

Romains 11 v 1-15

Part 1

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Duration	01:15:32
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/aeb004/romains-11-v-1-15

Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:30] I say then, has God cast away his people? Far be the thought, for I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abram, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away his people whom he foreknew. Know ye not what the scripture says in the history of Elias, how he pleads with God against Israel, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, they have dug down thine altars, and I have [00:01:02] been left alone, and they seek my life. But what says the divine answer to him? I have left to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed knee to Baal. Thus then, in the present time also, there has been a remnant according to election of grace. But if by grace no longer of works, since otherwise grace is no more grace, what is it then? What Israel seeks for that he has not obtained, but the election has obtained, and the rest have been blinded. According as it is written, God has given to them a spirit of slumber, eyes not to see, and ears not to hear, unto this day. And David says, let their table be for a snare, and for a gin, and for a fall-trap, and for a recompense to them. Let their eyes [00:02:04] be darkened, not to see, and bow down their back always. I say then, have they stumbled in order that they might fall? Far be the thought! But by their fall there is salvation to the nations, to provoke them to jealousy. But if their fall be the world's wealth, and their loss the wealth of the nations, how much rather their fullness! For I speak to you the nations, and as much as I am apostle of nations, I glorify my ministry. If by any means I shall provoke to jealousy them which are my flesh, and shall save some from among them. For if their casting away be the world's reconciliation, what their reception, but life from among the dead. So far the reading of the scriptures. It would be good if we [00:03:03] could read the whole chapter in one, but I'm afraid we would not be able to cover the whole chapter. So if we remember the context, we have seen that this book presents in a special way God's righteousness. And we have seen that God is righteous when he condemns the sinner. We have seen God is righteous when he justifies the repentant sinner. And I hope that we are all in that category. We have then seen how God's righteousness expresses itself in this new position that he gives the Christian in Christ. It's all in connection with God's righteousness. And then we have seen at the end of chapter 8 this wonderful climax. And if we are living in a world where everything is in principle still against God, and against the people of God, we have seen that God is in full control, and that all things work together for the good of [00:04:06] those who love him. And in Romans 8 we have come not only to see God's ways with us, but we have seen God's purpose. And that's a wonderful highlight in this epistle. God's purpose is much more unfolded in Ephesians and Colossians, but especially Ephesians. But we find this highlight, we have seen that in Romans 8. But then Paul interrupts himself, as it were, and he asks some questions in connection with the Jews. Or perhaps there were Jewish people who asked him questions. And so we have seen in chapter 9 how he has explained their tremendous privileges, but that despite of their privileges, they still rejected God's grace. And then we have seen God's mercy, how God's mercy was shown in the history of Israel, how God's sovereignty was also shown [00:05:07] in judgment, in connection with Pharaoh. So

that is the line of God's sovereignty. So you remember Romans 9 to 11 is like one great parenthesis that deals with God's ways. And then in chapter 12, Paul goes on, and he continues then the practice of the believer, the walk of the believer. And it's important to see the connection. We'll get there then in chapter 12, Lord willing, if he would still leave us here another time. But chapter 12 is really based on the doctrinal pillar, Romans 1 to 8, and on the pillar of God's ways, Romans 9 to 11. And God's ways here are especially emphasized in connection with the Jews. But God's ways, of course, are also ways with us. And then as a result of that, we see then God's compassion. What we see, not tonight, but then [00:06:06] the next time, Lord willing, God's compassion towards everyone, either the Jew or the Gentiles, and we can also say to the Christians, to the believers, we are the recipients of this wonderful mercy and compassion of God. And then on the basis of that, Paul will then address the walk of the Christian, Romans 12 to 16. On the basis of this doctrine, the doctrinal position, on the basis of God's dealings. But now to come back to chapter 11, we have seen then the disconnection. God's sovereignty is emphasized very much in Romans 9, but that does not exclude man's responsibility. And that's what we have seen the last time at chapter 10, where the emphasis on man's responsibility or man's response to what God has in mind. And then we have seen the importance [00:07:03] of faith. Faith will respond to God's plans. But when there is a lack of faith, there is no response.

