

Analysis of Romans 11

1. God's covenant faithfulness

Verse 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. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.

Verse 11 – I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

a. To whom does Paul refer when he writes, “His people”?

- i. We know that God's people consists of the elect of every nation but here it cannot be taken in that broad sense because the context makes it clear that Paul is speaking of the Jewish nation. We understand that Israel, as a nation, is elect of God, though every individual of that nation is not necessarily elect. As we read,

1. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers (Deut 7:7-8a)
2. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. (Romans 11:28-29)

b. Has God cast away national Israel?

- i. How easy it would be to think that because Israel rejected and crucified the Lord Jesus Christ that therefore God has wholly rejected them. This might be an easy inference from what Paul has written up to this point. And so, Paul entertains the question. Has God cast away His people?
- ii. Our version has the words, “God forbid.” Though it does literally mean “God forbid,” the phrase expresses the impossibility of the thing and also Paul's abhorrence at an inference which he fears might falsely be drawn from his argument. It's not a simple negation, but a vehement denial. The phrase uses a negation of a relatively uncommon verbal form used to express possibility. By negating the mere possibility, Paul strongly expresses his aversion to the very idea as utterly impossible. The phrase is translated in a variety of ways in the various versions, “certainly not,” “of course not,” “by no means,” “absolutely not,” and “far from it.” The abhorrence expressed by “God forbid” makes that a reasonable choice. “Impossible!” is a literal translation of the Greek but doesn't quite express the abhorrence which is implicit in the original.
- iii. We have ten examples in the book of Romans.
 1. “For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?” (Rom 3:3) Does the faithlessness of the Israelites nullify God's faithfulness?
 - a. “God forbid:” says Paul, with great passion, “yea, let God be true, but every man a liar” (Rom 3:4) Paul says, it is impossible

for God not to be faithful. As God cannot lie, neither can God fail to accomplish His purposes in all the earth. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

2. Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)
 - a. Of course not! Even if our sinfulness makes God's righteousness all the more apparent by contrast, and so serves a good purpose, doesn't mean that God is unjust to judge us.
 - b. And Paul takes it as an incontrovertible fact -- for then how shall God judge the world? (Rom 3:5b,6)
3. Do we then make void the law through faith? (Rom 3:31)
 - a. By no means! It is an abhorrent thought to Paul, that because justification is by faith, apart from the works of the law, that therefore the law is made void through faith.
4. Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? (Rom 6:1b,2)
 - a. God forbid! Paul's understanding of salvation is through union with Christ. Justification presupposes union with Christ and union with Christ necessarily implies sanctification.
 - b. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?
5. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? (Rom 6:15)
 - a. Not at all! There is no room for this kind of thinking in Paul's mind. Newness of life in Christ is a life unto holiness based in the resurrected life of God. Saving grace comes through union with Christ which is unto conformity to His image.
6. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? (Rom 7:7)
 - a. Of course not! Because the law is how we know what sin is. As you look around you see things but not directly -- you don't see the things themselves but the light that comes to your eye. Light bounces off those things and brings information to you. All we can see is light. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light (Prov 6:23). The law is the light that brings to us a knowledge of sin in ourselves. Thus, the law which shows us our sin is not itself sin, any more than light is the thing it reveals.
7. Was then that which is good made death unto me? (Rom 7:13)
 - a. By no means! It is not the commandment which causes sin but sin, as an active rebellious principle in each of us which rebels against the known commandment and brings forth more sin.
8. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? (Rom 9:14)
 - a. Impossible! Paul showed that all together stand condemned before God and so God is free to show mercy as He sees fit.
9. I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. (Rom 11:1)
10. I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid. (Rom 11:11)

