

# **ISRAEL AND THE GOSPEL OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

**The Callous on Israel's Heart is Not Total**



## **ROMANS 11:1-36 TEXT, EXPOSITION AND PRACTICAL HELPS**

**West Los Angeles Living Word Christian Center  
Centro Cristiano Palabra Viva  
Dr. Eddie Idefonso, Senior Pastor  
6520 Arizona Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90045  
Email: [Pastoreddie@Wlwlwcc.org](mailto:Pastoreddie@Wlwlwcc.org)  
[WWW.WLALWCC.ORG](http://WWW.WLALWCC.ORG)**

# ISRAEL AND THE GOSPEL OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, [Romans 9:1-11:36](#)

## A. The Callous on Israel's Heart is Not Total—There is a Remnant, [Romans 11:1-10](#)

[\(Romans 11:1-10\)](#) **Introduction:** there is a glorious hope both for Israel and for the world. God's promises are always fulfilled. The callous on *Israel's heart* is not total—there is a remnant. The callous on *any people's heart* is not total—there can be a remnant. God will have His witnesses among all people. People everywhere can be saved if they will turn to God's Son, Jesus Christ.

1. **Israel was disobedient (v.1).**
2. **Proof 1: Paul himself was part of the remnant (v.1).**
3. **Proof 2: God's foreknowledge guarantees a remnant (v.2).**
4. **Proof 3: Elijah foresaw the remnant (v.2-4).**
5. **Proof 4: there is a remnant at this present time—a strong assertion (v.5).**
6. **Proof 5: God's grace assures a remnant (v.6-10).**

### 1. [\(Romans 11:1\)](#) **Israel, Remnant: Israel was disobedient to God, gripped by an obstinate unbelief (cp. [Romans 10:21](#)).**

The nation as a whole did not believe or obey God. They even rejected God's own Son ([John 1:11](#)). How can this fact be reconciled with the fact that Israel is *God's people*? Note that even in this verse they are called "**His people**" ([Romans 11:1](#)).

- a. God had given birth to Israel through Abraham and had made some great promises to the nation through Abraham (see [Romans 9:6](#); see below [Deeper Study # 1—Romans 4:1-25](#) for more discussion).
- b. God had even promised that He would never cast off His people: "**For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance**" ([Psalm 94:14](#)).

In light of this, is it not inconsistent and is it not denying God's Word to teach that Israel is not saved, that Israel is no longer the people of God? To ask the question as Paul words it: "**Has God cast away His people?**" The words "**cast away**" (*apōsato*) means "**to push away, to thrust away, to repel, to repudiate.**" The idea is to *utterly and totally and finally* cast away. **Has God utterly cast away the Jews?** Paul shouts: "**God forbid**" (*mē genoito*). It is impossible! It must never be! It can never be!

God has not broken and violated His Word to Israel. God's promises to Israel did not mean that all Jews were *locked in* to salvation no matter how sinful and disobedient they were.

It did not mean that an unbelieving and disobedient Jew was acceptable to God simply because he had been *born* a Jew. God's promises were intended for those who *believed and obeyed Him*.

The people who believed and obeyed Him have always been "**His people.**" Paul gives five proofs to show that God has not rejected every Jew. God accepts and fulfills His promises to all those who believe and obey Him.

## DEEPER STUDY # 1

**(Romans 4:1-25) Abraham— Jews, the Seed— Justification— Righteousness— New Creation:** Abraham held a unique position in the Jewish nation, for he was the founder of the nation. He was the man whom God had challenged to be a witness to the other nations of the world—a witness to the only living and true God. God had appeared to Abraham and challenged him to leave his home, his friends, his employment, and his country. God made two great promises if Abraham would follow God unquestionably: Abraham would become the father of a new nation, and all nations of the earth would be blessed by his seed (**Genesis 12:1-5; Genesis 13:14-17; Genesis 15:1-7; Genesis 17:1-8, 15-19; Genesis 22:15-18; Genesis 26:2-5, 24; Genesis 28:13-15; Genesis 35:9-12**). (See **Deeper Study #1—John 4:22**.)

Scripture says Abraham did as God requested. He went out not knowing where he went (**Hebrews 11:8**). He completely and unquestionably trusted God and took God at His word.

**Now note:** it was not Abraham's keeping of the law that pleased God. In fact, the law had not yet been given (**Galatians 3:17**). What pleased God and what caused God to justify Abraham was Abraham doing as God had said. Abraham simply *believed* the promise of God that God would give him a new life—in a new nation—with a new people.

### Note several things.

1. Abraham and his "seed" were the only ones to whom God gave the promises. This is emphatically stated (**Romans 4:13-25; Galatians 3:6-16, 26, 29**).

2. Only a promise was given to Abraham (**Romans 4:13-21; Galatians 3:14, 18-21, 29**). No other information whatsoever was given. God did not identify the country nor tell Abraham where he was to go. Neither did God tell Abraham when his wife (Sarah) would bear the seed (the male child) from whom the promised nation would be born. God made a simple promise, and all Abraham had to go on was that simple promise, that is, the sheer Word of God.

3. Only one condition was attached to the promise. Abraham had to believe God. No works whatsoever were involved.

4. Abraham did believe God ([Genesis 12:4-5](#); [Romans 4:3, 11-22](#); [Galatians 3:6](#); [Hebrews 11:8](#)).

5. Abraham was *counted righteous* because he believed God ([Romans 4:3-5, 9-13, 19-22](#); [Galatians 3:6](#); cp. [Genesis 15:6](#)). God did not count him righteous because of who he was or what he had done. He simply believed God. Therefore, God took his faith and *counted* his faith as righteousness (see [Romans 4:1-3](#); [Romans 4:22](#); [Romans 5:1](#)).

6. The proof that Abraham really believed God was that he did what God had said. His faith *preceded* his obedience. He believed God and then he obeyed God. If he had not believed God, he would not have left his home or his employment. He would not have left his familiar surroundings and meaningful relationships and personal attachments. The fact that he did as God asked was evidence that he believed the promise of God.

7. The man who believes God is the man who receives the promises of God ([Romans 4:5-12, 16-17, 23-25](#); [Galatians 3:7-9, 14, 22, 26, 29](#)). Paul argues that neither heritage nor nationality, neither merit nor works, neither the law nor the rules of the law have anything to do with the promises of God ([Galatians 3:6-7](#)). The true children of Abraham are those who believe God—any person of any nation. In fact, God's promise that a nation would be born to Abraham and "**his seed**" was the promise of an eternal nation. This eternal nation is to be of another world, of another dimension of being: the spiritual dimension, a dimension just as real as the physical dimension. But it is to have one distinction: every citizen is to be a believer—one who has believed God and His Word. This is exactly what this passage is saying: "**They who believe are the children of Abraham, the children of God's promise. They are to be blessed along with faithful Abraham. They are to be the citizens of God's Kingdom, of 'the new heavens and the new earth.'**" (Cp. [Hebrews 11:8-18](#); [2 Peter 3:10-14](#).)

## 2. ([Romans 11:1](#)) **Israel, Remnant: proof one is that Paul himself was part of God's remnant.**

God had not totally rejected Israel. There was a remnant of godly and obedient believers in Israel. Paul himself is proof of the glorious fact.

1. Paul was a pure Jew, a true descendant of Abraham, not a mere proselyte; and he was of the elite, of the Benjaminite aristocracy.

2. Paul was part of the remnant of God. He was claiming to be a true child of God, a true son of Abraham, one of the sons whom God had not cast away. Therefore, he himself was proof that God had not cast away His people. (Cp. [Acts 9:1-19](#); [Acts 22:1-6](#); [Acts 26:12-18](#) for Paul's conversion.)

"And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" ([Acts 9:5-6](#)).

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" ([Phil. 3:7-9](#); cp. [Romans 11:3-16](#)).

### **[3. \(Romans 11:2\) Israel, Remnant— God, Foreknowledge: proof two is that God's foreknowledge guarantees a remnant.](#)**

(See below [Deeper Study # 2—Foreknowledge,—Romans 8:29](#) for discussion. Also see below [Deeper Study #3—Acts 2:23](#) for more detailed discussion.) Very simply stated, God Himself guarantees a remnant; He saves those whom He foreknows.

