

## The Supremacy of Grace # 38 Romans 11: 1-10

Today we come to the final chapter, of the parenthetical passages, in which Paul was speaking specifically to a Jewish audience. His theme has been consistent throughout: the salvation of Israel. Although most had rejected the Gospel of grace in Christ, Paul would not give up on reaching those who would respond favorably by faith. His desire was to reach all he could for the glory of God.

Even though Paul was speaking specifically to the Jews in these three chapters, the truths they reveal regarding salvation are not exclusive to the Jewish nation. Salvation is an act of God's grace through which one believes in the finished work of Christ, by faith, for salvation. It is grace received by faith, plus or minus nothing, regardless of the recipient. God did not have a plan of salvation for Israel and a separate plan for the Gentiles. Christ offered Himself the sacrificial atonement for sin and means of salvation for all people. He alone is the way of salvation!

Let's consider the [aspects](#) of grace Paul shares in the text as we think on: [The Supremacy of Grace](#).

**I. Paul Speaks of Confidence** (1-5) – While many of the Jews were unsure of salvation through grace by faith in Christ, Paul was absolutely certain of it, possessing great confidence. Notice:

**A. The Concern** (1) – [I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.](#) The Jews viewed the Gospel as a new approach to God. As we have studied, the majority of them continued to seek acceptance of the Lord through adherence to the law. Apparently some assumed, if this “new way” was the only means to God, then Israel must have been cast aside and forgotten of the Lord.

- Paul declared such concern was not based upon any measure of truth. He was also an Israelite, born into the tribe of Benjamin, a direct descendent of Abraham their father. There was no question concerning Paul's heritage. He was a rising star among the Pharisees, well known among the Jews. He had received salvation in Christ. Paul is emphasizing the certainty of salvation for all who respond to the call of Christ by faith. If salvation had been made available to Paul, it was available for any Jew.
- This principle is relevant for all, regardless of race or heritage. The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. The opportunity is there for all who will respond by faith.

**B. The Confirmation** (2-4) – [God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, <sup>\[3\]</sup> Lord, they have](#)

killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. <sup>[4]</sup> But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image of Baal*. Although many assumed God had forsaken Israel, Paul seeks to assure them He hadn't. He reminds them of a familiar passage within the Old Testament. Elijah had won the great victory of Mount Carmel, and soon found himself hiding in fear because Jezebel had threatened his life. God comes to Elijah, hiding in a cave, and questions why he is there. Elijah responds that he alone is left to serve the Lord. He believed all the other prophets had been killed and he would soon die at the hands of Jezebel. He saw no need for living. God revealed to Elijah there were 7,000 who had not bowed their knee to Baal and His work in Israel was not over. When it appeared the entire nation had turned to apostasy, God had preserved many who continued to follow Him.

- Just as it had been in Elijah's day, Paul wanted the Jews to see the hand of God at work in their midst. Even though the majority had rejected Jesus as the Christ, refusing to embrace Him through faith, God was still drawing and saving those who would only believe. It may have appeared the entire nation had been abandoned of God, but He remained at work. The means of salvation had been provided and there was hope for them.
- We often grow weary in service to the Lord, even questioning the merit of our efforts. The majority has rejected the Lord, refusing to believe, and we wonder if any hope remains. We too need to be reminded that God is still at work in our day. He is still speaking to the hearts of men and saving souls. The wickedness of our day has not diminished the saving power of Christ!

**C. The Commitment (5)** – *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.* Paul knew Christ bore the sin of the world as He hung upon the cross. He endured the righteous judgment of God for that sin. He purchased redemption for humanity, making the way for all who believe. Although the Jews for the most part had rejected the saving grace of Christ, they were not excluded from salvation. Provision was made for them as it was for all who come to Christ. The number of Jews being saved were fewer than that of the Gentiles, but salvation remained available for them! God remained committed to the salvation of the Jews as well. Paul sought to instill faith and hope in those who would listen.

- This ought to challenge and encourage us as well. We are seeing fewer conversions today than in years past, but God's commitment to the salvation of those who will respond to the call is not diminished. There is still power in the blood to save sinners. The Holy Spirit continues to convict and point the lost to Christ. As long as we live in the day of grace, the Lord will continue to deal with the hearts of men in salvation!

