

In coming to chapter 11—we come to one of the most misunderstood and misused chapters within the entire Bible—in short this chapter has been used to support the modern notion—that physical and ethical Israel—will once again have central place to God's saving and redemptive purposes on earth—there is nothing further from the truth...

I suggest—there are a few reasons that drive this misuse of Romans 11—[1] failure to connect chapter 11 to chapters 9 and 10—there's a sense in which what Paul says in this chapter he's already said in the previous two—[a] the exclusion of most Jews, [b] the inclusion of the Gentiles—that is—the true people of God consists of both Jews and Gentiles...

[2] Failure to notice that Paul largely if not exclusively speaks about present and not future realities—throughout the chapter emphasis is placed upon the present salvation of a remnant of physical Jews—the chapter consists of four major parts—[a] vv1-10, v5—"even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace" [b] vv11-16, v14—"if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them" [c] vv17-24, v23—"and they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again" [d] vv25-32, v26—"the Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob..."

O.P. Robison—"Most commentators are well aware of the references in Romans 11 to God's current saving activity among the Jews. However, the pervasiveness of these references, as well as their significance for the total thrust of the chapter, is generally overlooked"—Sam Waldron—"Paul's reference to the present dealings of God with Israel permeate Romans 11. They are present in every part of the chapter..."

- I. A Question—v1a
- II. An Answer—vv1b-4
- III. A Summary—vv5-6

#### I. A Question—v1a

1. The apostle Paul begins this chapter with a question—that in many ways connects it with the previous chapters...
2. V11—"I say then, has God cast away His people"—that is—His people who are physically and ethnically Jewish...
3. Thus the question isn't—Has God cast away His people—BUT—who in fact—constitute God's NC people...
4. Rom.9:6—"but it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel..."
5. If Romans chapters 9-11 teach us anything—they teach us that not every physical or ethnical Jew is included...
6. Or—put another way—the physical nation of Israel is not God's people—God's people are comprised by Jew and Gentle...
7. That is—believers—the church—those who have the faith of Abraham—who have called upon the LORD...
8. Now—the importance of this question is evident—what would Gentiles think of a Jewish religion that failed...
9. That is—you can imagine Paul encountering the question—if God cast away His Jewish people what about us...
10. Or—put another way—can God be trusted—if He has rejected the Jews—will He not also reject us Gentiles...
11. The Greek word rendered "cast away" is a rather strong word—it literally means—"to reject or thrust away..."

12. Thus the question is simply—has God rejected or cast away His elect, covenantal, and eternally beloved people...

## II. An Answer—vv1b-4

1. The apostle answers with his familiar response—"certainly not"—"God forbid"—"May it never be"—"By no means"...
2. He then provides three lines of evidence in proof of this answer—[1] personal, [2] theological, and [3] biblical...
3. [1] Personal—that is—his own example, "for I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin..."
4. In other words—in vindication of the fact that God has not cast away His people—he uses himself as an example...
5. Paul exemplified the fact—that God had not cast away His people—but was presently saving His true Israel...
6. Paul was an Israelite—a physical descendant of Abraham—he was a physical Jew—circumcised in the flesh...
7. But—he was more than this—he was also a spiritual or inward Jew—he was circumcised inwardly by the Spirit...
8. Thus Paul argues that God has not rejected all of physical Israel—for he too was an Israelite—a physical Jew...
9. [2] Theological, v2—"God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew"—now by foreknew is meant—for-loved...
10. God did not merely foreknow certain events—He foreknew certain people—He foreknew His elect people...
11. In other words—God has never—and He could never—reject those people whom He for-loved and predestined...
12. Thus—when Paul speaks here of "His people"—he is not referring to the Jewish nation but the elect nation...
13. That is—the remnant according to the election of grace—who along God foreknew—and thus predestined...
14. Or—let me put this another way—God did NOT foreknow every person—He only foreknew certain people...
15. Rom.8:29—"for whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son...v30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these he also glorified..."
16. Notice—every person He foreknew He will call out of darkness—justify—and will, without exception, glorify...
17. [3] Biblical, v2b—"or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying..."
18. Paul illustrates his point—by going back to a time within Israel's history—that resembled the first century....
19. The account is found in 1Kings 19—Elijah was sent to the nation of Israel who was largely filled with hypocrites...
20. [a] A complaint, v3—"LORD, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life..."
21. Elijah lived and ministered in a time of rampant idolatry—most Israelites had bowed the knee to serve Baal...
22. Elijah felt as if he were alone—I can only suppose that the faithful Jews of the first century—thought in a similar way...
23. In fact—the apostle himself may have felt this way—for as you recall he lamented Israel's unbelief several times...
24. [b] A response, v4—"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..."

25. In other words—don't become discouraged—you are NOT alone—I have a believing and faithful remnant...
26. Thus—the same was true of Paul's day—there was a remnant of believing Jews—who God kept for Himself...
27. For example—the NT begins with Zacharias and Elizabeth, Mary and Joseph, Simeon and Anna—all a part of the remnant...
28. Furthermore—there are the apostles who were all Jewish—in addition to the other disciples which were Jewish...
29. Acts 6:7—"then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplies greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith..."
30. Thus we read in Acts 21:20—"[of] thousands of Jews [who] have believed"—these together were the remnant...