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" ([Acts 15:18](#)).

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" ([Romans 8:29](#)).

"God hath not cast away his people [Israel] whom he foreknew" ([Romans 11:2](#)).

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained [foreknown] before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you" ([1 Peter 1:18-20](#)).

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" ([2 Tim. 2:19](#)).

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied" ([1 Peter 1:2](#)).

## DEEPER STUDY # 2

([Romans 8:29](#)) Note what it is that assures the believer's deliverance from the suffering and struggling of this world.

It is two things.

- a. The foreknowledge of God. The word "**foreknow**" (*proginōskō*) is used three different ways in Scripture.

**It means.....**

1. to know something beforehand, ahead of time.
2. to know something intimately by loving and accepting and approving it.
3. to elect, foreordain, and predetermine something.

The present passage is interpreted differently by scholars. Note that the second and third meanings are much the same. When a person is loved and approved, selection or election is involved. The person becomes a very special or select person.

Again, the point to see is not the pure logic of the theological or philosophical argument. This is not God's purpose in this passage. God's purpose is to assure the believer: the believer is going to be conformed to the image of Christ, and nothing can stop the glorious process. God *foreknew* the fact, saw it even before the world was ever founded. He has always loved and approved the believer, electing and ordaining him from the very beginning.

**"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" ([Acts 15:18](#)).**

**"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" ([Romans 8:29](#)).**

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**"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood**

of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied" ([1 Peter 1:2](#)).

- b. The predestination of God. The word **predestination** (*proōrisen*) means "to destine or appoint before, to foreordain, to predetermine." The basic Greek word (*proorizo*) means "to mark off or to set off the boundaries of something." The idea is a glorious picture of what God is doing for the believer. The boundary is marked and set off for the believer: the boundary of being conformed to the image of God's dear Son. The believer shall be made just like Christ, conformed to His very likeness and image. Nothing can stop God's purpose for the believer. It is predestinated, set, and marked off.

The believer may struggle and suffer through the sin and shame of this world; he may even stumble and fall or become discouraged and downhearted. But if he is a genuine child of God, he will not be defeated, not totally. He will soon arise from his fall and begin to follow Christ again. He is predestinated to be a brother of Christ, to worship and serve Christ throughout all eternity. And Christ will not be disappointed. God loves His Son too much to allow Him to be disappointed by losing a single brother. Jesus Christ will have His joy fulfilled; He will see every brother of His face to face, conformed perfectly to His image. He will have the worship and service of every brother chosen to be His by God the Father. The believer's eternal destiny, that of being an adopted brother to the Lord Jesus Christ, is determined. The believer can rest assured of this glorious truth. God has predestinated him to be delivered from the suffering and struggling of this sinful world.

**"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will" ([Ephes. 1:4-5](#)).**

**"According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom [Christ] we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him" ([Ephes. 3:11-12](#)).**

### **DEEPER STUDY # 3**

**([Acts 2:23](#)) Foreknowledge— Predestination— Determinate Counsel— Jesus Christ, Death: the word "foreknowledge" (*prognosis*) means "to see before; to know beforehand; to see and know the future; to foreordain."**

God is God; therefore He sees the future. No matter how far a person looks into the future, God sees it.

**God knows.....**

- a. exactly what **will** happen, every single event and its consequences.
- b. exactly what **could** happen (but will not), every single possibility and its consequences.

**Therefore God knows.....**

- a. exactly what man **will** do, every single act and its consequences.
- b. exactly what man **could** do (but will not), every single possibility and its consequences.

God is God. He is eternal and omniscient (knowing all). He knows the past, the present and the future. And note: He knows it all eternally, forever.

**God knew.....**

- a. every event of world history before the ***foundation of the world.***
- b. every event of a person's life before the ***foundation of the world*** (cp. [Ephes. 1:4](#)).

Now in light of this, a question arises that is extremely important. If God knew all the terrible consequences of evil and death that would enter and overtake the world, if He knew the world would even kill His Son, why did He go ahead and create the world? Why did He not choose another way to do things?

**In the simplest terms possible, there are at least two reasons.**

1. God wanted a creature, a being with free will. **God created man because God willed to have the *presence of a being who could freely choose*.....**

- a. to love and worship Him.
- b. to obey and fellowship with Him.
- c. to serve and reign with Him.

In His foreknowledge, God knew that some would choose Him and some would reject Him.

**But He was willing to face.....**

- a. the pain and hurt to His heart,
- b. the abuse and shame to His person,
- c. the rejection and rebellion against His will.

God was willing to face all this in order that some might know His glorious mercy and grace and experience all the glory of Himself and heaven.



2. God did not choose another way to create and **deal with man**.....

- a. because the way God created man was the best way: perfect, in a perfect environment, with free choice and will, and in perfect fellowship with God (**cp. [Genesis 2:16-17](#)**).
- b. because the way God deals with man is the best way: in love, in the mercy and grace of His Son. Love is the greatest force on earth. It is the very nature of God Himself (**[1 John 4:8](#)**). Love will change and transform, help and give, win and conquer when nothing else will. Love will cause a person to reach out and help another and even cause a person to sacrifice his life quicker than any other force on earth (**[John 3:16](#); [John 15:13](#); [Romans 5:8](#)**).

Note one other point that is critical, a point that stresses the glorious love and care of God: it is the determinate counsel of God (**cp. [Acts 2:23](#)**).

The word "**determinate**" (*hōrismenē*) means "**pre-determined, appointed, decreed, ordained, planned, purposed.**" It is a plan set within bounds, within a certain boundary. It is a purpose that is set, marked out, determined, decreed to happen.

The word "**counsel**" (*boulē*) means "**to advise, counsel, design, will; to give a piece of advice.**" It carries the force of being willed and determined. Since God knows exactly what would happen in every situation, He plans for the best thing to happen. God takes counsel, puts all things under advisement and chooses the best way.

We may not understand some things that happen nor why they happen the way they do. We may think something else or some other way would have been better.

**But we must remember two things.**

1. We cannot see into the future. No man can. We cannot know what would have happened if another way had been chosen.

**We cannot know what would have happened.....**

- a. to us.
- b. to others.
- c. to the world.

In every situation or event there are many other things that could have taken place. This is true of every situation, whether we call it **good or bad**. Think for a moment.

- a. What would have taken place if the situation had been replaced by some other happening?
- b. What would have taken place if another way had been chosen?
- c. What and how much would be changed for the worse eventually, if not now?

We cannot know. But we can know this: God knows, for He deals with the future as well as the present. God deals with eternity, with the whole view. Therefore, another situation, another way could have changed things for the worse.

**Simply stated.....**

- a. God knows the future, everything that could happen as well as what is best and should happen.
- b. God takes counsel, purposes, determines, plans and chooses the best thing to happen.

2. We who love God and are called according to His purpose know that all things work together for good. How do we know? Because we *do* love God and *are called* according to His purpose.

God knew that we would say "Yes" to Jesus, that we would love and follow Him. Therefore, God called us.

**"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" ([Romans 8:29](#)).**

Note why we are predestinated. This is the key: **"that he [God's Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren."** God has determined that Jesus will have many brothers, many who will live and fellowship with Him as the first Person, the pre-eminent Person throughout the universe.

This is the reason God chooses the very best events and the very best way for us. It is the reason He works all things out for good for believers. God knows all the possibilities; therefore, He is able to take counsel and determine, to plan the very best for us. ***Believe and trust the glorious truth.***

**"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" ([1 Cor. 2:9](#)).**

**"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen" ([Romans 11:33-36](#)).**

**"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" ([Ephes. 3:20](#)).**

**"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" ([Phil. 1:6](#)).**

**"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" ([Psalm 31:19](#)).**

#### **4. (Romans 11:2-4) Israel, Remnant: proof three is that Elijah foresaw the remnant (1 Kings 19:9-18).**

This is proof from the very highest authority among men, the authority of Scripture itself. From the very beginning Scripture very clearly says that not all Israel was saved, but only a remnant truly followed God. This is clearly seen in Elijah's experience. His day was a terrible day of sin and apostasy, and he himself was being marked for death because he refused to stop his preaching of righteousness. In a moment of extreme pressure and uncertainty, he cried out to God in prayer wondering if he was the only godly person left in Israel. God assured Elijah by telling him there were still seven thousand godly believers in the nation. The point is this. In Elijah's day the vast majority of people were as they are today: disobedient and disloyal to God, rejecting and denying God, controlling their own lives and following after the man-made and humanistic gods of this earth. But there *was* a remnant, a few who were loyal and obedient to God. There were only seven thousand; nevertheless there was a remnant, a few who were trusting God to fulfill His promises to them.

