

LESSON 21: ROMANS 11:1-24
DECEMBER 16, 2020

OVERVIEW

- . God's remnant – Romans 11:1-10
- . Riches for the Gentiles and Jews – Romans 11:11-24

GOD'S REMNANT – ROMANS 11:1-10

- . God's present relationship to His ancient people – Romans 11:1
 - . "Did God reject His people – by no means!" – Romans 11:1
 - . **Two ways to look at this verse**
 - . At the present time, just because there are those that have rejected God, God has not rejected them
 - . Regardless of our story or our present ideology, God is there with open arms ready to accept us into His grasp
 - . Although, while living, its never too late, there will come a day when God will put an end to this ongoing battle of good vs. evil
 - . For the time being, we are living under this period of grace where no living human being has been rejected by God
 - . The other way to look at this is that as long as there is one remnant to carry the torch forward, God has not rejected His people
 - . Scripture tells us there will always be that remnant that will be light in and amongst the darkness and provides a way for everyone to know God
- . Paul uses the story of Elijah to make his point – Romans 11:2-6
 - . The story of Elijah – I kings 18:16-19:18
 - . Elijah challenges the priests of Baal to a contest
 - . All were invited to Mount Carmel to see the challenge between the four hundred priests of Baal vs. Elijah, a servant of the one true God
 - . This was a winner take all challenge to prove the one true God
 - . When Elijah wins, he has the four hundred priests of Baal slaughtered
 - . The next day the King of Israel, Jezebel, puts a bounty on Elijah's head
 - . A fearful Elijah flees to Mt. Horeb to save his life
 - . There he has a conversation with God, where God rebukes Elijah for not trusting Him

- . At the heart of Elijah's lament to God is that he is a lone warrior fighting on behalf of God and it just become too much for him to bear
 - . God reminds him he is not the only one fighting on his behalf – there are actually 7000 other Israelites doing the same thing
 - . The importance of this story is that even in the darkest of times, there is a remnant
 - . Though we may feel like we are on an island, we are not
 - . There has always been and will always be a healthy remnant
 - . Paul is reminding the Jew reading this letter that there are many, many Jews who have embraced the gospel – they are not alone
 - . The story is also a reminder that many, but not all will be saved
 - . This story serves as an encouragement for those times when results seem small
-
- . Paul summarizes many of the points he has talked about in chapters 9-11
Romans 11:7-10
 - . The hardening of Israel
 - . Here Paul is saying that many of the nation of Israel have hardened their hearts towards God
 - . What should have been a blessing has turned in to a curse
 - . Blessings like the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple, the patriarchs and the prophets have become a snare, trap, and stumbling block for them
 - . The critical point is that if blessings are misused they will harden our hearts
-
- . Current day Christian blessings that could become curses
 - . Baptism
 - . An outward sign of an inward spiritual union with Jesus Christ
 - . It is meant to strengthen our faith by making the inward reality more perceptible to us
 - . However many have trusted the outward sign without the inward commitment
 - . The very thing that was meant to be a blessing becomes a false grounds for hope
 - . Communion
 - . The Lord's Supper is meant to show us the broken body and atoning blood of Christ
 - . It's a reminder that we are to put our trust in Christ, not the ceremony
 - . The ritual can become a curse for us if we become superstitious and even pagan like in our practice
 - . Material possessions
 - . These gifts from God can become something we hoard and ultimately worship

- . What should lead us closer to God can poison us and actually lead us away from Him
- . **The Sabbath**
 - . What was meant to be a day of needed rest has become a day packed full of activity that can leave us exhausted and feeling further separation from God

RICHES FOR THE GENTILES AND JEWS – ROMANS 11:11-24

- . Four important points discussed in Romans 11:11-12
 - . Israel's stumbling is not final
 - . The unbelief of Israel will not be forever
 - . They stumbled as a nation by their rejection of Jesus as their Savior and Messiah, but they will rise again
 - . Israel's stumbling had a purpose
 - . Israel's stumbling would be used by God to bring salvation to the Gentiles
 - . The salvation of the Gentiles would be achieved by the Jewish rejection of Israel
 - . The Gentiles salvation will lead to blessing for Jews and Gentiles
 - . In time the Gentiles salvation will lead to the salvation of Israel as a nation
 - . Israel has not been cast aside
 - . God is working through Gentile salvation so that the Jews might themselves find Jesus as their Savior
 - . The Gentile salvation will make Israel envious
- . Jewish salvation – Romans 11:13-16
 - . Why has the conversion of Israel as a nation not taken place
 - . Could it be that Gentile Christians have not lived in a ways that would provoke anyone, let alone the Jews, to envy what they possess
 - . Any Christian who has talked with Jews about Jesus must be amazed at the blindness that seems to have settled over the Jewish people
 - . Paul wanted his ministry to be conducted in such a way that the response to his preaching among Gentiles would be used for the conversion of his own people
- . Root, shoot and branches – Romans 11:17-24
 - . Jews have not believed in Jesus and are therefore cut off from spiritual blessings that should belong to them because of their being Jews
 - . There is only one people of God
 - . All who are saved, either Jew or Gentile, are part of the one salvation tree

- . The people of God must bear fruit
 - . The point of grafting is to produce a more fruitful tree
 - . Although Paul does not speak of fruit, that is what he has in mind here
 - . Unbelief is the ultimate expression of fruitlessness and faith is the first of all spiritual fruits
- . The engrafted branches are the Gentiles and the thrust of his words to them is that they are not to be boastful
 - . Gentiles need to remember that they do not support the root, but the root supports them
- . Paul's warning to the Gentile church
 - . Prosperity seems to lead to some kind of boasting
 - . This is true of spiritual prosperity as well as material prosperity
 - . As soon as things go well for us we suppose that it is because of who we are or what we have done
 - . This can cause us to relax and become complacent in our faith
 - . From here we begin to drift away from God and back in to sin
 - . We need to remain diligent to make our calling sure

NEXT LESSON - WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2021 - ROMANS 11:25-32