

I. Introduction

A. What are God's plans for the people of Israel?

1. Some believe the Jews are God's people and have an unconditional right to the land. (Dispensationalism) Gen. 12:1f
2. Others believe because the Jews rejected Jesus the Messiah, the Church has replaced Israel and inherited all their promises. (Covenant Theology). Gal. 3:29

B. Paul, in Romans chapters 9-11 addresses the question of God's plan for Israel.

1. Israel's falling away is according to God's sovereign purpose in election. 9:1-29
2. Israel willfully rejected the gospel. 9:30-10:21
3. God's rejection of Israel is neither total (11:1-10) nor final (11:11-32). 11:1-32
4. God's plan for Israel displays His magnificent wisdom. 11:33-36

II. God's rejection of Israel is not total: He is presently preserving a remnant. v. 1-6

A. Has God totally cast away His people? v. 1a

1. Why might one conclude God is finished with Israel? 9:31-32 10:3,21 Mt. 21:33f
2. May it never be!

**B. Personal evidence: Paul himself is an Israelite of unquestioned pedigree. v. 1b
Phil. 3:5 II Co. 11:22**

1. If ever there appeared to a hopeless case, it was Saul of Tarsus. Ga. 1:13-14
I Tim. 1:13-15 Acts 9:1-2
2. God chose this Jew as His instrument of bringing the gospel to the Gentiles. v. 13

C. Theological evidence: God cannot reject His covenant people. v. 2a

1. Israel is foreknown (foreloved) according to God's sovereign will. 8:29 Dt. 7:6-8
Amos 3:2 Gal. 4:9 Acts 2:23 I Pe. 1:1-2
2. Is Paul here referring to God's concern for the elect within Israel or His interest in the nation as a whole?
3. God has foreordained this people to privileges and blessings which cannot be revoked. I Sam. 12:22 Ps. 94:14 135:4 Jer. 31:37 Ex. 4:22 19:6 Deut. 14:2 26:18
4. The hardening of the majority should not be interpreted as a complete rejection of His people.

D. Historical evidence: God preserved a remnant in the days of Elijah. v. 2b-4

1. Israel's present situation is like what occurred in Elijah's day. v. 2b I Ki. 17-19
2. Elijah thought he was the last faithful Israelite. v. 3 I Ki. 19:9-10
He implies that God is limited by man's failures.
3. God declares that He is at work in Israel, in spite of human appearances. v. 4
4. God has faithfully preserved a remnant throughout the history of Israel, no matter how widespread her apostasy and unbelief. 9:27 Is. 1:9 10:22 Jer. 23:3 31:7 Joel 2:32 Amos 5:15 Micah 2:12 4:5-7 7:18 Zeph. 3:13 Mal. 3:16
5. God's promises to Israel are fulfilled in the remnant.

E. Contemporary evidence: God is presently preserving a remnant among His people Israel. v. 5 9:27-29

1. Even though the majority rejected the Messiah, God saved many Jews in the early church. Acts 2:41 4:4 21:20 John 1:11
2. God has continued to save a remnant from among the Jews throughout the history of the church.

III. God saves and hardens according to His sovereign good pleasure. v. 5b-10

A. The faithful remnant exists by God's gracious choice. v. 5b-7

1. The 7000 in Elijah's day were kept by God's sovereign efficacious grace. v. 4
2. Grace and works are mutually exclusive. v. 6 Eph. 2:8-9
3. Those who obtained salvation were not those who sought it, but those who were chosen by God. v. 7a 9:16 II Ti. 1:9
4. Those who claim God's election is based upon God's foreknowledge of our worthy acts (even faith) undermine grace!
5. If you have been preserved from the world (Baal), it is God's work! 12:1-2

B. The rest are hardened by God. v. 7

1. They refused to seek salvation in God's way. 9:32 10:3
2. Many professing Christians make the same fatal error.
3. God has sovereignly and judicially hardened them. 9:18 Ex. 4:21
 - a. Hardening, like election, is God's act.
 - b. Hardening, unlike election, is deserved.
4. Israel's disobedience has not frustrated God's plan, but fulfills divine prophecy.

C. Israel's present hardness is in keeping with their past history. v. 8-10 Deut. 29:4 Isa. 6:9-10 29:10 Ps. 69:22-23 Mt. 13:14-15 Mark 4:12 Jo. 12:40

1. God gives them a spirit of stupor. v. 8 Isa. 29:10 6:9-10 Mt. 13:14-15 Mark 4:12
2. God brings a snare, a stumbling block, retribution, darkness and servitude upon them. v. 9-10 Ps. 69:22-23 Ro. 15:3 John 2:17 15:25 Acts 1:20 Mt. 27:43
3. Even when God hardens Israel, He preserves a remnant through whom He will bring great future blessing. Isa. 6:13 29:17
4. The existence of the remnant implies hope for the future.

IV. God's rejection of Israel is not permanent: He has a plan for Israel's future. v.11-12

A. Has Israel fallen beyond recovery? v. 11a

B. Israel's transgression has led to the salvation of the Gentiles. v. 11b

C. The Gentiles will provoke the Jews to jealousy so that Israel might be restored to blessing. v. 11b

D. The fulness of Israel will result in even greater blessings to the world. v. 12

V. Concluding Applications.

A. Be prepared to be in the minority, even within the visible church.

B. God has preserved a faithful remnant of believers throughout church history.

C. God is doing far more than you may think! His faithfulness is not limited by human faithlessness. Don't despair. I Co. 15:58

D. Don't harden yourself against God's gracious offer of salvation.

Discussion questions:

1. According to Romans 9 and 10 why have the Jews failed to believe the gospel?
2. What does Romans 11 reveal about God's plan for Israel?
3. What different views do Christians hold about God's plan for the Jews?
4. How does Paul prove that God's rejection of Israel is not total?
5. What does Paul mean by calling Israel the people whom God *foreknew*? v. 2
6. How is the present age like Elijah's day?
7. How was Elijah wrong? v. 2b-4
8. What is the difference between those in the remnant and those who are hardened? v. 7
9. In what sense are we a remnant in our place and time in history?
10. How does this passage offer you hope and encouragement?