##### **Thought 1. Note two revealing facts:**

- a. how many stray away from God and reject Him—how many within a nation, a state, a city, a neighborhood, a family, a religious body!
- b. how God always has His few, His promised remnant who do obey and remain loyal to Him!

**"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" ([Hebrews 12:1](#)).**

**"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 1:13](#)).**

**"Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy" ([Rev. 3:4](#)).**

**"Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" ([Rev. 3:11](#)).**

**"The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity" ([Malachi 2:6](#)).**

**Thought 2.** Note how the image of a nation is determined by the life-style of the majority. The wickedness of the majority in Israel overshadowed the godliness of the few. Even Elijah, the great prophet of God, was unaware of the seven thousand godly scattered throughout the nation. Yet they were there. God will never leave Himself without a witness, nor will He ever leave His people without fellow laborers throughout the world. We may not know about each other, but we can rest assured there are other witnesses scattered around, witnesses who are bearing testimony for the Lord Jesus. God has His remnant, His faithful few.

**"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" ([Proverbs 14:34](#)).**

#### **DEEPER STUDY # 4**

**(Romans 11:2) Israel, Remnant:** Elijah foresaw the remnant in [1 Kings 19:9-18](#). Other prophets also saw the remnant: **Isaiah ([Isaiah 1:9](#); [Isaiah 4:3](#); [Isaiah 11:16](#); [Isaiah 37:4](#))**, **Jeremiah ([Jeremiah 6:9](#); [Jeremiah 23:3](#); [Jeremiah 3:7](#))**, **Ezekiel ([Ezekiel 14:14](#), [20](#), [22](#))**, **Amos ([Amos 9:8-12](#))**, **Micah ([Micah 2:12](#); [Micah 5:3](#))**, **Zephaniah ([Zeph. 2:9](#); [Zeph. 3:12-13](#))**.

#### **5. ([Romans 11:5](#)) Israel, Remnant: proof four is that there is a remnant at this present time.**

This is a strong assertion: **"There is a remnant."** There is no question about the fact. **Note why:** because of the **"election of grace."** If there was a remnant in Israel in the day of Elijah, there is bound to be a remnant of believers today. **Why? Because of grace:** the grace of God in Jesus Christ has now come to earth, and the Spirit of God is actively at work making God's grace known.

**"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" ([Titus 2:11-14](#)).**

**"Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved" ([Romans 9:27](#)).**

## **6. (Romans 11:6-10) Israel, Remnant— God, Grace of: proof five is that God's grace assures a remnant.**

A person is not saved because he merits or works for salvation. No man deserves God's grace. No one deserves being chosen by God for anything. God does not bestow His grace upon a man because a man deserves or earns grace. A man does not secure God's acceptance because he wills or runs after God ([John 1:12](#)). God has mercy upon a man because He is a gracious God.

**If a man was saved because of works, then salvation.....**

- a. would not be by grace (of God) but by works (of man).
- b. would remove grace (God) from the picture and put works (man) in the forefront.

Very simply, God would no longer be necessary, for man would be saving himself. If by some figment of the imagination and scientific work man could save himself by figuring out how to live eternally, then God Himself would not be needed. In fact, neither grace nor work would be necessary, for man would have reached perfection. (The absurdity of such a possibility is clearly seen in the thought.) (See below [Deeper Study # 5, Election—Romans 9:10-13](#) for more discussion.)

**The point is this:** it is God's grace that saves men. Therefore, God will see to it that there is always a remnant of believers in Israel. The vast majority of Jews stumbled and fell at the snare of works ([Romans 11:6](#)), but the callous on Israel's heart is not total. There is a remnant.

**Note two points.**

1. The vast majority of Israel did not obtain righteousness, but the chosen few did.
  - a. Most sought after righteousness, but they failed to secure it because they sought it by works (see [Romans 10:1-3](#)).
  - b. However, the elect have obtained righteousness (see [Romans 10:4](#)).
2. Israel is accused and condemned by Scripture of three terrible things.
  - a. Of being drowsy and condemned to drowsiness ([Isaiah 29:10](#); [Isaiah 6:9](#)).
  - b. Of being worthy of judgment and condemned to judgment ([Psalm 69:22](#)).
  - c. Of being blind and condemned to blindness ([Psalm 69:23](#)).

The picture is that of men sitting and feasting comfortably at a banquet table. They are at ease, secure, and possessed with a sense of safety. In fact they are so comfortable that their safety becomes their ruin. The enemy sneaks upon them unaware.

**Note this:** God is said to be the One who made Israel drowsy and blind and worthy of judgment. This is Scripture's way of stressing what can be called the *judicial blindness and rejection of men* (see below [Deeper Study # 6—Romans 11:7-10](#) for more discussion).

## DEEPER STUDY # 5

**(Romans 9:10-13) Election—Predestination—God, Grace of—Jacob—Esau**: a striking and decisive proof of God's election is seen in the choice of Jacob over Esau. Also, a striking proof that salvation is solely by the grace of God and not by the works and goodness of men is seen in the two sons.

Note **three facts**.

1. The promise to Rebecca was given before Jacob and Esau were born. Jacob's character, behavior, ability, works, and parents had nothing to do with God choosing him. God and God alone chose Jacob to be the child of promise. Jacob's choice was not by his own personal efforts but by the grace of God.

2. The promise was by election, not because of "**any good or evil**" of the children (**Romans 9:11**). Unquestionably, when we accept Scripture for what it says, our minds stagger at this argument. But there is one great truth that must always be remembered: neither Jacob nor Esau *deserved* mercy. Neither one *deserved* being chosen by God for anything. No man *deserves* mercy or purpose from God. God does not have mercy on a man because a man deserves or merits mercy nor because a man wills or runs after God (cp. **John 1:12**; **Romans 9:16**). God has mercy upon a man because He is a merciful God.

3. Election, being children of the promise, is *not of works, but of God who calls men to salvation*. The point is this. Paul is using the two children to get across the same point he stressed with Isaac: **a true child of God is not a person who.....**

- a. belongs to a particular race or institution.
- b. belongs to a particular family or heritage.
- c. works to secure the promise through his own plans and efforts.

God is merciful and He is love—absolutely so. Therefore, God has predestined a line of people to receive His promise of glory. Back in antiquity God chose Jacob, showing His mercy to Jacob. He chose Jacob to continue the line through whom He could send the Savior into the world and through whom He could fulfill all the promises of God to man. The fact that God chose Jacob for the line does not mean in any sense of the word that He condemned Esau for hell.

**"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (**John 3:16**).**

**"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (**John 5:24**).**

"Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" ([John 6:29](#)).

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" ([John 20:31](#)).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" ([Romans 10:9-10](#)).

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" ([1 John 5:1](#)).

## DEEPER STUDY # 6

**(Romans 11:7-10) Judgement— Judicial Blindness and Rejection— Spiritual Abandonment:** note the words "were blinded" and "God hath given them the spirit of slumber" (cp. [Isaiah 39:10](#); [Isaiah 6:9](#); [Psalm 69:22-23](#)). The idea is that God is the One who blinded Israel. However, Scripture clearly says that God does not tempt men, much less cause them to sin ([James 1:13](#)). What does this mean then?

**It means at least two things.**

1. The unbeliever's rejection is willful, always deliberate. The unbeliever does see and hear, yet he refuses to really open his eyes and ears. He refuses to understand. But why does a person act so illogically by rebelling and refusing to understand? Christ answers this question by saying, "**This people's heart is waxed gross**" ([Matthew 13:15](#)). The Greek is "**this people's heart has grown fat [overweight].**" Being fat indicates sensuality and senselessness. To eat and eat, adding weight upon weight, is living after the flesh; and living after the flesh makes no sense at all. It is sensual and senseless. Christ is therefore saying that the unbeliever has become so sensual and senseless that he rebels and refuses to understand the gospel of God.

a. His sensuality is due to worldliness and the lust for the things of the world.

