

Glen Park Gospel Church
Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes

Rev Chris Trinham

Studies in Romans Series 5

No 24

The Restoration of Israel

Scripture Reading: Romans 11

Amazingly, the Jewish people have been preserved by God through the centuries, despite many attempts to destroy them. In the last sixty years we have seen the restoration of Israel to their ancient homeland and despite repeated threats aimed at annihilation, the nation is growing and prospering. What is God doing in all this? What is his plan?

God Has Not Rejected Israel v1.

'Foreknew' v2 means 'known already', it is found in Acts 26:5, Romans 8:29, 11:2, 1 Peter 1:20 and 2 Peter 3:17. The nature of this foreknowledge is explained in Deuteronomy 7:6-11.

Again we stress that God has chosen them who have chosen to live by faith in Him, and He knows those who are His. It is important to wrestle with these concepts until we understand what the whole counsel of God teaches and not base our own understanding on a narrow perception of one phrase or text.

Paul illustrates the nature of this foreknowledge in the story of Elijah hiding in fear from Jezebel, Queen of adulterous Israel. See 1 Kings 19:9-18. The Lord knows those who are His 2 Timothy 2:19, and those men in ancient Israel who chose chosen to follow Him in a difficult and dangerous time.

The basis of God's choice is our faith and His grace. Those who reject are 'hardened' v7. It is important to understand the word 'hardened'. It is used in Mark 6:52, 8:17, John 12:40, Romans 11:7 and 2 Corinthians 3:14. The various translators have used the words hardened, calloused, blinded, darkened or dulled. Hard work callouses hands, bright light blinds

eyes and persistent noise dulls our hearing. Continued rejection of the Gospel builds a protective layer against its appeals until the gospel bell sounds our knell and our soul is lost.

The lessons drawn from this concept seem endless but we need to limit our attention to our text. In v9&10 Paul quotes Psalm 69:22&23. David suffered reproach by the deliberate, blasphemous feasts of his enemies. He prayed the Lord to make their table their snare and darkening their eyes because they idly, happily watched the sufferings God had allowed (John 2:17, 15:25 and Acts 1:20 also quote Psalm 69).*

The lesson seems to be that God's good things are for all those who trust Him alone; others have no right to feast at His table. There will always be those whose hearts are warm toward Him and who trust Him. In the darkest night, even feeble lights shine brightly.

Israel Has Stumbled v11.

Stumbled, but not fallen, as we have seen. The stumbling was an opportunity for the enrichment of Gentiles.

Mary's alabaster box of ointment was broken that the sweetness of

salvation might permeate the whole world. Does this mean that Israel will not be able to enjoy it too?

More than that, God still has a purpose for Israel that will only be fulfilled through them v12. But this is not Paul's topic in Romans 11. He is here telling us that God has not rejected Israel. If there is life in the root, there must be life in the branches, even though they appear withered. How often have we seen a pot plant to all appearances dead, but with care, soon shoots appear and the plant recovers. The root was not dead. The recession in the plant gave opportunity for God to graft a new strain. However the life that flows from root to branch is still in God's grace and it is taken up in the branches through faith v20 and it will only continue as long as the branch remains grafted to the vine by faith.

Israel Will be Restored v25.

The word 'mystery' means an hidden truth, some part of God's revelation that can only be understood in light of our knowledge of His purpose as explained by Jesus Christ.

Our day, the time since the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus is 'the times of the Gentiles' Luke 21:24-28, Acts 15:13-19. It will end in climactic, apocalyptic events when the task of preaching the Gospel through the entire world has been accomplished

and when the Jewish people accept their crucified Messiah.

I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. Zechariah 12:10.

See Matthew 24:12 and Zechariah chapters 12,13&14, (esp. 13:9-14:4)

Where is Israel Today v28?

Paul describes Israel in his day:

From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers Romans 11:28.

God is not defeated, He has not made a mistake or changed His mind. Paul tells why!

...for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Romans 11:29

Here is a great truth. Feed your heart on it. God has not changed His mind about them and He has not changed His mind about you. All His promises are but statements of fact:

He Himself has said, I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you Hebrews 13:5.

Because you abide, you are His and His forever. Trust Him, rest in Him.

What is the outcome of all this?

Paul sums it up in v32:

God has shut up all in disobedience, that He might show mercy to all. Romans 11:32.

Both Jew and Gentile.

Bible quotations in this study are from the NASB, unless otherwise acknowledged.
*Zondervan Bible Commentary

Welcome

Glen Park Gospel Church

Lower Road, Eltham North

Sundays 10.30 am

These notes may be reproduced in part or in full when distributed without cost, if the words 'Used by Permission, Glen Park Gospel Church.' is included