



World Christian Fellowship

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Romans 103

Revelation proves God's promise of Israel.

Romans 11:7-10

Romans 11:1-10, *I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. ² God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, ³ "Lord, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"? ⁴ But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." ⁵ Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. ⁶ And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. ⁷ What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded. ⁸ Just as it is written: "God has given them a spirit of stupor, Eyes that they should not see And ears that they should not hear, To this very day." ⁹ And David says: "Let their table become a snare and a trap, A stumbling block and a recompense to them. ¹⁰ Let their eyes be*

darkened, so that they do not see, And bow down their back always.”

Bible makes it very clear that God can be trusted.

God keeps His word.

God speaks the truth and God keeps His Word.

Is it true that because Israel has rejected the Messiah God has cancelled all His promises to them?

V1, I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Has God permanently set aside Israel because of their unbelief?

Paul has been presenting justification by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He has been giving this tremendous message in the book of Romans about salvation by grace through faith, justification through the death of Christ and the resurrection of Christ.

If the Jews have rejected Christ, then aren't all the promises cancelled to them?

They have rejected Christ.

They have been set aside from blessing.

They have rejected the gospel.

God knew that and God planned for that, that's all a part of His sovereign plan.

Has God cancelled His promises to Israel?

“No” is the answer.

Chapter 11 can be divided three ways to understand better.

- 1. Partial V 1-10**
- 2. Temporary V 11-25**
- 3. Purposeful V 26-36**

The theme of the chapter is very clear.

Israel will be restored,
Israel will receive fully the promises.

Their setting aside is only partial, not all of them.

Only temporary, not permanent.

Purposeful, it has a goal, it has an object, it has a reason.

1. Only partial.

Not all Jews are set aside.

In any generation from the time of Christ until the coming of Christ in His Second Coming and at any point in time we will find some Jewish converts, who have embraced the Saviour.

Precisely Paul's argument in verses 1 to 10.

Paul gives us three indications that the setting aside of Israel is only partial.

- a) The writer.**
- b) The remnant.**
- c) The revelation.**

- a) The writer.**

V 1, I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Are all Jews becoming victims of a comprehensive, sweeping totality of judgment that encompasses every Jewish offspring?
No, it can't be.

Why?

Because Paul is saved,

- Paul is transformed.
- Paul belongs to God.
- Paul is come to the Messiah.
- Paul is in the kingdom.
- Paul is an Israelite.

Though contemporarily the nation rejects, not all do because I don't. I am an Israelite. The unbelief of Israel, their rejection of Christ, their hatred of the gospel was never more demonstrated than by Paul.

If there ever was a hater of the gospel, it was Paul.

Paul killed Christians.

He was a blasphemer.

He was injurious.

1 Timothy 1:13, *although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.*

He persecuted Christians.

b) The remnant.

V 2, *God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying,*

God has always had a faithful group of people in His nation. It's never been the whole nation.

Paul quotes Elijah, that great prophet of God, as his illustration of remnant truth.

This is what the Scripture tells us about Elijah. Elijah didn't understand the doctrine of the remnant.

V 3, *“Lord, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life”?*

Romans 11:3 a paraphrase of **1 Kings 19:10 &14**.

What was God's answer?

V 4, *But what does the divine response say to him? “I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.*

In Paul's time?

V 5, *Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*

Even in the time of Paul the whole of Israel hadn't rejected. There was a remnant.

V 6, *And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.*

The election of grace is what chooses the remnant. If it's grace, then it's no more works.

So, the first six verses then add up to the reality that God is not finished with the Jews.

V 7, and this is just a very simple look at the Old Testament. Paul quotes some of the Old Testament passages. He wants to support his point with Scripture.

A good expository preacher. He has already reached back into the passage relative to Elijah, 1 Kings 19.

Now again he is going to reach back some more to support what he says with Scripture.

c) Revelation.

V 7, What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

When you look at the nation Israel and you see that

- the nation has not come into the covenant,
- the nation has not been redeemed,
- the nation has not been blessed by God,
- the nation has not found salvation,

Don't conclude that God has set the nation aside.

