

Romans 11:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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,

Analysis

God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew—the verb *proegnō* (προέγνω, "foreknew") denotes God's electing love from before creation, not mere prescience. This foreknowledge grounds Israel's security in God's eternal decree, not their performance. Paul then appeals to Scripture (1 Kings 19:10-14), citing Elijah's intercession against Israel (kata τοῦ Ἰσραήλ). The Greek preposition *kata* can mean "against," showing Elijah's despair had turned into accusation.

The rhetorical question *ouk oidate* (οὐκ οἶδατε, **Wot ye not**) assumes the Roman believers know the Elijah narrative but haven't applied it correctly. Elijah's isolation felt total—he believed he alone remained faithful. Paul will show (v. 4) that God's perspective differed radically from the prophet's. This pattern of a faithful remnant amid national apostasy becomes paradigmatic for understanding first-century Israel.

Historical Context

Elijah's crisis occurred during Ahab's reign (870s BC) when Baal worship dominated Israel under Jezebel's influence. The prophet's depression after Mount Carmel (1 Kings 19) led him to believe the entire nation had apostatized. Paul uses this historical precedent to interpret his own era.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What is the significance of God's 'foreknowledge' being the basis for His covenant faithfulness rather than Israel's merit?
2. How does Elijah's misperception of Israel's spiritual state mirror potential misunderstandings about first-century Judaism?
3. When have you felt like Elijah—isolated in faithfulness—and what does God's preservation of a remnant teach you?

Interlinear Text

οὐκ	ἀπόσαςτο	ὁ	θεῶ	τὸν	λαὸν	αὐτοῦ	ὃν	προέγνω	
not	cast away	G3588	God	G3588	people	G846	which	he foreknew	
G3756	G683		G2316		G2992		G3739	G4267	
ἢ	οὐκ	οἶδατε	ἐν	Ἡλίᾳ	τί	λέγων,	ἡ	γραφὴ	ὥς
G2228	not	Wot ye	of	Elias	what	saith	G3588	the scripture	how
	G3756	G1492	G1722	G2243	G5101	G3004		G1124	G5613
ἐντυγχάνει	τῷ	θεῶ	κατὰ	τοῦ	Ἰσραήλ	λέγων,			
he maketh intercession	G3588	God	against	G3588	Israel	saith			
G1793		G2316	G2596		G2474	G3004			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 94:14 (Parallel theme): For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.

Acts 3:17 (Parallel theme): And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.

Romans 9:23 (Parallel theme): And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

Genesis 44:15 (Parallel theme): And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?

1 Peter 1:2 (References God): Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

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