

## Chapter 11:1-

This chapter (Chap. 11) concludes the three chapter series that speaks of how Israel stands in relationship to the gospel, and regarding us who are Gentiles. Ch. 9 it was “my kinsmen according to the flesh: Who are Israelites;” Ch. 10 “Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is...” and here, “I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite,” All have the Jew in a special way before Paul.

In these three chapters God teaches dear Gentile brethren that He has not forgotten His promises to His earthly people Israel. They had stumbled and fallen, concerning Christ when He came to them. Their fall and its consequences, both for them and Gentiles concerning the gospel, are given in these three chapters in particular. They should make the dear Jewish Nation very precious to our hearts. Because of their fall, we Gentiles have been brought into blessing in a very wonderful way.

v 1 “I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, [of] the tribe of Benjamin.”

God spoke of Israel as “his people”. I believe they were first identified of in this way while they were in Egypt. and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage they experienced under Gentile (Egyptian) oppression.

“And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto [them]...Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt...And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go” (Passages from Ex.2:25-5:1).

They had promises from God. Had He broken those promises by bringing Gentile nations into blessing through the gospel? “God forbid.” “I also am an Israelite” Paul says. What then was He doing?

vv 2,3 “God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.”

Elias had spoken against Israel, God had reserved seven thousand of them, which He foreknew. They were His Israel. It might be well to mention here that Paul is speaking of a remnant of Israel. There is no remnant of the church.

The church is one whole in God's sight. He does not see some faithful, or otherwise, remnant parts of the church. We do find a “remnant” of Jewish believers in the church, but not even they, are a remnant of the church, rather—and this is precious—they are a remnant of Israel placed in the church. Paul thus describes them in Galatians. “And as many as walk according to this rule, peace [be] on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.” (Ga.6:16)

However it is important to realize the “Israel of God” spoken of here, is not the church but Jewish believers in it. Paul speaks this way in verse one of Romans eleven. Do notice that in the Galatian epistle, when describing the present economy as Paul was raised up to present it Paul speaks thus. “There is neither Jew nor Greek...for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Ga. 3:28). But this, in Romans, is a subject in itself. That is, the remnant of Israel, placed in the church. “The Israel of God.” (Not spoken of as being “The Church of God.”)

vv 4,5 “But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to [the image of] Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”

Remember, as we read these three chapters, Paul is speaking not of “church” truth, (I mean the truth of their being one body). He speaks of the gospel, and how it is that we Gentiles came into the sphere of the gospel message.

While God was dealing with Israel as a Nation, the word for us was, Eph 2:12 "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, ... and without God in the world:". It is no longer "that time" now that Gentile believers have a most beautiful relationship with God, even as our Father. (The Jewish believers now, of course, have this same relationship.) "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph.2:19).

Does this mean, at this time Israel is without God, or hope. We might say, as we shall see later, the Nation is, but God is saving a remnant of that Nation by means of the gospel, now. So Paul had said, "For I also am an Israelite" I would say here an "Israelite" is a reference to belonging to the nation of Israel, though not a reference to being that nation. Paul was a remnant of it.

While the salvation of Israel for earthly blessing is not taking place now, a remnant of that nation, individual Israelites, are presently being saved by means of the Gospel. This is important to understand in this present dispensation. The church is not the "Israel of God."

v 6 "And if by grace, then [is it] no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if [it be] of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

God at this present time is reserving to Himself a remnant of the Jews, by means of grace. Their salvation, in their time, was one of works, not so now. For the Nation of Israel it was: "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I [am] the Lord." (Lev.18:5)

v 7 "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."

All of God's children by faith, are elect children. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," (John 15:16). Even some angels are identified as elect. "the elect angels," (1 Tim. 5:21). It is perhaps in its simplest form, simply "the choice of God." Israel as a nation at the present time is under a "governmental" blindness, but there is a remnant of faith from among the Jews, Paul being one of them, at this present time. He was an elect one.

"Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect," (Titus 1:1). This remnant from among the Jews are saved as all other believers are saved, by faith, not by the works of the law.

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Gal. 2:16)

"I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, [of] the tribe of Benjamin" (Rom.11:1). Israel had "natural" ties, or claims upon Abraham. These could be, and were broken off, and we Gentiles, as "wild" by nature were grafted in. We need to be warned as to our conduct.