No, the reason the nation hasn't obtained it because the elect has obtained it and the rest are blinded.

Israel has not obtained what it seeks.

The word for "**seek**" is a very intense kind of seeking, earnest, diligent seeking.

The Jewish people were fanatically religious.

They were seeking people.

The present tense by the way indicates the constancy of their effort.

Romans 10:2-3, *For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ³For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.*

They are exercising themselves to try to establish their own righteousness. They live for this.

Israelites were seeking.

What are they seeking for?

They were seeking for righteousness.

They went about to establish their own righteousness and didn't submit themselves to the righteousness of God.

Never learned that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

They didn't know it was a matter of faith but not works.

But they seek righteousness.

What is righteousness?

Being right with God.

They sought to be right with God.

That was their pursuit.

They wanted acceptance with God.

Matthew 19.

Sometimes they called it eternal life like the rich young ruler and said, "*What do I have to do to get eternal life?*"

That was another way of saying to be right with God.

The rich young ruler was raised and become a leader in the synagogue. He was a very religious man, who came with a humble heart, falling on his knees before the Lord.

He had all the right sort of features to his arrival.

He asked the right question.

He really wanted to be right with God.

When Jesus gave him the conditions to make himself right with God, or through which he could be made right with God, he walked away because they did not fit his preconceived criteria, which was, you do it on your own.

Jesus said to him, "*You need to confess your sin,*" in effect, by giving him some commandments and the rich young ruler says, "*No, I have kept all those.*"

He thought he was righteous enough on his own, that was the problem.

So, they sought diligently a right relationship.

Even today in Jerusalem we can see them going through all this bowing, bending, praying and the earnestness with which they go through this.

These people seeking to be right with God.

Did they never get what they sought?

They never got it.

Why?

Because they sought it not according to knowledge.

They were ignorant of God's true righteousness and went about to establish their own which was utterly impossible.

So, they sought it and never got it.

Romans 9:30, *What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith;*

On the other hand, we got this gentile in the pagan world which didn't particularly seek to be righteous and didn't seek to live up to some moral code.

All we need to do is study the Greek culture to know that immorality was fine. There were all kinds of horrible sins connected with pagan Greek worship.

The Gentiles weren't seeking after righteousness. They weren't seeking either to be right with God.

They weren't seeking an intimate, right relationship with the living God. They didn't seek it, but they attained it,

Because they responded to the righteousness which is by faith. But Israel, who followed after the law of righteousness has not attained to the law of righteousness.

- Israel tried to do it by works they never got it!
- Gentiles never tried to do it by works but accepted it by faith, they got it.

So, the Jews are seen as continually attempting to be right with God, utterly impossible.

In the **Sermon on the Mount** in **Matthew chapters 5 to 7** Jesus was driving out.

Matthew 5:20, *For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Nobody's righteousness could exceed theirs, not in the human sense, they were so utterly religious.

V 7, What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

The ones who were chosen obtained it.

The word "elect" or "election" doesn't have reference to the theocratic nation of Israel. Doesn't have reference to the kingdom of Israel as a nation, but it has reference to the believing Jews, the individual Jews chosen out of the nation.

Those who were redeemed were the true Jews.

Romans 9:6, But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel,

Romans 2:28-29, For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; ²⁹ but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

The Remnant,

They did obtain it.

They received righteousness.

They became right with God.

They got eternal life.

They were redeemed, the elect.

What about the rest?

The rest were hardened.

Israel sought and sought to be right with God. Never got it.

But there was a group that did.

They were the elect.

We understand that salvation has a side where God elects and a side where man receives by faith. The emphasis here is on the elect because it is demonstrating to us that God in His sovereignty is not through with Israel.

So, the emphasis is on God's choosing of them. It is not to say that there's no balance, there is, it's just emphasis. The rest were hardened.

They were hardened. It indicates that they were hardened by some outside power. That force is none other than God Himself!

They were hardened by God.

Does God harden people?