And we have seen with the Jews how they were very eager to obey the law, but they did it in their own strength, and it wouldn't work. There was not really a response to God, it was really a working out of their own principles, their own efforts, and thus they were ignorant of God's righteousness.

That was a very solemn statement in verse 3. You remember, God's righteousness is the line through the whole epistle. And here we see that the Jews, the people of God, the people of the Word of God, that even they were ignorant of God's righteousness and were seeking to establish [00:08:03] their own righteousness. Now we have seen that all these things have also a practical lesson for us. We are believers, but we can even follow this course as believers to set up our own righteousness.

Okay, that's then an application, and we can always make applications of the truth as it comes to us. There are always very practical lessons on every page of Scripture. But then we have seen how there will be an answer in the grace of God. We have seen that already in chapter 9, verse 27, the remnant shall be saved. There will be a remnant, and that is the line of thinking that will be taken up then in chapter 11, which we have tonight. And so I would like you to bear in mind what we had, not all are Israel who are of Israel. We have seen that principle in Romans 9, [00:09:05] verse 6. Not all are Israel which are of Israel. So if you see the whole nation of Israel is a large circle, then you see in that circle a smaller circle. Those who are really of Israel, that is the Israel of God, who are that remnant. So now there's where we start in chapter 11. And let me say this right away. If this question comes to us, 11.1, I say then, has God cast away his people? We are talking about Israel. And it's sad to say that in the history of the church that they have taken things out of context. If you read the whole chapter, and that's why I said we should have read the whole chapter, but because of time we cannot do that. But if you come then to verse 26, the topic for the next time, where it says, so all Israel [00:10:05] shall be saved, then in the history of the church, what they have done, they have interpreted this to the church. They have said, yeah, here is the church. All Israel is here, then the spiritual Israel. See the inconsistency? The beginning of chapter 11 is Israel, and that is God's people, from Abram onwards. And then when they would come to verse 26, they would say, yeah, but that is the church. All Israel, that's then the spiritual Israel, the church. Well, that kind of interpretation is very dangerous, and that way you can put into the scripture anything that you want to put into the scriptures. We don't want to do that. We want to listen to what the scriptures have to say to us, and just obey. Trust and

obey. We sometimes sing that hymn, and that's very relevant in these matters. To trust God, and that's where Israel had failed. To obey God, that's where they also had [00:11:05] failed, because there was not faith. So this matter of faith is very important for each one of us, that we may walk by faith, by obedience, have a listening ear. So when we come then to chapter 11, verse 1, this important question, I say then, has God cast away his people? Far be the thought. The question could also be asked this way, God has not cast away his people, has he? That would be a good translation. And then, far be the thought, or perish the thought, that can never be. Why? And I'd like to quote a few scriptures from the Old Testament, where we see that this can never be. Even in the days of Samuel, the prophet, 1st Samuel, when Israel had rejected the prophet, and not only the [00:12:01] prophet Samuel, when they had rejected God, as God explains to Samuel in chapter 8 and onwards, then Samuel says in 1st Samuel 12, verse 22, for Jehovah will not cast away his people, for his great name's sake. So Samuel says this, just after they had rejected Jehovah. They had chosen a king after their own liking, and God says to Samuel in chapter 8, they have not rejected you, they have rejected me. Even in that context, God says, here through Samuel, Jehovah will not cast away his people, for his great name's sake. Not because they are so faithful, they were lacking in faithfulness, they were ignorant, as you've seen in Romans 10. Another passage, Psalm 94, that's a very similar thought, [00:13:07] if you read the fourth psalm book, starting at 91, the fourth psalm book deals with God's ways, like the book of Numbers in the wilderness. God's ways, does it ring a bell? Romans 9 to 11, God's ways. Well, in connection with God's ways, what does Psalm 94 say? Verse 14, for Jehovah will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance. Yet, when you read on, for example, chapter 95, Psalm 95, we see that they have hardened themselves. So that is this wider circle, as I said earlier. The big picture is, the whole people is marked by hardening, yet when you look [00:14:02] closer, inside that circle, there's a smaller circle, and that's the remnant. And that's what I want you to understand, that is very important. There is a similar thought, also in Hosea, and also in Jeremiah. I'd like to read that verse in Jeremiah 33. Jeremiah 33 is very definite. From verse 23 on, the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, so 33, 23, 24. Has thou not seen what these people have spoken, saying the two families that Jehovah had chosen, he has even cast them off? And they despise my people, that they should be no more a nation before them? Thus saith Jehovah, if my covenant of day and night stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of the heavens and the earth, then will I also cast away the seed of Jacob, and of David my servant, [00:15:06] so as not to take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abram, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will turn their captivity, and will have mercy on them. You see what the prophet says here? I will turn their captivity, I will have mercy on them. That is the topic of Romans 11. And then, what is important for us to understand is this. Paul argues in two ways in the beginning of chapter 11, the verses that we have read tonight. The first thesis is, God has not cast away his people, because there is a remnant. So there may be a casting away, or a setting aside, but it is only partial. The second point we will see then from verse 11 onward is, it's if there is a casting away, it's only temporal. [00:16:02] We have already seen from the passages I quoted, that there cannot be a definite casting away. Yet, in God's dealings with Israel, he has set them aside. But the point is now, it's only partial, because there is a remnant that is still there. Second argument is, if they are set aside, it's only for a time. I was just thinking of a question that one of those kings of the Enlightenment, in the time of the Enlightenment in Europe, I think it was the king of Prussia, asked his, how do you call him, the preacher, and he said, can you give me a proof, just in one sentence or one word, that the Bible is true? The man said, the Jews king, the Jews. That was [00:17:06] for him the proof that the Bible is true. And so we have to keep that in mind when you read Romans 11. It is dealing with this people, that although they had been unfaithful, as we have seen in chapter 10, yet God will fulfill his promises. He will fulfill what he has said to the fathers.

