

# Romans 11

## The Remnant in Israel

### Distinction in the New Covenant

G-d has not turned from Israel. Paul, the disciples, the Jews coming back to Rome, are examples of the remnant known by G-d, having the proper faith, and understanding the proper role of Torah in their lives.

- See Acts 21:20 for an example of this proper zeal.
- Paul is reminding his audience, Gentile Roman believers, that Israel is the core of G-d's plan for introducing His Son to the nations. This is an irrevocable calling (11:29)
- They have not replaced Israel, rather they are signing up in support of the Israeli, the Jewish task. Paul makes a sharp distinction in this chapter between Israel and the gentiles who have become attached to the Commonwealth of Israel.
- There is unity of purpose, there is unity in gaining salvation (10:11-13), but there are still distinctions made in role, in Jewish identity. This is an enduring tension and distinction throughout the Scriptures.
  - All are saved by the same hand, the same Person. Yet there are distinctions even in the very end. See Rev 21-22.
    - The 12 Tribes are distinguished, the Apostles are distinct, the Bride is distinct, the saved of the nations are distinct. All who are clean and whose names are written in the Book of Life enter, both of the nations, and of Israel.
  - Further pictures of this distinction even in salvation are in Rev 7. 144,000 from the 12 tribes, then those beyond count from the nations (Rev 7:9), but all clothed in robes of salvation, and are together in praise to G-d.

## Romans 11:1-5

### Israel the Remnant

11:1-5. Israel has a righteous remnant always within the larger Jewish community. It is this remnant G-d will always work with.

- What about the unrighteous remnant?
  - They are still worked with, still reached out to (10:21) G-d is incredibly patient.
  - Examples: 1<sup>st</sup> Generation in the wilderness in Bemidbar. G-d disciplined them until death for their children's sake. Yet the nation continued, and even that generation was shown grace.
  - Who is cut off? Pirke Avot. All Israel has a share in the world to come
    - But, some of them are cut off. Korah is a well-known example. But the nation endures.
- Paul, his companions, the thousands and thousands of Jews in the Diaspora and Judah are Jews, and believers, and zealous for Torah.
  - In Acts, most of the Jewish believers, such as Barnabas, Apollos, and others are introduced according to their heritage.
  - The righteous remnant will ultimately know Yeshua, and participate in the Gospel message.
  - The righteous remnant are by G-d's gracious choice, not our efforts. Paul uses Elijah to demonstrate this choice in Israel. This shows that Israel as a nation, as a people are still the centerpiece of His plans for salvation of the nations.
  - Today (Paul's time) there is also a remnant who know Yeshua.

## **Romans 11:6-15**

### **The Unrighteous Jews in Israel**

Israel sought, and is seeking a relationship with G-d, and her role in the nations.

- The larger Israel has not found it, (some have though, the remnant)
- Paul quotes Isaiah 6:9-10 which echoes Deut 29:4, and Jeremiah 5:21, Ezek 12:2.
- Vs 11. Yet, there is hope for even this unrighteous remnant in Israel.
  - Israel's rejection of Yeshua specifically triggered the bringing in of the Gentiles to salvation.
    - This is NOT a replacement, or a confusing of identities. The nations certainly get to share in salvation. They do not displace, nor do they take Israel's identity or role away. In that generation, the saved Gentiles participate and share in the role without losing their identity as well.
    - How do the Gentiles make Israel jealous? (See Deut. 32:16-21)
      - Some suggestions. They are a part of the synagogue, a part of the salvation of Israel, and even participate in the job of Israel, being a light. By remaining distinct they are a testimony to Israel (unrighteous) of G-d's mercy. This is seen in several places in Acts. Israel jealously guards her place, but it is a perversion, seen as a place of privilege and as better than the Gentiles. When the Gentiles can participate even in salvation as Gentiles the anger overflows.
- They will be reconciled and this will be like life from the dead. But as Israel, as Jews this will occur.
- The fact of identifiable Non-Jews in the Jewish congregations are a testimony to Israel.

## Romans 11:16-24

### The allegory of the trees

Paul uses several pictures to demonstrate that even disobedient Israel is still G-d's choice.

- Vs 16. The Challah. The dedicated remnant that is burnt is taken from the larger loaf of bread. We get our name *challah* from this piece of dough. See Lev 2 for descriptions of the memorial portion of grain offerings.
  - The larger loaf and the memorial portion, the remnant are both set apart. The analogy is that the righteous remnant and the disobedient larger portion are still called.
  - If the root is holy, the rest of the tree is also. If the root is holy, the rest of the tree, the branches are as well. Again it is an argument of the small righteous remnant and the larger, not so righteous larger Israel being called to the same task.
- Vs 17. Branches and branches. There are two distinct trees. They are not the same, but they are related. Both are human, but one is cultivated, one is not. One has been husbanded by G-d, the other has not (until being grafted in).
- Both are nourished by the rich root, but the root comes through the cultivated tree. The wild olive tree has no G-dly sustenance on its own.
- The sustenance comes from the root, through the cultivated tree, to all the branches.
- On the other hand, the cultivated tree supports the wild branches, and not the other way around.
- Paul makes this distinction: the Gentiles partake of and are supported by the Jewish community. It does not work the other way around.

