Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Has God Cancelled His Promises to Israel? Part 1
Scripture: Romans 11:1-2a
Code: 45-82

Now our study tonight is in Romans chapter 11 and we're going to embark upon the first ten verses of this great chapter. Just as a word of reminder. The ministry of Grace Community Church through the years has primarily been a ministry emphasizing the study of the Word of God. And that has not changed and nor will it change. We're so committed to the fact that God wants us to teach His Word that whenever we meet together that is of primary importance to us. We're not interested only in the study of the Word of God, we're interested also in its application but we know as well that we cannot believe it or apply it or proclaim it unless we understand it. And so, we must know the Word of God as best we are able through the teaching of the Spirit of God and faithful folks who share it with us. And so it's our goal and our commitment systematically to move through the books of Scripture that we may understand what it is that God has revealed to us. And I trust that tonight your heart is open and anxious as we approach this wonderful passage of Romans chapter 11, the first ten verses.

Now let me read the passage to you just to set it in your minds. "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. God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Know ye not what the Scripture saith of Elijah, how he maketh intercession to God against Israel saying, Lord, they have killed Thy prophets and dug down Thine altars and I am left alone and they seek my life. 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. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace, and if by grace then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded. 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 ear, even unto this day. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare and a trap and a stumbling block and a recompense unto them. Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see and bow down their backs always."

Now that's the text that we want to look at as we examine the Word of God in this portion. To begin with, there's something that must be initially established in an understanding of the heart and soul of this chapter and it is this, the Bible makes it very clear that God can be trusted, that God keeps His word. If He says something, that is exactly what He means and that is precisely what will come to pass. For example, the apostle Paul affirms in Titus chapter 1 verse 2 that God is the God who cannot lie. It is not within the character or the personhood of God to speak an untruth or to speak

something that does not come to pass. That is why the writer of Hebrews says in chapter 10 verse 23, "He is faithful that promised." In other words, what God promises He will faithfully fulfill.

In Joshua chapter 23 and verse 14 there is a reminder to the people of God that says this, "Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you." What God said came to pass. In 1 Kings, chapter 8 and verse 56 we read this, "According to all that He promised there hath not failed one word of all His good promise which He promised." And one of the most serious slights against God is recorded for us in 1 John 1:10, where it points up the terrible sin of making God appear to be a liar. God speaks the truth and God keeps His Word. Scripture affirms that and Scripture is authored by the Holy Spirit so it is the Holy Spirit's testimony to the truth of God.

Now you can add to the testimony of the Holy Spirit in Scripture the testimony of the Lord Jesus Himself, who in John 17:17, praying to the Father said this, "Thy Word is truth." And He also said in the same chapter, "And this is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God." So you have the testimony of the Holy Spirit in Scripture. You have the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ in person, as recorded in John 17, that God speaks truth. And you also have the testimony of God to Himself when He is called "the God of truth" in Psalm 31 verse 5. Now it's very important to establish at the very outset that God is a God who keeps His promise. It is essential for our study to remind ourselves that there are no changes; there are no voiding of God's promises.

Now having said that we want to make a direct application of that principle: God had made very great, very comprehensive, very specific promises to a people known as Israel. God promised them certain things. In fact, the Old Testament is literally filled with those promises. And we can't even begin to take the time to cover them all. God made very clear, specific promises to Israel. In fact, in Romans 9:4, do you remember it says that it is the Israelites to whom pertains the adoption and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the law and the service and the promises? They had received many promises from God.

Now, the question of God keeping those promises is a bigger question than just dispensational debate. The question of God keeping those promises is a question of divine integrity because if God has obviated, cancelled, changed His promises to Israel, we're all in a lot of trouble because we have a God who can't be trusted and who may as readily change His promises to us as He did to them. Now that's the bottom line consideration in understanding what's before us in this chapter.

Israel's very existence as a nation is tied to the promises of God without question. In fact, they were elected by God as His chosen nation and by His own sovereignty, unconditionally, He promised to

bless them. The blessing that came to them in the Abrahamic covenant was not even conditioned upon them. In other words, God determined to do it no matter what they did. God would bring about the right circumstances to fulfill His promises. So God chose a people, God made promises to a people, God confirmed those promises by an oath in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis. He made the promises in chapter 12, chapter 13, and then in chapter 15 He confirmed it by an oath. He had animals cut in half, which was the old way of making an oath; the pieces laid on two sides and two birds killed and laid on each side. And then He, as a smoking furnace and a burning lamp, passed between those pieces, covenanting with Himself, swearing by Himself, making an oath to Himself that He would keep His promises. So you have divine covenants based on sovereign election confirmed by a divine oath and that is why Hebrews 6 verses 13 to 18 says God has made His covenants and confirmed them by an oath by which He swore to keep His covenants. And so God has made promises to Israel which He must keep.