**"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God"** ([Romans 8:5-8](#)).

**"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes,**

and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" ([1 John 2:15-16](#)).

b. His senselessness is due to being deceived by the evil one.

**"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" ([2 Cor. 4:3-4](#)).**

2. The unbeliever experiences a judicial blindness and rejection by God. A person who *deliberately chooses* to be blind to the gospel and to reject Christ is given over to a *just punishment*. God offers His love and salvation of eternal life to a man, but a man has to choose to receive God's offer.

a. Man's unbelief is allowed to roam in the sphere of unbelief and to become obstinate unbelief—if the man continues to blind himself to the truth. God will not violate the will of a man.

b. Man's sin is allowed to roam in the sphere of sin and to become constant sin—if the man continues to blind himself to the truth. God does not violate the will of a man.

A person's rejection leads to *judicial blindness* and to being rejected by God.

**"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" ([Matthew 7:2](#)).**

**"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness....For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections....God gave them over to a reprobate mind" ([Romans 1:24, 26, 28](#)).**

**"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds" ([Romans 2:5-6](#)).**

**"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" ([Galatians 6:7-8](#)).**

**"My Spirit shall not always strive with man" ([Genesis 6:3](#)).**

**"But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would [have] none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels" ([Psalm 81:11-12](#)).**

**"He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" ([Proverbs 29:1](#)).**

**"Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone" ([Hosea 4:17](#)).**



# ISRAEL AND THE GOSPEL OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, [Romans 9:1-11:36](#)

## B. The Callous on Israel's Heart is a Warning to Other Nations, [Romans 11:17-24](#)

[\(Romans 11:17-24\)](#) **Introduction:** men can harden their hearts against God. Men can become so callous against God that the conviction of the Holy Spirit is never felt. Hardness of heart can doom men to an eternity of separation from God. The callous on Israel's heart is a warning to all men everywhere, a warning to the nations of the world.

1. [A parable of the olive tree \(v.17\).](#)
2. [Warning 1: do not be arrogant \(v.18\).](#)
3. [Warning 2: fear complacency and unbelief \(v.19-21\).](#)
4. [Warning 3: take a sharp look at the goodness and severity of God \(v.22\).](#)
5. [Warning 4: the restoration is a probable event \(v.23-24\).](#)

### 1. [\(Romans 11:17\) Israel vs. Gentiles: this is a parable of the olive tree.](#)

The olive tree was the most useful, productive, and valuable tree in Israel; therefore, it was precious to the economy and welfare of the nation. Because of this, the nation's relationship to God was sometimes pictured as an olive tree (cp. [Psalm 52:8](#); [Jeremiah 11:16](#); [Hosea 14:6](#)).

**Now note the exact picture given.** The natural branches refer to Israel, and the wild olive branches refer to Gentile believers. The olive tree refers to God and a right relationship with Him.

1. Some natural branches are broken off and rejected. Some Jews did not and do not believe in Christ; therefore, they are not attached to God. They do not have a right relationship with God. But note: only some of the branches were broken off. Some Jews did accept Christ as the Messiah and did maintain a right relationship with God.

**"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" ([Matthew 21:43](#)).**

**"I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper" ([Luke 14:24](#)).**

**"He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid" ([Luke 20:16](#)).**

**"And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree" ([Romans 11:17](#)).**

**"My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations" ([Hosea 9:17](#)).**

2. Some wild olive branches were grafted into the tree. Note that the words **"and thou"** (*su de*) or **"you"** (*kai su*) is singular. Paul is not speaking to Gentiles as a whole, but to the individual Gentile.

**Note two things.**

a. The Gentile believer is said to have been a *wild olive branch*. The word **"wild"** means that the Gentile was not part of the olive tree (God); he was outside and estranged and alienated from the olive tree (God).

**Therefore, he was.....**

1. part of the wilderness and desert and uncultivated world.
2. growing loose and uncontrolled.
3. useless and worthless.
4. uncared for and unprotected.
5. insect-infested and sour and inferior.

b. The Gentile believer is now said to have been grafted into the olive tree. He is now attached to God, that is, in a right relationship with God; therefore, he now partakes of the root and fatness of the olive tree. Very simply, this means that the believer is fed and nourished by God.

**Thought 1.** The glorious privilege of being nourished by God becomes as much the right of the Gentile as it is of the Jews.

**"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice" ([Genesis 22:18](#)).**

**"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee" ([Psalm 22:27](#)).**

**"All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name" ([Psalm 86:9](#)).**

**"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined" ([Isaiah 9:2](#)).**

**"And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldst 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](#)).**

**"And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" ([Isaiah 60:3](#)).**

"And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" ([Daniel 7:14](#)).

"And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God" ([Hosea 2:23](#)).

"And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God" ([Acts 11:1](#)).

"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" ([Acts 13:48](#)).

"And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe" ([Acts 15:7](#)).

"And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles" ([Acts 18:6](#)).

"Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it" ([Acts 28:28](#)).

"And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name" ([Romans 15:9](#)).

"That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" ([Ephes. 3:6](#)).

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" ([Rev. 11:15](#)).

- c. Note the words "**with them.**" The Gentile believer is grafted into the olive tree *with the natural branches*. This is important to note, for it means there is *only* one family of God, not two. Both the natural branches and the wild branches are part of the same olive tree. The only difference is that the natural branches were the first branches that grew on the olive tree. The wild branches had to be brought or grafted into the tree.

**Thought 1.** Note that some natural branches are broken off because they did not bear fruit.

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" ([John 15:6](#)).

## **2. (Romans 11:18) Arrogance—Pride—Gentile vs. Jew: there is the first warning.**

The Gentile believer must not be arrogant and prideful over the Jews.

**The idea is that.....**

- a. we must not treat them as inferior beings because they deny Christ.
- b. we must not insult and ridicule them because they differ from us as Christian believers.
- c. we must not trample them underfoot because they refuse to believe and be like us.
- d. we must not boast that we know the truth about the Messiah and they do not.
- e. we must not glory in our knowledge of Christ, conveying the idea that we are better than the Jews.

The Gentile believer has no right to elevate himself over the Jews nor over anyone else. The reason is clearly seen. We were wild branches, very wild. **We did not bear the root (Judaism); the root bore us (Christianity).** If it had not been for Judaism, there would be no Christianity. If it had not been for Jewish believers, there would be no Christian believers. If Peter and Paul and the others had not surrendered their lives to preach Christ, then the message of Christ would have never reached us. We must never forget that "**salvation is of the Jews**" ([John 4:22](#)).

**Thought 1.** Every Gentile believer owes a debt to Jewish people. We must carry the gospel to the Jews even as some of the earliest Christian Jews brought the gospel to us.

**"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" ([Romans 1:16](#)).**

**"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" ([Matthew 28:19](#)).**

**Thought 2.** All boasting and arrogance, pride and conceit against the Jews is wrong. It is wrong to elevate ourselves above others; in fact, it is even wrong to think that we are *better* or *higher* than anyone else.

**"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" ([Romans 12:3](#)).**

**"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" ([Romans 12:16](#)).**

"And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness" ([Romans 2:19](#)).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" ([Phil. 2:3-4](#)).

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" ([James 4:10](#)).

"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil" ([Proverbs 3:7](#)).

"Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right" ([Proverbs 16:8](#)).

"Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" ([Isaiah 5:21](#)).

### **3. (Romans 11:19-21) Unbelief— Complacency— Gentile vs. Jew: there is the second warning.**

The Gentile believer must fear complacency and unbelief. (See [Hebrews 3:7-19](#)).  
**There is the danger of Gentile believers thinking.....**

- a. that they are more *acceptable* to God because they have replaced the Jews as the true followers of God.
- b. that they are safe and secure in Christianity because Christianity is the religion that acknowledges God's Son.

However, we must always remember what this Scripture is saying. Israel was not rejected by God so that we, the Gentiles, might be saved. Israel was rejected by God because of unbelief. God did not and does not reject one people in order to save another people. God reaches out to every nation of people longing for all to be grafted into Him.

God accepts a person because the person believes in His Son Jesus Christ. The Jews did not believe; some Gentiles did believe. A Gentile believer stands attached to the olive tree by faith, not because of any goodness or merit or value within himself.

