

Romans 11

Verses 1-6:

--Paul has established that God did not cast off Israel even in the greatest wickedness of their Old Testament days but has always promised a remnant. The question is: *Is it the same now?*

--Paul's answer is emphatically, *Yes!* He references Elijah—looking around and feeling alone which is a temptation for us as well—and shows that God's purposes had not been thwarted despite Israel's outward failures.

--This, unseen remnant, is what Israel will look like in the gospel age. This is what the apostles saw and learned themselves! Peter said in Acts:

Acts 15:11: *But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.*

--(6) This is again, not because of their works, but because of God's grace.

Galatians 2:21: *I did not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.*

Verses 7-10:

--Paul asks, ***What then?*** or *What is the outcome of all this?* Is Israel as a nation hopeless because they are blind and hard?

--The fact that a tiny remnant believed and a larger group hardened in anger against Christ and His followers was the very thing that they were seeing in their time. Each was predicted in the Word as Paul adds quotes from Isaiah and David (**Isa. 29:10 + Ps. 69:22**).

--The Jews had hardened themselves against the very Word of God! ***Matt. 13:10-17***

--Trapp, in his commentary on Romans mentions two historians who spoke of religious Jews after the destruction of Jerusalem admitting:

1) They would whisper over a dying friend: *"Believe in Jesus of Nazareth whom our rulers crucified; for He shall come again to judge thee at the last day."*

2) There was a secret practice among the Rabbis that they would save the blood of martyred Christians and anoint their dying friends, saying: *"If He that was promised in the law and prophets has already appeared, and that Jesus who was crucified were the true Messiah, let this blood of an innocent man, who died in the faith of Jesus, cleanse thee from sins, and be a means to further thy eternal happiness."*

Verses 11-15:

--Paul then asks, ***have they stumbled that they should fall?*** Or, fall once and for all? His answer is another emphatic, ***Certainly not!***

--Paul again, knows that this sentiment exists among the Gentiles and seeks to correct it.

--He points out that despite their national failure—already predicted in numerous Scriptures—God has sent the gospel into all the nations of the world.

John 4:23: *The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.*

Acts 13:46-48: *Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord commanded us: 'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.*

--The *riches* are not the modern prosperity gospel riches but spiritual and eternal riches. Riches in Christ Jesus.

--Paul was blessed in his personal calling from God to go to the Gentiles but he also loved that the Jews were seeing the spiritual life that they zealously desired in the Gentiles and were becoming jealous over it. This is still how many Jews are coming to the faith even today. *The exact opposite of those Hebrew roots movements that seek to draw men back to the flesh and the law!*

--Israel was given national blessing in God but the world was blessed with the riches of the gospel and eternal life, as Israel was set aside. If that was so, what will be the blessings and fruit of their finally coming to the fullness of God's plan for them? Way more!

--Part of it will literally be *life from the dead*.

See: Ez. 34:23-24; 37:24-25 (resurrected David); Daniel 12:1-3 (people delivered and resurrection from the dust of the earth); Matthew 19:28 (apostles in the regeneration on thrones): Revelation 20:4-6 (OT saints and Tribulation martyrs).

Verses 16-24:

--(16) Here Paul is going to continue his argument that God is not done with Israel and does so by referencing the ritual of firstfruits as in: **Numbers 15:17-21 + Leviticus 23:10-11.**

--In like manner, Christ has become our firstfruits.

1 Corinthians 15:23: *But each one in his order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.*

--(17-24) Paul then moves on, using the illustration of an olive tree and branches being grafted in. Remember, this is an illustration and not a lesson on farming or tree care.

--The Jews would recognize the olive tree as a picture of their nation: **(Ps. 52:8; Jer. 11:16).**

--Paul is speaking of God's work, beginning with the root—Abraham the man of faith—and the whole religious structure moving forward from which life flowed.

--These Jews and Gentiles were brought together by God *for mutual benefit!*

--The warning to those who felt they could in pride exclude one or the other was serious.

Notice that God's goodness is connected with *faith* and God's severity with *unbelief*.

--Being connected to the "religious superstructure" is not good enough. Do you have life?!

2 Corinthians 13:5: Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

--There is no doubt a personal warning here. When you are sailing through a bunch of shipwrecks—look well to your own sails and tackling!

--There is also a warning against anti-Semitism as well. The Jews' unbelief caused them to be broken off, not because the Gentiles were more important. And God could easily graft them back in.

Galatians 3:14: That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Verses 25-32:

--Here Paul wraps up God's plan to bring **mercy on all** as the fullness of the Gentiles and Jews comes to completion together.

--The **mystery** that Paul is speaking of—**16:25-27**—is again that of the gospel age of Jew and Gentile in one body called the church. They were unaware of the fact that Israel wouldn't have their restoration during the gospel dispensation.

*Morgan (The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans): *"Thus through this maintenance of a remnant God keeps His covenant with the fathers through the period of national rejection, but at last the nation as a whole will be restored. Unbelieving Israel has been rejected as a nation, in order that the outside world they failed to bless, may receive salvation. Through the accomplishment of that larger purpose at last blessing will return to Israel."**

--There will be no massive revival in Israel's future until this salvation that Paul speaks of here—which is promised in the OT as he quotes from **Isaiah 59:20-21**. In fact, Israel's future looks unstable until the anti-christ, who they accept, and are then persecuted by, and then once again miraculously delivered as an Egypt all over again.

--Then **The Deliverer will come out of Zion! And all Israel will be saved!**

--Now, this **Israel** of **26** must be the same national **Israel** of **25**. Therefore it must be either:

- 1) All national Israel.
- 2) All elect Israel.

--Saying all elect Israel will be saved does not do justice to the text and is needlessly redundant. Paul is not saying all saved Israel will be saved.

--Also, it is not much of a mystery to say all saved Israel will be saved.

--Paul is saying, at the end of this mysterious dispensation that the Jews did not see or expect (though it was spoken of in Scripture), that God will fulfill those Scriptures that are still in reference to national Israel—so that the Word of God is not broken (9:6)!

--I think that it is important to take note that there are always three Biblical references to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

- 1) His chosen people of Israel
- 2) His Bride the Church

3) The unbelieving nations who are to be judged

--So He will come from Zion—first heavenly (**Phil. 3:20; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 14:1**) and then earthly.

--When He comes the Jews will be gathered from all over the world and brought to Him in Jerusalem to His glory. (**Isa. 27:12-13; 43:5-7; 49:9-13; 17-23; 56:8; 62:10-12; 66:19-20; Ez. 34:11-31; 36:24-25; Mk. 13:27**)

--In that meeting they will be saved and cleansed (**Isa. 60:21-22; Jer. 31:35-37; Zech. 13-14**).

--Virtually all the Scriptures tied to Israel's salvation are also tied to their restoration and the fullness of God's promises to them *as a national people!*

--**(28-32)** This was basically Paul's life before the Lord. He knew it well.

--NT Jews thought that the Gentiles needed to be circumcised and become Jews to be saved. Now Gentiles think that Jews need to forget about their OT promises and just join the plan God has for the Gentiles. Both are wrong!

--God's plan isn't to wrong or be finished with anybody. Here is the end of God's plan: ***For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all!***

Verses 33-37:

--There is not much left to say about all of this!

--God's wisdom and knowledge and judgments and ways are seen in Him using the best means to bring about the best ending.

--This is the hand of God as seen in human history—and in our personal history. When the story is told in eternity—this is the story as it will be told.