

“Grace & Peace to You”

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Voice of China and Asia

Bible Class Instructor: *Dr. Geof W. Jackson, Board Member*

ROMANS LESSON 72 PART 1: A REMNANT CHOSEN BY GRACE

ROMANS 11:1-6 *I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.* ² **God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.** *Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel?*

³ *“Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.”* ⁴ *But what is God's reply to him? “I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.”*

⁵ *So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.* ⁶ *But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise, grace would no longer be grace.*

Paul ended his previous section with the quotation from **ISAIAH 65:2** **“All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”** THEY were disobedient... THEY were contrary...

So, he poses the repeated question, **“Has God rejected His people?”** The appropriate answer would be, **“NO, THEY have rejected Him!”** It was not God's choice imposed on them by His decision to make SOME of them **“hardened to the Gospel.”** HE wanted them... ALL of them... He wanted ALL who would accept His way and seek His path to righteousness through the Messiah / Jesus Christ.

It is the same today. **God extends His hands to ALL** ... THEY must make the choice by accepting the grace offered to them, placing their faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ.

Paul continues his impassioned message regarding God's desire for both the Jews and Gentiles: God is NOT done with the Jews; Neither have the Gentiles taken their place. BOTH are the objects of His Love, and are designated as the recipients of the Gospel. BOTH must come by the same path: **BY Grace THROUGH Faith!**

LOOK AT ME...

➤ **ROM 11:1** *I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.*

THE REPEATED QUESTION:

- **ROM 3:3** *What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness NULLIFY the faithfulness of God?*
- **ROM 11:11** *So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous.*
- **“Absolutely NOT!”** - How can you even ASK that question?
- Who has **REJECTED** Whom?

JOHN 1:11-13 *He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.¹² But to all who did receive him, WHO BELIEVED in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*

ACTS 3:14-15 But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and you asked for a murderer to be granted to you,¹⁵ and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.

ROM 10:21 But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people."

- Who has been **FAITHFUL**?

1 SAM 12:22 "For the LORD will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you a people for himself."

PSALM 94:14 "For the LORD will not forsake his people; he will not abandon his heritage..."

JEREMIAH 31:37 Thus says the LORD: "If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done," declares the LORD.

ROMANS LESSON 72 PART 2: A REMNANT CHOSEN BY GRACE

PAUL AS AN EXAMPLE:

- Israelite > Descendant of Abraham > Tribe of Benjamin –
 - Only Son born in the Promised Land –
 - First Tribe to Cross Red Sea –
 - Israel's First King – Saul
 - Judah's Great Prophet – Jeremiah

BUT... that did NOT save him. He needed to come to Faith in Jesus the Christ [Messiah]

IF God has "cast-off" the Jews [Israel] he would have been one of the **FIRST** to GO...

- 1 TIM 1:14-16 "...and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.¹⁵ The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.
¹⁶ But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

ACCORDING TO THE ELECTION OF GRACE

ROM 11:2-6 God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel?

- 11:3 "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life."

These were NOT selected for martyrdom, nor assigned to this death...

Their faithfulness had been seen in their sacrifice...

- 11:4 But what is God's reply to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

- "**I have KEPT...**" – Usually the idea of being "**left behind**" ... But here God uses it for the ones who are "**left FOR Him**" out of the rest...

- *“have NOT bowed...”* – The KEY is that *“THEY have Not bowed before the pagan gods”* – they have remained TRUE to the Covenant.

Always within the Nation of Israel a remnant was left who *had never forsaken their loyalty to the Covenant*, nor *compromised their faith*. Prophet after prophet came to see this principle: **AMOS (9:8–10)** / **MICAH (2:12, 5:3)** / and **ZEPHANIAH (3:12–13)**.

JEREMIAH 23:3 foresaw the Day when the remnant would be gathered from all the countries throughout which they had been scattered.

➤ **11:5** *So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.*

- *“A Remnant...”* – a portion of the whole... a small group out of all others... -
- *“Chosen by grace...”* – Elect – Chosen / Select
 - WHAT is the basis of their being a part of the “Remnant”?
 - GRACE... – Unmerited favor granted to us BY Faith

ROM 4:3-4 *For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”⁴ Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.*

ROM 4:16 *Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed,*

EPH 2:8-9 *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

➤ **11:6** *But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise, grace would no longer be grace.*

- *“IF BY grace...”* – God has established THIS...
- *“NOT on the basis of works...”* – Not just the Law... but also personal effort... Race... Family... National origin... Social identity...
- *“Otherwise, it is NOT grace...”* – IF it is not by “faith” it is not “grace”

But the Jews wanted to hold-on to the Law... to “measure” their righteousness... to show their “worthiness” to be called God’s People... ONLY works would allow this

DOCTRINE OF HARDENING

ROM 11:7-10 *What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened,⁸ as it is written,*

➤ **11:8** *Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking... –*

- EVERYTHING they had learned and practiced as Jews was to Lead them to Jesus Christ [**GAL 3:24**]
- THEY sought righteousness through their OWN worth... (works / effort / THE LAW)
- They SHOULD HAVE sought Righteousness THROUGH the Redeemer of Israel – THE MESSIAH

➤ *The elect obtained it... –*Jews who had received Jesus Christ ... and the Gentiles who believed...

- *Elect...* – Same as above – they are “Chosen / Elect” because of the grace they have received BY faith in the Covenant Promise - The Messiah...

ROM 1:17 – *The just shall live by faith... – [HAB 2:4 / GAL 3:11 / HEB 10:38]*

- *Obtained...* “received it...”

➤ *The rest were hardened...* – Jews who had heard and rejected... holding tightly to THE LAW...

“God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day.”

[ISA 29:10 / DEUT 29:3-4 / JER 5:21 / EZEK 12:2]

Reading these passages, it becomes clear that their “condition” (*callousness / blindness / deafness*) was NOT God’s initial intention BUT a result of their rebellion, sin, idolatry, and rejection of God’s Covenant...

To THESE God reacted with an increasingly more severe condition... He HARDENED their hearts

EPH 4:18 *They are **darkened in their understanding**, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, **due to their hardness of heart**.*

➤ 11:9-10 *And David says,*

*“Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them;
10 let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see; and bend their backs forever.”*

God will even cause their own “celebration of iniquity” to become an obstacle that further separates them from God. The more they become angry... the more they sin... the angrier they become... Until they are “enslaved” in their own rebellion

These passages show that the hardening of the unbelieving Israel agrees with what Israel had known all along from their own Scriptures. God does not allow rebellious humanity to pursue their own way to righteousness without placing His Own limits. This “mysterious **DOCTRINE OF THE HARDENING OF THE HEART**” is proof that God limits man’s defiance of His will... they can never proceed beyond a certain point.

Though it is of course true that the hardening comes from man’s unbelief, **yet here the Apostle ascribes it directly to the will of God.**

But this, is nothing more than the solemn and inevitable outcome of God’s law of righteousness.

If we place our hand in the fire, we may say...

a) That the fire did it... *And that is true. Sin is at fault*

b) That we ourselves did it... *And, that is, at the same time, true as well. I am at fault*

c) That God did it... *And THIS is also true... In that it was by the established Laws of Nature that God has set the Law that FIRE IS ALLOWED TO BURN US. God is at fault*

So, in the moral world, when we rebel, we set in motion the LAWS OF GOD’S UNIVERSE which act upon our soul and tend to blind and harden us.

HEB 3:15 *As it is said,*

*“Today, if you hear his voice, **do not harden your hearts** as in the rebellion.”*

HEB 4:2-3 *For good news came to us just as to them, but **the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.***

³ *For we who have believed enter that rest...*