Now, beloved, let me just tell you that's why there are still Jews in the world. That's why there is still a nation. The covenants of God sworn in the oath of God have demanded the preservation of the people of God. For if Israel went out of existence there would be no way for God to fulfill His covenants. And so God has caused perpetuity in the Jewish stock. He has caused those people to outlive all other peoples contemporaneous with them in ancient times. They are a phenomenon. They are not God's ancient people Israel, they are God's present people and God's future people to whom He must fulfill His covenants, He must fulfill His promises. Therefore He must maintain their existence. God has a plan for Israel. His character depends on it. His integrity depends on it. His trustworthiness and faithfulness depend on it.

And to sum up God's promise to Israel is to say ultimately He promises to redeem them, to give them a glorious kingdom, to give them peace from all their enemies and the fullness of blessing. And that will come in the future, that is God's promise.

Now obviously the Bible also indicates that those who are outside national Israel will also be blessed. It is not that God will alone bless Israel, it is that God will bless Israel and through them the world. He already has done that because it was through Israel that God brought the Messiah, the Savior of the world. So God has not seen His nation Israel as if they were a bucket, but a channel for the blessing of the world. But that in no way, and listen carefully, the fact that God is blessing the world through Israel in no way means that He is going to cease fulfilling His promise to them, the promise of salvation, the promise of a land, the promise of blessing, the promise of peace, the promise of salvation, the promise of a kingdom with a King. That all must be fulfilled.

And you can go back into the Old Testament as we did when we looked at Romans chapter 9 and see promise after promise after promise. There is what is called the Abrahamic covenant in which God promises to bless the people that come out of the loins of Abraham. There is what is called the Davidic covenant in which God promises to give them a King from the seed of David who will be a greater King than any king who ever reigned, the Messiah. There is the Palestinian covenant, Deuteronomy chapter 30, which is the promise of God that they shall possess the land. There is, in fact, a Mosaic covenant which is a promise of blessing upon obedience. And then there is Jeremiah 31 in which God promises to them a new covenant in which He will plant His law within their hearts, in which He will redeem them. All of these promises given by God must be fulfilled to the Jewish people. And the fact that through Israel multiplied millions of Gentiles have been blessed does not cancel the promise to Israel.

No doubt the Jews in Old Testament times and the Jews in New Testament times understood that the promises existed would be fulfilled literally. They understood that there would be a real kingdom and real blessing and real possession of the holy land. They understood them to be literal promises. But, when the Messiah came they rejected Him, and here's the crux of where we are in Romans 11. When the Messiah came they rejected Him. They turned their back on Him as we've been learning in Matthew. They did not want Him and ultimately cried, "We will not have this man to reign over us, crucify Him, crucify Him." And when given a choice between Him and a common criminal they cried "Barabbas, we'll take the common criminal, kill Jesus." They rejected their Messiah. And Peter indicts them in Acts by saying, "You have killed the prince of life, and you desired a murderer, Barabbas, and you killed the prince of life. You desired one who took life and you killed the one who gave life." What a confused people.

And so, some have concluded, therefore, that because Israel rejected the Messiah, God cancelled out all His promises to them. God just erased the blackboard. The promises were written in chalk and when that happened, took out His big eraser and just wiped them off. That's the end of promises to Israel. And many teach today that God then has obliterated all of His covenant promises to Israel and they are now spiritually being fulfilled in the church and we are the new Israel who receive all of the literal promises to Israel spiritually. We are the Israel of God, they tell us. And as far as the nation is concerned, they're out, the promises have been cancelled.

Is that true? Is it true that because Israel has rejected the Messiah God has cancelled all His promises to them? That's a very, very important question and that is the question in verse 1 of chapter 11, "I say then, has God cast away His people?" And you can stop at that point. That's the question this chapter faces. Has God permanently set aside Israel because of their unbelief? That's a very important question. You see, Paul has been presenting justification by grace through faith in the

Lord Jesus Christ. He's 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. And the question that comes to him is, "Look, Paul, if this is true, how is it that the Jews rejected it? How is it that the people who belong to God, who were the custodians of God's truth, how is it that they rejected this? I mean, doesn't that mess up the plan?" And so chapters 9 and 10 discuss the matter of Jewish rejection.