Romans 9:18, *Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.*

Who was Paul's illustration in chapter 9?

Who is the illustration of God hardening?

Pharaoh!

God hardened Pharaoh.

We did study this in detail in chapter 9.

When we read the account of Pharaoh in the book of Exodus, we will read "God hardened Pharaoh's heart, God hardened Pharaoh's heart."

But we will also read, "Pharaoh hardened his heart, Pharaoh hardened his heart."

When God hardens it is a result of a process of wilful rejection of true righteousness, a process of hardening.

Romans 10:16, *But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?"*

Romans 10:21, *But to Israel he says: "All day long I have stretched out My hands To a disobedient and contrary people."*

When God moves in with judicial, final, judgmental, condemning, hardening of the heart.

It is as a result and response to a continual process of wilful rejection.

It is a judicial thing that comes to those who continue to reject.

Perhaps the balance of this can be seen in a passage reference to Judas.

Luke 22:21, *But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table.*

Do you think it was determined before the world began that Jesus would go to the cross?

Sure.

Does that make a hero out of Judas?

No.

Luke 22:22, *And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!"*

Yes, it is the plan of God, but woe to the man who does it.

We have that inexplicable, mysterious balance of God's predetermined, sovereign choice and yet man's responsibility.

God's hardening is never, ever separated from man's hardening. We can say that it is the judgment of God on a person through the fault of that person.

So, the nation rejects. They are hardened judicially because they have chosen to reject wilfully.

But there is a remnant elect to demonstrate that God is not through with Israel.

Now Paul quotes from the Old Testament law to demonstrate that this is not a surprise to God.

If the gospel is true, then why did the Jews reject it?

Paul is saying that God knew they would all along.

Their rejection is confirmed in the plan of God by an act of judgment on them because of their obstinate disobedience.

Paul quotes from the Old Testament.

V 8, *Just as it is written: "God has given them a spirit of stupor, Eyes that they should not see And ears that they should not hear, To this very day."*

This was written this way in the Old Testament that God would give them the spirit of slumber and eyes that couldn't see and ears that couldn't hear.

This verse comes from two different Old Testament verses that are combined.

The first half of the verse comes from **Isaiah 29:10**.

Isaiah 29:10, *For the Lord has poured out on you The spirit of deep sleep, And has closed your eyes, namely, the prophets; And He has covered your heads, namely, the seers.*

The second half of the verse comes from **Deuteronomy 29:4**.

Deuteronomy 29:4, *Yet the Lord has not given you a heart to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this very day.*

Paul takes a passage from **Moses** and a passage from **Isaiah**.
The law and the prophets.

These two are combined under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit here to indicate that God Himself has withheld spiritual understanding from His people.

It is God who gave you deep sleep.

It is God who made eyes that wouldn't see and ears that wouldn't hear.

The present-day unbelief of Israel does not alter the plan of God, but it is the plan of God.

When God in the Old Testament made His promises to Israel that He would not break, or violate, at the same time that He planned to fulfil those promises He planned also for Israel's rejection.

The promises are cancelled because Israel rejects is to assume then that God made promises assuming something would happen. It didn't happen so He changed them. Can't be.

Paul says that in Moses' day God gave the people ignorance, shut their eyes and ears.

In Isaiah's day God did the same thing.

In **Isaiah 6** and Isaiah is told to go tell this people and that their ears would be fat, and they would not hear, and their eyes would be closed.

Paul says that don't be surprised at the rejection of Israel and don't be surprised that God hardens them.

- That happened in the day of Moses,
- That happened in the day of Isaiah.

Paul draws out of the time of Moses a great and glorious time, the time of Isaiah, an equally interesting and unique time and says this is nothing new.

- They were often blind.
- They were often hard-hearted.
- They were often apostate.
- They were all the time disobedient and contrary.

To see now God blinding them in the main is nothing new, God did it in the past. So, this is not something that is foreign to the plan of God.

Just because we see the mass of Jews rejecting Jesus Christ doesn't mean God has permanently set them aside.

