

Romans 11 - Israel's Relationship to God - Future

SUMMARY

- Chapter 11 primarily deals with the future of Israel, specifically:
 1. The restoration of Israel to their place as God's chosen people
 2. The salvation of the Jews at the end of the Tribulation
- vv. 1-2a - God has **not** cast away the Jews who are His chosen people - Rom. 11:25
 - "his people" - Israel as a physical nation, which includes all 12 tribes. - Deut. 7:6
 - While **we don't know** where all 12 tribes are today because of them being scattered all over the world, **God knows** where they are and will choose 12,000 from each tribe of Israel (144,000 total) in the Tribulation to be his witnesses. - Rev. 7:3-4 (sealed servants)
 - God has a perfect foreknowledge about what He is going to do and what man will do, but God does not override man's free will to bring it to pass.
- vv. 2b-3 - Elijah's intercessory prayer quoted from 1 Kings 19:10, 14
 - Notice Elijah's prayer is **against** (not for) Israel and is the only time in the Bible that intercessory prayer is **against** someone.
 - Paul is saying "don't you know how it was with Elijah" when he saw no remnant?
 - Elijah thought he was the only prophet left even after being told that Obadiah had saved 100 prophets from Jezebel when she "slew the prophets of the Lord" in 1 Kings 18:13.
 - When we focus on ourselves, we may think we are all alone and this leads us to self-pity.
- v. 4 - God's response to Elijah - Quote of 1 Kings 19:18
 - God reserved to Himself 7,000 men who had not given in to Baal worship.
 - "not bowed the knee to the image of Baal", is something they **did not do**, i.e. they were keeping the first commandment: Exodus 20:3 - Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
 - Doctrinally, the 7,000 not bowing the knee to Baal is a picture of a right relationship to God in the OT in that they 1) believed God and 2) obeyed His commandments.
 - The 7,000 were no doubt scattered throughout Israel so Elijah could not see them.
 - In the same way Bible believing Christians are scattered wherever God wants them to carry out His work today.
- v. 5 - Contrast of v. 4 showing Jewish election in the present time, the Church Age
 - There will be remnant of Jews saved in the Church Age based on receiving Jesus Christ by grace through faith. - Eph.2:8-9
 - A clear passage showing salvation during the Church Age is by grace and not by works.

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v. 6 - The Jews have a choice to make during the Church Age - *Their system of justification*

- 1) OT Law (*works*) => go to Hell 2) Receive Jesus by (*grace through faith*) => go to Heaven.
- Salvation is either by grace or by works, but it cannot be both (or some *mixture* of both).
- Prophetically, these verses point to the salvation of the Jews **during the Tribulation:**
 1. Worshipping the antichrist and receiving the mark of the beast automatically results in going to Hell.- Rev. 14:9-11
 2. A person is saved by faith in Jesus, not taking the mark of the beast, and keeping God's commandments. - Deut. 4:30; Rev. 13:10, 14:12, 12:17; Heb. 10:38-39; 1 John 3:23-24

v. 7 - Three different groups of Israelites are identified:

1. **Israel as a nation** - Nationally, Israel was/is seeking to establish their own righteousness required for salvation without Jesus Christ - Rom. 10:1-4
2. **Israel as "the election"** - These *individual Jews* who received the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ by faith. - Rom. 3:21-22
3. **The "rest (of Israel) were blinded"** - Those *individual Jews* who rejected Jesus Christ were blinded to the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - Not that they did not have a chance to be saved, this is referring to all who willfully reject the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - We know "the Jews require a sign" (Ex. 4:1-9, 29-31, 7:3; Ps. 78:43; 1 Cor. 1:22; Acts 2:43, 5:12, 2 Cor. 12:12; John 4:48, 20:30-31; Heb. 2:4; Mark 16:15-20), yet the vast majority of the Jews ***shut their eyes*** to what God has done for them in Jesus Christ. - John 12:37-40

v. 8 - Spiritual blindness is a result of sin and unbelief and is ultimately what God does ***in response*** to what man does, in this case the Jews - Isa. 29:9-14

- Quote of Is. 29:10 - In this verse, God identifies exactly whose eyes He has closed after the word "***eyes:***" => prophets, rulers, seers - So after the apostles, Israel had no other prophets (and still has none "***unto this day***") and gets none until Rev. 7 & 11 during the Tribulation!
- In Isa. 29:11-12 - Not only has God blinded the Jewish Rabbis themselves, but has also closed up the scriptures to them, therefore the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ ***is not taught*** by the Jewish leaders today, so their congregations are also blind to the truth. - Matt. 15:14
- This is why it is so important to respond and obey the calling of God immediately.