And the other question that comes up is: If the Jews have rejected Christ then aren't all the promises cancelled to them? I mean, if they have rejected, if they have denied Christ, if they have stumbled at that stumbling stone, as it tells us in chapter 9 at the end, if they have ignorantly pursued righteousness, as it tell us in chapter 10 verse 3 and following, if they have not believed though they have heard many preachers, if they are a disobedient and contrary people as it says in verse 21 of chapter 10, if they have rejected, then hasn't God just wiped off all the promises? That must be answered. And it is answered in chapter 11. Yes Israel is in unbelief, chapter 9 says, but that fits into the plan of the sovereignty of God. Yes Israel is in unbelief, chapter 10 says, but it's their own fault. So you have that amazing combination of the sovereignty of God and the fault of man. They have rejected Christ. They have been set aside from blessing. They have rejected the gospel. And God knew that and God planned for that, that's all a part of His sovereign plan. And yet chapter 10 makes it clear it was their own fault. But even so, even so, even having rejected, even having sovereignly by God been planned, as it were, out of the place of blessing, does that mean God has permanently, totally and forever cancelled His promises to them? And the answer is in chapter 11, a very, very important chapter.

And we want to understand what it has to say. And I hope that when we're done you'll have a tremendous affirming sense of the trustworthiness of God who is a covenant-keeping God. You see, Paul must defend the fact that God has not cancelled His promises to Israel, because how are you going to get any Gentile to accept the gospel from a God who cancels out His promises? I mean, no Jew would want to hear a gospel in which it was inherent that God had cancelled His former promises to them. And no Gentile would want to sign up to belong to a God who couldn't be trusted. So this whole matter of, does God keep His Word, and have the promises of Israel been cancelled, is essential to the further proclamation of the gospel. And again I say what I've said all along in 9, 10 and 11, this portion of the book is not incidental, it is the very heartbeat of this epistle because the doctrine of justification by faith must deal somehow with Israel. Why have the people of God refused it? Doesn't that mess up the plan? No, God had that in the plan. Why are they set aside? Because the gospel is untrue? No, because they were unbelieving and they sought righteousness the wrong way. Does God then cancel all His promises to them? And the enemy would love to have the answer be "yes He does" because then he couldn't sell the gospel to anybody. Nobody wants to trust a God who can't be trusted. And so, Paul must deal with the issue. And that's exactly what he does. And he deals

with it in such a wonderful way, by the time you get to the end of the chapter it's time for praise and hallelujah. And the chapter ends with a glorious praise, a glorious benediction, "O the depths of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out," and so forth and so forth. So it ends on a note of praise, a note of joy.

Now, as we look at this chapter I want you to sort it out in your mind in very, very simple and clear terms. Chapter 11 gives us Paul's answer to the question: Has God cancelled His promises to Israel? “Has He cast off His people?” it says in verse 1. The answer is “no.” He says it there. "God forbid." “No” is the answer. And then these three things take up Paul's thought. First of all, Israel's setting aside because of their unbelief, because of God's sovereign plan, Israel's setting aside — mark it now — is only, first of all, partial. It's only partial. Not all Jews are set aside, it's only partial. Secondly, it's only passing, it's only passing. It's only temporary. Thirdly, it is purposeful and that is the most marvelous part of the chapter. It is partial. It is passing. It is purposeful. It is partial, goes from verse 1 to 10. It is passing, from verse 11 to 25. It is purposeful, from 26 to 36. So the theme of the chapter is very clear, Israel will be restored, Israel will receive fully the promises and that's why the chapter ends with praise in verses 33 to 36. Their setting aside is only partial, not all of them; only passing, not permanent; and purposeful, in other words, it has purpose, it has a goal, it has an object, it has a reason. And it's just thrilling as we go through these things.

