

## **Pt 38 Romans 11:1-10, Israel's Spirit of Slumber**

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### **Romans 11:1-10**

- 1 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.
- 2 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,
- 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.
- 4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image of Baal*.
- 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.
- 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.
- 7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded
- 8 (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.
- 9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them:
- 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back *always*.

We pick up this morning where we left off last Sunday by looking at Chapter 11. In Chapter 10, Paul had just told them that God's plan of salvation included the Gentiles and that the Jews had rejected Christ and the last thing he said to them was that they were a disobedient and gainsaying people.

As Paul's manner is, he proposes the obvious questions the Jews would have after hearing the truth about God's plan: **1a I say then, Hath God cast away his people?...** So, Paul, if all these things are so, then does that mean God has permanently rejected his people? Are we over and done with and no hope for restoration? Have we been "cast away?" That phrase "cast away" means "**thrown out, rejected, driven away.**"

It is understandable that the Jews would ask such a question. After all, we read in the Old Testament:

**Genesis 13:14-17** And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: 15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. 16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, *then* shall thy seed also be numbered. 17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

And in **Genesis 17:7-8** And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

So, we can see why the Jews may question if God has broken his covenant with them.

Paul is going to answer the question but first we must know that there are others besides the Jews that also believe God has permanently rejected the Jews.

Some religions and denominations have already made up their mind that the Lord has rejected the Jews for good and replaced them with the Church. This is called "**Supersessionism**," better known as, "**replacement theology**." This is the belief that Jesus through the New Covenant has superseded or replaced the Mosaic covenant. They claim that the New Testament church is actually the "**true spiritual Israel**." They claim since the Jews rejected Christ when he came the first time, that He rejected them permanently and chose the New Testament church to replace them.

This thinking has been around ever since the 1<sup>st</sup> Century. The Roman Catholic Church is actually the biggest perpetrators of replacement theology. Some say they even started it. This was the cause of millions of Jews being persecuted by the Church of Rome for many years. Martin Luther was a big influence in this thinking and his teaching was even read to the German people by Hitler as one of the excuses for exterminating all the Jews during the Holocaust.

Replacement Theology leads to Antisemitism (which is deliberate discrimination, hostility, persecution, and prejudice against Jews).

The truth is, nowhere in the Bible do we read where the Church "replaced" Israel or the Jews. The Bible never refers to Gentile believers in the Church as Israel. Every time the Bible uses the term Israel it is referring to the physical descendants of Jacob.

We don't have time to get into it this morning, but down in **verses 11-24**, Paul gives the analogy of the Gentiles being "**grafted in**" and "**partakers of the root of the Olive Tree**." (The Olive Tree being representation of Israel.) He says some of the **natural branches** (meaning Israel) were broke off and the branches from a "**wild Olive tree**" (meaning Gentiles) were grafted onto the tree in their place. We will look deeper into this in our next message. --

Now, let's get back to our text in verse one and look at Paul's answer to them:

**Romans 11:1b...** God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. **2a** God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew...

As usual Paul answers with "**God forbid**," don't even think such a thing. Paul explains that he himself is an Israelite, but he has become a Christian. So had many other Jews. You must remember, it was Jews who first believed in the Gospel and became Christians. The Apostles were Jews, and they were the beginning of the Church. If God rejected all Jews, then none of them could become believers in Christ. God has not permanently cast away his people. The Jews disobedience has not nullified God's promises or love for them.

Look at the next part of **Verse 2b...** Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image of Baal*.

Let me pause here a second and explain why the name **Elijah** is spelled **Elias** in the New Testament. First, the name Elijah means "**My God is Yahweh**" or "**My God is Jehovah**." So, the **EL** stands for **God**, the "I" stands for **my** and the **JAH** is the abbreviated form of the name **Yahweh (YHWH)** or **Jehovah**. The New Testament spelling of the name Elijah is the **Greek rendering which is Elias**. You will find the same done with **Jeremiah** - spelled **Jeremias** and **Isaiah** spelled **Esaias**.

