

**ROMANS 11:1-5**

After stating that "...to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people," Romans 10:21, Paul wants to clear up any misconceptions that might arise concerning God's plan for Israel. The prideful, arrogant, rejection of God's word and plan for Israel by many (dealt with later in chapter 11) is a stain on Christianity! In these first five verses Paul categorically states that God is not through with His plan for Israel, giving two examples of why this is true. First, consider what some teach about Israel.

Justin Martyr, another church father wrote in the second century:

"Christians had become 'the true spiritual Israel' because the Jews had despised and forsaken the law of God and God's holy covenant and had hardened their hearts, refusing to see and perceive the will of God given to them through the prophets." *Anti-Semitism and Early Christianity*, Lee Martin McDonald, 1993, page 223

Bruce K. Waltke, for instance, declares that the New Testament teaches the "hard fact that national Israel and its law have been permanently replaced by the church and the New Covenant.

He also states, "The Jewish *nation* no longer has a place as the special people of God; that place has been taken by the Christian community which fulfills God's purpose for Israel"

Bruce K. Waltke, "Kingdom Promises as Spiritual," in *Continuity and Discontinuity* 274.

"On the one hand, in a positive sense it presupposes that the church springs from, is born out of Israel; on the other hand, the church takes the place of Israel as the historical people of God."

Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. John Richard De Witt. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975)

"According to this teaching [supersessionism], God chose the Jewish people after the fall of Adam in order to prepare the world for the coming of Jesus Christ, the Savior. After Christ came, however, the special role of the Jewish people came to an end and its place was taken by the church, the new Israel."

Richard Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996) 1-2.

"Israel would no longer be the people of God and would be *replaced* by a people that would accept the Messiah and His message of the kingdom of God."

Hans K. LaRondelle, *The Israel of God in Prophecy: Principles of Prophetic Interpretation* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1983) 101 (emphasis in the original).

Loraine Boettner writes, "It may seem harsh to say that 'God is done with the Jews.' But the fact of the matter is that He is through with them as a unified national group having anything more to do with the evangelization of the world. That mission has been taken from them and given to the Christian Church (Matt. 21:43)."

Loraine Boettner, *The Millennium* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1957) pg. 89-90.

A former member of Bethlehem Baptist Church for 8 years, served on the worship team, and a Jewish Christian, who met with John Piper about his beliefs about Israel said: "Ultimately I believe John Piper's replacement theology comes from his veneration of the saints of the Reformation and to later Christian scholars who devised the theological paradigm called "Covenant Theology." This system of theology, not unlike theoretical Kabbalism, claims that it understands God's purposes and actions — even before the creation of the universe itself. The idea of "covenant" (תּוּבָרַת), in particular, is more a philosophical construct than a genuinely Biblical doctrine, inductively discovered... Indeed, the 'great covenants' of Covenant Theology (i.e., 'Works' and 'Grace') are not historically rooted interventions into the human experience made by the LORD God of Israel at all, but rather are theological fictions devised by those who claim to give a meta-narrative account for 'God, the universe, and everything in it.'

I may write about this more at a later time, but Christians should be aware that Dr. Piper's "Presbyterian-Baptist" theology is decidedly not traditional Evangelicalism, but rather a nuanced version of Reformed theology that has its roots in anti-Semitic European theological traditions." <http://www.h4cblog.com/john-piper-and-replacement-theology>

**LARGEST REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY DENOMINATIONS**

The Roman Catholic Church - The United Methodist Church - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) - The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod - African Methodist Episcopal Church - The Episcopal Church - Churches of Christ, Corsicana, Texas - Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America - African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church - United Church of Christ - Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, Joplin, Mo. - Jehovah's Witnesses

Approximately 100 Million American Church Members adhere to the creeds of replacement theology.... and of course ISLAM is a world religion that is founded on the idea of supercessionism... [Source of list: Bill Koenig]

Supersessionist hermeneutics assumes that:

(1) the New Testament has interpretive priority over the Old Testament; (2) national Israel functioned as a type of the New Testament church; and (3) the New Testament indicates that Old Testament prophecies regarding national Israel are being fulfilled with the church.

NEW COVENANT THEOLOGY AND THE OLD TESTAMENT COVENANTS, William D. Barrick  
Professor of Old Testament, Master's Seminary, TMSJ 18/1 (Fall 2007) 165-180

**1 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.**

Paul's response to God casting off Israel is an emphatic **NO! IT CAN'T POSSIBLY HAPPEN! CERTAINLY NOT! LET IT NOT BE! GOD FORBID!** There is probably no stronger statement about Israel's security in the plan of God than this statement. And there are many strong statements in the Bible.

Jeremiah 31:35-37

- 35 Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name:  
36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.  
37 Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 33:19-26

- 19 And the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, saying,  
20 Thus saith the LORD; If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season;  
21 Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers.  
22 As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.  
23 Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,  
24 Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the LORD hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them.  
25 Thus saith the LORD; If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth;  
26 Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.

C.E.B Cranfield, writer and theologian, is an example of a believer in replacement theology who let the scripture change his mind. He said:

"And I confess with shame to having also myself used in print on more than one occasion this language of the replacement of Israel by the Church."

C.E.B. Cranfield, [A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans](#), page 448

His study of Romans 9-11 change his mind:

"It is only where the church persists in refusing to learn this message, where it secretly - perhaps unconsciously! - believes that its own existence is based on human achievement, and so fails to understand God's mercy to itself, that it is unable to believe in God's mercy for still unbelieving Israel, and so entertains the ugly and unscriptural notion that God has cast off His people Israel and simply replaced it by the Christian Church. These three chapters [Romans 9-11] emphatically forbid us to speak of the Church as having once and for all taken the place of the Jewish people."

C.E.B. Cranfield, [A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans](#), page 448

"I reiterate, however, that the doctrines deduced by these opposing schools of eschatology [literal vs allegorical], the one being Judeo-centric, the other Judeo-eccentric, have profound ethical consequences. On the one hand, Judeo-centricity, as represented by Bonar and Spurgeon, exults in the national seed of Abraham and its promised, fulfilled, territorial glory through sovereign covenant grace. Consequently, it esteems that seed, according to Paul's exhortation in Rom 11:18-20, because it remains "loved because of their ancestors" (Rom 11:28). On the other hand, Judeo-eccentricity, as represented by Augustine and Calvin, dismisses the national seed of Abraham beyond the perimeter of the kingdom of God, except for the condescending inclusion of "a remnant chosen by grace" (Rom 11:5), that has no ultimate, divine, national, territorial validity. Augustine and Calvin were at best tolerant of the Jews; Bonar and Spurgeon were deeply affectionate toward the Jews. Which of these parties approximates the attitude of Paul toward his "kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom 9:3, ESV), and what is it about the doctrine they embrace that produces their kindly disposition? The answers to these questions are abundantly clear and are especially significant with regard to the prosperity of Jewish evangelism in this present age."

Barry Horner, [Future Israel - Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must Be Challenged](#)

"Paul is not raising a question to cause one to doubt God's faithfulness to fulfill His covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He is driving home the fact that God did not cast Israel away permanently. Israel is God's elect nation. He foreknew them. He chose them, and they are His. The fact that most of the nation rejected the Messiah is not proof that God is finished with Israel although sadly this is what is taught by many, especially since about 100AD and rejuvenated in 400AD by Augustine's teaching in the City of God that the church had replaced Israel. At stake is whether God can be trusted to keep His unconditional promises to that nation." [https://www.preceptaustin.org/index.php/romans\\_111-4](https://www.preceptaustin.org/index.php/romans_111-4)

Paul's first reason God has not cast away Israel is a statement about himself.

**For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.**

He appeals to the fact that although he is an Apostle, a member of the body of Messiah - Ephesians 2:19-22; 3:1, 6, 16-21 - he is still part of Israel (**an Israelite**) and Jewish (**of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin**).