Alright, let's look at the first one tonight and see how far we move along. The first ten verses tell us that Israel's setting aside is only partial, only partial. That is, not all Jews are set aside. I'd be curious to know how many of you here tonight are Christians and you're Jewish. Put your hand up, just put your hand high. You can wave it if you want, that's great. Put it up again, let me see. You're a Christian, you're Jewish. That's great, that's good. Now, I don't know how many there are, sure, we're thankful, great. But I would guess maybe 40 or so people or more. And in our whole church family I don't know how many there would be. Now I just tell you that to let you know that God hasn't cancelled His promises to all Jews. Because we have some here who have entered into the covenant, who have entered into the fullness of Messiah. And that's the kind of thing I want you to see as we look at this passage. It is only partial. And you could ask for a raising of hands in any generation from the time of Christ until the coming of Christ in His Second Coming and at any point in time you're going to find some Jewish converts, some Jewish converts, some who have embraced the Savior, some who believe the truth. And that's precisely Paul's argument in verses 1 to 10. And he gives us three indications that the setting aside of Israel is only partial, three.

Number one is the writer. And just a little outline so you can remember it: The writer, the remnant and the revelation. Number one is the writer. And the whole argument begins with that. Look at verse 1 again, "I say then," and the "I say then" takes us back to verse 21. Israel is a disobedient, a contrary

people. They were a foolish nation. And so the question is, alright, if they were a disobedient, contrary people, foolish nation, unbelieving, rejected Christ, rejected the Messiah, "I say then, does God, therefore, cast away His people? God forbid," he says, *m genoito*, the strongest negative in the Greek language, no, no, no, no way, utterly impossible, can't happen, ridiculous, no, no, no, no. Even though Israel followed Gentile patterns of evil, even though Israel indulged in lusts and evil passions, even though Israel desired not Christ but desired His death, that does not nullify the promise of God, no, no, not at all.

Now looking at that opening phrase, I'm just kind of intrigued by it a moment, if I might indulge your thinking. Has God cast away His people? No, no, no, no, it cannot be so. It could never become that, not in any way. The very question itself sort of inherent in it implies that "no" answer. Because the question is couched in terms that are very much reminiscent of Old Testament passages which affirm that God never will cast away His people. Let me show you what I mean. Look at 1 Samuel chapter 12 verse 22; 1 Samuel 12:22. It says this, "For the Lord will not forsake His people." Why? “For His great name’s sake, because it hath pleased the Lord to make you His people." I mean, why would God be pleased to make you His people and then cancel out that which pleased Him? No, it can't happen. The Lord will not forsake His people.

Look at Psalm 94, Psalm 94, and these would be familiar passages to the Jew. Psalm 94, I think it's verse 14, "For the Lord will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance." He will not forsake His people. And there we have two passages to indicate it.

Back up to the eighty-ninth Psalm, verse 31, "If they break My statutes and keep not My commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with the rod and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, even though I may chasten them, My loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor allow My faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor will I alter” that is, change in any way, “the thing that is gone out of My lips. Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David, his seed shall endure forever and his throne as the sun before Me, it shall be established forever like the moon and as a faithful witness in heaven." Now it's pretty obvious from that that God's not going to change. He will not cast His people away. He will not forsake His people. That is the repeated affirmation of Old Testament teaching. And you find it in so many, many places, I wish we had time to fully develop all of the places. But in Psalm 106, it would be just a classic illustration. You start... Well you can start all the way back in verse 13. He starts to talk about Israel. They soon forget His works, they wait not for His counsel, they lust exceedingly in the wilderness, they tested God in the desert. And he gave them their request but sent leanness unto their soul, they envied Moses in the camp and Aaron, the saint of the Lord, the earth opened and swallowed up Dathan and covered the company of Abiram. In other words, he's giving the history of their defection and apostasy. A fire

was kindled in their company, a flame burned up the wicked, they made a calf at Horeb and worshiped the melted image, they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eats grass. They forgot God their Savior who had done great things in Egypt, wondrous works in the land of Ham, and awesome things by the Red Sea. Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses, His chosen, stood before Him in the breach, to turn away His wrath lest He should destroy them. Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believe not His Word, but murmured in their tents and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord. This is just a chronicle of their history, he goes on and on. Verse 39, "They were defiled with their works, they played the harlot in their doings, therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against His people," verse 40, "insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance, he gave them into the hand of the nations and they that hated them ruled over them. Their enemies also oppressed them, they were brought into subjection under their hand," talking about captivity. "Many times did he deliver them but they provoked him with their counsel and were brought low for their iniquity," constant sinning, no matter what God did.

