

## **The Work of Christ (cont.) - The King & His Kingdom (cont.)**

Review from last week (Romans 11):

- In times of old, ethnic Israel always had a remnant – an elect of God who were chosen by grace to preserve in the faith as God worked through them to fulfill the promise given to the patriarchs
- Now (in Paul's time), Israel's remnant is applied to those who are faithful to Christ. However, they are also now included with Gentiles who are grafted into the elect of God. This is the fulfilling of the promise to Abraham, that he might be the father of many nations and that all the nations of the earth would be blessed through his seed.
- This grafting in of Gentiles is coupled with the hardening of Jewish hearts. This current partial hardening of Israel (not full, there were still remnant Christians in Israel...particularly thought to be true in the Roman church Paul is writing to) is "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in." This is all seen through the lens of the sovereignty of God, and reminds us of how He previously hardened Pharaoh's heart to bring forth Israel as His people. God's hardening and softening of hearts at different points in time in order to preserve an elect (remnant), that will be both Jew and Gentile (as promised to the patriarchs), is God's right as God. See Romans 9.
- Paul's hope is that in this process, Israel will become jealous for a relationship with God through Christ their King, and thus find salvation.

Pick back up from last week with verse 16:

- V. 16-22 – Ultimately Christ is the root (the true Israel, seed of Abraham) and we are the branches. However, the patriarchs are in view here as the firstfruits of the promise.
  - What has been consecrated to God has produced good results. And the nation of Israel is "beloved for the sake of their forefathers." (See v.28)
  - Arrogance will produce the hardness of heart in Gentiles that is the current snare for Paul's fellow Jews. Grace, and not works of the self, should keep them humble. They are not better than the Jews
- V.23 - Jews still need to come to the kingdom through faith in Christ!
- V.24 – the ultimate tree (Kingdom of God, fulfillment of Israel and the promise to Abraham) is a tree that has branches of ethnic Jews and ethnic Gentiles. Spiritual Israel is the fulfillment of Israel (grafted back into their own tree) and the Kingdom of God that Israel was supposed to represent (ethnic typology spiritually fulfilled)
- V.25-27 – Play on words with "partial" and "all Israel"
  - This hardening of ethnic Israel, until the time is completed for the Gentiles to come into the Kingdom promise (through the righteousness of Christ and not ceremonial law), still leaves the full and final consummation of Israel (as promised to Abraham) only partially realized.
  - When the full number of Jews and the full number of Gentiles are completed in Christ, then all Israel (spiritually) will finally be saved (Israel realized in full, the promise to Abraham attained)!
  - Does this suggest once God has finished his work with the Gentiles, there will be a time when Jews as a whole recognize their Messiah and a mass entrance of ethnic Israel will come to Christ?
    - Some believe this will occur in the millennium, where Christ will reign as the Jewish King and they will recognize Him

- However, it could also mean that the fullness of Israel (as a whole) is continuing to grow as more and more hearts are being softened (Jew and Gentile can now be grafted in), and this process will continue until the fullness of the Gentiles is complete, at which time God's purposes will be fulfilled in both and the end will come (see Matt 24:14).
  - A special season strictly for the Jews again is not mentioned.
  - And verse like vv.13, 23 suggest the time is still now for them to be saved by the gospel (more to come in v.31)
  - It seems more like the flow here is 1) there was a season for the Jews to partake of the Kingdom, 2) now there is a season for the Gentiles that coincides with a hardening of the Jews, 3) there will be a time when the hardening of the Jews for the sake of the Gentiles will cease, and 4) Israel will be fully realized when all the elect (Jew and Gentile) are brought into belief.
- We should never assume that the season for all hearts to be softened is not yet here.
  - Many Jews come to Christ even today (Messianic Jews).
  - Remember Paul sees the return of Christ as a reality that could come at any time. If it were a special millennium season after the return of Christ in the clouds, why the warning in verse 23 not to “continue in unbelief”??
- V.28-29 - Ethic Israel is loved on account of the promise to their forefathers – who received the irrevocable call to bring forth the PROMISED SEED that would allow them collectively through Abraham to be THE FATHER OF MANY NATIONS .
  - Gentiles are grafted into Israel, not Israel into the nations. (branches into the root)
  - So Israel is realized and fulfilled through faith in Christ.
  - CHURCH (of which Jews and Gentile are a part in Christ) IS THEREFORE THE FULFILLMENT OF ISRAEL & PROMISES TO PATRIARCHS
    - See Rom 9:6, Gal 6:16-church is Israel, Gal 3:16, 28, Eph 2:15 (new man)
- V. 30-31 – Gentiles receive mercy to be grafted in NOW (v.30). When do Jews come in through grace? NOW (v.31 – some manuscripts omit this “now”, but the more well attested have it, as do translations that are widely viewed as most accurate).
  - In verse 25, the "partial hardening until the fullness of Gentiles has come in" signifies how/when all Israel (Jew & Gentile) will be completed.
  - But, as the epistle to the Hebrews says, “Today” is the day of salvation (the day to not be “hardened” as in the past). See Hebrews 3:14-19!

#### Pre-millennial Dispensational theology -

- Israel is God's chosen people on earth, Church is God's heavenly people. Millennium is time period where Jesus will come as He was promised and expected to Israel, and usher in the millennium where Jews will get second chance.
  - No sense of unity in Christ, and doesn't fit vv.13, 23, 31. Also doesn't coincide with Jesus' parables regarding His return and separating wheat/tares, discarding all those who rejected King's son, & Luke 3:8
  - Fails to see the Church (Body of Christ - Jew and Gentile) as the fulfillment of promise to patriarchs. (again Gal 6:16)

The Personhood of God, pt 11 – The Work of Christ (The King and His Kingdom – cont.)

- This theology sees promises not yet fulfilled to Israel (like land) will then be cemented forever. Fails to see typology of something greater fulfilled in NT
  - OT: Land=separate people; Temple = place of sacrifices
  - Do these line up with NT? NO!
- God works differently during different dispensation's (grace, works, Jew, Gentile, gifts of Spirit for Pentecost only, etc.)
  - NO! Abrahamic and Davidic covenants were always faith. The Mosaic was the working out of the people leading up to the completion of the Abrahamic promise
  - People of the Spirit are still people of the Spirit (more later)
- Jews will be saved on the basis of law of Moses (works) irrespective of cross. Church was God's backup plan since Jews rejected Messiah.
  - What does this make the cross, but a little blip in the valley of OT mountain promises.
  - The cross is not a backup plan for Israel's disbelief