And so now this first argument is, yes, even if they have been set aside, there is a remnant. Paul says in verse 1, I also am an Israelite. Israelite means a descendant of Israel, and that's Jacob. Israel is the other name of Jacob, and it means prince of God. Or strong man of God. So it is an honor to be called with this name. And so again, I say this [00:18:10] is the literal Israel and the physical descendants of Abram, and we have seen already that not all the physical descendants of Abram were the true Israel of God. We have seen that in chapter 9 already. And that is the problem we have to understand here. Yes, God has set aside in the dispersion, in the scattering, in the Babylonian captivity, in his dealings, in his discipline, God has set them aside for a time. But God will restore the kingdom to them, to the descendants of David, as he has promised. And in the meantime, there is a remnant. In the meantime, there is a remnant. However, when Paul presents this, I think of Acts 22, when he speaks to the Jews there in [00:19:02] Jerusalem. When this same Paul speaks to them, they were listening, because he was speaking in Hebrew. And then, when he said that the Lord had sent him far away to the nations, then there was a riot that you cannot describe. It was a tumult, and they wanted to lynch him. They wanted to kill him right away. They could not accept that God's grace would reach out to the Gentiles. And we will see that in the next verses. That is one of the problems that we find with Israel. They had rejected God's thoughts. But when God, in his grace, turned them to the Gentiles, then they were even more provoked in their hatred and in their anger. And that was this attitude we saw in Saul before his conversion. Saul of Tarsus had exactly that attitude as those Jews that I just described. [00:20:04] He had the same attitude. But here he is, changed by the grace of God. He is now a true Israelite. Still a literal descendant of Abram, but now a true Israelite according to God's thoughts. And I don't want to confuse that with that concept that I mentioned earlier. The spiritual Israel is not a spiritual Israel. Here is a true Israelite. He is a descendant of Abram, but now he's also right with God. And in that sense, he's a true Israelite. So he is the living proof that God was going to carry out his plans. Paul was the living proof of that. He belonged to that remnant. And a remnant is not something that is left over. A remnant really represents what is the nucleus, what is there for God. And God had preserved the remnant, as we will see in a moment. [00:21:02] And that remnant now in Paul's days, and that was now God's ways, that remnant in Paul's days, God had introduced into the church. That is what Acts 2 explains. That those who needed to be saved were those Jewish people who God in his ways, in his dealings with them, wanted to introduce into the church. So this remnant from those days on, and even in our days, really belongs to the church at the same time. And then, that is why this chapter is so difficult to understand. There will be a remnant also after the rapture, and we will talk about that the next time. There we see there will be a remnant after the rapture when the fullness of the nations will have come in. Then God will have again a remnant, and from that remnant he will build then the whole nation as a testimony for him, the nation of Israel. We will see that the next time, Lord willing. So the first [00:22:02] proof here is, Paul says, I am myself an Israelite. I'm there. So God has not cast aside his people completely. And notice what he says, he's also not only of the seed of Abraham, Abraham the father of the Jews, the father of Israel, he is also from the tribe of Benjamin. So in connection with Abraham we see God's grace, we see God's plans. It's a wonderful study to study Genesis 12, for example, but then when you see he's also the tribe of Benjamin, that underlines again this idea of a remnant. Benjamin, the tribe of Benjamin, one day was almost completely destroyed. You can read it in Judges 21-22. And so there was only a small remnant left of Benjamin, and from that remnant God later had King Saul as the king of Israel, and from that remnant here we have Saul of Tarsus. So [00:23:09] that shows again that he is a living illustration of this principle that God preserves a remnant. But then he goes back to a history past, in verse 3, or in the middle of verse 2. So his conclusion is, because of his own experience, he could say in verse 2, God has not cast away his people. You could also read Micah and Ezekiel, I mentioned already a few verses a bit earlier. No, God has not cast away his people, although there is only a remnant that God is recognizing, and as I said, that remnant is now part of the church. But