- iv. These last two form the subject of the first part of this study in Romans 11 – namely, the covenantal faithfulness of God. Why is Paul so adamant about this point? Why is He no less concerned about this than about God’s right to judge mankind, about continuing in sin after justification about clearing the law of all offense. Paul has defined and defended the gospel, as we’ve seen, by using this form of speech, a question and then an emphatic rejection of the premises of the question. All the questions come from a superficial understanding of the gospel and presuppose false beliefs about the nature and character of God, the gospel which are not only absurd but disastrous. Paul replies to them one by one with the same vehement abhorrence, “God forbid!”
- v. And so, here in Romans 11 we have the two verses: verse 1, Paul is vehement against the possibility of God abandoning national Israel. Paul says it in the strongest possible terms, “God forbid!” Likewise, in ver 11, Paul rejects the possibility that Israel has stumbled so as to remain down. That is the sense of the words. By rejecting the possibility of Israel being left permanently in the current miserable condition, we necessarily conclude that national Israel will be raised up. If Paul is vehemently opposed to the possibility of Israel remaining in general blindness, then
 - 1. Paul argues that the blindness of the Jews is not only partial among the extent of living Jews but is also temporary – there is a time in which the Jews will be raised up. As there is a fulness of the Gentiles to be brought in, so there is time period given in which the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in.
 - 2. And then, fallen Israel will be raised up again. The measure of the contrast has to be taken with respect to the fewness of the Jews who were saved in Paul’s day and who have been saved over the centuries. By contrast with the relatively few Jews who were saved, the idea in Romans 11 is of a great many, most, or even all of the Jews alive following the time of the Gentiles will be saved.
- c. Paul is absolute proof against the complete and utter casting away of the Israelites**
 - i. Paul’s simple rebuttal to the idea that all Israel has been cut off is the fact that he is an Israelite.
- d. God’s covenant faithfulness**

And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD. (Leviticus 26:44-45 KJV)

- i. Lev 26:44 states things at the most dire for Israel, dispersed among the nations. Yet even in this extremity, God states that He will by no means break His covenant. He is the covenant-keeping God. He is the LORD, the infinite, eternal and unchangeable Triune God who works all things according to the counsel of His own will.

Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, [and] the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts [is] his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, [then] the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. (Jeremiah 31:35-36 KJV)

- ii. Jeremiah 31:35-36 makes it clear that God makes it clear that the existence of national Israel is as of the covenant of the day and the night. That is, as long as the earth continues, national Israel will be preserved.
- iii. The promise of preservation of the nation is often spoken of as the preservation of a remnant.
 - 1. Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah (Is 1:9).
 - a. The book of Isaiah opens with God's complaint and views Israel in the grip of God's judgment. Against that backdrop full of the divine displeasure stated in the language of forsaking by the Lord, the unmerited factor of divine preservation shines forth.
 - 2. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness (Isaiah 10:22).
 - a.
 - 3. Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him. (1 Kings 19:18)
 - 4. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (Romans 11:4-5 KJV)
- iv. We rejoice in the covenantal faithfulness of God as Gentiles and do put our utmost trust in it and are as supported by it as Israel
 - 1. The same God who spoke through Malachi, saying "For I am the LORD, I do not change; therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob" (Mal 3:6) has also said to us, "lo, I am with you always" (Matt 28:20).
 - 2. And the same God who said to them, "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you" (Deut 31:6) says to us, "be content with such things as you have for He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you'" (Heb 13:5).
 - 3. And we must be careful to maintain our belief in the covenantal faithfulness of God since our own salvation depends wholly on the same. As Paul wrote elsewhere, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6 KJV). If God is not faithful to His covenant with Israel, how can we be sure He will be faithful to His covenant with us?

2. Blindness, in part, has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles will come in

Verse 25 – For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.

