

The Book of Romans

LESSON ELEVEN

“God’s Sovereign Plan and Israel’s Restoration”

Chapters nine and ten spoke of **God’s sovereignty** and **man’s responsibility**, showing us how God used Israel’s rejection to open up His plan of salvation for all mankind. Here, in chapter eleven, Paul refers back to God’s statement concerning Israel in Romans 10:21, asking if this means God has cast them away and is done with Israel. Paul’s answer to his own rhetorical question is once again, “certainly not!” and he goes on to explain Israel’s restoration as part of God’s sovereign plan from the beginning.

1. Look back at **Romans 10:21** and write down the statement God made concerning Israel.

2. In **verse 1** of chapter 11, Paul addresses the issue of God’s relationship with Israel by stating clearly that He is not done with them. Looking at the second half of the verse, Paul begins to **declare proofs** of this. What is the first proof he states in the second half of **verse 1**?

3. Paul’s first proof comes from his own experience of faith in Christ. He lays out all the credentials of his own heritage to prove his lineage, stating that he, himself, is proof that God has not cast away His people. Looking at **verses 2 through 4**, summarize in your own words this **second proof** that Paul gives that God has not cast off His people.

11. Looking back at **Romans 11**, record Paul's question in the first part of **verse 11**.

12. The NLT reads, "**Did God's people stumble and fall beyond recovery?**" Paul gives the same answer to this question as the others, saying "**Certainly not!**" Record Paul's explanation in the rest of **verse 11** below.

13. Read **Acts 28:25-27**, then record **Acts 28:28** below.

14. Looking at the rest of **verse 11** again from the NLT it says concerning Israel, "**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.**" What else does Paul say about this in **verse 12**?

15. Israel's rejection opened up the opportunity for the Gospel to go out to the Gentiles, which brought riches to the Gentiles as they embraced it. Paul suggests that if Israel's failure to embrace the Gospel brought riches to us, we will enjoy even greater blessings at Israel's return to their God and Messiah. In **verse 13**, Paul tells his Gentile readers that these things he is saying concerning Israel are being said to them especially, as he is an apostle to the Gentiles and wants them to understand that Israel's rejection gave them access to the Gospel. At the end of **verse 13** Paul wants them to know that he "magnifies" his ministry to the Gentiles. Look up **Ephesians 3:8** and record that verse below.

16. Paul was honored to be the apostle to the Gentiles, but he still had a heart for his countrymen, and a desire that his preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles might accomplish what God intended in turning away from them to the Gentiles. Record Paul's words in **Romans 11:14**.

17. Continuing his discourse on Israel, what does Paul state in **verse 15**?

18. What further argument does Paul give concerning Israel and her future, found in **verse 16**?

Some commentators believe Paul refers to the **firstfruits** and **the root** as the first believers who formed the early church, all of which were Jewish. Many others, however believe that Paul is referring to the patriarchs who were the founders of the Jewish nation. In context with what Paul is addressing concerning the Jewish nation, I tend to agree with the later view that he is speaking of the patriarchs. The word "holy" isn't saying they were perfect in their conduct, but that they were **"set apart for God."** Paul uses two illustrations. The first refers to the grain offering, which was to be set apart as an offering to God from the first fruits of their harvest. Paul is saying that if the first fruits of the grain was set apart for God, so was the whole lump of dough made into loaves from the grain set apart for God (which it was in the loaves for the tabernacle and the temple). The second illustration is of the root of a tree and her branches. The **Bible Knowledge commentary** states, **"In both illustrations the principle is the same: what is considered first contributes its character to what is related to it. With a tree, the root obviously comes first and contributes the nature of that type of tree to the branches that come later. With the cake presented to the Lord, the flour for the cake is taken from the ground meal, but that cake is formed and baked first and presented as a firstfruit. Since it is set apart to the Lord first, it sanctifies the whole harvest. The firstfruits and the root represent the patriarchs of Israel or Abraham personally, and the lump and the branches represent the people of Israel. As a result Israel is set apart (holy) to God, and her "stumbling" (rejection of Christ) must therefore be temporary."**

19. It is obvious that Paul strongly argues here that God has a plan for Israel's restoration and salvation, as a nation, not only for the Jewish believers who had come to Christ and were now a part of the church. God's plan for Israel has not been revoked, as some seem to believe, and God's plan for Israel has not been replaced by the church. Paul makes this even more clear in the following verses. What statement does Paul make in **verses 17 & 18?**

J. Vernon McGee says, "The 'olive tree' is a picture of the nation Israel, and the 'wild olive' is the church. Everything you and I have is rooted in the fact that God called Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and that out of the nation Israel He brought Jesus Christ, our Savior and our Lord."