then it says in the middle of verse 2, whom he foreknew. See, here is the matter of a relationship. God wanted to have a relationship with his own people. [00:24:06] The word foreknew includes that. But Israel, in its rebellion, in its own efforts, as we have seen in chapter 9 and chapter 10, they did not enjoy that relationship. They did not respond to God. And so God had to set them aside. God could only continue on with a remnant. And with them, he had a relationship. Now, I also want to say here, if we read a word like this, foreknew, we have to see here it deals with God's ways. Foreknowledge is also used in connection with God's purpose. And that's another topic, but perhaps we come back to that also. Then he says, now go back to the past and see God had also a remnant in the past. So when Paul says, [00:25:04] I belong to that remnant today, he says, not only that, look back now to the history. What the scripture says in the history of Elias, how he pleads with God against Israel. Now, first a practical comment here. Here we find a prophet, a great prophet. Elijah was a great prophet. But here is the only negative comment in the New Testament about Old Testament believers.

Did you ever notice that? Here we find the only negative comment in the New Testament about Old Testament believers. If you read the Old Testament, you will find lots of negative comments about believers in the Old Testament. But they are not quoted in the New Testament. The only negative comment we find here in the history of Elijah, that he pleaded against God's own people. That's not right. Elijah should have made intercession for them, pleaded for them. He was really playing [00:26:09] the role of the enemy. The devil is called the accuser of the brethren, Revelation 12. Does that ring a bell? Does that ever happen to us, that we are accuser of the brethren? See, that easily happens. It's not to say that we should close our eyes for everything that's wrong. But here it was a matter of God's people. And Elijah didn't even know them. Those 7,000, they belong to God's people. And Elijah didn't even know them. Elijah was making intercession. The word, he pleads with God, is really the same verb as we have seen in chapter 8, that the Holy Spirit makes intercession. And the other verse was, the Lord in the glory makes intercession for his people. It is the same verb. Now here Elijah was making intercession [00:27:06] against God's people. This is a practical lesson for us. Even when God's people is wrong, we do not, should not be blind for that. But we should make intercession and not pray against the people of God, not plead against them. Then the third verse, what was Elijah saying? Lord, they have killed thy prophets. Again, Elijah was part of the remnant, but he thought he was the only one. So that was a gloomy day. If a believer thinks he's the only one left, that's a very sad situation. On the one hand, he may have a complex. He may think that he's better than all the others. And that's of course wrong. And there was something of that with Elijah. If you read Kings 19, he must have thought that he was better than his father. Something like [00:28:06] Simon Peter, he thought he was better than the other disciples. Something of that must have been with Elijah. Although he was a great man of God, we should not underestimate him. He was a great man of God. Who could compare himself with Elijah? Yet the scripture showed this failure. But now the point, he belonged to that remnant, but he did not know that God's remnant was even greater than just one person. He says, they have dug down thine altars and I have been left alone and they seek my life. Discouraged? Yes. But what does God say? Verse 4. What says the divine answer to him?