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vv. 9-10 - Quote of Psalm 69:22-23 (which follows immediately after the Jews' rejection of Jesus Christ when He was on the cross).

- Then in Psalm 69:24-28 God (through David) reveals Israel's sin and goes into a fierce and violent prayer of vengeance against the nation of Israel who has rejected Jesus Christ.
- A table is a place for nourishment, council, instruction, and fellowship.
- God takes something that should have been for the Jews' benefit (the table), and made it into something that would curse and hurt them (snare, trap, stumblingblock, and a recompense).
- But didn't Jesus pray, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" in Luke 23:34? Yes He did, but that prayer was not for the nation of Israel (as the prayer of Psalm 69:24-28), but for those individuals at the cross.
- Heb. 4:12 - The word of God and the Holy Spirit can bring conviction of sin and salvation to your soul; however **if rejected**, it will bring spiritual blindness and damn your soul. It depends on **you!**
- Rejecting God and the scriptures leads to deeper and deeper spiritual darkness and blindness.
- Cf. Rom. 11:10 with Psalm 69:23 - "bow down their back always" = "make their loins continually to shake"; this likely means that God is going to cause the Jews' foundational beliefs (back/loins) to slip or **shake** or falter as they **bow down** to (yield to or worship) the false teachings of their false spiritual leaders.

v. 11 - What kind of fall are the Jews experiencing right now? - Rom. 11:1

- This verse means: "Are the Jews as a nation experiencing a **permanent** falling away from God's grace and salvation forever?" The answer is emphatically NO, "**God forbid!**"
- The Jews are experiencing a **temporary** fall (setting aside) during the Church Age and God as a result is giving the Gentiles a chance to be saved. - v. 25
- God is also using the Church Age as a time to provoke the Jews to jealousy.
- The Jews cannot understand God saving a bunch of heathen Gentile dogs like us and then God giving us Christians many physical as well as spiritual blessings, including the opportunity to read, study, and understand the scriptures, which the Jews don't understand.
- This also infuriates the Jews and provokes them to jealousy (just as God intends for it to do!)

v. 12 - The Gentiles are the beneficiaries of the temporary setting aside of the Jews

- God has given both physical and spiritual riches to the Gentiles through the Body of Christ.
- But even greater blessings will occur when the Lord restores the Jews.
- The restoration of the Jews will culminate after the 2nd Advent when Jesus establishes and reigns from His throne in Jerusalem during the Millennium.

