

Romans 11

1. God had not rejected the whole nation of Israel, only the unbelievers. Paul himself is a proof of this, he is a Jewish believer.

2-4. He had not rejected the spiritual remnant within Israel who He foreknew. This has always been true. In the days of Elijah there were seven thousand.

5-7. At that time, Paul says, it is still true. There is a remnant chosen by grace from among the majority who still relied upon their works. What the majority had sought in vain to obtain, the elect remnant had obtained through the gospel. The others were hardened.

8-10. This hardening of the nation had been prophesied by Moses, Isaiah and David in the Old Testament.

11-12. Does this hardening mean that there is no hope for those who have stumbled? Not at all. One of the results of Israel's rejection was that salvation had come to the Gentiles. Acts 13.44-48. And a further possible result will be to make the unsaved Jews envious seeing God blessing Gentiles and so they may think again.

So if their initial rejection meant blessing for the Gentile world, even greater blessing will come from their consequent restoration; that is the full number of remnant elect Israel.

13-14. Paul addresses the Gentile believers in the church at Rome appealing for their help in reaching unsaved Jews, in the hope of stirring up their envy resulting in the salvation of some of them. Paul clearly does not have in view here the restoration and mass conversion of the whole nation Israel. He is seeking the spiritual salvation of some of them through the gospel. The remnant.

15-17. The acceptance or the salvation of individual remnant Israel believers who had formerly with majority Israel rejected the gospel is likened to a resurrection from the dead. Similar to Gentiles dead in sins. Ephesians 2.4. After all Israel had been as a nation set apart for God under the Old covenant so these saved Jewish believers were in a sense returning to their roots from which they had been broken off because of their unbelief. Gentile believers with no attachment to the original root stock had been grafted in and become branches in true spiritual Israel.

18-19. Gentile believers are warned against boasting about their superior numbers in the church or of superiority in any way over Israel which as it were provided the root stock, Abraham, to which they are now attached.

20-21. Gentile believers are warned against boasting about their acceptance instead of those broken off. Remember they were broken off because of unbelief, you are accepted because of faith, you are dependent upon God's grace!

Don't be arrogant, be afraid. If God cut off natural branches because of unbelief He will not spare anyone who is unbelieving. True faith excludes all boasting.

22. Consider the kindness of God toward believers and the sternness of God toward unbelievers. Necessary to continue in His kindness. True faith will be proven by perseverance.

23. Individual Jews who come to faith are grafted into the one True Olive Tree.

24. If God grafts unnatural branches into The Olive Tree, He can certainly graft natural branches, Jewish believers.

25-27. These verses are crucial.

Up to this point Paul has been concerned about the salvation of individuals not races or nations.

9.24. "Even us, whom He called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles".

10.13. "Everyone, Jew or Gentile, who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved".

11.15. I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them.

Paul here warns the Gentile believers at Rome to be neither conceited because of their acceptance, nor anti Semitic despising the Jews. It is true that a partial hardening characterizes Israel but nevertheless all Israel, remnant believing Israel, will be saved. And this will happen throughout the whole gospel age as also the full number of elect Gentiles will come in, also in response to the gospel. A mass conversion of Israel at some time in the future does violence to the context of this passage.

The remnant being saved. See 9.6, 9.8, 9.24, 10.12, 11.1, 11.2, 11.5, 11.7, 11.14, 11.23, and 11.26.

An Old Testament quote indicates the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the new covenant of grace by which remnant Israel is saved.

All Israel will be saved, is a gospel expression.

28-32. Paul is still addressing Gentile believers at Rome.

God will save remnant Israel even though they are still part of hardened Israel, they are your enemies opposed to the gospel at present, but being loved and chosen on account of the promise to Abraham, and upon their conversion they will become your friends and fellow believers. Nothing can prevent the promise of God being fulfilled.

If a mass conversion of Israel was intended after the full number of Gentiles had come in, this passage would have no meaning for the Gentile believers at Rome.

For here we have again the interplay of Gentile and Jewish individual believers under the gospel.

Gentiles were disobedient; received mercy when Israel rejected the gospel; now they may receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you Gentiles.

Indeed we are all in the same predicament, we all need mercy. Those on whom God has mercy are all Jewish and Gentile believers. Rom 3.23-24, Rom. 10.12-13.

33-36. Paul gives all glory to God for His infinite wisdom.