

GOD HAS NOT REJECTED ISRAEL (PT 1)

Romans 11:1-10

Introduction: Is **Anyone** Being Saved?

I. God Saved Paul, and Paul is an Israelite (v.1)

- A. Paul has impressive Jewish credentials
 - o He is a descendent of Abraham
 - o He is of the tribe of Benjamin

II. In Paul's Day, God Has Chosen a "Remnant" of Israelites to Save (v.2-6)

- A. Historically, God's people always have remnant of true believers
 - o In v.2-4, Paul appeals to the story of Elijah (1 Kings 19)
 - o How Does Elijah's response to God sound like our own?
 - o But, God had chosen a remnant of 7000 true believers: "I kept for myself"
- B. There was also a Remnant of Israelites in Paul's Day
 - o Notice they are "chosen" (v.5)—Paul reaffirms the doctrine of election
 - o Notice this election is "by grace" (v.5)—the remnant are chosen not for any merit of their own
 - Paul's statement again rules out the idea that God's election is based on someone's future good works. If that were true, then it would destroy the gospel of grace
 - **Again, salvation by grace naturally leads to the doctrine of election!
- C. ** Key Point in this section: Even when it looks like the gospel is being rejected, God is at work. Our hope lies not in the faithfulness of men, but in God!

III. But Not All Israelites are Elect—God Has Hardened Some (v.7-10)

- A. "The elect obtained it [salvation] but the rest were hardened"

- o Paul combines Deut 29:4 and Is 29:10: "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear" (v.8)
- o Paul then cites Ps 69:22-23: "Let their eyes be darkened so they cannot see"
- o Note: Paul cites from the three parts of the OT canon: Law (Deut 29:4), Prophets (Is 29:10), and the Writings (Ps 69:22-23)

B. Reminder of what "hardening" means

- o Hardening is a spiritual insensitivity that prevents people from responding to the message of salvation
- o Hardening is not caused by a person's own action—God hardens whomever he will
- o Hardening does not make/force a person to sin; rather God removes his restraining grace and turns a person over to their own wicked desires.

C. But Doesn't God "Want" All To Be Saved?

- o There are three ways to talk about God's will, or what God "wants":
 - *Decretive will*: that which God ordains or decrees
 - *Preceptive will*: the precepts or command of God
 - *Dispositional will*: that which pleases/delights God
- o In regard to God's dispositional will, he "wants" all to be saved, meaning he does not take delight in the death of the wicked. But, God does decree that some will be saved and some will not.
- o Example: A judge may not "want" to send someone to jail, but he still will do so for the purposes of justice

** Implication #1: God's act of hardening explains a lot about why the world is the way it is.

** Implication: #2: Let your heart rejoice with thankfulness that God mercifully chose to soften your heart so that you would receive the Gospel!

Discussion Groups

1. How does the concept of a “remnant” encourage you in the midst our current culture where all seem to have abandoned God?

2. Although many think of the doctrine of election negatively, how is it a positive thing when you think about God’s plan for the world? How is it a positive thing when you think about your own salvation?

3. How does God’s hardening of some serve to enhance your own gratefulness and thankfulness?