**Now note:** the Gentile believer must guard against complacency, against feeling safe and secure and more acceptable because he stands in Christianity, the religion that acknowledges God's Son. The Gentile believer must not be high minded, but rather fear. He must fear, for God is less likely to spare the unnatural branches than He was the natural branches. The warning is strong: "**Take heed lest He also spare thee not**" ([Romans 11:21](#)).

**Thought 1.** If God spared not the Jews because of their unbelief, how much more will He not spare us. The Jews were the natural branches; we are the unnatural branches.

- a. The Jews had the godly heritage; we had the wild, ungodly heritage.
- b. The Jews had the fathers, the followers of the only living and true God; we had heathen, polytheistic fathers, fathers who created humanistic gods to suit their own fancies.
- c. The Jews had the Word of God and the Savior; we had neither.
- d. the Jews had the prophets of God; we had the false humanistic priests of the world.

In light of this and of so much more depravity, we must guard against self-complacency and conceit. We must walk in the fear of God and humility, fearing unbelief lest we too be *broken off* ([Romans 11:17](#)).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him" ([John 3:36](#)).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" ([John 8:24](#)).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" ([Hebrews 3:12](#)).

"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" ([Hebrews 4:11](#)).

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" ([1 Peter 1:17](#)).

"And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" ([Deut. 10:12](#)).

"Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread" ([Isaiah 8:13](#)).

#### **4. (Romans 11:22) Judgment— God, Goodness of: there is the third warning.**

The Gentile believer must take a sharp look at the goodness and severity of God.

1. The severity of God is seen in the spiritual fall of Israel. The word "**severity**" (*apotomia*) means "**abrupt, sharp, rough, cut off.**" The Jews had committed the very sins the Gentiles are being warned about in this passage.

**The Jews.....**

- a. had developed an attitude of arrogance and boasting toward other people, refusing to carry the Word of God to them.

- b. had felt highminded and complacent, feeling safe and secure, thinking themselves to be more acceptable to God than other people.

In addition to these gross sins, the Jews had rejected God's prophets down through the centuries until they eventually killed God's very own Son. In one brief word, their sin was *unbelief*. The vast majority of the Jews never did believe God, not to the point that they loved God supremely. As a result, the judgment and severity of God fell upon them (see above [Deeper Study # 6, Judgment—Romans 11:7-10](#) for more discussion).

**"You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" ([Amos 3:2](#)).**

**"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" ([Luke 12:47](#)).**

**"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" ([John 15:6](#)).**

**"And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just. What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin" ([Romans 3:8-9](#)).**

**"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" ([Hebrews 10:29](#)).**

**"And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible" ([Isaiah 13:11](#)).**

**"But I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings, saith the LORD: and I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and it shall devour all things round about it" ([Jeremiah 21:14](#)).**

**"And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil" ([Zeph. 1:12](#)).**

2. The goodness of God is seen in the grafting in and acceptance of the Gentiles by God. But note the stress of this point: the goodness of God is given only to those who continue in God's goodness. A person who knows about the love of God must walk and live in God's goodness. The word "**continue**" (*epimenō*) means "**to remain, be steadfast, abide, persevere, endure.**" The idea is both *position* and *relationship*.

**The believer.....**

- a. is positioned in the goodness of God.
- b. is related to the goodness of God.

It is the picture of a person who is remaining and abiding in the house of God's goodness. A Gentile believer must continue and abide, endure and persevere in the goodness of God, or else he too will be cut off (*ekkopēsē*) just as the Jews were cut off ([Romans 11:17](#)).

**"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" ([Romans 2:4](#)).**

**"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" ([John 3:16](#)).**

**"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" ([Romans 5:8](#)).**

**"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace [goodness]" ([Ephes. 1:7](#)).**

**"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" ([2 John 9](#)).**

## **5. ([Romans 11:23-24](#)) Israel, Restoration: there is the fourth warning.**

The Gentile believer must know that Israel's restoration is a probable event.

1. The restoration of Israel is conditional. Note the word "if"—"if they abide not still in unbelief." Genuine belief is the condition for salvation. A person has to run from his unbelief to belief in order to be grafted in and accepted by God. No person comes to God unless he believes in His Son Jesus Christ.

**"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" ([John 3:16](#)).**

**"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" ([Acts 3:19](#)).**

**"Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the LORD our God" ([Jeremiah 3:22](#)).**

2. God is able to graft the Jews back into the olive tree.

**Two things are meant by this.**



- a. God is able because of His enormous love. God loves everyone and will forgive any person for any thing if that man will turn from his life of sin and unbelief. God will accept any person who approaches Him through His Son Jesus Christ.

**"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy" ([Micah 7:18](#)).**

**"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" ([Titus 3:4-7](#)).**

- b. God is able because of His enormous knowledge and power. God is God; therefore, He has unlimited knowledge and power. He knows when a man's heart is subject to Him and moving toward Him. He knows just when to move upon a person's heart, and He can arrange circumstances that will cause the person to turn to Him. Therefore, when the time comes, He has the power to stir Jewish hearts to turn to Him in large numbers. The valley of dry bones can be resurrected by the power of God ([Ezekiel 37:1](#)).

**"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" ([Romans 16:25](#)).**

**"For with God nothing shall be impossible" ([Luke 1:37](#)).**

**"That ye may know....what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" ([Ephes. 1:18-20](#)).**

**"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" ([Ephes. 2:1](#)).**

**"Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all" ([1 Chron. 29:12](#)).**

3. The grafting in of the natural branches (the Jews) is much more likely than the calling of the Gentiles was. **Note the words "much more."** Paul is confident that God is not only able, but God will graft the Jews back into the olive tree. Paul proclaims that the Jews will turn to Christ and be restored into a right relationship with God (see [Romans 11:16](#)).

**"Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved" ([Romans 9:27](#)).**

"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" ([Romans 11:5](#)).

"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. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" ([Romans 11:25-26](#)).

"That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee" ([Deut. 30:3](#)).

"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" ([Isaiah 1:9](#)).

"And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase" ([Jeremiah 23:3](#)).

"For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart" ([Jeremiah 24:6-7](#)).

"For thus saith the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither" ([Jeremiah 31:7-8](#)).

"Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it" ([Ezekiel 14:22](#)).

"So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army" ([Ezekiel 37:10](#)).

"I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel" ([Micah 2:12](#)).

"Therefore as I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them" ([Zeph. 2:9](#)).

# ISRAEL AND THE GOSPEL OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, [Romans 9:1-11:36](#)

## C. The Restoration of Israel and Its Surety, [Romans 11:25-36](#)

[\(Romans 11:25-36\)](#) **Introduction:** Israel's history is a surety. God loves man with an infinite love, and God's love is unchangeable. Therefore, any person can be restored to God if the person will call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and ask Christ to save him. This is clearly seen in the history of Israel. Israel's restoration is a surety, and as such, Israel stands as a prime example of the unchangeable love of God toward man.

1. **Surety 1: God's great revelation about the Jews (v.25-26).**
2. **Surety 2: the promise of Scripture—God's Deliverer, Jesus Christ, shall turn Israel (v.26-27).**
3. **Surety 3: God's pleasure with Israel's forefathers (v.28-29).**
4. **Surety 4: the believer's mercy and witness to the Jews (v.30-31).**
5. **Surety 5: God's holiness and mercy (v.32).**
6. **Surety 6: God's glorious plan for the world (v.33-36).**

### 1. [\(Romans 11:25-26\)](#) **Israel, Restoration— Blindness: the first surety is God's great revelation about Israel.**

The revelation comes from Paul.

Note **three significant** facts.

1. The revelation had been an unknown mystery until Paul. The word "**mystery**" (*mustērion*) in the Bible is not used as most men use the word, as something mysterious or difficult to understand.

*A Biblical mystery means that.....*

- a. something that was unknown is now revealed.
- b. something that was hidden is now made known.
- c. something that was a secret is now told.

The future of Israel is now revealed and made known to men. **Note exactly why God revealed the future of Israel:** that we not be ignorant of Israel's future, and that we not be wise in our own conceits or imaginations.