- Paul is a living proof He hasn't totally set Jews aside.
- The remnant is still out there.
- This is no surprise to the plan of God rather it fits in because it's God Himself who does the hardening in response to their unbelief.

Another Old Testament great is quoted in verse 9.

V 9, And David says: *“Let their table become a snare and a trap, A stumbling block and a recompense to them.*

Who said that?

David.

Psalm 69:22-23, *Let their table become a snare before them, And their well-being a trap.²³ Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see; And make their loins shake continually.*

Psalm 69 is one of the most marvellous Messianic Psalms in the whole Old Testament. Along with Psalm 22 they are the two

most quoted Psalms in speaking about the suffering of the Saviour. It is a lament of the Messiah's grief.

It is a lament of the Messiah's suffering and pain.

Psalmist, in Psalm 69, pronounces a curse on the enemies of God.

It is a Psalm that's what we call imprecatory, it prays for judgment to fall on the enemies of God.

Psalm 69:9, *Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.*

This is the Psalm Jesus quoted when He made a whip and cleansed the temple.

It is a Psalm that is zealous for the holiness of God.

It is a Psalm that calls down judgment on those who reject God.

The Messiah will, as did David, pray that the enemies of God be punished, be they Jew or Gentile.

The Messiah then says let their table be made a snare and a trap and a stumbling block.

So that the judgment that's come on Israel fits right into the prophetic picture, right into the plan of God.

- ✓ Moses said it.
- ✓ Isaiah said it.
- ✓ David said it.

The statement itself is most interesting.

You wouldn't think there was any safer place than at your own table! Where you are eating your own food.

- The place of feasting,
- The place of celebrating,
- The place of joy,
- The place of festivity,
- The secure place of plenty,
- The place of bounty,
- The place of blessing,
- The table.

May the very table at which they eat become the trap that catches them.

What have you pictured here is the Jew feasting?

What is the Jew's food?

The law of God.

The very law that becomes the trap.

That very law becomes the snare.

- The first term, "snare," literally means "trap."
- The second term, "trap," means a net used by hunters to throw over their prey.
- The third term, "stumbling block," is anything in which a person is caught.

They are not to be distinct but synonyms.

When they think they are feasting on the Word of God, that Word itself becomes the trap that catches them.

Why would anybody wish that on someone?

V 9, "As a recompense,"

Greek word ***antapodoma***, a pay-back, for the way they have abused God.

For the way they have denied God His rightful place.

For the way they have dishonoured Him and His Messiah.

God will pay back.

God is paying back a disobedient and hard-hearted people.

Any good trap feeds the animal it attempts to catch. That is how it catches them.

The Jews are caught in the very trap on which they feed. The Word is a two-edged sword.

V 10, *Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see, And bow down their back always."*

The picture of the bowed back is the picture of pain and grief. The picture of someone blind, groping to try to find the light with the bowed back, feeling in front of him lest he fall in a hole or injure himself or stumble.

The psalmist crying out, "O God, blind them, bend their back, trap them."

Speaking of those who refuse to be obedient to God.

The tragedy of that has come to pass in the history of Israel. This whole idea of darkened eyes and deaf ears is filling the New Testament.

This whole concept sort of crystallizes in **Isaiah 6:9-13** where it talks about their eyes and ears and they can't understand. They see with their eyes, and they do not see. They hear with their ears, and they really don't hear. Their mind can't understand.

That passage in **Isaiah 6** is the most often quoted Old Testament text in all the New Testament.

It is quoted in **Matthew 13, Mark 4, Luke 8, John 12, Acts 28**. It is quoted throughout the New Testament to indicate that God has blinded His people for their wilful rejection.

Israel is blind but still fits into the plan of God. They grope around in the darkness. That doesn't surprise God. That is part of the plan.

Has God set aside Israel totally?

No.

- Paul is proof of that.
- The remnant is proof of that.
- God in the midst of a blind nation has chosen out a remnant.

Confirmed blindness was always part of the prophetic plan from way back in Moses' time, Isaiah's time, David's time.