But when reading this do not substitute "believer" for "Gentile." Paul is not speaking of conversion to God by faith, but simply a place of privilege upon earth, which provides special privileges from God. Israel, has lost these, we Gentiles have been grafted into them.

vv 17,18 "And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee."

While the Nation of Israel has been cut off, not all of those composing it were. Paul himself was an Israelite. Some of the branches were broken off, and Gentile being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them. But ever remember, Jews, and Gentiles, are the

subject here, not believers, from either source.

They, the Jew, were in a special place of favor, we, Gentiles, at that time, were seen as far off and without God. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph 2:12).

Abraham, was the one, God had made promises to. While the Lord was dealing solely with the nation of Israel we were outside that sphere of national blessing. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos 3:2).

They were, and are now, being punished for their iniquities. Gentiles should not boast, though now we have been grafted "in." Again, remember, "gentiles" does not mean "believers." Of those believers described as being "in Christ" we read, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal.3:28). The olive tree, is another subject, and not to be confused with being "in Christ."

v 19 "Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in"

We tend to place an undue importance on ourselves, "that I might be grafted in." The Jew was not broken off to allow someone more important, but simply because of their unbelief, otherwise we Gentiles would have remained without God, and without hope. I simply mean, it was not because of our importance, but their unbelief. Our high thoughts of ourselves, Jew or Gentile, breeds pride.

v 20 "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:"

Whenever we realize what we were in ourselves, before the Grace of God does a work of any kind, even outward blessing, as here, it should lead us to fear (Not being afraid of God, but moving in reverence before Him). Boasting of ourselves as though we move on the principle of earning something from God, is dangerous. The Apostle speaks in this manner; "what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive [it], why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received [it]?" (1 Cor.4:7).

v 21 "For if God spared not the natural branches, [take heed] lest he also spare not thee".

The Jews were "the natural branches" as descendants of Jacob. This shows the olive branches, were not a result of true faith in God. None of us are "natural" children of God. We all need to be born of Him by faith. We are born of our natural parents; lost. The Jew was born into a special place of favor, but one that they could be broken off from.

v 22 "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in [his] goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off".

In Gentile lands that have had the privilege of the light of the Gospel, and many professed to being Christians blessing from that profession have followed. Even when there may have been no soul saving work in a heart. As this profession of Christ is given up in a national way, we see the darkness that begins to prevail in those lands. God's severity begins to be felt when His goodness is not continued in.

v 23 "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again".

The Jew will return to the place of blessing from God, but when they do, it will be by "belief". This will initially be by means of a remnant of them returning to their Lord.

"Who [is] a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth [in] mercy" (Micah 7:18). The goodness of God on Israel.

v 24 “For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural [branches], be grafted into their own olive tree?”

Whatever the Gentile “olive tree” speaks of, it was wild by nature.

“For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers [is] rejected, and [is] nigh unto cursing; whose end [is] to be burned” (Heb.6:7-8).

Rain is a blessing from God, falling upon just and unjust, but the results are different. As Gentiles without God, His kindness produced no fruit for Him. We were wild by nature.

v 25 “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in”.

The setting aside of Israel from this sphere of blessing on earth, is temporal, the fullness of the Gentiles is coming soon, and unbelief will mark the Gentiles so blessed now for over two thousand years. “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24). Well might we fear.

v 26 “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:”

As we witness “the times of the Gentiles” in our day we see many nations seeking to eradicate the children of Israel from the earth. Even sources that had been favorable to the nation are changing their attitude towards God’s earthly people. While Nations make their plans to destroy this people, God has His already made—“all Israel shall be saved”. This is an earthly salvation in which Israel shall have her land in peace.

“But in the last days it shall come to pass, [that] the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Micah 4:1-3).

v 27 “For this [is] my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins”.

We are accustomed to think only of the church. The “with them” is Israel as a nation. It is not even a reference to a remnant of the Jews that are now presently saved and placed in the church. The remnant of Israel now being saved are added to the church, but this is not a reference to Israel as a Nation. “The Lord added [to the assembly] daily those that were to be saved” (Acts 2:47).

Not “that were saved”, but to be saved, these elect Jews, would be spared as individual Jews, from the coming judgment of Jehovah, on the nation for its disobedience, and refusal of the grace of God. This is not a reference to Jehovah’s “covenant” with Israel.

