

## **Israel's Comeback**

### **Romans 11:11-21**

11 I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. 12 Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! 13 For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, 14 if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them. 15 For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? 16 For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. 17 And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, 18 do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." 20 Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.

In the preceding verses the thesis is that although Israel as a whole had been disobedient yet a remnant was left and therefore God had not cast off his people. Israel's rejection was not complete. The thesis in the verses which follow is that the rejection is not final. Both considerations—not complete but partial, not final but temporary—support the proposition that God had not cast off his people. *John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans – Volume II, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 75.*

We are privileged to live in the time that we do. There are so many passages of the Bible that used to take much more faith to believe than they do today.

For generation after generation Israel had no national existence.

Many thought that Israel was only one of many lost nations. Lost to time. Lost to the ages.

Sure there have always been Jewish people who practiced their modified Jewish faith.

But they had no king, no temple, no country, no priest, no sacrifices.

Paul's words did not seem as believable as they are for our generation.

As a matter of fact some describe the fact of a separate Jewish people as somewhat of a miracle.

No people from that time period have maintained their separate and yet consistent religion down through the ages.

It seemed that Israel was dead. But in 1948 they were given a new chance as a nation.

And now the promises that the Bible speaks of are much more believable than before.

And there are great things ahead. This world is groaning awaiting the salvation of the Jew and the redemption of the bodies of the saints.

Romans 8: 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

I. God's Purpose in Setting Aside Israel for a Time.

A. In order to bring in the Gentiles.

1. Matthew 8:11-12 (NKJV) 11 And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
2. Genesis 12:3 (NKJV) 3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

B. In order to provoke Israel to jealousy.

1. You see for several millennia God had worked through the Jews.
2. But now He was working through the Gentiles.
3. God did this to cause the Israel to pursue after God.

C. To enrich the world through grace.

1. This world is so much better a place today than in was 2,000 years ago.
2. When God brought salvation to the Gentiles He gave the whole world hope.
3. Even totally non-Christian nations have been raised to a higher standard through the Christian influence on the world.

II. The firstfruit, the lump and the root, the branches.

A. Three different ways to illustrate the foundation of Israel.

1. The firstfruit here seems to me to be the believing Israel of the old days, as in Jer 2:2-3: "Thou wentest after Me in the wilderness,... Israel was holiness unto Jehovah, the firstfruits of his increase"; and the lump to be the whole "Israel of God," of Galatians Six; that is, Israel, in God's sight as an always beloved nation; though now the saved "Remnant according to the election of grace" comes out of that nation into a risen, heavenly Christ, into a higher calling, where there is neither Jew nor Gentile. And, as has been said, the Gentile "is placed upon the root," not upon the trunk nor upon the branches. He became neither a Jew, nor of Israel. Blessing, however, had been promised through Abraham to "all the families of the

earth.” Now it is important to see that the root is Abraham, the depository of the promises. The tree of Divine blessing grows up by these promises to Abraham, and His Seed, which is Christ. *William R. Newell, Romans Verse-by-Verse, (Chicago: Grace Publications, 1938), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 420-421.*

2. This illustration owes its origin to the offering to the Lord of a cake prepared from the firstfruits of grain worked into dough (Num. 15:17-21). When the Israelites brought this offering they thereby consecrated to the Lord the entire grain harvest. All of it was now regarded as set apart to the Lord, so that whatever was subsequently used by the people was regarded as a gift out of his hand. *William Hendriksen, Baker New Testament Commentary – Exposition of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1980), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 369.*

### III. The laws of grafting.

- A. It is totally outside the norm to graft a wild tree into a good tree.
- B. The way it is done is that the gardener will take a hardy tree though wild and cut off branches so that good olive tree branches might be grafted in to the hardy root.
- C. But what God has done is he has taken the wild olive branches, the Gentiles, and has grafted them into the good root, that of Abraham.
  1. Therefore the life of Abraham now flows through us Gentiles.
  2. Therefore we are children of Abraham by faith.
  3. Romans 4:16 Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

### IV. Israel brought back in by grace.

- A. In that day the Lord Jesus Christ will establish His kingdom on earth, Israel will reign with Him, and her people will become the faithful witnesses and blessing to the world that God always intended them to be. And in that day when Israel turns to Christ, Satan will be bound, the heavens and earth will be renewed, justice will prevail on earth, and there will be worldwide righteousness and universal peace. That will be the much more blessing that Israel's faith will bring to the world. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 110.*
- B. Zechariah 12:10 (NKJV) 10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

- C. Isaiah 11:9 (NKJV) They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.
- D. Jeremiah 31:23-40 (NKJV) 23 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "They shall again use this speech in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I bring back their captivity: 'The LORD bless you, O home of justice, and mountain of holiness!' 24 And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all its cities together, farmers and those going out with flocks. 25 For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul." 26 After this I awoke and looked around, and my sleep was sweet to me. 27 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast. 28 And it shall come to pass, that as I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to throw down, to destroy, and to afflict, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the LORD. 29 In those days they shall say no more: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children's teeth are set on edge.' 30 But every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge. 31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- 32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. 33 **But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."** 35 Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for a light by day, The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, And its waves roar (The LORD of hosts is His name): 36 "If those ordinances depart From before Me, says the LORD, Then the seed of Israel shall also cease From being a nation before Me forever." 37 Thus says the LORD: "If heaven above can be measured, 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, says the LORD. 38 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, that the city shall be built for the LORD from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. 39 The surveyor's line shall again extend straight forward over the hill Gareb; then it shall turn toward Goath. 40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields as far as the Brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be holy to the LORD. **It shall not be plucked up or thrown down anymore forever."**
- E. Acts 15:16-17 (NKJV) 16 'After this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; 17

So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the LORD who does all these things.'

- F. Amos 9:11-12 (NKJV) 11 "On that day I will raise up The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, And repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, And rebuild it as in the days of old; 12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name," Says the LORD who does this thing.

Someday Jesus will return and the Jewish nation will be saved.

That will be the beginning of the glorious age we call the millennium.

A thousand years of perfect peace for the prince of peace will rule.

“How much more their fullness” will be a blessing to this old world.