**II. Paul Speaks of Providence (6-10)** – After speaking of his confidence in grace, Paul now shares the providence within the Gospel of grace. Consider:

**A. The Significance of Grace (6)** – *And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.* Paul desired the Jews, and all people for that matter, to understand the great significance of grace. It is essential to salvation. It is impossible to receive salvation apart from grace.

- This statement may seem a bit confusing on the surface, but it is really quite simple. If salvation is of grace, (which we know it is,) then it can't be of works. If salvation were of works, (which we know it isn't,) then it can't be of grace. Paul again reveals the same principle he has shared numerous times before. Salvation is a work of grace apart from works of the flesh. It isn't a combination of the two, or even one or the other; it is grace alone. If works enter the equation with grace, then genuine grace ceases to exist; (we no longer depend solely upon the grace of God for salvation and seek to earn it based on our merit and worth.) Grace is God's unmerited favor given to us, in spite of our works and failures. If grace enters the equation of a works-based salvation, then works cease to exist; (we then realize works in themselves can't save and trust the grace of God for salvation.)
- Once grace comes on the scene, it always trumps works! We must understand that salvation is an act of God's grace apart from our works. If one is depending on any measure of personal works, he is not resting solely in the grace of God and thus misses biblical salvation.

**B. The Selection through Grace (7-8)** – *What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded <sup>[8]</sup> (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.* These verses seem to be a bit controversial and tend to make some uncomfortable. Really there is no reason for controversy or uneasiness. Paul simply says that the generations of works performed by committed Jews had not produced the intended result. They sought the approval of God through their works, but His approval had eluded them. Only those who responded by faith in Christ were found acceptable to God. This includes the Old Testament saints, who having not yet seen the promised Messiah, believed through faith in His coming to atone for sin. Those who refused to embrace the plan of redemption in Christ were blinded, having hardened their hearts, and missed the plan of God for salvation.

- Verse 8 reveals the consequences of their lack of faith and refusal to believe. They rejected the truth of God, denying His only begotten Son as the means of salvation, and God dealt with them according to their unbelief. Their eyes beheld the truth, but they did not see. Their ears heard the truth, but they did not receive what they heard as truth. Israel now suffered nationally due to their rebellious spirit of unbelief.
- We see a principle that cannot be ignored. Israel was God's chosen people. They had received more blessing and light than any other, but their rejection of salvation by God's grace resulted in their rejection. This principle has not changed and it never will. Receiving salvation by grace through faith alone will result in acceptance by God. Those who reject it will be rejected of

Him. This is the means by which the ranks of heaven are selected and granted forgiveness of sin and eternal life.

**C. The Suffering without Grace (9-10)** – *And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them:* <sup>[10]</sup> *Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.* Finally Paul addresses the great calamity that comes on all who reject the grace of God that brings salvation, including the Jews. He quotes Psalm 69:22-23. David reveals those who depend upon the works of the flesh and their own prosperity will find that which they depended upon has become a snare to them, entrapping them in doom and destruction. They will face the judgment of God for their rebellion and rejection of truth. He will reward them according to their deeds.

- He also speaks of the lack of spiritual discernment in Verse 10. Their eyes will become darkened to the truth and they will be unable to recognize it when it is right before their eyes. This lack of discernment will have detrimental effects on the entire nation. It would eventually lead to bondage and separation from God.
- Although written specifically for the Jewish people, we see these principles being confirmed in our day as well. Many today are depending upon their own prosperity and works, completely ignoring the ways of God. As a result we live among a people who lack spiritual discernment, bound in their sin and separated from God. While the majority continues to reject salvation in Christ, they live their lives assuming all is well. Apart from coming to Christ in salvation, they too will face the judgment of God, being ultimately rejected of Him and cast out of His presence.

**Conclusion:** Again Paul has spoken of the fundamentals of salvation by grace through faith. Provision was made for all who will come to Christ, but He remains the only means of salvation. In Him there is peace and rest, enjoying the abundance He gives. However, being apart from the grace of God in salvation will result in judgment and condemnation.

Do you know Christ as your Savior? Have you responded to the grace being offered in salvation? If not, I urge you to do so as the Lord is speaking to you. Christian, this serves as a challenge for us as well. We are reminded of the grace available to all who will come by faith. We must do all we can to reach them before it is eternally too late!