**Romans 11**

**Verses 1-6:**

--**(1)** ***I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.***

--Does this new gospel dispensation cancel God's promises to the Jewish people? Did God choose the people of Israel to use them and now be done with them?

--Paul's own life established the fact that God did not castoff Israel. Even in the greatest wickedness of their Old Testament days, He always promised a remnant. Paul was evidence of the continual faithfulness of God to Israel.

--**(2-6)** ***God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel saying, "LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"? But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according the election of grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.***

--Paul references Elijah (who felt discouraged and alone while looking around and not seeing many other people faithful to God) and shows that God's purposes had not been thwarted despite Israel's outward failures.

--The unseen remnant is what Israel will look like in the gospel age. The apostles had to figure that out as well! Peter said:

***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.****

--Paul cannot help but repeat our salvation is never because of works, but because of God's grace. Even for the Israelites.

***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:**

--***What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded. Just as it is written: "God has given them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear, to this very day." And David says: "Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a recompense to them. Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see, and bow down their back always."***

--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 the larger group hardened their hearts in anger against Christ and His followers, was the very thing that the apostles were seeing. 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:**
--***I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, who much more their fullness!***

***For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them. For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?***

--Paul then asks, ***have they stumbled that they should fall?*** Or, fall once and for all?
--His answer is another emphatic, ***Certainly not!***
--Paul knows that a negative sentiment exists among the Gentiles and seeks to correct it. This section of Scripture should forever put to shame anyone who claims that the Church has replaced Israel once and for all. Paul says nothing of the sort!
--He points out that despite Israel's 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 blessings and fruit will come at the fullness of God's plan for Israel? 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).**

--This passage should be a constant humbling reminder to Gentile Christianity. God did not make Jews better than Gentiles, but neither did He make Gentiles better than Jews.

**Verses 16-24:**

--**(16)** ***For if the firstfruits is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.***

--Paul continues his argument that God is not done with Israel 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)** ***And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.***

***You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?***

--Paul moves on, using the illustration of an olive tree and branches. 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.
--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. Unbelief caused Israel to be broken off. They were not broken off because the Gentiles were more important. God could easily graft them back in.
--Gentiles have been ***grafted in among them (17)***, not *instead of them.* Paul is showing that God's ultimate work from the beginning included the Jews. They were first historically and will be a part of the end, whether Gentiles believe it or not.
***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:**
--***For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins."***

***Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable. For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.***
--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 after they accept the anti-christ, and are then persecuted by him. They come to some type of national understanding at that point and are again miraculously delivered, as in the time of Egypt all over again.

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

--Now, ***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 that 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!*

--Paul knew well that Jews were not favorable to the Gentiles now. Paul had been the chief sinning and persecuting Jew!

--Religious Jews thought 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 of God 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:**

--***Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?" For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.***

--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.