Now watch this, verse 44, "Nevertheless," it's incredible “He regarded their affliction when he heard their cry and He remembered for them his (What?) his covenant." That's the key. "He remembered His covenant and repented according to the multitude of His mercies. He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives. Save us, O Lord, our God, and gather us," and so forth. When they cried, He heard. Why? He remembered His covenant. Now that was the confidence of the Old Testament saint, that what God promised, He would do. And the terminology used in these passages is sort of gathered up by Paul when he says, "Hath God cast away His people whom He foreknew?" It's almost couched in terms so familiar to a Jew that he would have to say, "Well ridiculous, obviously not," because those are the very terms used to affirm that that in fact is exactly what God says He would never do.

You go to Nehemiah chapter 9 and it says, “They were disobedient, they rebelled against God, they cast His law behind their backs, they slew the prophets who testified against them to turn them to Thee and they wrought great provocations, therefore Thou deliveredst them into the hands of their enemies who vexed them and in the time of their trouble when they cried to Thee, Thou heardest them from heaven and according to Thy manifold mercies Thou gavest them saviors who saved them” out of the land of their enemies “out of the hand of their enemies. After that they had rest, they did evil again.” No matter how many times God rescued them, they did evil again. “Therefore leftest Thou them in the hand of their enemy so that they had the dominion over them, yet when they returned and cried unto Thee, Thou heardest them from heaven and many times didst Thou deliver them according to Thy mercies and testifiest against them that Thou mightest bring them again unto Thy law. Yet they dealt proudly and hearkened not unto Thy commandments but sinned against Thine ordinances, which if a man do he shall live in them, and withdrew the shoulder and hardened their neck and wouldn't hear. Yet many years didst Thou forebear them and testified against them by

Thy Spirit and the prophets, yet they would not listen; therefore gavest Thou them into the hand of the people of the lands."

Now listen to this, "Nevertheless, for Thy great mercy's sake Thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them, for Thou art a gracious and merciful God." That's the whole point. And the next verse says, "Who keeps covenants." So important.

And I could take you to Jeremiah 30 and it's exactly the same thing there. I could take you to Jeremiah 31. I could take you to Isaiah 14. It's the same thing. Will God cast away His people? No, no, no, no. Will He chasten them? Yes, yes, yes. But not utterly cast them out.

So, Paul begins then — back to Romans 11:1 - with an emphatic answer that God has not at all cancelled His promises to Israel. And the present dispensation, beloved, and this is such an important thing because it's so debated today, the present dispensation is a time period in which there is a partial and a passing and a purposeful setting aside of the nation Israel, not a total and permanent and judgmental, final setting aside.

Now how does he prove that it's partial? His first point in verses 1 to 10: Number one, the writer himself, the writer himself. This is great. Has God cast away His people? No, no, no, "For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." That's point number one. If God cast away His people, I wouldn't be here. I wouldn't have entered into covenant blessing. I wouldn't have come to salvation. If God had condemned all Jews because of the nation's rejection of Jesus Christ, which by the way was not the whole nation, but the majority part and the leaders. There were many Jews in Israel who did believe, so it wasn't the full nation. But let's say that God accepted it as a whole national rejection, if indeed He did that, does that mean that every Jew who ever lives past that point is cut off from the covenant? Are all Jews, then, victims of a comprehensive, sweeping totality of judgment that encompasses every Jewish offspring? No, it can't be. You say why? Because Paul is saved, Paul is transformed. Paul belongs to God. Paul is come to the Messiah. Paul is in the kingdom and Paul is an Israelite.

And what is this saying? That it is saying this, that though contemporarily the nation rejects, not all do because I don't. I'm an Israelite. The unbelief of Israel, their rejection of Christ, their hatred of the gospel was never more demonstrated than by Paul, was it? I mean, if there ever was a hater of the gospel, it was him; he killed Christians. He was a blasphemer. He was injurious. He tells about it in 1 Timothy 1. He persecuted Christians. He breathed... He was breathing out slaughter, it says in the eighth chapter of Acts. And here was this man who was so venomous and so hateful toward

Christians, and he was Jewish. And you would say to yourself, "Boy, there's one Jew that ought to be cut off. There's one Jew that ought never to be able to enter into the covenant. There's a Christ-rejecting, Christ-hating, Christian-hating, Christian-killing Jew who should never be allowed into the covenant. But he says, "I am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham and the tribe of Benjamin," and he was the leading spokesman for the Christian faith. Now what that tells me is that you could be a Christ- rejecting, Christ-hating, God-rejecting, Christ-denying Jew and still be saved. Which is to say God does not set...has not set aside all Jews, not at all. He is living proof that as the promises didn't include all Jews in salvation, chapter 9 said, nor does the punishment exclude all Jews from salvation, chapter 11. Paul wouldn't teach his own damnation. Paul wouldn't spend his entire life preaching a gospel that he was shut out from, would he? It would be kind of a stupid way to waste your life and he certainly wouldn't rejoice in it. No, he is the first living proof that the setting aside of Israel in judgment is only partial, partial.