**This last reason can mean two things.**

- a. Gentiles become guilty of looking down upon the Jews because the Jews are so different from the rest of us. They have rejected Jesus Christ and are opposed to Christianity to such a degree that they remain almost exclusively among themselves. Gentiles face the danger of becoming puffed up, of thinking that they are more acceptable to God because they look with favor upon Jesus Christ

and are more open in professing Him. There is the danger of being prideful and arrogant, of lording it over the Jews.

- b. A Gentile, especially a Gentile believer, can begin to think that his idea of Israel's destiny is the correct idea and that he and the followers of his position are the persons who have a full understanding of the truth. All other understandings are incorrect. There is the danger of becoming "wise in [our] own conceits."

2. Israel's blindness is only partial, only **"in part."** There were Jewish believers who followed Christ in His day and there have been Jewish believers who have followed Christ down through the centuries. The blindness and hardness of Israel to the gospel is not total; it is only partial. Granted, just as Scripture says, so many Jews have rejected and still do reject Christ that it is as though *all Israel as a nation* has stumbled and fallen over Him (cp. [Romans 11:8-9](#)). However, there have been and always will be some Jews who believe. Israel's blindness is only partial.

3. Israel's blindness is only temporary.

**Two statements clearly show this.**

- a. Israel's blindness is only **"until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."** **Note a significant point. It does not matter how a person interprets this clause,** when the fullness of the Gentiles is completed, *Israel's blindness will be removed* according to Scripture. Just what **"the fullness of the Gentiles"** means is open to different interpretations, but it does not change what is to happen to Israel. It only affects *when* the blindness is to be removed from Israel. Israel's blindness is to continue *only* until the fullness of the Gentiles comes. **Now what does this event mean?**

**The fullness of the Gentiles can mean.....**

- a. a certain number of Gentile converts are to be saved, to fill up the **"cut off branches of Israel"** ([Romans 11:17-21](#)).
- b. the end of the Gentile age, a time when the emphasis of salvation will no longer be upon the Gentiles, but upon the Jews.
- c. the end of the Gentile age, a time when God will rapture the church (all believers) and cause a revival among the Jews who will then become the primary witnesses for Him.

**The point is worth repeating.** No matter what the phrase **"the fullness of the Gentiles"** *means*, it does not change the event of Israel's revival. The blindness of Israel will be removed.

- b. **"All Israel shall be saved."** The fact could be stated no clearer:
  - 1. Israel's blindness is only temporary.
  - 2. The restoration of Israel is a surety.
  - 3. Israel shall experience a revival.
  - 4. Israel shall turn to God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Thought 1.** There is hope for every person.

**Note two critical facts:**

- 1) A person's blindness to the Lord Jesus Christ is only partial. As long as a person is alive, he can still turn to Christ.
- 2) A person's blindness is temporary *only* if the person turns to the Lord Jesus Christ. Unless a person believes and commits his life to Christ, his blindness becomes permanent, and he is lost forever.

**"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" ([John 3:19](#)).**

**"[God] who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" ([Col. 1:13-14](#)).**

**"Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" ([2 Tim. 1:10](#)).**

**"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" ([1 John 1:5-7](#)).**

## **DEEPER STUDY # 7**

**([Romans 11:25-26](#)) Israel, Restoration:** there are many reasons for taking this passage at its face value, that is, as a prediction of the Jewish people's conversion as a nation.

1. The whole context favors this view. The conversion of the Jews as a probable event has been described in the plainest and simplest of terms.

2. The nation was rejected, not as individuals but as a community or nation. Therefore, it is only natural to say that when God speaks of a restoration, He is speaking not only of individuals being restored, but of the community or nation as being restored ([Romans 11:11, 15](#)).

3. Paul speaks of a great event, something that will attract universal attention.

4. Paul says this is a "**mystery**." The gradual conversion of a few Jews would be no mystery. When speaking of the mystery of the Gentiles ([Ephes. 1:9](#); [Ephes. 3:4](#)), Paul is speaking of the Gentiles as a community being admitted into the church of God. Therefore, it is only natural to assume that when Paul speaks of the mystery of the Jews, he is speaking of a great event, of a great movement of Jews into Christ.

5. The words "all Israel" ([Romans 11:26](#)) cannot mean the spiritual Israel. Such an interpretation would do violence to the use of the word "Israel" throughout this whole context. It simply means Israel as a nation, as a community of people. This is also clear from the warnings that are given throughout this passage to both Gentile and Jew.

However, "all Israel" looks at the nation en masse. It does not necessarily have to mean every single individual. Note a very significant fact: when the nation became hardened, Scripture speaks of the nation, that is, of all Israel being rejected. However, not every single person was rejected. There were a few individuals who still believed and who comprised a remnant (**cp. [Romans 11:1-10](#)**). Every single individual was not lost, so the same is probably true when the nation is restored. There will be a large number of Jews who will become open and tender to the gospel, but not necessarily every individual. In one simple statement: Israel will be open to the gospel just as the Gentiles are open to the gospel. Many Jews will begin to be saved just as many Gentiles are now saved.

**"That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee" ([Deut. 30:3](#)).**

**"And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city" ([Isaiah 1:26](#)).**

**"And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" ([Isaiah 11:12](#)).**

**"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem" ([Isaiah 27:13](#)).**

**"Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken" ([Isaiah 33:20](#)).**

**"Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins" ([Isaiah 40:2](#)).**

**"Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders" ([Isaiah 49:22](#)).**

"And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee" ([Isaiah 60:10](#)).

"And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase" ([Jeremiah 23:3](#)).

"For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart" ([Jeremiah 24:6-7](#); cp. [Jeremiah 31:7-8](#)).

"Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it" ([Ezekiel 14:22](#)).

"For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the first fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things" ([Ezekiel 20:40](#)).

"But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come" ([Ezekiel 36:8](#)).

"So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army" ([Ezekiel 37:10](#)).

"I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel" ([Micah 2:12](#)).

"Therefore as I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them" ([Zeph. 2:9](#)).

"Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem" ([Zech. 1:17](#)).

**"And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and will hear them" ([Zech. 10:6](#)).**

**"And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited" ([Zech. 14:11](#)).**

**"Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years" ([Malachi 3:4](#)).**

## **2. (Romans 11:26-27) Israel, Restoration— Forgiveness of Sin: the second surety is the promise of Scripture.**

God's great Deliverer, Jesus Christ Himself, shall turn Israel. Scripture gives a glimpse into the future of Israel's restoration in this verse, but note that it is only a glimpse. Just how Israel will be restored is not discussed in this passage.

**Only two major things are given.**

**1.** Some great manifestation of Christ the Deliverer will cause Israel to turn to the gospel.

**"For I say unto you [Israel], Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" ([Matthew 23:39](#)).**

**"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you [Israel]: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" ([Acts 3:19-21](#)).**

**"Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" ([Romans 11:25](#)).**

**"But their minds [Israel] were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it [Israel] shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away" ([2 Cor. 3:14-16](#)).**

**"Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad" ([Psalm 14:7](#)).**



"And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds' seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever" ([Isaiah 59:20-21](#)).

"By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged" (literally to take away their sin) ([Isaiah 27:9](#)).

"I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" ([Jeremiah 31:31-34](#)).

"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days" ([Hosea 3:4-5](#)).

"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born" ([Zech. 12:10](#)).

2. The great Deliverer, Jesus Christ, **will do two things** for Israel.
  - a. Jesus Christ will turn away ungodliness from Israel (cp. [Isaiah 27:9](#)).
  - b. Jesus Christ will fulfill God's covenant with Israel: He will take away their sins (cp. [Isaiah 59:21](#); [Isaiah 27:9](#)).

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" ([Acts 2:38](#)).

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" ([Acts 5:31](#)).

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" ([Acts 13:38](#)).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" ([Ephes. 1:7](#)).

"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" ([Isaiah 43:25](#)).

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee" ([Isaiah 44:22](#)).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy

upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" ([Isaiah 55:7](#)).

### 3. ([Romans 11:28-29](#)) Israel, Restoration: the third surety is God's pleasure with Israel's forefathers.

1. The statement "**they [the Jews] are enemies for your sakes**" sounds as though God predestinated Israel's rejection. However, God does not cause sin ([James 1:13-14](#)); God does not cause people to reject His Son and His will. What the statement means is this: the word "**enemy**" (*echthroi*) has both an active and passive meaning. It means either hostile or hated by, and it means either hating or being hated. It is possible that in this particular passage it is to be read both ways. The Jews were hostile to God; they had refused the offer of God's righteousness in Jesus Christ, and they had refused to be the missionary force for God's Son. Therefore, they had aroused God's displeasure. They hated God; consequently, God was displeased with them.