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- The Millennium will be a literal, physical, Jewish reign with Jesus as the King for 1000 years! - Read Isaiah 11 and 12
 - And that time will be eclipsed only by Eternity Future after the earth is renovated by fire and the New Heaven and the New Earth comes into existence and Paradise is once again and forevermore restored, WITHOUT the possibility of sin ever entering in again. - 2 Pet. 3:4-13 cf. Isa. 65:17-25
- vv. 13-14 - Paul's primary ministry is to the Gentiles - Acts 9:15; 22:21; 26:17
- The 12 apostles and Jesus Christ Himself were sent to the Jews. - Matt 10:5-6; 15:24; Rom. 15:8
 - Paul brought attention to the fact that he was ministering to and trying to get as many Gentiles saved as possible *for the purpose* of provoking the Jews to envy and jealousy that some of the Jews might get saved. - Rom. 9:3; 1 Cor. 9:16-23
- v. 15 - Similar to v. 12, we see the Gentiles benefit from the temporary setting aside of the Jews and the coming (future) restoration of the Jews (Note: "life from the dead". - Ezek. 37:1-14; Isaiah 26:19)
- Israel did not exist as a nation from A.D. 70 until 1948.
 - But during those 1878 years, Israel kept their identity as a people, including their same language and religion...that's a miracle of God and proves Israel is God's chosen people.
 - The temporary casting away of the Jews has allowed millions from every nation on earth to hear the Gospel and believe on Jesus Christ and get saved.
 - A great day is coming when God will restore, bless, and fulfill all the OT promises to the nation of Israel. - Ezek. 36:24-28; Acts 2:16-21 (which is a fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32)
- v. 16 - **Context of vv. 16-24**: God uses the analogy of an olive tree to represent Jews and Gentiles as *groups* of people (not individual salvation)
- God counted the firstfruit holy and it was brought into the tabernacle and set aside for the priests.
 - Next, we see a tree (an olive v.17) that is holy, which is made up of holy roots and holy branches, signifying the nation of Israel, **not the Church**.
- v. 17 - God breaks off *some* of the branches of the tree, **but not all**
- First we must note that Gentile believers **do not replace** and take over God's promises to the nation of Israel. "Church Replacement" theology is false doctrine.
 - The branches (these are the *natural* branches) broken off **represent the Jews** who rejected Jesus Christ as their Messiah and Saviour (note reason in v. 20 => **unbelief**)

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- Then God grafted in Gentile believers (limbs) “a wild olive tree”, which are put into the good olive tree by (v. 20) **faith in Jesus Christ**.
- Being grafted in allows the Gentile believers to partake “with them” (the Jews) of the root (Jesus Christ) and the fatness (rich blessings / abundant life) of the olive tree. - John 10:10
- Jesus Christ is the foundation of **both**: 1) Prophecy Program 2) Mystery Program. - Acts 3:21 cf. Rom. 16:25 (Note that both verses end with “**since the world began**”; one was “**made known**” and one was “**kept secret**”.)

vv. 18-19 - Gentile believers' relationship to the Jews - Rom. 12:3

- The tendency of Gentile believers is to become highminded (v. 20) and conceited (v. 25).
- Gentile believers are not to boast against to the natural branches that were broken off. - Rom. 3:27
- There is nothing glorious about unbelievers (Jew or Gentile for that matter) going to hell.
- Why? Because in a tree the roots do not exist because of the branches, the branches exist because of the root. Destroy the roots and you'll destroy the tree, but not vice-versa.
- Application: Christianity for the Gentiles was established through the Jews. How so? The entire Bible was written by the Jews, all the Apostles were Jews, Jesus in His manhood was a Jew, and “salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22b). No wonder God blesses those who bless Israel and curses those who curse Israel. - Gen. 12:3
- The whole theme of the Bible is Jesus as King and His **Jewish** Kingdom.
- We should love and respect the Jewish people; we should also witness to and pray for them as well as support missionaries who are trying to reach the Jews with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

v. 20 - Gentile believers stand by faith alone - 2 Cor. 1:24; Rom. 5:1-2; Col. 2:5-7

- “Well” means “yes” or “truly”.
- Gentile believers are admonished “**but fear**”, why? - v. 21

v. 21 - Gentile believers (**as a group**) are given a warning to “take heed”

- This verse is not about individual Gentiles losing their salvation.
- If God is willing to cast off His own chosen people, the Jews, what makes us think God will not set aside the Gentiles when He again starts dealing with the Jews.
- God doesn't owe the Gentiles one thing more than He's already given, that is the opportunity for salvation through Jesus Christ and the scriptures telling us how to get saved by grace through faith alone in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

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v. 22 - There are two sides to God (good/severe; love/jealous-Ex. 34:14; light/consuming fire-Heb. 12:29; holy/wrath-John 3:36)

- God has a positive and loving side to those that trust His Son and a negative and condemning side to those that reject his Son.
- God loves righteousness and hates evil, just as there is Heaven and Hell.
- God gives eternal life but also casts out unbelievers into hell fire. - Mark 9:42-48; Matt. 13:41-42; 47-50
- God is dealing here with (“thee”) the Gentile believers as a whole, not individual salvation.
- God will keep on dealing with Gentile nations as long as they continue to follow God.
- No revival will come until and unless **Christians repent** of our worldly ways and seek God with our whole heart. - Matt. 15:8
- This verse makes it easy to see that judgment is coming to America, because as a nation, including many believers, have turned their backs on God and His Book.

v. 23 - How will God graff in the Jews again?