### III. A Summary—vv5-6

1. Verses 5-6 serve as a summary for the pervious verses—and in some senses—a summary of the previous 2 chapters...
2. The apostle returns to a topic he mentioned in chapter 9—and that is—the doctrine of the faithful remnant...
3. Now—a remnant is a small remainder of something bigger—for example, a seamstress might have remnants of a larger fabric left over...
4. The remnant is the part that's left over—it's not the major part—it's the smaller part—that's often despised...
5. Thus by remnant—Paul refers to the entirety of converted Jews—who remained faithful in the first century...
6. Rom.9:27-29—"Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: 'Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, The remnant will be saved. 28 For He will finish the work and cut *it* short in righteousness, Because the LORD will make a short work upon the earth.' 29 And as Isaiah said before: 'Unless the LORD of Sabaoth had left us a seed, We would have become like Sodom, And we would have been made like Gomorrah'..."
7. [1] It is a PRESENT remnant—"even so then, at this present time there is a remnant"—that is—during the first century...
8. Thus—the remnant referred to refers to the small and despised group of believing Jews that lived in the first century...
9. This passage—as I will argue throughout the chapter—speaks of PRESENT events and not FUTURE events...
10. [2] It is an ELECT remnant—"even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace..."
11. In other words—the reason why the remnant remained faithful to God—was due to God's ELECTING grace...
12. Now—we know—that the phrase "the election of grace" refers to—God's gracious choice of sinners to salvation...
13. This is the meaning of v6—God's choice of some for salvation had nothing to do with what they would do...
14. Some—as you know—misunderstand election to mean—that God looks into the future to see you would choose Him...
15. Based upon this foresight or foreknowledge—He then chooses them—but this contradicts the teaching of v6...
16. And if by grace [that is if election is by grace], then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace..."
17. That is—election is based upon grace and not works—or—God's choice of a people has no concerns for what they would do...
18. "But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work"—that is—if election is based on works—the it's based on merit...

19. In other words—these two grace and works are put in opposition to one another—they can not both be true...
20. Rom.9:10-13—"And not only *this*, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, *even* by our father Isaac 11 (for *the children* not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), 12 it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger." 13 As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated..."
21. I trust it's evident—that this passage is very akin to Romans 11:5-6—election is based upon grace not works...

#### IV. Three Lessons

##### A. The IDENTITY of God's people

1. This identity of God's people is a rather important theme—that runs straight through this eleventh chapter...
2. Let me begin by reminding you that God has but ONE people—Old and New Testaments—comprise one people...
3. In the Old Testament this single people were largely Jews—and in the New Testament they are largely Gentiles...
4. Now—what we find in this Jewish elect remnant is the beginning of the NT church—which included the apostles...
5. We could say—and I think it's important to say—that the NT church began as entirely a Jewish institution...
6. It began with a Jewish Messiah, Jewish apostles, and Jewish converts—the NT church had its beginning as Jewish...
7. Now—as we shall see in upcoming weeks—believing Gentiles are engrafted into the olive tree which is Israel...
8. Or—put another way—believing Gentiles are engrafted into the remnant—and become partakers of the common wealth of Israel...
9. Rom.11:17—"and if some of the branches were broken off, add you, being wild live tree, were grafted in among them, and with them because a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree..."
10. The "olive tree" is Israel—true and spiritual Israel—into which the Gentiles become partakers of their blessing...
11. In other words—the church DOES NOT replace Israel—but the church IS Israel—the continuation of Israel...
12. Rom.2:28—"for he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 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..."
13. Joel.2:32—"and it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the remnant whom the LORD calls..."

##### B. The DEPICTION of God's people

1. Now—I have asserted that by REMNANT is meant—the converted physical Jews within the first century...
2. Furthermore—I have asserted—that by faith Gentile converts are grafted into the Remnant and become Jews...
3. Thus—the church as a whole is described as a remnant—which describes—their size and apparent insignificance...
4. [1] The remnant is small—a remnant is by very definition is small—it's in contrast to the larger piece from which it came...
5. Simply put—God's people have always been the minority—they've been the few in comparison to the many...

6. Matt.7:14—"narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" 9:37—"the harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few" 22:14—"for many are called, but few are chosen..."
7. [2] The remnant is despised—that is—its considered insignificant—it's mocked, ridiculed, and mistreated...
8. Rev.12:17—"and the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ..."
9. The word rendered "rest of her offspring" is literally—"the remnant of her seed"—and refers to the entire church...
10. Thus—while this remnant is foreknown by God—that is fore-loved by God—they are despised by the world...

### C. The SECURITY of God's people

1. This passage not only describes the identity and tyranny of God's people—but also their eternal and certain security...
2. That is—God will NEVER cast them away—but will always preserve them through this world into the next...
3. Now—as I sought to show—the remnant here referred to is—the sum total of elect Jews within the first century...
4. Thus—all that's within this passage must first be applied to them—that present remnant in Paul's day of converted Jews...
5. But—what was true of them is also true of the Gentiles—who was being grafted into Israel by or through faith...
6. Thus—what's said of them is true of us—or is true of God's entire Israel—His spiritual Israel—or the church...
7. They are foreknown and elect—they will be justified, preserved and sanctified—and without exception—glorified...
8. Jer.23:3-6—"But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. 4 I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking, says the LORD. 5 Behold, *the* days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 6 In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this *is* His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS..."

Ps.94:14—"for the LORD will not cast off His people, nor will He forsake His inheritance"