

Israel's Future Restoration – Part 1

Romans 11:1-14

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I want to start with a couple of questions that are found in our text, actually beyond our text at verse 11 as well. Look at verse 1 real quickly. Paul says, “I say then, Hath God cast away his people?” I have taken a little highlighter and highlighted all the question marks in all of these chapters. Here’s the first question mark, “Hath God cast away his people?” I would put by that a little added word, the word “completely.” Has God completely, totally, finished with the nation of Israel?

There are some Christians today, and I acknowledge them as Christians though I disagree with them, that believe that God is finished with the nation of Israel, that the church is spiritual Israel and that God’s purposes and plan are being fulfilled in the church that He promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God’s plan is to have a church made up of Jew and Gentile, it’s not a racial thing—there’s not bond or free, Jew or Gentile, we’re all one in Christ—but the church is going to come to a conclusion. We’re going to see it in this chapter, “...the fulness of the Gentiles,” that’s the church all complete, and when that’s complete it’s caught up to meet the Lord in the air and then beginning at the revelation of the Antichrist, the signing of the covenant with Israel for seven years, there’ll be seven last years of Israel’s history upon the earth and then Christ will return in His Second Coming.

At the end of my series in Romans, I’m going to put up my prophecy chart for you again, and we’re going to go over the 70 weeks of Daniel and God’s whole prophetic plan in one setting as we break it down. Then, the Kingdom Age will merge into the Eternal State and there’ll be a New Heaven and a New Earth.

Notice that in verse 1, “Hath God cast away his people?” Notice then the second question in verse 11, “I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall?” and by that question I would put the word “forever.” So, the first question is: Has God cast away His people completely? The second question: “I say then, Have they stumbled?” We know that Israel nationally rejected Jesus Christ. We saw at the end of Romans 9, “For they stumbled at that stumblingstone,” and they tripped up and rejected their Messiah. So, has God forever forsaken them? Is He done with them completely as far as His purpose and plan?

There’s the answer to both questions in verse 1. The answer is, “God forbid.” How’s that for an answer? Perish the thought is what it means. I don’t know how in anyone’s understanding of Scripture they can conclude that God is through with the nation of Israel. Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said, “God is not finished with Israel. God forbid,” perish the thought; and then in verse 11, the second question, “Have they stumbled that they should fall,” and shall they not be restored? Paul says, “No, God forbid.” He says, “God forbid,” in verse 1, and then “God forbid,” again in verse 11.

Romans 11 has the theme that God is not through with Israel. There’s a lot of different ways

you can summarize entire chapters, and a real helpful way to study the Bible is to take a section, a paragraph or a chapter, and put it into a summary statement to be able to summarize. This is why I encourage Bible students to outline their Bible when they're studying and keep everything in proper context. I would say Romans 11 is God is not through with Israel. They have a future and a hope. Amen? It's not an accident that Israel is in the land today. It's not an accident that they're the center of the storm of all that's going on in the world because God is not finished. God is not through with the nation of Israel.

I want to take just a second, and believe me we'll get into the text, but I want you to turn in your Bible to Jeremiah 31. There are several verses that I could read, but I want to point out this one. I wanted you to see it in your Bible. It goes with what we just read there in the book of Romans 11. In Jeremiah 31:31-34, we have the classic passage on the new covenant. The new covenant is technically made with Israel, and we as Gentiles in the church are actually grafted into the blessings of that covenant and are beneficiaries. The covenant was made with Israel, so we should be humble and grateful and thankful that God has taken us as Gentiles, I'm assuming the majority of us are Gentile believers, and has grafted us in.

We're going to get in this chapter, and I don't know if I'm going to take two or three weeks, but the next couple of weeks as we go through, that we are described as wild olive branches grafted into the natural olive tree and that we become recipients of the root, which is the covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That's the picture there. But at the end of the new covenant, verse 35, is where I want to start reading. "Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar,"—I love that, that's one of my favorite little verses found in the Bible—"The LORD of hosts is his name." That phrase, "LORD of hosts" is one of the compound names of God, Jehovah Sabaoth, which actually means hosts of armies, and it's referring to angels. God is the Lord of armies of angels, Jehovah Sabaoth, the Lord of hosts.