That is like an oracle. That is God's communication. The same word is used then as a verb in Matthew when the angel communicated to Joseph, the husband of Mary. In Luke 2, the angel or God had [00:29:08] communicated to the old, or we don't know whether he was old, to Simeon, that he would not die before he would see the Messiah. Luke 2. And so this is a divine communication. And here we have the divine communication to Elijah. And what is the divine communication? I have left to myself 7,000 men.

That was God's communication. No Elijah, you are not the only one. You may think so, but you are not the only one. God has left for himself. It's a matter of God's honor. Elijah was very zealous, rightly so. But perhaps there was a selfish element with Elijah. Now God says, you know, you have been faithful, but look what I have done. I have left to myself 7,000 men. While we were reading this, I [00:30:08] thought, hey, it's remarkable, 7,000 men. What about the women? It's like the story in the Gospels. When the 7,000 men were fed, there were also women and children. So there were the 7,000 men. Man has to do his testimony in Scripture. They were part of God's public testimony, even in those gloomy days. And probably their wives and their children partly also, but we don't know much about them. This is, we're talking about God's sovereignty in chapter 9, Romans 9. Here is an example of God's sovereignty. God has left for himself 7,000 men. That's what God is doing. Now think of Isaiah 6. Isaiah 6, Isaiah sees the glory of the Lord, the holiness of the Lord. And then he sees himself. Isaiah had a [00:31:04] closer look to himself than Elijah did. And Isaiah said, woe unto me. And then the Lord says, now I sent you. Whom shall I send? And Isaiah was ready. Now send me. And what did the Lord say to Isaiah? He sent Isaiah to his own people. Notice, that's the same people we're talking about, Israel. That he would close their eyes so that they would, no, he would touch their eyes as it were, but they would not see. He would speak to their ears, but he would not hear. That was his ministry. That is that hardening that we are talking about. We'll come back to that in a moment. Yet, and that's not my point, at the end of Isaiah 6, what do we see? God has a remnant, 10%. There it is, 10% that God will preserve for himself. That's the same principle as we have here. Now, the other point I [00:32:05] want to underline, here again, it is God's ways, God's dealings. He has left a remnant for himself. And we have a similar thought in connection with God's purpose. Ephesians 1, we see that God has made, accepted us and he beloved, and then it says also in Ephesians 1, that we should be holy and without blame before him, having predestined us unto the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ for himself. That was my point. Here you have God's purpose. In God's purpose, he wants to have a people for himself. That's God's purpose. That can never change. But now in chapter 9 to 11, you see that God carries that thought on and he puts it into practice in [00:33:07] his dealings. He realizes it in time and that is God's ways. God's ways always fulfill his purpose.

God's ways lead to the fulfillment of his purpose. So in both cases, we have God doing something for himself. We can think of his purpose, the people is for God. God has determined that in his counsel. But then when you see their actual practice, their actual situation, they are living in rebellion, they are living in idolatry. Yet in God's ways, he has left for himself 7,000. That is again the remnant that we were mentioning. The other point I want to underline here, they have not bowed the knee to Baal. Here the article before Baal is in the feminine. Usually Baal refers to a male deity.