20. Record the warning that Paul gives to the Gentile believers in **verse 19-21.**

21. In **verse 22** Paul gives an additional warning. What does he say?

22. Jesus used a similar analogy in **John 15:4-6.** Look up these verses and record them below.

23. What further argument does Paul make concerning Israel's future in **Romans 11:23 & 24**?

24. As we come to **verse 25**, Paul will make a strong argument for the future restoration of Israel as a nation. Record **verse 25**.

“Blindness in part has happened to Israel...” The word **“blindness”** can also be rendered as **“hardening”** as it is in some translations. **Vincent Word Studies** defines the word in **“part”** with the idea of, not partial as in part of the Jewish nation was blind or hardened and not the other part, but in regards to a timeline, meaning for a part or portion of time. In other words, their blindness or hardening is for a temporary portion of time. The **Bible Knowledge Commentary** states: **“God purposed that some from all nations should by faith receive the righteousness provided by grace. In order to achieve this goal Israel’s relationship as God’s Chosen People was rescinded for a time...”**

25. Still looking at **verse 25**, when does Paul tell us this time of blindness or hardening will end?

26. **“Until...”** Paul makes clear that there is an end to this blindness for Israel, and he makes clear that there will be a time when the **“full number”** of Gentiles who will be saved will be reached. Looking now at **verses 26 & 27**, what does Paul say about Israel's future after this time of blindness or hardening is over?

There is a difference between what we call “**spiritual Israel**” and “**national**” or “**ethnic Israel.**” Spiritual Israel was described by Paul in **Romans 9:6 & 7** and in **Galatians 3:7**. Spiritual Israel, as God’s people, is attributed to all who have come to Christ, both Jew and Gentile. Spiritual Israel is “the Church.” Paul makes clear that he is speaking of national or ethnic Israel in this verse. We see this first in the fact that he is describing what happens with Israel **after** the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. The Church, although made up of both Jews and Gentiles, is primarily a work of God “among the nations.” During this time of the Gentiles, (a time period we are now in) God has turned His attention away from national Israel to a work primarily with the Gentiles, although there are many Jews who are a part of the church who have come to faith in Christ. But when this church-age is completed, God will once again turn His attention back to the nation of Israel because He still has a plan of salvation for them as a nation. **Warren Wiersbe** states: “**Today, God in His grace is visiting the Gentiles and taking out a people for His name (Act 15:12-14). Individual Jews are being saved, of course; but this present age is primarily a time when God is visiting the Gentiles and building His church. When this present age has run its course, and the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then God will once more deal with the nation of Israel.**”

27. There will be a day when Israel will behold their Savior, the One they rejected, and they will mourn over Him. Look up and record **Zechariah 12:10-11** below.

28. Look up and record these other Scriptures that speak of Israel’s restoration and salvation.

Isaiah 30:18 & 19 -

Isaiah 59:19-21 -

Jeremiah 31:33-34 -

Micah 7:18-20 -

- 29.** Turning back to **Romans 11:28**, record the statement Paul makes concerning our relationship with Israel.
- 30.** As Paul penned this letter National Israel had become enemies of the Gospel, and of Christians as a whole. Paul certainly experienced this throughout his ministry. However, Paul makes clear that even while they are enemies of the Gospel, God's love had not departed from them. The covenant God made with Abraham still stands and His love for them as a nation has not faltered. What further argument does Paul add to his statement in **verse 29**?
- 31.** God will never go back on His promises. This assurance is one of encouragement for the Jewish nation, but it is also a great comfort for us as well. What God has promised, He WILL deliver. What He has given to us He will not take back. Paul goes on in **verses 30 & 31** to remind the Gentile believers of where they started from, and to remind them also of His promise to the Jewish nation and where they would be in the future. Write down these verses below.

32. Record Paul's words in **verse 32**.

33. We are ALL sinners, saved by God's mercy and grace, both Jew and Gentile alike. Paul concludes this chapter with the beautiful declarations found in **verses 33 through 36**. Write down these beautiful truths found in these verses below.

34. What are you taking away from this chapter that has been the most meaningful to you?

This study was written and prepared by Shawn Van Hook, 2026