Verse 36, "If those ordinances,"—that is, the sun, the moon, the stars, and the sea—"depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel,"—notice that—"also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever." The point is that obviously that's not going to happen. The sun's not going to stop shining, the stars aren't going to stop shining in the heavens, and the sea is not going to overrun its boundaries. God is in control of it. He set them by His law.

Look at verse 37. He says, "Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured,"—which it cannot—"and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD." This is a powerful statement in the book of Jeremiah saying that God, who establishes the heavens and the stars and the sun, the moon, the seasons, and the seas, that if those things could be measured or passed away, then He would forget the nation of Israel. It's a fancy, prophetic way of saying God is not going to get rid of His nation. God hasn't abandoned them. God has a purpose and a plan for them in what we call the Abrahamic covenant and the Davidic covenant—the promises that God made to our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Turn back with me to Romans 11. It's interesting that in Exodus 1 Pharaoh tried to destroy the people of Israel. In Ester 3, Haman tried to destroy the Jewish race and people. Herod, Matthew 2, sought to destroy all the babies born in Bethlehem to wipe out the Promise of God to send the Messiah, the Savior. In our own time Hitler, in WWII, actually tried to exterminate the Jewish people; and in our day right now, right here where we live at this present time, there are evil world powers and forces that are trying to wipe Israel off the face of the earth, to wipe out the Jewish people completely, but God will not allow that to happen because His promises will be fulfilled. When we watch the news, we know that God promised Abraham, "Those that bless you, I will bless; those that curse you, I will curse." America has always been blessed when they stand behind Israel, and America is in trouble if we forsake Israel. Any nation that has forsaken Israel has had great difficulty. God is not through with the nation of Israel.

One of the greatest signs of the divine inspiration of Scripture is the Jew. How do we know there's a God? Just look at the Jewish people. Something that has happened to no other nation ever in history that without, for two thousand years, their own homeland, until 1948, they were dispersed on the whole face of the earth, but they maintained their identity. They returned back to their Promised Land. Have you ever hear the statement, "Promised Land," I'm bound for the Promised Land? God promised it to them, it's called the "Promised Land" for a purpose, and that they are planted in that land. I personally, based on Bible prophecy, don't believe they'll ever be driven out of that land. I believe they'll be there after the rapture. I believe that during the tribulation there will be the time of the greatest spiritual awakening and revival of Jewish people coming to Yeshua, or Jesus, as Messiah than ever before in history. Amen?

When Paul says, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." It's going to happen so marvelously during the time of the tribulation. Remember the 144,000 Jews from out of the twelve tribes of Israel just going all over the land of Israel preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, angels flying around preaching the gospel, so even though there'll be great persecution, and one of the evidences that we're in the last days is the continued and increasing Antisemitism because it will arise to a new level during the time of the tribulation. The Antichrist is going to hate the Jewish people in the nation of Israel and try to make war against them. Many of them will be put to death, many of them will still not believe in Messiah, but many of them, more than any other time in the last two thousand years, will come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ. Right now there are hundreds and thousands of Jews, and it's interesting also Arabs, that are coming to Jesus Christ and understanding and believing that He is Lord and Savior and the Messiah and the Savior of the world. This is what God's doing in the church right now, but He's not finished with Israel. There's a purpose and plan for them.

Let me give you some foundational things before we start Romans 11. God's promises to Israel in the Old Testament, one covenant to Abraham and one to David, are unconditional. Write down that word. The promises to Abraham and David, known as the Abrahamic covenant and the Davidic covenant, are unconditional. That means no matter what Israel does, God will keep His promises. If you interpret the Bible literally, not figuratively or allegorically or spiritualize the text, there must be a future for the Jewish people.

