

97. The Book of Romans 11:2-15

Paul's Epistle to the Romans

A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier

(7-30-25)

Find this week's Study Audio & Video [Here](#)

In our studies of the Book of Romans, we have entered into the fourth major section of the book of Romans:

I. Condemnation—Chapter 1:18-3:20

II. Justification—Chapters 3:21-5:21

III. Sanctification—Chapters 6-8

IV. Restoration (of Israel)—Chapters 9-11

Let me just say this one more time—as we come to Chapters 9-11, we come to a very misunderstood and misinterpreted section in the book of Romans. There are many who think that Romans 9-11 form an unrelated *parenthesis* to the rest of the book.

However, a careful study of Romans 9-11 reveals that—this section is not an *interruption* or a *parenthetical* detour at all—it is a necessary continuation of what Paul brought up to end Chapter 8—the eternal security of the believer.

Paul had argued in Romans 8 that the believer is chosen and secure in Christ and will never be separated from God (Romans 8:28-30, 38-39).

But someone might ask, “*What about the Jews? They were chosen by God, and yet now you tell us they are set aside, and God is building His church. Did God fail to keep His promises to Israel? And if that’s true, why should I put any confidence in the promises He’s given to me!??*”

In other words, the very character of God was at stake—if God was not faithful to Israel and the Jews, how do we know He will be faithful to us who are Christians in the Church (Body of Christ)? So, Paul set out in Romans 9-11 to focus his attention on Israel as a way to prove God’s promises to them hadn’t failed and neither will His promises to His Church fail.

A. Israel’s Past: Their Election by God—Chapters 9:1-29

B. Israel’s Present: Their Rejection of God—Chapters 9:30—10:21

C. Israel’s Future: Their Restoration to God—Chapters 11:1-36

Romans 11:1 (NKJV)

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.

Paul is essentially anticipating his readers were thinking, *“Has God cast away His people completely?”*

Or in other words, *“Has every single Israelite been cast away or disowned as His covenant people?”*—to which Paul responds, *“Certainly not!”*

The point is that although God has **“cast away”** His people Israel (verse 15)—this does not mean that He has rejected *all* of them—

Romans 9:6–7 (NKJV)

⁶ But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they *are* not all Israel who *are* of Israel, ⁷ nor *are they* all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, *“In Isaac your seed shall be called.”*

As we have already said, God’s promises (covenant) He made with Abraham didn’t include all his descendants (Ishmael was a son of Abraham, and Esau was a son of Isaac).

God’s promises were limited to the Messianic line (Abraham—Isaac—Jacob—Judah and down through Jesus)—but also when Jesus died on the cross it was expanded to include all who would believe in Messiah Jesus of both Jew and Gentile.

But with regard to God casting off the nation as a whole—Paul himself is proof that the casting away has not been complete and that God still has a plan for the nation of Israel and the Jewish people. And no doubt in Romans 11 Paul has in mind something God promised the Jewish people through the prophet Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 31:35-36 (NKJV)

³⁵ Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for a light by day, The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night...(The LORD of hosts *is* His name): ³⁶ "If those ordinances depart From before Me, says the LORD, *Then* the seed of Israel shall also cease From being a nation before Me forever."

In other words, God is saying, *“As long as the sun, the moon and the stars continue to shine in the heavens so will Israel continue to be a nation before Me.”*

After all Paul himself was living proof that God was still saving Jews—

Romans 11:1–4 (NKJV)

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. ² 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, ³ *“Lord, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life”*? ⁴ 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.”*

Romans 11:4–5 (NKJV)

⁴ 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.”* ⁵ **Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.**

What was true back then is still true today—God never leaves Himself without a witness. He always keeps for Himself a faithful remnant which He has chosen to use as special instruments of His grace—

Revelation 11:3 (NKJV)

³ And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

Right after the Rapture takes place there won't be any true believers in Jesus Christ left on the earth and since God never leaves Himself *without* a witness—He immediately sends two witnesses to the earth.

➤ *Why are there two witnesses?*

Because "*In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established*" (2 Corinthians 13:1).

Under the Mosaic Covenant, in the Law God commanded that no one could be put to death without the testimony of at least 2 or 3 witnesses.

Here in Revelation, God is about to execute the guilty, rebellious, sinners on earth—and so God sends the Two Witnesses.

The Two Witnesses will conduct their ministry during the *first* half of the Tribulation Period and will testify to the people of the world on behalf of God that the disasters occurring during the first half of the Tribulation are in fact—the judgments of God (Explain from Revelation 6:17).

They will warn the people of the world at that time that the most severe judgments are yet future (second half of the Tribulation Period) known as "the Great Tribulation". They will no doubt proclaim that after God's final outpouring of judgments (if people don't repent)—will lead to the final and eternal judgment—Hell (Lake of Fire).

Yet, at the same time, they will preach the gospel, calling people to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—and at least 144,000 Jews will be converted (no doubt millions more).

Romans 11:5–6 (NKJV)

⁵ Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

⁶ And if by grace, then *it is* no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if *it is* of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.

God doesn't choose this remnant on the basis of their *works*—but by His sovereign, electing grace.

Remember, this is not talking about God choosing individual people for salvation, but of God choosing a remnant from the nation of Israel to be a special instrument to glorify Himself through.

God can choose ('elect') nations to put in special places of blessing (as He did with Israel—Rom.9:4-5) to show forth His glory on the earth, but in the end only individuals can be saved, and then only by faith in Jesus Christ.

