

# ROMANS

KNOW THE TRUTH

August 11, 2024

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SERMON: God's Grace: Free and Undeserved

SCRIPTURE: Romans 11:1-16

**SUMMARY:** Romans 11:1-16 addresses the question of whether God has rejected His people, Israel. Paul emphatically denies this, using himself as an example of a faithful Jew and highlighting that God has preserved a remnant of Israel chosen by grace. He explains that this remnant is not based on works but on God's grace, affirming that God's promises to Israel remain intact. Paul further discusses how Israel's rejection has led to the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's redemptive plan, which, in turn, is intended to provoke Israel to jealousy and ultimately lead to their salvation. He uses the metaphor of an olive tree to illustrate the relationship between Jews and Gentiles, emphasizing that Gentile believers have been grafted into the rich root of the patriarchs. Paul warns Gentiles against arrogance, reminding them that they do not support the root but are supported by it. He concludes by expressing hope that Israel's acceptance will result in even greater blessings for the world, illustrating the depth of God's mercy and the unfolding mystery of His salvation plan.

### I. GRACE: GOD'S FREE AND UNDESERVED KINDNESS FOR ALL

#### ROMANS 11:1-6

1 I ask, then, has God rejected his own people, the nation of Israel? Of course not! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham and a member of the tribe of Benjamin.

**2** No, God has not rejected his own people, whom he chose from the very beginning. Do you realize what the Scriptures say about this? Elijah the prophet complained to God about the people of Israel and said, **3** “Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too.”

**4** And do you remember God’s reply? He said, “No, I have 7,000 others who have never bowed down to Baal!”

**5** It is the same today, for a few of the people of Israel have remained faithful because of God’s grace—his undeserved kindness in choosing them. **6** And since it is through God’s kindness, then it is not by their good works. For in that case, God’s grace would not be what it really is—free and undeserved.

## II. THE DEEP SLEEP OF THE HARD-HEARTED AND THE UNDISCOVERED FAVOR OF GOD

### ROMANS 11:7-10

**7** So this is the situation: Most of the people of Israel have not found the favor of God they are looking for so earnestly. A few have—the ones God has chosen—but the hearts of the rest were hardened. **8** As the Scriptures say, “God has put them into a deep sleep.

To this day he has shut their eyes so they do not see,  
and closed their ears so they do not hear.”

**9** Likewise, David said,

“Let their bountiful table become a snare,  
a trap that makes them think all is well.  
Let their blessings cause them to stumble,  
and let them get what they deserve.

**10** Let their eyes go blind so they cannot see,  
and let their backs be bent forever.”

## III. GOD MAKES SALVATION AVAILABLE TO ALL

### ROMANS 11:11-16

**11** Did God’s people stumble and fall beyond recovery? Of course not! They were disobedient, so God made salvation available to the Gentiles. But he wanted his own people to become jealous and claim it for themselves. **12** Now if the Gentiles were enriched because the people of Israel turned down God’s offer of salvation, think how much greater a blessing the world will share when they finally accept it.

**13** I am saying all this especially for you Gentiles. God has appointed me as the apostle to the Gentiles. I stress this, **14** for I want somehow to make the people of Israel jealous of what you Gentiles have, so I might save some of them. **15** For

since their rejection meant that God offered salvation to the rest of the world, their acceptance will be even more wonderful. It will be life for those who were dead! **16** And since Abraham and the other patriarchs were holy, their descendants will also be holy—just as the entire batch of dough is holy because the portion given as an offering is holy. For if the roots of the tree are holy, the branches will be, too.

## LIFE APPLICATION SERMON GUIDE

**1. The Faithfulness of God to Israel:** In Romans 11:1-2, Paul argues that God has not rejected His people, Israel, and uses himself as proof. How does this demonstrate God's faithfulness, and what does it teach us about His promises?

**Life Application:** Reflect on a promise from God's Word that you are holding onto. How does God's faithfulness to Israel encourage you to trust Him with your own life and circumstances? Identify ways to strengthen your faith in God's promises, especially when circumstances seem contrary.

**2. The Concept of the Remnant:** Paul mentions a remnant chosen by grace (Romans 11:5). What is the significance of the remnant in God's plan, and how does it relate to His sovereignty and grace?

**Life Application:** Identify areas in your life where you see God's grace at work, despite challenges or setbacks. How can recognizing God's preservation of a faithful remnant inspire you to remain faithful in your own journey? How might you support and encourage others who are striving to remain faithful.

**3. Israel's Rejection and the Inclusion of Gentiles:** Romans 11:11-12 speaks of Israel's rejection leading to the inclusion of the Gentiles. How does this illustrate God's redemptive plan and His ability to bring good from what seems like failure?

**Life Application:** Reflect on a time when you experienced rejection or failure. How can you trust God to bring about good from that situation? Think about how you might use your experiences to bless others or further God's purposes, just as Israel's rejection became a blessing to the Gentiles.

**4. The Olive Tree Metaphor:** In Romans 11:16, Paul uses the metaphor of an olive tree to describe the relationship between Jews and Gentiles. What does this metaphor reveal about the interconnectedness of believers and the importance of humility?

**Life Application:** Consider your role within the body of Christ: the church. How have you demonstrated humility and recognize your dependence on God within the faith community? How might you do that more effectively in the future? How might you influence others to do the same? Reflect on ways you can contribute to unity and growth within your church or Life Group, by focusing on the corporate value of waiting on God together (See Psalm 27:14).

**5. The Danger of Arrogance:** Paul warns against arrogance in Romans 11:13-16, reminding Gentiles that they do not support the root (the root supports them!). How can spiritual pride manifest in today's church, and what steps can we take to prevent it?

**Life Application:** Examine your own attitudes toward others who might have different backgrounds or beliefs not identical to yours. Are there areas where pride or superiority might hinder your relationships or ministry? In what ways can you and others cultivate a spirit of humility and service, seeking to learn from and support others in your faith journey.

**6. God's Sovereignty and Human Responsibility:** How does Romans 11:1-16 balance the concepts of God's sovereignty and human responsibility, particularly in the context of Israel's rejection and the Gentiles' inclusion?

**Life Application:** Think about a situation in your life where you struggle to see how God's sovereignty and your responsibility work together. How can you trust God's overarching plan while actively participating in His purposes? List some practical ways to partner with God in fulfilling His will in your life and community. Identify your top priority moving forward and share with someone with whom you can be both accountable and encouraged!

**7. Hope for Restoration:** In Romans 11:15-16, Paul expresses hope for Israel's restoration. How does this hope shape our understanding of God's mercy and His ability to restore what seems lost?

**Life Application:** Identify an area in your life or community where restoration is needed. How can you partner with God in order to bring about healing and renewal in that area? Consider ways to pray for and actively work towards restoration, trusting in God's mercy and power.