

“Has the Church Replaced Israel?” Romans 11:1-16 LARGENT

- **How are we supposed to view Israel today in light of the church and the gospel? How do we view Israel’s fighting in the Middle East?**
- Some Christians are so pro-Israel that they give Israel and automatic pass even when Israel does something evil. Israel isn’t perfect. Read the OT.
- Some have been anti-semitic. The German church allied with Hitler.

Hopefully, today you’ll come to better understand how we as Gentile Christians should view and relate to Israel.

- **Now we come to this because our main point so far – God hasn’t failed. That’s relevant to you because otherwise how can you trust God’s promises.** Promised Jews and now not many Jews in the pews.

Romans 10:16-18¹⁶ *But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?”*¹⁷ *Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.*¹⁸ *But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did: “Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”* **Not all Jews accepted the message of Christ, but it wasn’t because they didn’t hear it.** OT & Prophets pointed to Christ.

I ask then: Did God reject his people? This is the nation of Israel.

Since the majority of the Jews rejected the message of Christ, is God now done with Israel?

- This is called Replacement Theology. That the Church has replaced Israel. The promises to Israel are now to the church. That the church is now God’s chosen people. – This is clearly not true according to Romans 11.

I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! NO! GOD IS NOT DONE WITH ISRAEL. AND HERE ARE SOME PROOFS OF THAT.

Paul’s first proof that God has not rejected Israel is His own life.

I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin.

- **When you want evidence of God’s work, look at your own life first.**

² *God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew.*

Paul’s second proof that God has not rejected Israel is that God knew them when He called them. (The nation as a whole)

- It’s not like God didn’t know these people. God has always known these people. It doesn’t make sense for God to reject Israel now when He knows who they were. (guy proposes to girl he knows he’s gonna break up with.)

Paul’s third proof that God has not rejected Israel is the presence of a remnant of Jewish believers. There’s still a few Jews in the Pews.

*Don’t you know what Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed to God against Israel:*³ *“Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me.”*⁴ *And what was God’s answer to him? “I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal.”*⁵ *So too, at the*

*present time there is a remnant chosen by grace.*⁶ *And if by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.*

- **In 1 Kings 18, Elijah has a showdown with the priest of Baal** and God humiliates them by proving His existence and power.
- After this Queen Jezebel mounts begins a massive persecution against all God’s prophets, including Elijah, and Elijah ends up isolated thinking he is the only one left.
- **Elijah despaired for Israel because he thought its over for Israel, I’m the only prophet left.**
- **The Jews in Rome are despairing thinking, it’s over for Israel, We’re the only one’s left who trust Jesus.**
- But a remnant of people is proof God is not done with Israel.
- So now Paul shows us from Old Testament scripture why those who aren’t a part of the faithful remnant rejected Christ.

⁷ *What then? What the people of Israel sought so earnestly they did not obtain. The elect among them did, but the others were hardened,*⁸ *as it is written: “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that could not see and ears that could not hear, to this very day.”* [Isaiah 29:10]

⁹ *And David says: “May their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them.”*¹⁰ *May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever.”* [Psalm 69:22-23]

- **It’s Judicial Hardening. – Leighton Flowers –** *“This is God’s active role in blinding an already rebellious person in their rebellion s as to prevent their repentance for a time. God’s motive is ALWAYS to accomplish a greater redemptive purpose through their rebellious actions (often including the potential redemption even of those being judicially hardened.)”*

¹¹ *Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? He asks the same question again because this is the main point of the chapter.*

Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression (who’s transgression? The Nation of Israel’s), salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious.

- **So, one of the reasons you and I as Gentiles have been offered salvation is to make the Jews envious of what we now have that was supposed to be for them and make them return to Christ.** How’s the church doing with that? You see a lot of Jews wishing they were Christians these days?
- **Don’t get confused.** Jewish rejection of salvation by grace through faith in Christ didn’t cause Gentile salvation, but rather gave more opportunity to the Gentiles that they readily took advantage of.

¹² *But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their full inclusion bring!*¹³ *I am talking to you Gentiles.*

- The Jewish rejection of Jesus benefited Gentiles like you and me, but here is where the current church of Gentiles tends to get cocky. God loves us now and not you. You had your shot and blew it. So we took your place.

Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I take pride in my ministry ¹⁴ in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. Paul is hoping by preaching to the gentiles that the Jews will get envious and turn back to where they naturally belong which is trusting Jesus. ¹⁵ For if their rejection brought reconciliation to the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? So, if Jews being rejected for a time has proved to be good for the world, imagine who good it will be when Israel is reconciled back to its proper place. ¹⁶ If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches.

Paul's fourth proof that God has not rejected Israel is they are the people of whom Abraham was the first fruit.

- To understand this verse you really need to understand that Paul is making reference to Jewish offering of First fruits. A festival of Israel.

Lev. 23:9-14 ⁹ The LORD said to Moses, ¹⁰ "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When you enter the land I am going to give you and you reap its harvest, bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest. ¹¹ He is to wave the sheaf before the LORD so it will be accepted on your behalf; the priest is to wave it on the day after the Sabbath. ¹² On the day you wave the sheaf, you must sacrifice as a burnt offering to the LORD a lamb a year old without defect, ¹³ together with its grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah^[a] of the finest flour mixed with olive oil—a food offering presented to the LORD, a pleasing aroma—and its drink offering of a quarter of a hin^[b] of wine. ¹⁴ You must not eat any bread, or roasted or new grain, until the very day you bring this offering to your God. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live.

- Paul's argument is that **if the first fruits is acceptable to God, then the rest of the grain would be too.**
- **Likewise, Abraham, the first fruit of Israel was acceptable to God so therefore His descendants are too.**
- The harvest won't be rejected if the first fruit was accepted as holy.
- **Is the church the successor of Israel? Did Israel miss her shot?** No. It was always God's plan to make salvation available to all people, but the church has not replaced Israel.
- **Gentiles like you and me have been grafted into a people that have been and always will be God's chosen people; Israel.**
- Next week we will talk about what it means to be grafted in and what the future of Israel holds.