- They must believe on Jesus Christ as their Messiah and Saviour.
- **Picture of salvation repentance:** It is a changing of their mind in that they turn **from** abiding in unbelief **to** believing on the Jesus Christ alone for salvation.
- Exactly the same way a person gets saved today in the Church Age. - Acts 26:20

v. 24 - How fitting for the Jew to be grafted back into the good olive tree

- God is saying that if, contrary to nature, He is able to graff those limbs that are from a wild olive tree (i.e. the Gentile believers v. 17) into the good olive, how much more able and fitting is it to graff the natural branches (Jewish believers) back into the good olive tree.
- This is not teaching that all Jews **that ever lived** are ultimately going to be saved, they must be believers according to v. 23 and during the Tribulation the Bible says they must have faith in Jesus Christ and also obey God's commandments. (See v. 6 for references on salvation in the Tribulation.)

v. 25 - Don't be ignorant of the mystery of God's relationship to the Jews

- Ignorance in thinking that God 1) is through dealing with Israel and 2) has given the church the OT promises he made to Israel will make you highminded (v. 20) and conceited.
- Israel is spiritually blind right now, **as a nation**, but not totally (notice v. 17 - “some” and v. 25 - “in part”). Some Jews are being saved right now during the Church Age.
- The “fulness of the Gentiles” is nearing completion. - cf. the word “fulness” in v. 12 and its definition in v. 15.

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- After the last soul is saved in the Church Age, the Church (Body of Christ) will be raptured out. - 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-57
 - Will there be any Gentiles saved during the Tribulation? Yes! - Rev. 7:9-17
- v. 26-27 - Quote of Isaiah 59:20-21
- God will then deal directly with the Jews under a New Covenant - Heb. 8:6-13; Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:24-35
 - At the end of the Tribulation, when Jesus returns at the 2nd Advent, all **surviving** Jews at that time will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him as their Saviour. - Zech. 12:9-14
 - Israel will be purged during the Tribulation. - Ezek. 20:37-38
 - If "all Israel" meant every Jew who ever lived will be saved at the 2nd Advent, why was Paul so burdened about his "kinsmen according to the flesh" in Rom. 9:3 and "brethren" in Rom 10:1 if they were all going to be saved anyway? Also why is it necessary to witness to Jews today if all Jews will be saved at the 2nd Advent anyway?
 - Unbelieving Jews do go to Hell. - Num. 16:20-35; Luke 16:19-24; Matt. 23:15
 - Jesus told Nicodemus (a Jew) in John 3:7 "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."
 - Israel as a nation will again be put in their rightful place above the nations, but their national sins are not taken away until the second coming of Christ when they repent of their unbelief (v. 23) and believe on Jesus Christ as their Messiah and Saviour.
 - Under the New Covenant with Israel, God "shall take away their sins". Jesus Christ paid for all of their sins at the cross of Calvary, and he will remember them no more. - Heb. 10:16-17
- vv. 28-32 - Context is God's relationship to the Jews right now during the Church Age
- v. 28 - Concerns "the gospel" relating to the Jews and "the election" of the Jews as a nation
- Jews (or anyone for that matter) who reject the gospel of Jesus Christ are enemies of God.
 - Jews consider Christians their enemies because they associate all Christianity with Catholicism and the persecution they suffered at the hands of Hitler during WW-II. (NOTE: All of Hitler's henchmen that inflicted the terrible persecution on the Jews were confirmed Roman Catholics and of course the Catholics profess themselves as the only true Christian church.)
 - God's election (choosing) of the Jewish nation are the beloved of God "for the fathers' sakes"; that is, in spite of all the rejection of Jesus Christ among Jews

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today, God loves them for the sake of national patriarchs, e.g. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Joseph, etc.