## Romans 11:16-24 continued

Paul is painting a picture here of the unconditional choice of Israel, whether they are obedient or not, whether they are righteous or not, to bring blessing to the nations.

- A consistent theme throughout Scripture. No individual, no nation, no group of any kind develops a relationship to G-d except that they come into contact with, and have a relationship to, Israel.
- All of the Bible has a consistent theme. People learn of G-d, of how to come to Him, through Israel. There is an exclusive way to come to G-d, to be reconciled to Him

*Ac 4:12 And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.*

- Yeshua cannot be separated from Israel, and those who come to G-d through the Messiah come into a relationship with Israel. Salvation is revealed through Israel, Instructions on G-dly living come through the Torah Prophets and Writings, and the New Covenant Scriptures. All emanate from, and are fully understood only through Israel. This is what Paul is expressing in this chapter.
- The broken branches. They are individuals, not whole peoples, not all of Israel. Those apostate of Israel apparently can be returned to the tree, if they turn to belief.

## Romans 11:25-36

### Vs 25-26. Israel and the Nations.

Israel will not experience her full salvation until the nations have entered into salvation in their fullness.

- Israel has been hardened, somewhat. Partially. This is a picture of Paul's statement that G-d has shut all in disobedience so He can have mercy on all.
- That hardness is expressed throughout Jewish history.
- The nations “come in” to faith, to a relationship with Israel, and G-d's hand is in all of this. Locally the nations are granted full right to participate in the Jewish community, have full access to His Spirit, giftings, and service.
- In Chapter 10 Paul calls the non-Jews *adelphoi*, brothers and sisters. The nations participate in salvation, they participate in the community, yet do not become Israel.
- When this has occurred, as this happens Israel will experience her full salvation as well.
  - Partial should not be understood in terms of time, but in terms of part of the whole. There always has been, and always will be a righteous remnant within Israel.
  - All Israel: This is a future blessing and promise. See The promises of the New Covenant in Jeremiah and in Ezekiel, and this passage from Isaiah 59:20-21 and 27:9.
  - In Zechariah 14 we see a hint of this ultimate fulfillment in Judah seeing Messiah at the end.

## Romans 11:27-29

Paul quotes Isaiah 59:20-21, 27:9 to strengthen his words. Jacob, Israel, will ultimately return to G-d, or rather He will reveal Himself to them, scattered amongst the nations.

Vs 28-29. Even while they are against Yeshua at this point, for the sake of the promises to Abraham, and the Patriarchs, (at least), they are still chosen to their task.

The calling of Israel was unconditional, irrevocable, and never ends.

The following verses give flesh to this unconditional calling.

We are still in the middle of the story, and have not yet seen the end. Even at the end we see the distinction between the nations and Israel.

*Isa 66:19-22 19 “I will set a sign among them and will send survivors from them to the nations: Tarshish, Put, Lud, Meshech, Rosh, Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations.*

*20 “Then they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as a grain offering to the LORD, on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem,” says the LORD, “just as the sons of Israel bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD.*

*21 “I will also take some of them for priests and for Levites,” says the LORD.*

*22 “For just as the new heavens and the new earth Which I make will endure before Me,” declares the LORD, “So your offspring and your name will endure.*

*Isa 49:6 He says, “It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth (Quoted in Luke 2:32 as well)*

## Romans 11:30-32

The Roman non-Jewish believers are to show mercy and care for the non-Messianic Jewish community that they have become attached to, as well as the Messianic Jews in the community. For they need G-d's mercy just as much as the non-Jews did.

- The non-Jews were disobedient once
- They have received mercy, because of Israel's disobedience
- The non-Messianic Jews of Israel are now disobedient
- The non-Jewish believers must show them mercy and care
- When this happens they will also receive G-d's mercy.
  - This is the picture Paul gives of the “jealousy” the Gentiles will cause these Jews.
  - If there is conversion, or a loss of the respective identities, then the point is completely lost.
  - If the believers separate, and become completely different, then the point is again lost. Israel has no reason to be jealous.
  - But, if the believers act in community, love one another, care for the rest of Israel *in their communities*, then jealousy will arise, and mercy can come.
- In the end, all of us are in disobedience, G-d can show mercy to all of us through Yeshua.
  - It was Israel's disobedience, ultimately shown in the rejection and execution of Yeshua that led to the Gentiles being able to be shown mercy. If they can have mercy outside of Yeshua then His death is simply not needed.