But a “covenant” from God, has been made with Israel as a nation, and is yet to be fulfilled with them. “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: ...But this [shall be] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; ..... and they shall be my people... for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jer.31:31-34).

Not only will they be, as it were, born again, (the law written upon their hearts,), but their iniquity will be forgiven, their sin shall not be remembered.

It is on the principle of this covenant (grace) the church is blessed, though the actual covenant is made with Israel. Paul wrote to Gentile believers: "Ye are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read of all men, being manifested to be Christ's epistle ministered by us, written, not with ink, but [the] Spirit of [the] living God; not on stone tables, but on fleshy tables of [the] heart...who has also made us competent, [as] ministers of [the] new covenant..." (2 Cor.3:2-6, JND Trans.).

Yet to Jewish believers it is recorded: "For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah" (Heb. 8:8). Their "days" as a nation, have not yet come.

v 28 "As concerning the gospel, [they are] enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, [they are] beloved for the fathers' sakes [Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob]"

While awaiting the enactment of the "New" covenant with Israel we have the "gospel" preached to Gentiles. The "Nation" of Israel (verses 25-26) have rejected this "gospel." They are enemies of it but here presented "for your [Gentiles] sakes" Because they refused the gospel, Paul turned to the Gentiles. "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13:46)

"The election" here is not simply the remnant of them referred to in verse 6 of this chapter, "at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." but the Nation, as a Nation. "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect" (Is. 45:4)

"v 29 "For the gifts and calling of God [are] without repentance."

God does not give, and take away what He has given as a gift. The promised new covenant (to Israel) has not been taken away from that Nation, it is yet to be known and enjoyed by them. This is the meaning of "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." (Heb. 4:9) The "people of God" refers to Israel here, and "remaineth" means the New Covenant remains yet to be fulfilled for them. (The Millennial thousand years of rest. ; "and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Rev 20:4)

v 30 "For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief".

We Gentiles have obtained "mercy" from God. Looked at here in Romans as a result of Israel being in unbelief until the "New covenant" with them is realized by them. They rejected the "gospel." Gentiles consequently are brought in to blessing. This blessing is on the principle of election of grace, pure mercy. We shared with Israel, the place of unbelief.

They will share with us "our" mercy shown to us mentioned in the next verse. But let us remember, it is mercy, and not become "highminded." (vs.20) as though God saw some good in us that merited our being "grafted in."

vv 31,32 "Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all."

Under the "old" covenant, blessing was obtained by man's obedience. But no blessing from God could be obtained on the principle of "our doing." We all, Jew and Gentiles were in unbelief of God. We needed His Mercy. We came in first on this principle of mercy, so it is here spoken of as "your [Gentiles] mercy."

Remember dear ones, Paul is not looking at Gentile blessing or church blessing here, as he does in Ephesians. There the great eternal counsels as they relate to Him having children, and Christ having a bride are both before us. These thoughts (in Ephesians) go far beyond anything regarding the Nation of Israel, which is here the subject. In Ephesians, it is before the foundations of the world, before there ever was an Israel: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," (Eph. 1:4)

Here, Paul is continuing to display his heart for his own people after the flesh. (Israel.)  
Ro 9:3 “For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen (Jews) according to the flesh.”

Our spiritual relationship with God does not make us forget natural relationships or our God ordained responsibilities to those relationships. They are not a result of faith in Christ but being a Christian does not release us from just relationships we have to others simply because we are men. I refer to relationships we are in as Husbands, wives, children, servants, masters, or many other relationships we have as humans. Paul carried a special burden on his heart for his “kinsmen” after the flesh. Jews.

vv 32-36 “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable [are] his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, [are] all things: to whom [be] glory for ever. Amen.”

In this closing “doxology” we see the joy Paul had in the ways of God with Israel in God’s ways with them of the gospel, and mercy shown to Gentiles, that all were being used to provoke Israel to jealousy.

“I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but [rather] through their fall salvation [is come] unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.”  
(Rom. 11:11)

Oh may this encourage us when things seem contrary to our natural desires, God may have a plan we do not see, or understand. We will soon know “His ways are past finding out.” May we never question Him in His ways with us, as though He does not have a plan. A perfect plan.

“[As for] God, his way [is] perfect.” (Ps. 18:30)