



Challenging Chapters of the Bible

**Christian Life Assembly
Summer 2014
Jim Hoffman**



Romans 11

- 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.



Has God Cast Away His People?

- Chapter 10 ended with Israel choosing to turn away from God – that begs the question of chapter 11, and verse #1.
- Has God responded in kind and rejected them?
- And the answer is immediately given – of course not! His choices and his love are not predicated on our performance.

Has God Cast Away His People?

- He chose Israel for his own purposes and their purposes would not negate God's purposes in his quest to redeem mankind.
- Even though the vast majority of Israelites rejected Jesus, God had preserved a remnant. (Paul was a part of the remnant)
- Elijah once sat under a juniper tree and lamented his supposed solitude – God reminded him he had preserved 7,000 faithful prophets.



Has God Cast Away His People?

- Later on in this chapter we will read “for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.” NIV
- Many times our choices disrupt or interrupt God’s will for us and we miss his best for us.
- However, there are some things so important that God will not allow our choices to disrupt his plans. (His redemption plan in an example)

Has God Cast Away His People?

- Jeremiah 31:35 This is what the Lord says, he who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar — the Lord Almighty is his name: 36 "Only if these decrees vanish from my sight," declares the Lord, "will the descendants of Israel ever cease to be a nation before me." NIV

Romans 11

- Romans 11:7 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."* 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.



Romans 11

- **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.

Has God Cast Away His People?

- Because they rejected Messiah, the nation of Israel has been generally blinded - some have always come to faith, and some still are, but relatively few.
- The day will come, in the latter times, when the blindness will be removed and Israel will experience a sweeping move to Christianity, but there is a pause in God's plan for them.

Has God Cast Away His People?

- In verse #11 Paul asks if they fell so low they cannot recover – no they have not!
- In fact, their fall has brought about the church and untold blessings to the gentiles.
- However, we (the church) are not the replacement for Israel – our salvation and proximity to God is to cause Israel to be jealous of what we have and seek it for themselves.

Has God Cast Away His People?

- Paul goes on to say that his hope was to stir up the Jew to believe on Jesus.
- He wonders that if the stumbling of the Jew brought about salvation for the Gentile, what will happen when they recover?
- He says it will be like a wave of life coming to the world through the people of God who were once dead to God.

Has God Cast Away His People?

- In Rev 7 when the 144,000 Jews are sealed they will be zealots for Christ and will go out to evangelize the world.
- So while it may take some time to fully play out, history will eventually prove what the Word says now – God keeps his covenants, his promises, and his selection of Israel stands.

Romans 11

- 17 If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, 18 do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." 20 Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either. 22 Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. 23 And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree! NIV



Branches and Faith

- Verse 16 mentioned the branches and the root.
- The root was Abraham and his faith – the branches represent the Israelites.
- The wild olive branches are believing Gentiles.
- The olive tree is the place of God's blessing.



Branches and Faith

- Gentile Christians ought not boast about being saved for we were grafted into the tree of faith that God started with the Jew.
- If the original branches were cut off what makes us think the branches that were grafted in could not be cut-off as well?
- The original branches were cut-off because of unbelief – and faith just happens to be the only prerequisite for being a branch in the tree of blessing.

Branches and Faith

- If God judged unbelief in Israel, what would make us think he would over look unbelief in the church?
- Perhaps there was some pride creeping into the church over the fact that Israel was cut-off to make room for them.
- I have seen immature Christians poke fun at what they consider the stupidity of the unbelieving – wise people will not go there.

Kindness and Sternness

- Paul speaks of the kindness and sternness of God – In his kindness he provides the offering for our sin and the faith to trust Him.
- In his severity, he holds all men accountable for what they do with what he provides –
- Ignore the offerings of God at your own peril -

Kindness and Sternness

- In general, I think it is a fair statement that “God allows us to choose how he deals with us”.
- Do we want to be dealt with as a son or as an outsider – will we choose kindness or sternness?
- And even beyond salvation, will we choose to live with his blessing, or with his chastening?

Romans 11

25 I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. 27 And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins." 28 As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies on your account; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, 29 for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable. 30 Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, 31 so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you. 32 For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all. 33 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! 34 "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" 35 "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" 36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen. NIV



All Israel Will Be Saved

- Paul tells us in verse #25 that Israel experienced a partial hardening of heart upon the rejection of Messiah.
- A partial hardening, a partial blindness to the gospel – some Jews were and still are believing in Jesus.
- He also says the hardening is temporary until the “fullness of the Gentiles has come in”.

All Israel Will Be Saved

- So what is the “fullness of the Gentiles”?
- The passage interprets itself – the fullness of the Gentiles happens when “26 The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. 27 And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.” NIV
- There will be a time in the future when Israel will turn to God and believe in Jesus as Messiah.



All Israel Will Be Saved

- Zechariah 12:8 On that day the Lord will shield those who live in Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the Angel of the Lord going before them. 9 On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem. 10 "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. NIV

All Israel Will Be Saved

- The question gets raised from time to time about the phrase in Rom 11:26 – does “all” mean all?
- In the absence of any evidence that it does not, I must assume it does – there will come a day when the hard hearted Jewish people will see Jesus come as their redeemer, and acknowledge they missed him when he came the first time.

All Israel Will Be Saved

- Romans 11:29 “God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.” NIV
- When God called Israel to be his people they were imperfect at best, but he used them anyway – and he decided to save them anyway.
- What is true of a nation may also be true of an individual.

God's Gifts and Calls

- God has gifted everyone of us to serve in His kingdom in some fashion.
- He has also called all of to come serve in the kingdom in some fashion.
- His gifts and calls are irrevocable.



Questions