- God remembers the promises He made to these fathers of Israel and He loves the Jews today and will keep all those promises he made to them.
- Now if God loves the nation of Israel, we ought to also love the Jews as well. Don't ever get involved in Jew-bashing or blaming the Jews for the problems in the world today. It's wrong and God will curse you for doing so, individually and as a nation. - Gen 12:3
- God has not prospered America because we are great capitalists or so intelligent, He has prospered America largely because we have historically supported the nation of Israel.

v. 29 - God will never change His mind (repent) concerning His calling out the nation of Israel as His **chosen people** and the OT promises He gave them. - Deut. 7:6; 14:2

- God is also not going to repent of His giving gifts/promises to Israel. - Rom. 9:4
- While the doctrinal application in this verse applies to Israel as a nation, the practical application for Christians today is that each believer has a specific calling and purpose in this life and has been given gifts from the Holy Spirit to fulfill that calling. These spiritual callings can be into full-time ministry or through whatever secular job or vocation God has given you.
- What you do with your calling and gifts is based on your obedience and surrender to God.
- SIDE LESSON ON REPENTANCE: The Bible says God repented (28x) or refused to repent (9x), therefore repentance **DOES NOT NECESSARILY** always have to do with sin: Examples: Jer. 18:8-10; 20:16; 26:19
- Repentance as a change of mind. - Matt. 21:28-30; Acts 28:1-6
- In Jonah 8:1-10, when sinners “**turn every one from his evil way**” (v. 8), God clearly defines this as “**works**”! (v. 10)
- So why do **nearly all** the Bible preachers, teachers, and gospel tracts tell us we must turn from our sin as a prerequisite in order get saved? **THAT IS WORKS FOR SALVATION!!** - Gal. 1:6-12, 2:16, 3:26; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 3:28, 6:23; 4:5, 5:1, 5:8; 10:9-10; Titus 3:5-7; John 3:16

vv. 30-32 - God is merciful to all.

- Through the Jews unbelief, all nations have now obtained mercy and are given the opportunity to get saved through trusting Jesus Christ.
- God sees all people as being in bondage under sin and unbelief, and in need of Jesus as Saviour.

v. 33-36 - A list of things that man cannot completely understand about God. God is here reflecting on all the things He has said in chapters 9-11 concerning the nation of Israel and its relationship to God.

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v. 33 - God is so far above man that it is impossible to compare the two.

- God's "wisdom and knowledge" are inexhaustible and too deep to fully understand.
- God's "judgments" are "unsearchable", i.e. as they are only revealed to us by the Holy Spirit.
- God's "ways are past finding out". - Isaiah 55:8-9 Here are four examples:
 1. 2 Cor. 9:15 - Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.
 2. Ephes. 3:8 - Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;
 3. Philip. 4:7 - And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
 4. 1 Peter 1:8 - Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

v. 34 - Context of this verse is in the sense of being able to instruct God, not that we cannot have the mind of Christ in the sense of being able to understand His will for our lives or how He wants us to conduct ourselves as believers. - 1 Cor. 2:9-16

- God is perfectly righteous and has a perfect and holy mind and has no need to seek counsel from anybody for anything!
- God knows all things that have ever happened or will ever happen concerning the entire universe...nobody can fully understand a mind like that!
- But believers can study to understand that which God reveals to us through His word and through the Holy Spirit. - John 14:26
- We as believers need to saturate ourselves with the scriptures so that we can think more like God as we grow in our Christian walk. Example: How we treat the Jews - Gen. 12:3

v. 35 - God has first given us everything we have. - James 1:17

- Acts 17:28a - "For in him we live, and move, and have our being;"
- Nobody ever gave God anything first, so it is impossible for God to be in debt to anyone. - Prov. 11:31
- Even the ability and power to get wealth is given to us by God. - Deut 8:18
- You cannot out-give God. - Luke 6:38
- Jesus said in Acts 20:35b - "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

v. 36 - Jesus Christ is preeminent (first) in all things, resulting in "glory for ever".- Col. 1:16-17; Psalm 115:1

- This verse refers to v. 33 and His riches, wisdom, knowledge, and judgments.
- God has placed all things under His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. - 1 Cor. 15:20-28
- Believers have a perfect salvation and go to Heaven because Jesus is preeminent. - Heb. 2:10