Also, we need to understand that when we study Bible prophecy, we need to keep everything in its proper order that God has a plan and a purpose and a program right now in the church, for the Gentile nations and for Jews all being one in Christ; and then He'll have a future program for Israel as a nation, and what a marvelous and important thing that is; and that He has a plan and program for the Gentile nations as well, which interestingly will culminate in what's called the battle of Armageddon, the last world war when Christ will return.

There is a teaching known as replacement theology, and I'm going to touch on it more in the next couple weeks. Replacement theologians are those that teach that God is finished with the nation of Israel and that He has now fulfilled His promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the church. They spiritualize the promises. Most of them are what's called Amillennial, they believe that we're living right now in the Millennium, we're in the Kingdom Age right now. Now, we are living as believers, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." But if you look around this world today, right now, I don't see Jesus reigning and ruling in the hearts of all men. Do you? At the Kingdom of God, when it comes to earth in the Millennium in God's promise to David that his son will sit on the throne, it's that one thousand year period, it will be the theocratic reign of Christ on earth, and we can say that the Kingdom of God has come to the earth. Be careful about those who try to replace the nation of Israel with the church, I think it throws all of your understanding of biblical prophecy, and especially the future prophetic Scriptures, into chaos.

We also learn from Romans 11, and we've seen that thread run through Romans 9, 10, and 11, that God keeps His promises. Paul calls four witnesses to prove there is a future restoration of Israel—four witnesses. I want to point out that these four witnesses show that the rejection of Israel is not total but only partial, not final but only temporary. Those are very important points. I'm going to hit them over and over again the next few weeks that the rejection of Israel is not total. There are Jews today, there will be many in the future, that believe in Jesus. It's only partial, not final but only temporary. It's so very, very important.

Let me give you the four witnesses. The first, if you're taking notes, is in verse 1, Paul's own testimony. I call it his personal testimony or his personal proof, verse 1. Follow with me in your Bible. "I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid." We could just close our Bibles and go home right now, eat some cookies, and go to bed, but we want to finish the chapter, right? Basically, he answers the question right there in the first verse. Is God done with Israel? Has God cast them off? "God forbid,"—perish the thought, and here it is—"For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." Simply stated, this is Paul's personal testimony proving God was not finished with Israel. He's saying, "I'm exhibit A. I'm an Israelite—I'm of the tribe of Benjamin, I'm from Abraham."

It's interesting, in 1 Timothy 1:16, write that down, check it out, that Paul says that his testimony of conversion became a pattern for how God wants to save the Jewish people. What was Paul's name before his conversion? Saul. He was from Tarsus, right? He was a Pharisee. He was, let me put it in just modern-day vernacular, hard-core, full on Jew. He was as hard-core as you can get. He was hard-core Jew. He was a rabbi. It's possible he was a Pharisee and part

of the Sanhedrin, but he hated Jews following Jesus and hated Christians, right? The first Christians were Jews, they weren't Gentiles. It's funny. Today people say, "Oh, Christianity is a western religion." No, it's not a western religion. It started in Israel. It started in the East. It started with Jewish people. The first Christians were Jews. Paul says, "I'm exhibit A. I'm a true Israelite of the seed of Abraham. I'm of the tribe of Benjamin."

I'm sure if you have been a Christian for very long, you know about Paul's conversion. Saul of Tarsus, right? Acts 9. He's on his way to arrest Christians, to throw them into prison, right? Paul was going to go arrest people. He's on his way to arrest them, and this light from heaven shone brightly on him, even though it was high noon, and he was struck to the earth. He heard an audible voice...you talk about conversion! Can you imagine his testimony at church? As a matter of fact, when he came to church after he got saved, everyone went, "Ahhhh!" and ran out of the church because he so hated Christians and was persecuting them.

Here's this voice, and I've gotta be careful because we gotta get through this text, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" and Saul, trembling, said, "Who art thou, Lord? that I might serve thee," And a voice came back, "I am Jesus...whom thou persecutest." Can you imagine what was going through his mind? He probably thought, I am dead. "I am Jesus...whom thou persecutest." He's going all the way to Damascus to arrest Christians, and God arrested him, saved him, turned him around. I'm awful glad He did or we may not have the book of Romans or the book of Corinthians or the book of Galatians or the book of Ephesians or the book of Philippians.

I'm so glad that God reached down in His grace and mercy and saved this zealot Jew who thought he was doing God a service by killing Christians, and God got ahold of him, turned him around, and he went from a persecutor to a preacher—and one of the greatest preachers that have ever lived. I think you could actually classify Paul the greatest Christian that ever lived. I know Jesus said John the Baptist was the greatest one ever born of women, but as far as in the church and the apostles, I believe that Paul was the greatest of all. What a marvelous picture his testimony is.

Now, in a way there's a picture here that I'll just mention and we'll move on, is that Paul was persecuting the church. He rejected Jesus Christ. He was radically converted, saw the great light, turned around, and became a believer in Yeshua. Israel radically rejected Messiah. They'll see Jesus coming back in power and great glory, as a light that shines from the east to the west, they will believe and repent and believe and trust in Yeshua, Jesus, and be converted and saved just like Saul was on the road to Damascus. His testimony and his conversion is a picture, a type, of how God saves Jews.

You could also say there's a secondary lesson there that if God can save Saul of Tarsus, He can save your husband. He can save your wife. He can save your boss. He can save your heathen neighbor, your family members that aren't Christians, and notice that God just reached down in His grace, mercy, and love and His elective purpose and saved Paul the Apostle. So, he's exhibit 1, "God's not finished with Israel. I'm an Israelite."

You can also read Philippians 3 where Paul talks about his testimony again and what a strict Jew he was, but all those Jewish things in line with his pedigree he says, "I counted them but refuse that I may be found in Christ, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Jesus Christ."

Here's the second proof, verses 2-6. It's the historical proof. Let's read it. "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,"—he's quoting Elijah, and it comes from 1 Kings 19, "Lord, they have killed thy prophets,"—this is what Israel did in Elijah's time—"and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life." Boohoo, Elijah. This great man of God is crying and weeping, "Poor little ol' me." He was actually, in the Hebrew, saying, "Nobody knows the trouble I've seen." I'm just kidding. "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone,"—I am the only right-on person left, I'm the only believer left. Then he says, "...and they seek my life,"—as well—"But what saith the answer of God unto him?" verse 4. He says, "God spoke to Elijah and said, 'I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.' 5 Even so,"—here's the application—"then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." You might want to underline that, that even at this time there's a remnant and it's by the election of grace.

Verse 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." I'm going to ask you to quote that verse to me after church tonight. You say, "What in the world did he just say?" We'll come back to that. Here's a marvelous story from the history of the nation of Israel during the reign of wicked King Ahab and his wife Jezebel. You don't want to name your daughter Jezebel, bad name. And, I wouldn't name your son Ahab, either. They were two of the wickedest people in Israel—the king of Israel, Ahab, and his queen, Jezebel. Jezebel introduced to Israel Baal worship.

Baal was a pagan god of the weather. Archeologists have unearthed little statues of Baal, and he had lightning bolts in his hand, so he was in charge of the weather. He would bring the lightning and the rain. They were worshiping this pagan god, Baal, also Ashtaroath, and they were involved in licentious, evil, filthy worship of these false gods and turned away from God, so God raised up Elijah the prophet. He sent him to King Ahab and said, "Because of the sin of the nation there will be no rain according to my word for these three-and-a-half years. He left the presence of the king, and a drought came over the land until ultimately the king said, "Call Elijah," and he brought Elijah in. He was trying to kill Elijah, but God was protecting him.

Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to a contest on what's called Mount Carmel. We know the story, right? He said, "You guys build an altar to the prophets of Baal, and put your sacrifice on the altar, pray to Baal, and if he answers by fire and consumes the sacrifice on the altar, then Baal is god. If not, then I'll build an altar. I'll put the sacrifice on the altar, and we'll call on Jehovah. Whoever is God, let's prove who's God." So, a showdown at the O.K. Corral is what it is. It's the prophets of Baal against the prophet of God, Elijah, on Mount Carmel. I just get

goosebumps thinking about how amazing that would've been. When you tour Israel, you go to the Mount Carmel and stand on the mountain where this took place. You look out over the Mediterranean Sea and the beautiful Mount Carmel and you imagine this contest. What an awesome scene that must be.

You know the story, the prophets of Baal were given first shot. They prayed from morning till afternoon, "O Baal, hear us! O Baal, hear us!" They called upon their god. Then, they took out their knives and started cutting themselves, dancing around, throwing themselves on the altar. The prophet Elijah, with a little sanctified sarcasm, said, "Pray a little louder. Maybe he's asleep right now," or "Maybe he's on vacation," or "Maybe he's relieving himself at the bathroom or something." That's what he actually said. It was classic sanctified harassment is what it was. This is why I wish I could've been there. Sarcasm, sanctified sarcasm was used. Prophets used it quite often in the Old Testament.

Finally, Elijah had enough of this and said, "Okay, build my altar." Then, to prove that Jehovah is God, he actually doused the altar with water. He drenched the water all over the altar so it ran all over it. Then, he prayed a simple prayer, "Lord, so the people will know that You are God, send the fire," and BOOOM! the fire came down from heaven and consumed the altar and the sacrifice. It licked up the water, and all the people fell on their faces and just said, "Jehovah is God! Jehovah, He's God." Elijah commanded that all the prophets of Baal be destroyed, 350 of them. As a result, he prayed, the rain came back, but the people of Israel still would not return to Jehovah. They would not return to the Lord. Jezebel finds out that Elijah had killed her prophets. She's upset and angry, so she threatens to kill him. He runs for his life.

I said all that to bring us to the text. Elijah crawls under a little bush. He's tired. He's emotional. He just had this high mountain-top experience, but people have not repented. He prayed and said, "Lord, I'm just asking that You will kill me right now." Have you ever prayed that? "Lord, I come to You right now, in Jesus' name, just kill me." Aren't you glad He doesn't answer? The Lord could say, "Okay," and fried him on the spot. Elijah with a little puff of smoke, and a little smoke coming up a pile of ashes. The Lord spoke to Elijah, encouraged him, fed him with some...the angels made a cake, probably angel food cake, and said, "Eat and take a nap." I love that portion of the story of Elijah, by the way. Sometimes you just need to eat and go to bed. You're tired, and you just need to rest.

Elijah began to pray again and went into a cave and said, "Lord, I'm the only one! I'm the only one that loves You." I better make this story a little shorter. God said, "Elijah, I have seven thousand in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Baal." God always has a remnant. God is working when we don't realize it, and God sees things we don't see and understands things we don't understand. Elijah thought, I'm the only true...

Years ago I had a woman come to me in my former church. She said, "Can I talk to you?" I said, "Sure." I met with her, and she said, "I just want to know why I'm the only spiritual person in this church." I'm telling the story because I'll never forget it. I've forgotten a lot of stuff, but I've never forgotten that. My mouth dropped open, "Are you serious?" I didn't say that, but,

“You’re the only spiritual person in this church, and you don’t have a problem right now—called pride? You’re the only one that prays? You’re the only one that reads your Bible? You’re the only one that witnesses? You’re the only one that serves?”

It’s so crazy how blind and narrow-minded and how limited we get in our sight. This should be an encouragement to us when we look at the world around us. I confess that sometimes, “What’s going on in the church? What’s going on in the world? Where are the true committed Christians?” It’s almost that God would speak to our hearts and say, “I have seven thousand who haven’t bowed their knee to Baal.” When you think the church is being destroyed and God’s work is not progressing or God’s forsaken His people; no, God has not forsaken His people.