- a. The judicial blindness which came upon Israel was spoken of by the Lord to the prophet Isaiah in his calling. Immediately after Isaiah saw the Lord seated in great majesty upon His throne, and had his sins burned away by a hot coal from the alter, the Lord calls out,

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here [am] I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, "Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not." Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, (Isaiah 6:8-11 KJV)

- b. Here is the judgment of the Lord upon the people of Israel. Is it not just?
 - i. He led them up out of slavery in Egypt into the Promised Land. Along the way they grumbled and murmured against Him at every turn and preferred rather to return to slavery. They put Him to the test ten times and yet did not believe in Him. Nevertheless, He brought them into the land and gave them the land. The people made peace with various of the inhabitants of the land. During the time of the Judges, the people continually fell into sin and were subjugated by the peoples around them. God delivered them time and time again. Then they rejected Him as king over them, and so God gave them a king in His anger and took him away in His wrath. The time of peace under David and Solomon lasted but 40 years and then the kingdom split and there was war between the tribes. The people in the north fell into gross idolatry. Then the people of Judah fell into even more horrifying idolatry.
 1. Hath a nation changed [their] gods, which [are] yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for [that which] doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, [and] hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. (Jeremiah 2:11-13 KJV)
 2. As Paul wrote in Romans 9, they are the Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.
 3. How much of the gospel was given to Israel!?! How much revelation of the HOLINESS and surpassing greatness of the LORD!?! How much wisdom of God is found in the knowledge of God and of man's desperate condition and the promises of the blessed Redeemer?!?
 - ii. Is it not true that to whom much is given, much is required? Jesus spoke of this

1. And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: (Luke 12:47-48)
 2. "And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. "But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you." At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from [the] wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. (Matthew 11:23-25 NKJV)
- iii. What hindered Israel from seeing and repenting?
1. Isn't it the same problems that plague us as well? Unbelief? Pride? Love of the world or the things of the world? These things cause blindness. The cause of our blindness is always in ourselves.
 2. He came in a way that was unexpected by the people. Unbiblical preconceptions, or Biblical ideas taken out of context, wrongly understood, cause blindness. There were plenty of passages which, correctly understood, should have led to a recognition of His coming.
 3. The details of His birth are obscured by the providence of the census and the removal to Nazareth afterwards.
 - a. Therefore, many from the crowd when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is the Prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee? (John 7:40-41) and the Pharisees wrote, "for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet" (John 7:52)
 - b. But the fault is in the presupposition that Jesus was born in Galilee. We must be very careful in our interpretation of Scripture to make sure that we don't import things like that.
 - i. No prophet arises from Galilee
 - ii. This man arose from Galilee
 - iii. This man is no prophet
 - c. The middle statement, that Jesus arose from Galilee is true in one sense but, not altogether accurate since it is also true that He was born in Bethlehem.
 - i. When Herod the king had heard [these things], he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, (Matthew 2:3-5 KJV)

- ii. Nor is it quite true that there is no hint of a prophet arising from Galilee. Matthew applies Isaiah 9:1 to Christ and says it is fulfilled by His living in Nazareth, and Capernaum
- d. In general, I would like to encourage each of us to be quite careful to make sure we don't impose our own ideas on Scripture.
 - i. In general, this is an iterative process. Your theology affects your interpretation. And so, one must be open to allowing Scripture to control your theology by ensuring that clear verses interpret less clear, and this is part of the process of sanctification. One important key is to always be humble and tremble before the Word of God. We must seek to read as much as we can because then we will begin to see the connections. Use concordances and cross references.
 - ii. Scripture has to interpret Scripture and everything needs to be viewed in the Biblical Trinitarian framework. One must always preserve the view of the simple unity of the eternal God in a Trinity of Persons as necessary to not only properly understand Scripture but really for any and every aspect of life.
 - iii. One must seek to know Christ first of all, love Him most of all and above all by finding Him in all the Scriptures. Christ is in all the Scriptures and is the key to understanding them, as we read – as Luke wrote, And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. (Luke 24:27 KJV)
- e. The leaders of Israel and the vast majority of the population completely rejected the Messiah.
 - i. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. (John 1:11)
 - ii. What Stephen said of the Jews of his generation, applies to us as well – Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers [did], so [do] ye. (Acts 7:51 KJV)
- iv. So, Israel's punishment is just and, in fact, when the evidence is weighed, a judicial blindness seems very mild in comparison to what might be expected, for instance by comparison with what happened to Sodom!

Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with [their] eyes, nor understand with [their] heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess [him], lest they should be put out of the synagogue: (John 12:39-42 KJV)

- c. This verse in John references back to the passage where we started this section.
- d. Please note that John states that Isaiah spoke of Christ in majestic glory. “These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.” It was the same Lord Jesus Christ who spoke those words, even as they apply to Himself in His incarnation and down through the centuries.
- e. As in Isaiah, John makes sure to point out that even among the chief rulers there were many who believed on him. There was a remnant even at this time but they lacked fortitude because they feared man rather than God.

3. Recap – themes

- a. God’s glory manifested in Covenantal Faithfulness
 - i. Judicial blindness in part on His people
 - 1. God’s withholding of sovereign grace is seen to be determinative
 - ii. Preservation of a remnant throughout
 - 1. God’s sovereign provision preserves the nation of whom a remnant is converted in each generation
 - 2. Demonstrates God’s sovereign grace in the most difficult of situations
 - iii. Grace to the Gentiles
 - 1. How the church has ebbed and flowed, risen and fallen!
 - 2. How our own spiritual experiences ebb and flow. As with Elijah, one minute we might have an extraordinary spiritual experience of God’s grace and then a short while later have stumbled and find ourselves fallen into doubts and unbelief.
 - iv. Redemption of the Jews by grace
 - 1. We ought to be careful not to have the “older brother syndrome” as set forth in the parable of the prodigal son. If we view the Jewish nation as having wandered off from the Father unto desiring to feed on swine husks, we ought to be like the Father, looking and hastening their return.
 - a. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. (Luke 15:24 KJV)
 - b. For if the casting away of them [be] the reconciling of the world, what [shall] the receiving [of them be], but life from the dead? (Romans 11:15 KJV)
 - 2. We ought to be careful not to have the attitude of the men in the parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard
 - a. Saying, these last have wrought [but] one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. (Matthew 20:12 KJV)
- b. The humbling of men
 - i. Paul urges the Gentiles to humility.

1. God did not need to save any Gentiles. We are grafted in by grace to the one olive tree.
 - a. And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. (Isaiah 49:6)
 2. because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear (Rom 11:20). We stand by faith in the perfect work of Christ
 3. Salvation is by grace through faith and this involves humiliation – first the humiliation of Christ and second the mortification of the flesh.
- ii. The prophesied “fullness of the Gentiles” implies an absolute number and a fixed time. Blindness in part is happened to Israel until that time.
1. Much light has gone out into the Gentile world but the Gentile world has generally rejected the gospel. So, there is no reason why God would not allow that hardness to permeate the Gentile world, corresponding to the testimony of Isaiah regarding the Jews, I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; (Isaiah 65:2)
 2. We should never take for granted the time of continuance of grace upon the Gentile nations. Do not wait for some future time. Do not presume upon the grace of God.
 - a. Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: (Isaiah 55:6 KJV)
 - b. Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: (Luke 13:24-25 KJV)
 - c. Therefore, the Holy Spirit says, Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your heart. Beware, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief. (Heb 3)

4. Then, all Israel will be saved

(Verse 26-27) And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. For this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins. (Romans 11:26-27)

- a. Paul says that he reveals a mystery, that is, something which is packed away in the Old Testament in such a way that it requires New Testament revelation to understand.
 - i. Paul’s mysteries are always things that wouldn’t be clear without the revelation that is provided through him.
 1. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- (1 Corinthians 15:51)

