

REFORMED CHURCH BELLVILLE: SUNDAY 22 AUGUST 2010: HOLY COMMUNION

Sing before (standing): Psalm 19:5

Let us commence this meeting with God by declaring openly to one another and to God:

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Beloved grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, through the mighty working of God the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Song of praise: Scripture Versification 5-4:1, 2, 5, 6 [Romans 8: 33-39]

Confession of faith: Apostolic

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into Hell, the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, a holy universal Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting

Amen.

After the reading of the Law we confess our guilt and pray for forgiveness and a new life before God with Psalm 34:7

Law

Psalm: 34:7

Prayer:

- **Doxology**
- **Worship**
- **Confession of sins**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Gratitude**
- **Prayer for the need of the congregation for the church, the authorities and the sinful world and appeal to God's promises.**
- **General prayer**
- **Enlightenment from the Holy Spirit for the sake of the ministry of the Word.**

Amen

Psalm 119:3

Scripture reading: Romans 11

Scripture text: Romans 11:7

What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded. (Romans 11:7)

This text of Scripture summarises the work of the Lord Jesus Christ:

- He died for the salvation and redemption of all the chosen.
- But He also died for the hardening of those who are reckless towards the faith.

Israel wanted to work for their salvation. In this letter to the Romans they were corrected.

- Their zeal towards their salvation rested in their disbelief.
- Their zeal was aimed in a completely wrong direction.
- No human can bend the justness of God.

We all bow to the justness of God.

The Romans saw the Jewish people in their relationship to God.

- They saw some serving the Lord with all their hearts.
- Others they saw as crestfallen.
- And others they saw whilst they were wayward and hardened.

Not all in the congregation of Rome were Jewish, some were also converted Romans. Now they wanted to determine what conclusion to come to from what they saw amongst the children of Israel.

Then in the way God put the matter in this chapter it became clear.

- The salvation rested in God's free choice and not with the zeal of the Israelites.
- But this did not mean that the Lord now rejected the Israelites and only granted His mercy to the heathen.
- Hereby the Lord prevented the heathen from falsely becoming arrogant and despising the Jews.

Verse 2 supplies the confirmation we are seeking:

God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew.

We also fall under these people of God who were previously known. This we read in Ephesians 1:4:

just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

(Ephesians 1:4)

- Therefore to us this passage of text is so important to us as well.
- God will never push us aside.
- He never breaks His covenant.
- He also never retracts His promises.

The Bible sets the example of Eliah.

- There was a time, when he considered himself to be the only believer remaining, that he had to flee for his life.
- Then the Lord answered him that there were still seven thousand men left amongst the people who did not bow towards Baal.

Come, let us now apply our Scripture text to this portion recorded here.

- All the children of Israel were looking for their salvation in the service of Baal.
- There they did not find any salvation.

- The Lord hardened the house of the king as well as a number of the children – this all in aid so that God could punish them.
- But the Lord preserved the seven thousand chosen. He said:
"I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal."
(Romans 11:4)

Our verse of Scripture:

Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.
(Romans 11:7)

Then we continue to verse 5 where we are brought from Eliah to the present:

Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.
(Romans 11:5)

Here the Holy Spirit puts us in the bright light of God's mercy.

- Because we are of the chosen, we may join in the sacrament of the Holy Communion –
- and may commemorate that the mercy of God's predestination has gone, through the Lord Jesus Christ, into fulfilment over us.

By this sacrament we thank the Father that we were not hardened but that we, in fact, were granted redemption in our Lord Jesus.

This passage strongly underlines our responsibilities.

- Israel did not, because their zeal was incorrect, find what they were seeking.
- Their complete attitude towards worshipping was not up to standard.
- They wanted to worldly attain their salvation – and thus, because they lost God, lost their salvation.

Therefore the Lord took revenge on them.

- Because they wanted to do things wrongly, He hardened them.
- He wanted to destroy them because they wanted to do differently to His will.

But the Lord does not only punish.

- He visited the chosen and worked life in their hearts.
 - Obedience
 - Thankfulness
 - Love for Him and each other.
- The chosen, because they do not worldly search for salvation, attained it.

Come join in this way the Table of Holy Communion.

- Seek everything that is good, where Christ is present: spiritually and with continued obedience to God and love for Him.
- Do it continually with zeal serving the Lord.
- Also do it from when you rise from this table till eternity.

Amen.

Prayer.

Psalm 98:2

Formulary

Psalm 23:3

To the table:

During Holy Communion: Psalm 116
Psalm 118

Closing prayer. Closing Psalm: 33:1

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

Amen

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Reformed Church Bellville
22 August 2010
Scripture Modern King James Version

Jeremiah 7:26 "Yet they did not obey Me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.

Jeremiah 17:23 "But they did not obey nor incline their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear nor receive instruction.

Jeremiah 19:15 "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will bring on this city and on all her towns all the doom that I have pronounced against it, because they have stiffened their necks that they might not hear My words.' "

Daniel 5:20 "But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him.

Mark 6:52 For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.

John 12:40 "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with their eyes, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them."

Act 19:9 But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

Romans 9:18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

Romans 11:7 What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

2 Corinthians 3:14 But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ.

Hebrews 3:8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,

Hebrews 3:13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Hebrews 3:15 while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

Hebrews 4:7 again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts."