*Northwest Bible Church – Nov. 14, 2004 – Worship Service – Alan Conner*

**Romans 11:2-6**

*Elijah and the Remnant*

**INTRO**
    Chapter eleven is all about Paul answering the question as to whether or not God has rejected His people Israel. Chapter 9-10 has not put the nation in a good light. They had the covenants, promises, etc. but were in rank unbelief. Why? God had not chosen to save them all, for even though the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea, "it is the remnant that will be saved" (9:27). The rest were disobedient and obstinate and refused to believe in, serve, or worship the Lord (10:21).
    So in 11:1 Paul asks the question "God has not rejected His people, has He?" and then gives an adamant denial, followed by his first piece of evidence, HIMSELF. Paul is a Jew and is saved which proves that God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew (the remnant).

    Now for evidence # 2. Paul, as is his custom, turns to Scripture to prove this principle of a "remnant" from the days of Elijah. See Sola Scriptura with Paul.

**I. THE REMNANT IN THE DAYS OF ELIJAH (11:2b-4).**

A. Baal worship in the OT.
    The worship of Baal extends back to the 14th century BC among the ancient Semitic peoples, the descendants of Shem, the oldest son of Biblical Noah. The word Baal means "master" or "owner". Baal is still principally thought of as a Canaanite fertility deity who controlled fertility among the crops, animals and mankind. Baal is also the weather god, specifically a rain god.

The religion of the god Baal was widely accepted among the ancient Jews, among both kings and ordinary people, and although it was put down at times, it was never permanently stamped out.

    B. The context of 1 Kings 18-19.
    Before Mt. Carmel, Elijah had prayed and it had not rained for 3 1/2 years. Baal, the rain god, wasn’t looking so good. Where was the rain? Thus, a showdown between Yahweh and Baal was inevitable. Who was in charge of the rain?

   The time was ripe, and Yahweh decided to send rain but not before he makes a monkey out of Baal
After Yahweh’s magnificent victory on top of Mt. Carmel and after Elijah slays the prophets of Baal, he hears that Jezebel wants to kill him so he flees to Beersheba, and then is directed by an angel to go to Mt. Sinai.

While there in a cave, the word of the Lord came to Elijah with this question, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Now he gives this answer to the Lord found in Romans 11:3.

    C. Elijah’s appeal to God (vv. 3-4).

        1) Elijah’s complaint (v. 3a). A "pleading" – an intense and fervent appeal to God.

            a) They have killed Your prophets ("with the sword" – 1 kngs. 19:10).

            b) They have torn down Your altars.

 2) Elijah’s complex (v. 3b).

     a) I alone am left. (not true)

     b) And they are seeking my life. (true)

 3) God’s response (v. 4).

     a) "I have kept for Myself"

     b) "7,000 men who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

**II. THE REMNANT IN THE DAYS OF PAUL (vv. 5-6).**

    "In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time"

    A. Remnant acc. to God’s gracious choice (v. 5).

    B. Election cannot involve works (v. 6).

    Sum: as in the days of Elijah, so in Paul’s day, God has not rejected His people, that is, His remnant whom He has chosen by sovereign grace.

**III. LESSONS FOR THE REMNANT TODAY.**
    Both Jewish and Gentile remnant today share this same characteristic, "they have not bowed the knee to Baal." What application can we make for the remnant today to help us not bow the knee to Baal?

1) Guard the home.
2) Guard our concept of God.
3) Avoid fleshly worship.
4) Don’t be carried away by numbers
5) Don’t be discouraged by opposition.
6) The battle is the Lord’s.