Now notice what he says in regard to himself, he says, "I am an Israelite." That means that he belongs to the nation connected to the land. He is an Israelite. He is a genuine one. He is not a proselyte. He further says, "I am an Israelite, not by choice but by birth. I come from the seed of Abraham, by blood." He is a real Jew. He is a real son of the land inherited by birth. In fact, in 2 Corinthians 11:22 he says, "Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I." So he was a true Jew. And not only that, he was of the tribe of Benjamin. And the two tribes that had the most dignity and the most honor and the most prestige because they never defected were the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The other ten tribes that went north defected and went apostate. Judah and Benjamin were very respected tribes. One writer, I think it's Hodge, Charles Hodge, says they were the chief representatives of the theocratic people. So to belong to the tribe of Benjamin was indeed a distinct honor. And the most prominent person that had ever belonged to the tribe of Benjamin was Israel's first king, whose name was Saul. And here was Paul, he was named after this most famous of all Benjamites, Saul the first king of Israel. So his pedigree really was very, very together. He was a man who was truly of the land, of the seed of Abraham, of one of the respected tribes, and even named after the most famous of all of the Benjamites, Saul the king.

Now he recites something of these credentials also in Philippians chapter 3. Listen to what he says. "I was circumcised the eighth day and that according to the law. I was of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law a Pharisee, concerning zeal, persecuting the church, touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." Boy, this is amazing. Now if there ought to be any Jew shut out, it ought to be him. I mean, if God says I'm going to judge that whole nation and wipe them out of any covenant fulfillment, it certainly ought to come to a guy who is that Jewish and that committed to it and that anti-Christ and anti-Christian. But, Philippians goes on, "All those things that were gained to me, those I counted (What?) loss." Actually he says in verse 8, "I count them manure that I might gain Christ." Hmm.

So the first proof that Israel setting aside is only partial is Paul himself. The second proof. The writer, number one. The remnant number two, the remnant number two. Verse 2: "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew." He has not. He makes an emphatic statement. He asked the question, answered it in verse 1, now makes an emphatic statement, very much the same terminology. He has not *apthe*, that is to push away from oneself, to repudiate, to reject. He has not done that. Not at all. He has not cast away His people. Oh, that's such a, such a good statement, His people, His people. It's in verse 1, it's in verse 2, the idea of possession. They are a people of His own. They are a people that He called, a people that He predetermined to love, a people that He chose and He has not changed His mind. And that "His people" has reference, please, to the nation of Israel. It is not referring to saved Jews as such, it is not referring to saved Gentiles. It's referring to the nation of Israel. But to Israel, chapter 10 verse 21, to Israel, he says, “All day long have I stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.” Then verse 1, "I say then, has God cast away His people?" The people in verse 1 have to be the same people in 10:21 and that people is the nation defined in 10:21 as Israel. Has God cast away Israel? We're not talking just about regenerate Jews. We're not talking about regenerate Gentiles. We're talking about the nation of Israel, which is the theme of this passage. The reference is to the nation, and such amillennial writers as John Murray affirm very strongly that this is the only possible interpretation in the context. This is not talking about spiritual Israel, saved Jews and Gentiles who are the spiritual children of Abraham, or even saved Jews, it is talking about the nation. It is in reference to national identity. So God has not set that nation apart except partially, partially.

Now I want you please to notice also in verse 2, "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew,” whom He foreknew. Now what does it mean, "foreknew"? Basically means a predetermination to love, a predetermination to love. To foreknow, we think of it as knowing something before it happens. That's not the idea of the term *proginsk*. That is not the essence of it. It doesn't mean to know something before it happens, it means to determine it. It's a guaranteeing word, just like the word "His." I love that. He has not cast away. He doesn't say Israel; He says "His people," because that ties them in with Him, "Whom He foreknew He predetermined to love."

If you understand the biblical use of the word "know" it helps. The Old Testament, the Bible tells us that a man knew his wife and she had a child. It's the knowing of intimacy, it's the knowing of a close relationship, it's the knowing of love. In Amos 3:2, "Israel only have I known." It doesn't mean the only people in the world God knew about were the Jews, no. Israel only have I predetermined to love with intimacy. Israel only have I joined with Me in a very intimate bond. It's, for example, the same thing with Joseph and Mary when the people saw she was with child, and Joseph had not known her. Or it says in the Bible that a person never knew a man. It doesn't mean she never knew a man existed or

didn't know the name of one, it meant she never had a relationship with one, an intimacy of love.

And that is the essence of it. It is a predetermined love relationship. The word "know" carries the love relationship. The word "fore" or "pre" means a predetermined love relationship. So God has not pushed away or rejected His own called people, whom He predetermined to love. And you can go back to Deuteronomy where he says, "I have predetermined to set My love upon you." So it is a foreordination to a unique love relationship. His foreknowledge is the foreknowledge of His own will. It is the same as a determination. And if you still have a question about that, look at Acts 2:23, Acts 2:23. It says here, regarding Jesus Christ, as Peter preaches to the Jews in Jerusalem after the death and resurrection of Christ, he preaches about Jesus of Nazareth in verse 22. Then look what he says in verse 23, very important. "Him," that is Jesus of Nazareth, "being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God you have taken and by wicked hands crucified and slain." He says you took Him with your wicked hands, you crucified Him, and slew Him. But He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Now foreknowledge in that context can only mean preordination, predetermination. "Determinate counsel" and "foreknowledge of God" are equal. They're equivalent statements. "Determinate counsel," that is that God already determined what would happen, and "foreknowledge of God," the same thing. So, on the basis of the application of Acts 2:23 we know that it means foreordination. That is what foreknowledge means, God predetermines to set His love.

It's the same thing as in 1 Peter 1, "With precious blood of Christ, the Lamb without blemish, without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world." God had already set it in motion. And you read it in Romans 8. Do you remember that verse 29? "Whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate." Whom He predetermined to love, He predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ. So it is a predetermination.

Now listen very carefully. There are several things in the Bible, several groups of people, several individuals, in fact, within those that were preordained, or foreordained for the love of God: Israel, Mine elect, Israel on whom God predetermined to set His love; the church, on whom God predetermined to set His love, and Christ, who is called Mine elect. Those three, Christ, the church and Israel, are spoken of in Scripture as the elect of God, predetermined before the foundation of the world to the task and the role within the framework of God's love to which they were ultimately called. So when God chose Israel, it was a predetermined love relationship.

In Deuteronomy 7 verse 6, "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people who are on the face of the earth."

And then it says this, "The Lord did not set His love on you," stop at that point. That's another way of saying what He just said. You're a holy people, the Lord has chosen you, and He did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than anybody else. It equates His choosing with His setting love on them. So foreknowing is setting love on someone as an act of sovereign choice on the part of God. It's a great thought but that is exactly what God has done.

Now if God has predetermined before the foundation of the world to set His love upon this people Israel, He's not going to change His mind. He did not love them to damn them. He did not call them and elect them and choose them and draw them to Himself for ultimate cancelling of His promises. Israel is the only nation which God ever foreknew. “Israel only have I known,” Amos 3:2. And Israel is not cast off.

You say, "What's the proof?" The proof is the remnant. In every period of the history of Israel, as I said at the very beginning of the service when I had people raise their hands, there's always a remnant of saved Jews, always, always. And he goes on to illustrate that in verse 2, "Know ye not what the Scripture says about Elijah, how he made intercession to God against Israel saying, Lord, they have killed the prophets and dug down altars and I am left alone." See, he's got a martyr complex. I'm the only one left. And what was God's answer to him in verse 4? You're wrong. ”I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." It never got down to one; there were seven thousand in the apostate time of Elijah. God always has His remnant. So then, says verse 5, "At this present time there is also a remnant, according to the election of grace." And that's the second indication that the setting aside of Israel is only partial. It's only partial. It's only partial.

Now I want to go into detail in that whole thing about Elijah ‘cause it's absolutely fabulous. You remember the story of Elijah and Jezebel and how all that happened? But I don't have the time. So come back next week, alright? And we'll get into that. But let me just summarize as we draw to a conclusion.

Does God keep His word? Absolutely. He's going to keep His word to Israel? That's right. His character is at stake, His integrity is at stake and He's the God who cannot lie so there's no way He cannot fulfill His word. He set His love upon those people, predetermined to set His love upon those people to bring them fulfillment in the covenants that He made and God is a God who keeps covenants. And He may have to chasten and He may have to rebuke and He may have to discipline, but ultimately He is going to mercifully, graciously demonstrate the fulfillment of all His promises. And that is why there's a preservation of Jews to this day, until the time can come when God will fulfill the

literal promises to the literal nation of Israel in their land with their kingdom and their king in the glory promised to them. And that's what Paul is saying. And even though they have been disobedient to the point where they denied their own Messiah, God will yet bring them back. There will come a day when, Zechariah says, they will look on Him whom they have pierced and mourn for Him as only son, and then the Lord will open up a fountain of cleansing for the...for the people of Israel and their salvation will come. There will come a time, says Matthew, when they will look upon Him and they will say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," and they will call Him their Messiah and they will enter into the glory promised to them.

Has God cast away His people? No. And the first proof of it is Paul himself, who is a Jew of all Jews, a Christ-rejecting Jew, a Christian-killing Jew, and God didn't even reject him but wonderfully, graciously, mercifully redeemed him. And the second proof that it's only partial is not only Paul but the remnant. And he says there in verse 5, "Even at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace." And there was, wasn't there? The first church ever established in the early years was the church at Jerusalem and it was large, three thousand on the day of Pentecost, five thousand more the next time they preached and probably twenty thousand, four chapters into the book of Acts. And pretty soon they filled all Jerusalem with their doctrine and there was a great Jewish church in the city of Jerusalem, of Jews who were that remnant who believed in the Messiah. And God always has His remnant. So we know then that the setting aside of the nation Israel is only partial.

Now we're going to learn more about the doctrine of remnant next time and we're also going to get into that third point. He proves it by the writer, by the remnant, and then by the revelation itself. And that will take us down to verse 10. So be here next week for a great time. Let's bow in prayer.

Our gracious Father, so marvelous is it to know that You are a God who keeps Your promise. O what confidence because we have put all of our trust in You, all of our hope, all of our confidence for time and eternity. Lord, we... We believe that if we trust the Lord Jesus Christ and confess Him as Lord and believe in our hearts that You've raised Him from the dead we'll be saved from sin and death and hell. We believe that. And we live in the light of that belief because we believe You can be trusted. Your Word says that and we believe it. And we have heard in Your Word that we are to obey, and if we obey we'll be blessed, and we obey. And we believe we'll be blessed. And we believe the day will come when we enter into kingdom glory, when we see Jesus face to face and become like Him, when we enter into the glories of eternal heaven. We believe that. And we believe it because Your Word says it. And throughout all of history You are a God who has always kept Your covenant and never wavered one bit. And not one word that You have given has ever been violated. Not one jot or tittle shall be removed from the law until all is fulfilled.

And so we trust You, Lord, we trust You with our time, we trust You with our lives. We could do so many things, Lord, but we...we obey Your Word. And sometimes it's hard and sometimes it's sacrificial but we do it because we believe that You've told us that is right. And that honors You. And that brings about blessing for us and glory for Yourself. And we have given You our lives that we may enter into Your eternal heaven and we believe You'll take us there. We believe You're coming for Your church. We believe You will give us Your Holy Spirit to empower us for any task, whether it be teaching or evangelizing, whether it be working in our family or outside of it. We believe that because Your Word says that. Our whole lives are predicated on the fact that You are a trustworthy God who keeps His Word. And, Lord, we would be shattered to find that You did not keep it with Israel, but that those unconditional covenants made to that people have been cancelled. God forbid, can't happen.

And so, Lord, we wait and watch Israel for the fulfilling of Your covenant ultimately. We see the unfolding even in this day of the centrality of that little nation, that present people of God being readied for the time of their kingdom. And we know You're a God who keeps His Word. If there were no nation Israel left, if there were no Jews, we would have reason to wonder, but there are and so we thank You and we trust You, not only for their history but for ours as well. With confidence and thanksgiving, in Christ's name. Amen.

Available online at: http://www.gty.org
COPYRIGHT (C) 2015 Grace to You
You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright).