

Sermon Reflections

“...To Give You a Future and a Hope” • Romans 11

Summary: Similar to God’s promises to Israel, believers in Christ have a future and a hope.

1. God has a remnant (vv. 1–10)

- The Bible often mentions hope we have in Christ. How does the Bible use the word “hope” differently than we typically do in casual conversation? What is the relationship between God’s promises to His people and their hope? How can you make your hope more scriptural?
- In 11:3–4, Paul describes God’s comforting response to Elijah’s despair. Of what was Elijah despairing? How was his perspective incomplete and incorrect? How did God’s comfort realign his perspective to give him hope? How can we apply Elijah’s example to our life today?

2. Gentiles have been grafted into the root (vv. 11–24)

- Of what does Paul warn Gentile believers in 11:17–22? Why would Gentiles be tempted to have such an attitude? How does God’s grafting “Gentile branches” into the root serve His overall purposes for redemption of all peoples in the present era of redemption? How about in the future? Thinking ahead to the eternal state in the New Heavens and New Earth, what will be the final result of God’s working in this way through redemption history? Knowing some of the intricacies of God’s working in history to redeem individuals such as you, how does this impact your relationship with Him? How does it impact your ongoing sanctification?

3. Jews and Gentiles are saved according to God’s promises (vv. 25–36)

- In 11:25 we see that Israel was partially hardened. Thinking about other passages in Scripture, what did the hardening of Israel look like? Is this hardening something that could come on Gentile unbelievers? How about Gentile believers? Does it make you uncomfortable that God hardened Israel? If so, why, and is it ok to be uncomfortable with God's plan for Israel? If not, why doesn't it make you uncomfortable? In either case, if an unbeliever challenges your hope in God (1 Peter 3:15) by asking why God would harden His covenant people Israel, how would you respond such that your hope would still be vindicated?
- 11:33 lists three characteristics of God—riches, wisdom, and knowledge—on display in the salvation of all His elect peoples—Jew and Gentile. How are each of these characteristics shown in Romans 11?
- In 11:34 we see quotations/allusions from the books of Job 36:22–23 and Isaiah 40:13. Looking at Job 36, what does it teach us about to what extent and by what standard we should evaluate God’s workings in salvation? As well, looking at Isaiah 40:9–31, how does understanding our lowly position before God give us comfort in His redemptive purposes?