[00:34:04] But here it is female. And that underlines the thought of the affections. The nation were guilty of this idolatry and the idols had replaced in their own souls the love of God. There was no love of God. There was the love for the idols. And here God had preserved 7,000 men who were not guilty for this. Today there are many people who think that the earth is like a goddess and they serve the earth like a goddess. I'm not kidding you. There are many people today who think that way. They are similar to the people in Elijah's day who bowed the knee to this female deity. Intimately linked also with the male deity. Of course idols, we understand it. But idols take the affections away from the true God. That is why 1 John 5 21 says, children keep yourselves from the idols. [00:35:08] That shows it's a real threat. It's a real danger for us. I mentioned earlier, every page here has practical lessons for us. This would be one question to ask ourselves. Are there idols in my life? Then verse 5. This then in the present time. Okay now we have to understand what Paul is saying here. In the present time. Like God had a remnant in the days past, in the days of Elijah, God has a remnant in the present

time. And Paul was part of that remnant. That remnant in the present time goes on till what? Till the rapture. And then God's ways will introduce another remnant. And that is then verse 26. Until the fullness of the nations become in. That until. So the present time of [00:36:07] verse 5 will continue till verse 26. Until. Okay. So the present time is even today. The present time was in the days of Paul. And it is also in our days. There is a remnant in the present time. And that present time continues till the rapture. The rapture is not mentioned here in this chapter, but it is implied. In the present time there is a remnant according to election of grace. You see again the principle of God's sovereignty. God has chosen to keep a remnant for himself. God had chosen his people. And he will keep a remnant for himself. Even if they have failed. If you've seen Jeremiah. God will keep a remnant for himself. God will make sure. Malachi. Very dark days. Malachi 3. [00:37:03] Verse 16, 17. You have that remnant. Two or three. They were found there. Even among the remnant. Because that was only a little remnant returned from the Babylonian captivity. And even there, there was a remnant. So the thought of a remnant comes back many times. That is what is called in Isaiah 6. The holy seed. God. You remember what I said. God would preserve for himself 10%. The holy seed. That is that remnant. In Isaiah 7. One of Isaiah's sons is called Shear Yashub. That means a remnant will return. Well that's of course. We have to keep that in mind for the next time. In the present time there's a remnant. But also in the future there will be a remnant. And a remnant will return. Also in the future. That is the name of Shear Yashub. But the principle of a remnant is always there. Luke 1 and 2. You find a remnant in the priest. Zechariah failing. In his wife [00:38:09] Elizabeth. And others. There are at least seven persons in Luke 1 and 2 who are part of that remnant. God had preserved the remnant for himself. But I repeat. Here it is in the present time. And that is from Acts 2 when the church started. God introduced this remnant in the church. And that present time continues even till today. According to the election of grace. So that is again God's side. He will maintain this remnant even when everything fails. And I want to repeat that. If it depends on us. If it depends on the people of God. There would not be a remnant. Because even Elijah thought already was the only one. And then after his death nobody would be left. If it would depend on us. There would not even be a remnant. It is God who preserves it for his name's [00:39:05] sake. And then another principle in connection with that in verse 6. If by grace. It is the election of grace. Then it is not longer of works. So that fits with what we saw earlier at the end of chapter 9. In the beginning of chapter 10. Israel was on the line of their own righteousness. On the line of their own works. No. On that basis there will not be a remnant. It is on the basis of God's sovereign grace. And when it is a matter of grace. It's not a matter of works. It's not on the basis of their or our efforts. So these are important lessons that we really need to digest. Also for ourselves. The grace of God. I mean if you study Paul's life. And the grace of God. He was so overwhelmed by the grace of God. And he could really speak about it. In first Corinthians 15 [00:40:03] for example. When he compares himself with the other apostles. He could make a whole list of things that he did. Yet it was the grace of God. He was very aware of the greatness of God's grace.

As he had experienced that in his own life. And so as believers we can look back. How God has come in in our own lives. And we have tasted the goodness of God. And his grace. Then there was one more thing that I wanted to say in connection with God's grace. If you see some of the teachings of Paul. And I think of Philippians 3 now. Or Titus 3. You find how he explained that in more detail. Here it is just a reference of the principle of grace. But we have other scriptures that explain to us in more detail. What this grace really implies for us practically. And especially [00:41:05] a chapter like Ephesians 2 is really wonderful doctrinal exposition of what grace is. Now we come to verse 7. What is it then? What Israel seeks for. And we have seen that in chapter 10 already. They were running after something in their own righteousness. They were seeking great effort. But they did not obtain it. Because of the way they were looking for it. And we have seen then that the Gentiles have received