We are not surprised.

The unbelief of the gospel by the Jews doesn't obviate the gospel and it doesn't in any way thwart the plan of God.

God has His promise, and He will fulfil it.

Conclusion:

When Israel rejected Jesus Christ, was there instantaneously and forever a forfeiture of all God's promises to them?

Jeremiah 31:35-36, *Thus says the Lord, Who gives the sun for a light by day, The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, And its waves roar (The Lord of hosts is His name):* ³⁶ *“If those ordinances depart From before Me, says the Lord, Then the seed of Israel shall also cease From being a nation before Me forever.”*

God says when I lose control of everything, then Israel will cease to be My people and not until.

Will never happens.

Isaiah 43:1-7, *But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.* ² *When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you.* ³ *For I am the Lord your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Saviour; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place.* ⁴ *Since you were precious in My sight, You have been honoured, And I have loved you; Therefore I will give men for you, And people for your life.* ⁵ *Fear not, for I am with you; I will*

bring your descendants from the east, And gather you from the west; ⁶ I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not keep them back!' Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth— ⁷ Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him."

Isaiah 43:10, *"You are My witnesses," says the Lord, "And My servant whom I have chosen, That you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me.*

Isaiah 43:21-22, *This people I have formed for Myself; They shall declare My praise. ²² "But you have not called upon Me, O Jacob; And you have been weary of Me, O Israel.*

Isaiah 43:25, *"I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.*

God says,

I called you to be My people. But you would not hear Me, and you would not listen.

But I am the one who for My own sake because I must be true to My promises will blot out your sins.

The rejection, the disobedience of Israel does not change the promise of God.

Zechariah 8:20-23, *“Thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘Peoples shall yet come, Inhabitants of many cities; ²¹ The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, “Let us continue to go and pray before the Lord, And seek the Lord of hosts. I myself will go also.” ²² Yes, many peoples and strong nations Shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, And to pray before the Lord.’ ²³ “Thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.” ’ ’ ”*

The prophet says the day is going to come when the world wants to seek the Lord. Many people from the strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem and to pray before the Lord.

As Zechariah looks down through history, he sees a time coming when the world desires to go and meet God, when the world desires to be introduced to God.

They will hold on to the coattails of a Jew because Jews will be known as those who know God.

That is not presently the case. They are secular.

But when the glorious time of the kingdom comes and the world begins to turn to see the majesty of God as revealed in the glorious Christ, the Jews will be the people introducing the world to God. Nations will see in the kingdom the blessedness of Israel and they will come to be led to God by the Jews.

It has always been God's plan.

When God brought out of the loins of Abraham the people of Israel, when he identified the Jews as His special people, it was for the purpose of being the means of taking the world to God. They were never to be an end in themselves. They were always to be a means to bringing people to God.

Tragically they failed to do that.

They failed to be that people.

Throughout their history instead of bringing people to God, **Romans 2** says the name of God is blasphemed because of you. They did the very opposite.

Even reluctantly like Jonah when they were used to bring Gentiles to God, they got upset about it and mad and wanted to die because they found it difficult to imagine Gentiles horning in on their God.

They really missed the whole point of their existence.

They were a witness nation.

They failed.

But the day will come when they will be that nation.

Nations of the world will hang on their garments to be brought to God.

The nation of Israel will fulfil its intended destiny.

But because they did not, the Lord had to call a new nation, a no people, as Paul calls them. People who were not God's people, Gentiles, the church, and we are His witnessing people. But the day will come when Israel will be brought back into that place.

It begins even in the tribulation with the sealing of **144,000 Jews**, twelve thousand from every tribe in Israel, will be sent to evangelize the world and protected by God from those who would desire to take their lives.

Revelation 7:4, *And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:*

The result of their evangelism will be an innumerable number of Gentiles from every tongue and people and nation and tribe who are redeemed out of the tribulation.

So, they during the tribulation time will begin their evangelism.

During the kingdom they will be God's ambassadors, bringing the nations to see the Saviour.

The day will come when they fulfil their intended purpose.