Note that God did what He had to do. He turned to the Gentiles. Israel had refused to be the missionary force for God's Son, so God had to turn to the Gentiles. Among the Gentiles, God found a receptive people. The Gentiles accepted the offer of God's righteousness in Jesus Christ, and they have become the missionary force for Christ to the world. It is critical to remember something, however: this does not mean that every Gentile is saved. Most are not, but a fair number of them have accepted and still do accept Jesus Christ.

We must remember this: in this passage God is speaking *nationally, not individually*.

- a. A few Jews do accept Christ as the Messiah, but the number is small. The number is so small that God can say that Israel as a nation has rejected Christ.
- b. A far greater number of Gentiles accept Christ as their Savior. However, as is clearly evidenced by the unholy lives of most Gentiles, the majority reject Christ; but the number who do accept Him is fairly large. It is large enough for God to say that the Gentiles as a *community* do accept His offer of salvation in Christ.

**Thought 1.** The point is that God is speaking *nationally, not individually*. And we must remember this, for it is absolutely essential for everyone to make a *personal decision* to receive Christ and to follow Him by living a pure life.

**"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" ([Titus 2:11-14](#)).**

2. The statement "**they [the Jews] are beloved for the fathers' sakes**" shows that God still loves Israel. As a people they are still very precious to Him. How can this be when they have been so hostile to God's Son, Jesus Christ, and against the missionary force of God's Son?

There are **two reasons** why God still loves Israel.

- a. The forefathers of Israel were a godly people, a people of unusual faith in God. There were people such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Deborah, Ruth, Elijah—the list could go on and on. As Scripture says:

**"And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth" ([Hebrews 11:32-38](#)).**

Such godly men and women knew God—knew Him personally and intimately—and God would never forget a people who loved Him so greatly. Keep this in mind as well: godly people are a praying people, a people who pray for their families and neighbors, for their nation and world. And God hears and answers the prayers of His people. God would never turn His back upon Israel for this reason alone.

- b. There is a second reason why God still loves Israel: God Himself is ***unchangeable in His gifts and calling***. God called and promised some very special gifts to the forefathers of Israel, **and God is unchangeable; therefore.....**
  1. every purpose for which God called Israel shall be fulfilled in the lives of many Jews.
  2. every gift God promised Israel shall be given to many Jews.

**The point is striking.** God does not change His mind. He is constant, immutable, unchangeable. He shall perfectly fulfill His calling and gifts to Israel.

"The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations" ([Psalm 33:11](#)).

"But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end" ([Psalm 102:27](#)).

"Thy name, O LORD, endureth for ever; and thy memorial, O LORD, throughout all generations" ([Psalm 135:13](#)).

"Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations" ([Psalm 145:13](#)).

"For I am the LORD, I change not" ([Malachi 3:6](#)).

"Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail" ([Hebrews 1:12](#)).

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" ([Hebrews 13:8](#)).

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" ([James 1:17](#)).

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" ([Rev. 1:8](#)).

#### **4. (Romans 11:30-31) Israel, Restoration: the fourth surety is the believer's mercy and witness to the Jews.**

These two verses are speaking historically. Very simply, history shall be repeated.

- a. In times past—before Christ ever came—the Gentiles did not know and obey God, but the Jews did.
- b. Eventually, the Jews rejected God which is ultimately seen in their killing God's Son, Jesus Christ. They, too, failed to believe (obey God).
- c. Therefore, God turned to the Gentiles.

Now note: if we came to know God through the unbelief of the Jews, how much more shall the Jews be shown mercy through the mercy of the Gentiles!

**To word the matter another way.....**

- a. if mercy resulted from unbelief, how much more shall mercy result from mercy?
- b. if mercy to the Gentiles came through the unbelief of the Jews, how much more shall mercy to the Jews come through the mercy of the Gentiles?

**The point seems to be this:** we truly know the mercy of God through Jesus Christ our Lord; therefore, we want the world to experience the same mercy and forgiveness of sins. In particular, we feel indebted to the Jews, the people through whom God gave us His Word, His Son, and His promises.

Therefore, Scripture predicts that the evangelistic efforts to reach the Jews will someday bear fruit. The Jews will be reached by the mercy of God; they shall believe and obey Jesus Christ as Lord. The Jews shall be restored into the favor of God.

**Thought 1.** Every believer who knows the mercy of God should share the mercy of God. God hates exclusiveness, prejudice, partiality. The world desperately needs the gospel, the Jew as well as the Gentile, and God demands that His mercy be shared with the world.

**"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" ([John 20:21](#)).**

**"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" ([2 Cor. 5:19-20](#)).**

**"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" ([1 John 1:3](#)).**

## **5. ([Romans 11:32](#)) Israel, Restoration: the fifth surety is God's holiness and mercy.**

The word "concluded" (*sunekleisen*) means "to shut up in a place, to close up, to lock up." This is an unusual idea: God has taken men, both Jews and Gentiles, and shut them up to unbelief (*apeitheian*) or disobedience. This is the judicial judgment of God (see above [Deeper Study # 6—Romans 11:7-10](#) for more discussion; see below [Deeper Study # 8—John 12:39-41](#) for more discussion). It is the picture of God using sin and events for good. God takes sin and works it out for the good of the world. Man has chosen sin, choosing to go his own way in life, so God allows man to do his own thing. God locks man up in his own world of selfishness, allowing man to roam around in his world of sin. **Why?** So that man's true nature of sinfulness will be clearly seen, and thereby cause the honest and thinking man to seek God.

God wishes and will have mercy upon all, both Jew and Gentile; but before men can come to God, **they must confess two things:**

- a. that they are sinful and dying creatures in desperate need of God.
- b. that God exists and that He will have mercy upon the person who diligently seeks Him.

**Now note:** all men, both Jew and Gentile, are shut up in their world of sin. Why? That God may have mercy upon both. The holiness and love of God assures that the Jews will be saved and restored to the mercy of God. All that is needed is for the Jews to begin seeking God. God will have mercy upon any who genuinely seek Him.

**"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" ([Hebrews 11:6](#)).**

**"But if from thence [the world] thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" ([Deut. 4:29](#)).**

**"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" ([2 Chron. 7:14](#)).**

**"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" ([Psalm 103:17](#)).**

**"For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips" ([Proverbs 8:7](#)).**

**"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" ([Jeremiah 29:13](#)).**

**"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not" ([Lament. 3:22](#)).**

**"And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" ([Joel 2:13](#)).**

**"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy" ([Micah 7:18](#)).**

## **DEEPER STUDY # 8**

**([John 12:39-41](#)) Unbelief—Judicial Judgment:** this passage says that God blinds and hardens man. A man cannot reject Jesus Christ and expect matters to stay as they are. No matter how mild a man's rejection is, the matter is serious to God. A man may reject Jesus in thought only and never say a word or commit a public (visible) sin against Him. But no matter how mild the rejection, God still cannot overlook the rejection of His Son. He loves His Son too much and His Son has done too much for man. His Son has taken the sin of man upon Himself and borne the punishment for man. His Son died for man. Jesus has done too much for God to by-pass man's unbelief and rejection. When a man has the chance to see and open his heart, but chooses not to look and closes his heart, that man suffers the consequences.

Another way to say the same thing is this: when God has loved the world and done so much for man, man cannot deny God's Son and expect to suffer no consequences.

The consequences and results of unbelief are clearly spelled out, and they are terrible consequences, an awful fate for a person to suffer.

- a. God blinds the eyes of the unbeliever.
- b. God hardens the heart of the unbeliever.
- c. God condemns the unbeliever to be lost.
- d. God condemns the unbeliever to be unhealed.
- e. The unbeliever never sees the glory of the Lord.

**Now for an important question:** Does this mean that God causes the unbelief of a man and condemns that man to be lost before he is ever born? **No! Scripture shouts a thousand "No's!"**

**A man is not lost.....**

- a. apart from his will.
- b. against his will.