it. But now he goes a step further. Now he says the election has obtained it. Again the thought of a remnant as we saw earlier. There is a remnant and they have obtained grace. And so there's a remnant among the Gentiles. The believers that God has [00:42:02] saved from among the Gentiles are really a remnant. And then the believers from among the Jews are also a remnant. And they have obtained this grace. But the rest have been blinded. Here you have the hardness of the human heart. The insensitivity of the human heart. I referred already to Isaiah 6. So you see how the whole people was under God's judgment. That's very solemn. It was not only that they had blinded themselves. God sent Isaiah to make them blind. That is very solemn. And the Lord refers to that in John 12. When he sees the Pharisees and he sees their condition. He refers to Isaiah 6. This blindness. The judicial blindness that came over them because of their hardness.

Romans 1. A few years ago we have seen the hardness of the heart of the Gentiles. After the flood.

[00:43:08] And so there will be hardness also in the Christian profession. When the Antichrist will take over it will be in a time that the Christian profession will be marked by this hardness. But now again practically we need to search ourselves that we will not harden ourselves against God. So that we would expose ourselves to his judicial dealings. You remember Pharaoh what we saw in chapter 9. Pharaoh hardened himself five or seven times. You can read it. And then God hardened him.

That is God's judicial hardening as we find here in verse 8. According as it is written. Now of course it applies to the Jews. God has given them. Connected Moses writing Deuteronomy 29 and Isaiah. And so we could say in verse 8.

[00:44:19] And yeah in verse 8. The eyes and the ears. Eyes not to see. That is what Moses emphasizes. When he speaks to Israel. The generation that had left Egypt. They had seen the magnificent works of God. It's their own eyes. Yet Moses says you're blind. And then when you think of the prophets. Isaiah and other prophets who had given testimony to the people. Yet their ears were dull. They didn't hear. Ezekiel 2 I think around verse 7. God says speak my words. Whether they will hear. Whether they will [00:45:04] not hear. They are rebellious. That is the attitude they had. They had ears but not to hear. Remember Isaiah 6. Isaiah 6 is really a key passage for this. And Paul quotes it several times. In his ministry. Now what about us? It says here unto this day. So this attitude of the Jews was there even unto that day. Second Corinthians 3 when Paul speaks about the minister of the new covenant. He refers to this hardness. He says there is a veil over their hearts. And that veil is there even until this day. That is very solemn. And so there are people also in the Christian profession with such a veil. Unto this day. The veil because of their hardening. And the hardness of heart. And [00:46:02] God has allowed that. God has sent that. Because of their disobedience. Because of their refusal to respond. Job says God speaks once or twice. Or maybe three times. I can't remember now exactly. But if you don't listen. Then you expose yourself to these dealings of God. These ways that you would harden yourself. And then as a result of this. In verse 9 David says let that table be for a snare. So the table is the expression of privileges. And we can also apply it of course to the Lord's Supper. Again it is an application. The table if we make it our table as the Jews did. The Jews made the feast of the Lord their feast. The feast of the Jews. John's Gospel. It really became a snare to them. And that is what we can do if we make the table of the Lord our table. It becomes like a snare. It's not our [00:47:06] table. It's the Lord's table. We are very privileged. But if we claim everything for ourselves. Then even those very privileges become a snare. That is very solemn. That can happen under God's dealings. If we harden ourselves. And in the details here given in verse 9. A snare or a net or an offense. Or a fall trap. We have seen that already earlier. They were on the way of their establishing their own righteousness. They were running very fast. And they stumbled.

And another verse says that the stone has come upon them in judgment. And this process of hardening is described here in many different ways. But the fall trap is really you are running and then you are stopped in your race. And that is what happened to Israel. When they tried to establish their own righteousness. They stumbled over their own Messiah. And so all [00:48:05] these privileges they had in Psalm 69. This is a quote from Psalm 69. Became really a curse to them. Why? Because they had rejected their own Messiah. Now that is why I say this is very practical for us. The things that God has given us in his grace. If we claim these things for ourselves. And in a selfish way. As Israel did. The same things can become a trap. That is God's government. Verse 10. Let their eyes be darkened not to see. We talked about that already earlier. And then bow down their back always. Here we see how they were in bondage. Because of their own law. The way they dealt with God's word. They became in terrible bondage. In Acts 15. We see [00:49:02] also how Peter refers to that. And Paul refers to that in Acts 13. So this is an overview. How Paul says. Yes there is a remnant in this present time. Yet the majority is hardened.