Paul reminds them of the story of Elijah and how he stood against the wicked King Ahab and his wife Jezebel. Ahab was the reigning King of Israel in that day, and it looked like there was no one else on earth who loved God except for Elijah, yet God had a remnant, and that is the point he is making, look at **verses 5 and 6: 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 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.**

God has always and will always have a remnant. Jews that believe in Christ as Savior is proof of that. It is through God's grace that he saves those who are saved. It isn't by man's works or the Jews keeping the Law or their promise, it is all God's grace. It is so hard for man to understand that we have NOTHING to do with our salvation. We cannot save ourselves. We cannot work enough to earn salvation. We cannot cause God to love us more or less depending on our works. Salvation is ALL of Him. It is by HIS Grace, HIS mercy, His convicting power, that we can be saved. Some will say "Oh no Brother Byron, I chose Jesus myself." Let me say this: If you chose Jesus, it is only because He caused you to do so. Dead things cannot come to life on their own. A lost sinner is dead and unable to do anything unless the Lord does it for him. So, salvation is ALL of God and not us.

**7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded**

**8 (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.**

Now we get to a very important part of the Scripture which describes God's willful blinding of the Jewish people. Of course, not every single individual Jew has been blinded – as we said, he has a remnant. God allows some to see the truth and saves them by grace, but the Jews as a whole God has **blinded**, and as it says in **verse 8** "given them the spirit of slumber."

That word "slumber" is interesting. It is a form of sleep but a little different from normal sleep. In normal sleep you get rest and often dream, and your mind is free. But when you slumber, that is a form of "deep sleep," where you do not dream, and your mind shuts off. Let me explain it this way: On most computers if you go to the Power options you have the choice to "sleep" or "shut-down." Yes, I know, some you have hibernate and other settings but on a simple standard pc it is sleep or shutdown. If you choose sleep, the computer is still active in the background. If you move the mouse or press a key on the keyboard it will wake back up and resume normal operating mode. But, if you choose shutdown, it completely shuts the system down. You cannot access it and it cannot perform any functions – it's just OFF. The Lord chose "shut-down" on the Jews.

Christ came to this earth and offered salvation to the Jews. He could have setup his earthly kingdom and ruled and reigned at that time, but they rejected Him. Because of the Jews (as a Nation) rejected Christ, He gave them what they wanted and withheld salvation from them.

You will find over and over in the Bible instances of where God "hardens" hearts. We read in the Book of Exodus how God hardened Pharaoh's heart 10 times before Pharaoh let God's people go.

There is a price to pay for rejecting God. You can reject him enough to where he will give you over to your own desires and wishes and after that God help you. In **Romans 1:28** we see where God will **give people over to a reprobate mind**. These homosexuals, atheists, and those who love their sinful wicked ways are in

danger of being given over to their own wickedness. Trust me, you do not want to be given over by God.

**9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.**

Then Paul quotes from what David wrote in **Psalms 69:22-23 Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. 23 Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.**

The reason for Paul reaching back into the Old Testament and quoting these things is to prove to the Jews that what he is teaching, and preaching is the truth. It has all been foretold by the Prophets. It's not some wild new age way of thinking, it is as old as the Jewish race. He's just trying to make them open their eyes and see the truth. God had blessed them with everything, yet their blessings would become a snare and a trap to them. Just as in the days of their forefathers before they were taken into captivity.

To the Jews of Paul's day and the Jews of our own day, Jesus was and is a stumblingblock or stumblingstone to them. They were not and are not looking for a Messiah meek and lowly riding in an ass's colt to present himself as a Lamb just as their prophets foretold. Instead, they were looking for a conquering king riding on a white stallion.

That conquering king is going to be appearing, but he is the same one that came the first time meek and lowly and offering himself up as a sacrifice. The Jews rejected him the first time and many still will the second time but there will not be any other chances.

#### **Revelation 19:11-16**

**11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.**

**12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.**

**13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.**

**14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.**

**15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.**

**16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**