- 2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,**  
**3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.**  
**4 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.**

Like the 3 times of repetition in Jeremiah 31 and 33, Paul for a second time says God has not cast away the Jewish people.

As in the first verse, **cast away** is a very strong word - *απωθεομαι* ap-o-theh'-om-ahee - that means "o push off, figuratively, to reject:--cast away, put away (from), thrust away (from)."

His foreknowing them speaks to understanding their rebellion, their rejection of the Messiah, but also their promised re-gathering and blessing in the land of Israel.

Paul now refers to Elijah and the confrontation with the prophets of Baal, I Kings 18-19, when afterward Elijah thought he was the only one who followed Jehovah but there were actually 7,000, 1 Kings 19:18.

God has always had a remnant of Jewish people who have believed the truth and followed God.

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

Here is a unique position for Jewish believers in Jesus.

1. They are members of the church
2. They are the remnant (the true, believing part) of the nation of Israel - still a part of the nation.

Consider Isaiah 66:5 "Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

"**a remnant according to the election** [chosen] **of grace**" has nothing to do with a pre-determined individual's salvation.

"As to the scope of the passage, it will become obvious that it is all about God's dealings with men and nations historically and dispensationally, and is *not* about individual salvation and destiny beyond the grave. Now that is the absolutely vital fact to remember in reading the problem verses of the chapters. John Calvin is wrong when he reads into these verses election either to salvation or to damnation in the eternal sense. That is not their scope. They belong only to a divine economy of history....Let us further say that God could never create any man either to be wicked or to be eternally damned. 'Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid!' In Romans 9 we simply must not read an after-death significance into what is solely historical."

J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore the Book*, Vol. VI. Pp. 88-89

"To identify "his people," [11:1] we have to go back to the previous verse in the previous chapter:

"But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people," Romans 10:21.

Thus Paul is referring to ethnic Israel. The entire context makes it clear that he's talking about those of the physical seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

So Paul answers the concern that God has "cast off" ethnic Israel, whom He chose corporately. In the Old Testament, God Himself referred to all of Israel, believers and unbelievers, as "My people" (Exodus 3:7; 5:1; 6:3-8; 2 Samuel 3:18; 7:11; 1 Kings 8:16; Isaiah 1:2-3). Paul reminds his readers of what Elijah said to the LORD, and what His reply was: "I have left for myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal." God was letting Elijah know, that even though most of Israel had rejected Him, there was still a "remnant" of believers, whom God had received. So Paul is reassuring his readers, that God has not "cast off" ethnic Israel, that He is still saving individual Jews. As Paul states here, in his day there was still a "remnant" of true believers among the children of ethnic Israel, and Paul was one of them.

So here Paul is referring to believing Jews who had received Christ as their Messiah, as Lord and Savior. God chose to save them because they came to Him via His Son. They were the "remnant" of Jewish believers. Just as the Old Testament always had a "remnant" of believers, it was true in Paul's day and in our day too, and throughout history." Steve Sewell, *Commentary on Romans 11*

"It's important to note that Romans 11:5 does not explain how God decides which ethnic Israelites will be in the remnant. It simply explains that those who are in the remnant do not deserve their chosen status (i.e. they are 'chosen by grace'). Verse 6 then explains that they are not chosen due to their works. Paul wants to teach his ethnic Israelite audience against the idea that ethnic Israelites can achieve righteousness by their own works (see Romans 9:31-32). If this were achievable, those who would be successful (if any!) would deserve their chosen status, and therefore would not be chosen 'by grace'. Paul therefore rules out works as being the determining factor in who is chosen. He doesn't explain in this verse what the determining factor is, only that they are chosen 'by grace', i.e. their chosenness is not deserved but is a gift."

*Romans 11:1-6 – Has God rejected ethnic Israelites?*, March 1, 2017, posted by kingswoodhart