Let me quickly drive home some lessons I’ve already alluded to. Things are not as bad as they seem, verse 3. He says, “...and digged down thine altars: and I am left alone, and they seek my life.” Sometimes we get shortsighted, we don’t see as God sees. Remind yourself tonight, things are not as bad as they look. Secondly, remember God knows more than we do, verse 4. He’s at work even though we can’t see it. Verse 5, God always has a witness. I’ve always appreciated this. It’s a theme that runs through the Bible—God always has a witness.

You know, the little bit of travel I’ve done around the world, I’ve been to a lot of big, wicked cities. I didn’t go there because they were wicked cities, our ministry took us there. Wherever you go around the world, in some of the darkest places of the world, guess what you’ll find? Christians. Every place you go in the world, some of the darkest places in the world, you can go into the jungles of some of the deepest, darkest places on earth and you will find believers in Jesus. If you think that God’s not working in the world today, you have to realize that God is working and He always has a witness. God does His best work through a remnant, a faithful minority. One of God’s consistent works throughout history is that He always uses the minority. The majority is very rarely right or righteous, it’s usually the chosen few that God uses. Also, remember that it’s God’s grace.

Go back with me to verses 5-6, “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant,”—don’t be discouraged, God is saving Jews—“according to the election of grace.” God saves us by His grace. Verse 6, “And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.” Notice, grace and works are mutually exclusive. Works must be the fruit of genuine salvation, but they’re not the cause of our salvation. He doesn’t save us by grace, and then we have to work to maintain it. He doesn’t save us by works, He saves us by grace and He sanctifies us and keeps us by grace. It’s all grace. Either your salvation is the grace of God or it’s your works—you either save yourself or God saves you. It’s impossible to save yourself. This is why I emphasize that it’s taking the hand of Jesus, trusting Him who died on the cross. You should mark those verses and keep them in mind when people tell you, “Well, you can’t just believe in Jesus and think you’re saved by grace, you have to have good works as well to get yourself to heaven.”

Someone once said that salvation was like a row boat—the two oars represent grace and

works, and you have to have two oars in a rowboat to get across the lake. The problem with that is no one is going to heaven in a rowboat. All our human illustrations break down somewhere. We're saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Amen? Don't ever try to add works to salvation. So many religious systems do that to their great detriment.

Here's the third, and it's actually our last section. I'm going to mention the fourth because we're going to usher into it next week. In verses 7-10 we have the scriptural proof that God is not through with Israel. Let's read it. "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Israel sought for righteousness, but they missed it. Those who God chose by election, "...hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded,"—that's the nation of Israel who partially and temporarily are blind.

Notice verse 8. Here he quotes Isaiah 29:10, "(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day." Notice this is a parenthetical statement. At the end of verse 7, "...and the rest were blinded," and jump down to the end of verse 8, "...unto this day." God allowed them to have slumbering eyes and blinded eyes and ears that could not hear.

The second Scripture that Paul uses to prove that God is not through with Israel is in Psalm 69:22. It's quoted here in verses 9-10, "And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompence unto them: 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway." He's quoting from Isaiah 29:10 and Psalm 69:22. "Let their table be made a snare," 'table' represents blessings. Remember in Psalm 23 David said, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies," so it's a table that's set with the promises of God, the blessings, "...their table be made a snare."

The same thing can apply to us as Christians today that promises and the blessings that God has given us could lead us to feel proud, haughty, be lifted up, and lose out on blessings. Just like Israel had all the blessings of God and the promises of God, and instead of being a light to the world, they became isolated from the world and stumbled over their very own blessings that God had given them. So, verses 7-10, even the Scriptures indicate that much of Israel would be blinded, except those who were the few elected by God, the remnant whom God would save, yet, as we see, there's going to be a restoration for them in the future.

I want to point out, and we'll get there next week, that from verses 11-24, that the fourth argument that God's not through with Israel is the dispensational proof. This I want to save because it's so very important. What do I mean by dispensational proof? A dispensation is a term we use for how God deals with people at different times in history—how He dealt with the Jews in the Old Testament, how He deals with the church in the New Testament, how He deals with the world in the tribulation period, how He deals with the world in the Kingdom Age—it's called a dispensation, a government of God over the world, verses 11-24. As a teaser, I want to read verses 11-15, and then I can wrap up what I want to cover tonight. We'll start back next week in verse 11.

Read with me the dispensational proof. Paul says, "I say then,"—here's his conclusion—"Have they stumbled that they should fall?"—this is fall completely and be lost. Note the word "stumbled." At the end of Romans 10 we had them scanded and stumbling over Christ the salvation stone. "...but rather through their fall,"—here we begin now, verse 11, to get Paul's insight to God's allowing Israel to be rejected or stumble or fall or set aside partially and temporarily—"God forbid: but rather through their fall,"—that is, through Israel's fall—"salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy,"—to provoke the Jews to jealously. As Gentiles in the church we have the Jewish Messiah, the Messiah, so the Jews get envious of us, we have their Messiah. But "...their fall," verse 11, means our salvation. I'll come back to that.

Verse 12, "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world,"—in other words, their rejection of Christ, which is all a part of God's purpose, plan, and design; the cross was not a mistake, it wasn't a last-minute decision of God. "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" These verses open up a great understanding of God's purpose, plan, and program for the nation of Israel. As I said, pointed out the words "stumbled," verse 11, and "fall," then notice in verse 12 the word "diminishing of them," and we'll get it in verse 15, "casting away." All of that led to blessing, riches, salvation to the world and to the Gentiles. "Now if...the diminishing of them,"—that is, Israel—"the riches of the Gentiles; how much more,"—an argument of the lesser to the greater—"their fulness?" that is going to happen at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ when He returns, when Israel will be saved and be restored by God.

Verse 13, "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: 14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them." Here it is, verse 15, "For if the casting away of them,"—that is, Israel—"be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" Let me put this in simple terms. When Israel rejected Christ and crucified Him, it was all part of God's predeterminate plan and purpose. When Jesus was crucified, God the Father didn't say, "Oh no! Oh no! Messed everything up! What am I going to do?" No. It was all a plan. I can't fathom it. I don't understand it. I don't comprehend it. This is why when he comes to the end of Romans 11, "O the depth...of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" He just explodes in doxology, worship, and praise. That's what our hearts do when we see the Bible fit together and think, "Wow! God is so smart! Wow! God is so wise! Wow! God is so amazing!"

If in His first coming Christ's rejection by the Jews meant salvation for me as a Gentile, what will happen in the Second Coming of Christ when Israel is saved and Jesus reigns upon the earth? It will be the Kingdom Age, the fullness of time, the new age of Christ reigning on earth and all the universal blessings that it will bring. How marvelous is the purpose and the plan of God! So, verse 11, "...salvation is come unto the Gentiles,"—that's the Church Age right now—"...the fall of them be the riches of the world," verse 12, was part of God's sovereign plan. They're diminishing—God's plan. At the end of verse 12, "...how much more their fulness?" That's when they turn back to God and understand Christ is the Messiah, at the end of the tribulation,

at the Second Coming of Christ, and they go into the Kingdom Age.

Verse 15, “For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them,”—that’s the end of the tribulation, the Second Coming of Christ when they turn to Messiah—“be but life from the dead?”

Read Revelation 20, the Kingdom Age when Satan is bound for one thousand years. Isn’t that going to be awesome? Think about that, no more devil, Jesus sitting on the throne of David in Jerusalem. We won’t be at all freaking out about who’s in the White House, no more freaking out who’s running the United States, Jesus is running the world. Amen? And Israel plays a part in their role in God’s purpose and plan.

There is a Present Election, verse 1-10; there will be a Future Restoration, verses 11-24; there is to be a Final Salvation, verses 25-32; and in verse 26, all Israel will be saved. God always keeps His promises. Never forget that. Let’s pray.