2. To them God willed to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27)
3. For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. (Romans 11:25 KJV)
 - ii. Paul is not simply saying that the sum total of the small number of Jews coming in generation by generation is “all Israel.” That would be the same as revealing what he has already discussed plainly – the idea of the preservation of a remnant is already clear and is far from being a mystery.
 - iii. In light of this, and by virtue of the fact that Paul rejected the idea that Israel had stumbled and fallen so as to remain fallen in verse 11 with abhorrence, we must interpret this verse as teaching a wholesale conversion of the Jewish people following the ingathering of the fulness of the Gentiles.
 - iv. By virtue of the few before, many Jews will be converted to Christ. As my favorite Dutch theologian, Hermann Witsius wrote in his wonderful little book called *The Restoration of the Jews*, As the fall and diminishing of Israel and their casting away are to be understood, so likewise the receiving and saving of them: for here the rules of a just opposition must be observed. But the fall, diminishing and casting away of Israel are to be understood of the generality of the Jewish nation; therefore, the receiving and saving of Israel in like manner.
 - v. Charles Hodge comments “Now, part of the Jewish people is rejected; then, the whole shall be gathered in. The nation, as such, shall acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah, and be admitted into his kingdom.” (Commentary on Romans, v.26)
- b. Paul chooses two relatively obscure verses to support his assertion. This is helpful for us because it makes the more clear verses even more clear. That is, by clarifying an otherwise less clear verse in the OT with his reference in context, he makes the other more obvious verses all the more obvious.
- c. However, the verses Paul chose are wonderful because of their covenantal context. And so, the final aspect of the covenant to be covered in this overview is the concept of the Kinsman Redeemer.
 - i. The Kinsman-Redeemer is shown most clearly in the book of Ruth, where Boaz became the kinsman-redeemer to deliver his close relatives from ruin. Naomi and Ruth returned from Gentile lands and were liable to fall into destitution. Boaz displayed the kindness and mercy of a kinsman redeemer and married Ruth, from whom came the Davidic line, through Obed and Jesse.
 - ii. The kinsman redeemer was the nearest relative who had two purposes in the covenant
 1. To redeem, to do the part of the next of kin in taking a kinsman’s widow, in redeeming from bondage, in redeeming property (see Ruth 4)
 2. To avenge, to be the avenger of blood as next of kin, to seek justice for the wrong done against one’s nearest kin.

- iii. In Paul's use of Isaiah 59:20, God promised to send the Kinsman-Redeemer for Zion; who is Christ. Who else can justly say, "these are mine, for I am the nearest kinsman"?
 - 1. Paul's application of this verse to the time after the fulness of the Gentiles come in is determinative of our understanding. Truly Christ is the God of the Jews and the God of the Gentiles: but He set His love upon Israel, because of the fathers, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, Rom. 9:5.
 - 2. And Paul chose this verse to highlight the perfect covenant faithfulness of God in sending the Kinsman-redeemer to impart salvation to national Israel. He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob by granting repentance to national Israel on a grand scale.

"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. (Jeremiah 31:33 NKJV)

- iv. The church has applied verses such as this and Ezekiel 36 to the Gentile context of the church for so long that we have the tendency to overlook the original language – we have no problem spiritualizing the original meaning to apply to the Gentiles grafted in but we ought not to ignore the original context and the actual language used. Paul believed in the ultimate fulfillment of the promises as made to national Israel.
- v. Here is a wonderful promise --

Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. (Revelation 1:7 ESV)

"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. (Zechariah 12:10 ESV)

- vi. And so all Israel will be converted and saved.

The hand of the LORD came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it [was] full of bones. ... Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, 'Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!' ... "Then say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; ... "Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David [shall be] their prince forever. (Ezekiel 37:1, 11, 21, 25 NKJV)

- 1. The dry bones speak of a distant time from Ezekiel's perspective, not the near future fulfillment of restoration to the land following the Babylonian captivity. The Babylonian captivity was only 70 years and some of those who returned wept

because they remembered the original temple. So, those cannot be said to be dry bones.

2. The people will be gathered from the nations from a dreadful condition.
3. Verses 16-17 mention that there are no tribal divisions among the people of Israel at this time.