But just because God chose to put the nation of Israel in a special place of blessing to be a light to the rest of the world—didn't mean that every Jew in Israel was automatically saved and a part of the covenant God made with the Jewish people.

Paul dropped this '*bombshell*' on his Jewish readers back in Chapter 2 with this shocking statement:

Romans 2:28–29 (NKJV)

²⁸ For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, nor *is* circumcision that which *is* outward in the flesh; ²⁹ but *he is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God.

In other words, the promises that God gave to Abraham in Genesis that “*in him and in his Seed all the families of the earth would be blessed*”—was not a promise that was given to *all* the descendants of Abraham. (Romans 9:6)

There is a difference between ‘*ethnic Israel*’ and ‘*believing (spiritual) Israel*.’

Paul’s point here in Romans Chapter 11 is to prove that this special election of Israel (the faithful remnant) by God was not due to their good works but purely by His grace. These two principles (*grace* and *works*)—are mutually exclusive, “*A gift cannot be earned. What is free cannot be bought. What is unmerited cannot be deserved.*”

Fortunately, God’s choice was based on grace, not on works; otherwise—no one could ever have been chosen.

Romans 11:7 (NKJV)

⁷ **What then? Israel** [unbelieving ethnic Israel] **has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it** [‘spiritual’ or ‘believing’ Israel], **and the rest were blinded** [or ‘hardened’].

The conclusion that Paul presents is that—unbelieving Israel sought to be righteous through the works of the Law but failed to obtain it because they sought it through self-effort instead of through faith in the finished work of Christ. (Romans 10:3-4)

The remnant (believing Israel), chosen by God succeeded in obtaining righteousness through faith in the Lord Jesus—but the rest of the nation who refused to accept God’s gift of righteousness/salvation by faith, God has imposed upon them a ‘*judicial blindness*.’

Romans 11:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

Luke 19:41–42 (NKJV)

⁴¹ Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, ⁴² saying, “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things *that make* for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

Matthew 23:37-39 (NKJV)

³⁷ “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, **but you were not willing!** ³⁸ “See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ “for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ ”

J. Vernon McGee said,

“It is important to notice that they were hardened because they failed; they did not fail because they were hardened. A lot of folk get the cart before the horse—in fact, they get the horse in the cart, and it doesn’t belong there!”

Romans 11:8 (NKJV)

⁸ 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."*

"spirit of stupor"—means, *"an attitude of deadness towards spiritual things."*

Romans 10:21 (NKJV)

²¹ But to Israel he says: "All day long I have stretched out My hands To a disobedient and contrary people."

Matthew 13:13-14 (NKJV)

¹³ "Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. ¹⁴ "And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive;

Romans 11:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹ And David says: *"Let their table become a snare and a trap, A stumbling block and a recompense to them."* ¹⁰ *Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see, And bow down their back always."*

Romans 11:9–10 is a quote from Psalm 69:22–23—a psalm that is one of the most important of the messianic psalms and is referred to several times in the New Testament—especially in Romans 11:4, 9, 21–22.

"Let their table become a snare and a trap" means—*'let their blessings turn into burdens and judgments'*—which is exactly what happened to Israel—as one author put it:

"Their spiritual blessings should have led them to Christ, but instead they became a snare that kept them from Christ. Their very religious practices and observances became substitutes for the real experience of salvation. Sad to say, this same mistake is made today when people depend on religious rituals and practices instead of trusting in the Christ who is pictured in these activities."

Paul made it clear that the hardening of Israel is neither total nor final, and that God has a future plan for the nation—*"Hardness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in."* (Rom. 11:25)

In other words, when the last Gentile of the Church Age has received Jesus as their Savior—the Rapture will take place, and God will then turn His face to the nation of Israel once again to use as an instrument of His grace to bring the gospel to the world during the Tribulation Period.

The existence of the believing Jewish remnant today, as in Elijah's day, is evidence that God still has a plan for His people.

Romans 11:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ 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.

Paul is saying that God knew Israel would **'fall.'**

Or in other words, He knew the nation would fail to live up to the covenant He made with them by not receiving their Messiah when He came—but he quickly adds that this stumbling or falling was not final or forever.

In fact, that even though the nation failed in the covenant God made with them and God turned to the Church to make a covenant with during the Church Age—the covenant He made with Israel through Abraham was not rendered null and void but was only put on ‘hold’ or set aside for a time (Pentecost to the Rapture—the Church Age).

And that God’s covenant with Israel still stands because, as Paul said a few verses earlier—it was a covenant made with them through His grace and not based on their works.

The fact that God chose to make a covenant with the Christian Church to use us as His covenant people *didn’t negate* the covenant He made with Israel. In fact, was used by God in part to make Israel jealous so that they would return to Him that He might use them during the Tribulation Period as His covenant people once again!

Romans 11:12 (NKJV)

¹² Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness [i.e., ‘their impact on the world when they are restored to God!]

As a result of Israel’s rejection of the gospel, the nation was set aside, and the gospel went out to the Gentiles.

One author—

“In this sense the fall of the Jews has meant riches for the world, and Israel’s loss has been the Gentiles’ gain. But if that is true, how much more will Israel’s restoration result in rich blessing for all the world!”

When Israel turns to the Lord after the Church is Raptured—many believe that she will be used by God to save as much if not more than came to Jesus during the entire Church Age!

After Jesus returns to the earth, ends the Tribulation Period by judging the followers of the Antichrist and establishes the Millennial Kingdom (a promise God gave to the Jewish people)—the whole world will be blessed to be a part of it.

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Want to know more? Click [here](#).

Catch this week’s audio, video, study and sermon notes [HERE](#).