A man is lost only because he chooses to have nothing to do with God and to be lost. What Scripture teaches is that God has set certain laws in the universe...

- a. laws both within man and within nature.
- b. laws which go into motion and take effect when man acts.

If a man does something, certain things will happen. If a man does something else, then something else will happen. Scripture teaches that unbelief is governed by these laws.

1. There is the law of sowing and reaping. If a man sows unbelief, he reaps unbelief.

**"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" ([Galatians 6:7-8](#)).**

2. There is the law of measure. If a man measures unbelief, he is measured unbelief. Whatever a man measures, he receives.

**"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" ([Matthew 7:2](#)).**

3. There is the law of seeking. If a man seeks, he finds. The harder he seeks, the more he finds.

**"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" ([Matthew 7:7](#)).**

4. There is the law of willful hardness and impenitence. The more a man hardens himself and refuses to repent, the harder and more impenitent

he becomes. In fact, a man can become so hardened that he never repents, never even thinks about repenting. Such a man stores up wrath against himself.

**"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds" ([Romans 2:5-6](#)).**

5. There is the law of being "fitted" for destruction. The more a man refuses to believe, the more he is "fitted" and conditioned for destruction. Note that a man through his unbelief prepares and conditions himself.

**"What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" ([Romans 9:22](#)).**

6. There is the law of God's patience. God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Therefore, God allows the world to continue, allowing more and more to be saved. He endures with patience the unbelievers who harden themselves and store up wrath against themselves in order that some might be saved and given the privilege of knowing the riches of His grace ([Romans 2:5](#); cp. [Romans 9:22-23](#)).

**"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation....But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" ([2 Peter 3:3-4, 8-9](#)).**

7. There is the law of God's supreme purpose. God's supreme purpose is that His Son "be the first among many brothers" ([Romans 8:29](#)). God wants Jesus to have many brothers—brothers who will be conformed to His image and count Him as the Elder Brother: as the first and most honored, as the One who is to be worshipped and served eternally.

**"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be**



**conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" ([Romans 8:28-29](#)).**

In order for Christ to gain more and more brothers who will honor Him, God is willing for unbelievers to continue on in their unbelief, ever hardening themselves under the just and judicial laws He has established. Men are allowed to go on in their unbelief, condemning themselves under the just and judicial laws of the universe.

These laws are what men call *the law of conditioning*. Men would simply say that the more a man does anything, the more he conditions himself to do that thing. The more he does it, the more it becomes a habit. (Cp. smoking, eating, or anything else.) This is what the Bible is saying: if a man hardens his mind and heart to the truth, he becomes conditioned more and more against the truth. His openness and sensitivity to Jesus Christ dwindles more and more, and it can dwindle so much that it is gone forever. Therefore, the more a man rejects Christ, the more he decreases his sensitivity and chance of ever accepting Christ.

What Scripture teaches can be summarized under what might be called *the law of judicial blindness and rejection*. This simply means that the person who rejects God's Son chooses to be blind and to harden his heart. Therefore, he is given over to a *just punishment*. He is justly blinded and hardened (conditioned) more and more.

**A man is led to a judicial blindness and rejection by God through.....**

- a. obstinate unbelief
- b. constant sin
- c. continued rejection

God's Word plainly says that there are conditioning laws within man and nature, and it is a fact that unbelievers have to live under these laws the same as believers. God cannot play favorites; He cannot yank unbelievers out from under the just and judicial laws of the universe and force them to believe, taking away their wills. God has to allow all men to live under the same laws and to make the choices of life day by day. Believers have made the choice to follow God's Son. Unbelievers have made the choice not to follow God's Son.

There can be no violation of their wills: unbelievers have to be allowed to go on in their unbelief, ever hardening themselves under the just laws of God's will established in the universe. As Jesus Christ clearly said, the words of judgment are already spoken: they are set up as God's law and will within the universe.

It is the law and will of God that Jesus Christ proclaimed, and it will be His words that will judge men in the end time ([John 12:48](#)).

In addition to the above laws, compare the following verses.

"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness...For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections....God gave them over to a reprobate mind" ([Romans 1:24, 26, 28](#). See outline—" [Romans 1:24-32](#) and notes—" [Romans 1:24-32](#).)

"My Spirit shall not always strive with man" ([Genesis 6:3](#)).

"But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would [have] none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels" ([Psalm 81:11-12](#)).

"He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" ([Proverbs 29:1](#)).

"For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made" ([Isaiah 57:16](#)).

"Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone" ([Hosea 4:17](#)).

## **6. ([Romans 11:33-36](#)) Israel, Restoration: the sixth surety is God's glorious plan for the world.**

Note **four points**.

1. God's glorious plan for the world involves **four great acts of God**.
  - a. His infinite wisdom and knowledge: knowing how to do everything perfectly; knowing how to create and arrange, order and govern everything so that all things work out perfectly. Note how God's wisdom and knowledge are said to be deep and rich: "**O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.**"

**God's wisdom and knowledge are so deep and rich.....**

1. that angels desire to look into them ([1 Peter 1:13](#)).
  2. that they are infinite ([Ephes. 3:18](#)).
  3. that they are too wonderful for man ([Psalm 139:6](#). This one verse alone shows just how great God's mercy is toward us.)
  4. that they include thoughts more numerous than the grains of sand in the world ([Psalm 139:17-18](#)).
- b. His infinite judgments and ways: His judgment in planning and deciding everything, and His ways in executing His purposes and decisions.

Note that His judgment and ways are said to be unsearchable and past finding out.

1. Secret things belong to God ([Deut. 29:29](#)).
2. God is glorified by His infinite judgments and ways ([Proverbs 25:2](#)).
3. The great things of God are unsearchable and without number ([Job 5:9](#); [Job 9:10](#)).
4. Man cannot discover God by searching ([Job 11:7](#)).
5. There is no searching of God's understanding ([Isaiah 40:28](#)).

2. No man can grasp God's plan. No man can know the mind of the Lord; no man can be a counsellor to God. **Note two significant points.**

a. No man can grasp God's plan. Scripture makes this abundantly clear.

**"[Jesus Christ] who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting" ([1 Tim. 6:16](#)).**

**"Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" ([Job 11:7](#)).**

**"He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end" ([Eccles. 3:11](#)).**

b. Believers do, however, have *the mind of Christ*. This does not mean that believers understand God and His ways perfectly, but it does mean that God reveals Himself and the truth to believers—enough of Himself and His ways to save them from sin, death, judgment, and hell.

**"For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ" ([1 Cor. 2:16](#)).**

**"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" ([1 Cor. 2:12](#)).**

**"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" ([John 7:16-17](#)).**

**"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" ([John 8:31-32](#)).**

**"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" ([John 17:3](#)).**

**"We...pray for you....that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" ([Col. 1:9-10](#)).**

**"Then shall we know; if we follow on to know the Lord" ([Hosea 6:3](#)).**

**3. No man can earn God's gift. Note two facts about this verse.**

- a.** No man can put God in debt to him. No man can give anything to God and claim that God owes him something in return. God owes man nothing. Man has rejected and rebelled against following God, choosing to go his own way. Man is committing high treason against God. Man does not deserve nor can he earn any favor from God. If man is to receive a favor from God, God has to freely give the favor.

**"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" ([Matthew 7:22-23](#)).**

**"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" ([Romans 3:20](#)).**

**"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" ([Galatians 2:16](#)).**

**"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" ([Ephes. 2:8-9](#)).**

**"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" ([Titus 3:4-5](#)).**

- b.** Man's depravity should silence his boasting. It does not, but it should (see [Romans 3:19-20](#). Cp. [Romans 3:9-20](#)).

**4. God alone is the source, the means, and the end of all things. Therefore, God is to be glorified forever and ever.**

- a.** All things are *of God*: all things were created by and find their source in God.
- b.** All things are *through God*: all things come through His wisdom and knowledge, His judgments and ways.
- c.** All things are *to God*: all things exist for God, for His goodness and pleasure.

**"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" ([Rev. 4:11](#)).**

**"Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel" ([Psalm 22:23](#)).**

**"All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee" ([Psalm 145:10](#)).**

**"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" ([1 Cor. 6:20](#)).**

**"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" ([John 15:8](#)).**