** that there was **NO HOPE OF RECOVERY.**

One of these times was during the ministry of the prophet **ELIJAH.** **ELIJAH** was **CONVINCED** that **ISRAEL'S REBELLION** was **BEYOND RECOVERY.** He complained as recorded in *verse 3!*

It certainly seemed to **ELIJAH** that **GOD'S PLAN FOR ISRAEL** had failed. It certainly seemed that there were **NO FAITHFUL PEOPLE** for **GOD** to work through. In *verse 4*, we find **GOD'S** answer to **ELIJAH!**

In other words, **GOD HAD A REMNANT**, a small number of **FAITHFUL ISRAELITES, TO WORK THROUGH** and **TO FULFILL HIS PROMISES THROUGH** even in the worst of times. According to *verse 5* the same is true today. **So, GOD HAS NOT COMPLETELY REJECTED THE NATION OF ISRAEL!**

Read Verses 5-6

There may not be many **JEWISH BELIEVERS** but **THERE ARE SOME—A REMNANT.**

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If this is true, and it is, **IT CANNOT BE SAID THAT GOD HAS FAILED HIS PROMISES** or **COMPLETELY REJECTED HIS PEOPLE!**

Why were these few **JEWISH** people **SAVED** and **USED BY GOD?**
Was it because they worked harder than other **JEWS?**
Was it because they **KEPT THE LAW BETTER?**
Was it because they were **BETTER JEWS?**

The answer is an **absolute "NO!"** Look at what **PAUL** says in *verse 6*. The difference is that this **REMNANT** of **JEWISH PEOPLE** **ACCEPTED GOD'S OFFER OF SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH** instead of trying to work for it!

What happens to those **JEWS WHO REJECT GRACE?** Why are the **JEWISH PEOPLE** so resistant to the **GOSPEL** to this day? **PAUL** answers those questions next.

Read Verses 7-10

PAUL says that the **JEWISH PEOPLE** as a whole are **"BLINDED."** **LIGHT** cannot penetrate the eyes of one who is **BLIND!**

The **JEWISH PEOPLE** as a whole are not only **BLINDED**, but **HARDENED!** This means that they are **RESISTANT** to the **RECEPTION** of **SPIRITUAL TRUTH** in the same way that hard ground is resistant to the planting of seeds. You can not get anything to grow because you cannot penetrate the hard soil, or in this case the hard heart.

In *verse 8*, Paul makes clear that this **SPIRITUAL RESISTANCE** and **BLINDNESS** is the result of **GOD'S JUST PUNISHMENT**. They **REJECTED JESUS**, so what was the effect?

In *verses 9-10* **PAUL** quotes **KING DAVID!**

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In other words, this **SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS** or **HARDNESS** is **JUST PUNISHMENT** for **REJECTING THE GOSPEL** when they could have **UNDERSTOOD** and **BELIEVED!**

There are many issues involved in *verses 1-10* but the main point that **PAUL** makes is that **GOD HAS NOT COMPLETELY REJECTED THE NATION OF ISRAEL!**

There remains a **SMALL REMNANT OF FAITHFUL JEWISH BELIEVERS** for now. But one day the majority of **JEWISH PEOPLE** will **BELIEVE** and **BE RESTORED** to be **USED BY GOD AS HE PROMISED!** Right now there is a **BELIEVING MINORITY** and a **BLINDED MAJORITY**, but that is **NOT** the way it will always be! That leads us to **PAUL'S SECOND POINT:**

GOD HAS NOT PERMANENTLY REJECTED THE NATION OF ISRAEL!

Read Verses 11-15

In other words, **IS GOD THROUGH WITH ISRAEL? IS IT TOO LATE FOR GOD TO USE THEM AS HE PROMISED?**

PAUL'S answer is **"God Forbid!"** In *verses 25-29*, **PAUL** will expound on this topic, but for now he wants us to understand that **GOD** is **NOT** through with the **JEW**. They may be on the sidelines for now, but they will be placed back into the starting lineup of the game, so to speak.

This is important because many people are being taught that **GOD** is through with **ISRAEL** as a distinct people. They falsely teach that the **CHURCH** has replaced **ISRAEL** permanently. This false teaching is known as **"Replacement Theology"** and the basic thinking is that all of **GOD'S PROMISES TO ISRAEL** were **FORFEITED** because of **ISRAEL'S REJECTION OF JESUS** and are now **TRANSFERRED TO THE CHURCH.**

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This understanding leads to people **SPIRITUALIZING** many **BIBLE TEXTS** that were for **ISRAEL** and applying them to the **CHURCH** today. It has also leads to **ANTI-SEMITISM**, which is totally contrary to the attitude that **PAUL** wrote in *verses 13-24* that **GENTILE BELIEVERS** should have toward the **JEWS**.

GOD HAS NOT PERMANENTLY REJECTED THE NATION OF ISRAEL!

PAUL points out how **GOD** used **ISRAEL'S REBELLION** for a **GOOD PURPOSE!**

First, *"through their fall, salvation is come to the Gentiles."* **GOD** used the **JEW'S REJECTION OF HIM** as a springboard for sharing the **GOSPEL** with the **GENTILES**. It is wonderful the way that **GOD** can take something bad and use it for the good.

In football I've seen an offensive team fumble the ball for what looked like a significant loss, only to have another offensive player pick up the fumble and run for a touchdown. What looked like a tragedy has turned into a blessing.

This is what happened with **ISRAEL** and the **GENTILES**. Israel fumbled the ball but **GOD** used another group to pick it up and run for a touchdown, i.e. the **GENTILES**. This is the wonderful thing that **GOD** did with **ISRAEL'S SIN**.

Now if **GOD** can do something so great and wonderful with **ISRAEL'S REJECTION OF JESUS**, imagine what he can do with her acceptance of **JESUS!** That's the point of *verse 12*.

Rather than be against the **JEWISH PEOPLE**, we should be praying for and seeking their **SALVATION**, especially considering the positive results that this will have for the whole world!

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PAUL continues this line of reasoning through *verse 15* where he notes that **ISRAEL'S ACCEPTANCE BY GOD** will mean *"life from the dead."*

What does this mean? What could be better than **SALVATION?** Well, How about the **RESURRECTION!**

Conclusion:

I hope you're beginning to understand **GOD'S PLAN FOR ISRAEL** and the implications that this has for us. The main things we need to understand for today are:

GOD HAS NOT COMPLETELY REJECTED OR PERMANENTLY REJECTED THE NATION OF ISRAEL!