Then the second argument. If there is a rejection. A setting aside. It is only for a time. It's partial. We have seen there is always a remnant. But then there's also this idea of it is for a time. Because God will fulfill his plans. He will fulfill his promises. So have they stumbled in order that they might fall. That would be fall without possibility of recovery. No. Far be the thought. If they have fallen. And they have fallen. It was not that God wanted to get rid of them altogether. God has allowed this fall. For a purpose. And that's what we see now in verse 12 [00:50:06] and 13. But it's not to set them aside forever. Which in theology. In the churches. In many churches have been taught. That God has set aside his people forever. And that now we are Israel.

But that's the wrong interpretation of course. So here we see then. The reason of the fall. And we really have to lay hold of that. Why did God allow this fall to happen. Because through that fall. Through that trespass. God's ways are higher than our ways. Salvation would come to the Gentiles. Verse 11 at the end. That is why Paul says at the end of chapter 11. Which we may get to the next time. How unsearchable are his ways.

[00:51:05] Or untraceable. His ways. He bows down before the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God. If you look at these dealings. That God allowed the fall of Israel to happen. And then salvation could come to the Gentiles. That is part of God's ways that are unsearchable. But it's not the whole story yet. When salvation would come to the Gentiles then. It would be in turn to provoke Israel to jealousy. So that Israel would turn to God again. See that is the reasoning of the apostle Paul. In verse 12. If their fall be the world's wealth. So we have first seen that conclusion.

Through their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles. And again if we would have studied [00:52:02] what it entails. You have to study Ephesians 2. To see what that salvation really entails. In detail. Doctrinally and practical for us. We have to turn to other scriptures to understand it. But now this is the point of God's ways. How salvation has come to the nations. And then in turn this would provoke Israel to jealousy. So that they would turn again to their own Messiah. This is already in the gospels presented by the Lord himself. In several parables. But I think now specifically of one in Luke 14. Where the servants were sent out to get those who were invited. These are the Jews. God had special plans for the Jews. They had all excuses. They didn't come. And then the servant was sent to get people from the streets. [00:53:04] And then even to go further. To collect people. So that the house would become full. Now that process. Getting other people. Would cause then this jealousy. It's like to give an illustration. Suppose you have. You are in a restaurant. And there is a group. And they have. The meal is ready. And somehow they all rise up and say. No it's not good enough. We

leave. And then the manager calls people there who have no money. And they say. Well he says. You can come and have this wonderful supper. And then when some of those people would come back. They would be. They would be angry. But that doesn't make sense. That's exactly what happened. They despised the grace of God. The wonderful meal as it were. And then when the Gentiles. Got hold of that. And when the Jews saw that. Then they were provoked to jealousy. [00:54:03] This is described in Acts. In Acts 13 for example. When Paul reaches out for the first time to the Gentile world there in Turkey. Then when the Jews started to realize. Then they had rejected the message. And the message would go out to the Gentiles. Then they were provoked. This is a bad jealousy. But it might ultimately lead to a good jealousy. And good jealousy means. You really want to have that also. And that is. Will ultimately be the case. So verse 12. If their fall. Or their misstep. Or their transgression. Be the world's wealth. So that's now God's new program. As Acts 13 explains in other passages. God turns to the Gentiles. Although there's always this remnant from among the Jews. From Israel as we have seen. Always. Yet the main thought is. God turns to the [00:55:04] Gentiles. And that will then provoke them to jealousy. So the wealth. The wealth of God's grace.

Comes to the Gentiles. Although it is Israel's loss. You see. If their fall be the world's wealth. And their loss. It is a parallel. Their loss means. Their disqualification. They have disqualified themselves. By their attitude. That is what is their loss means. Their fault. Or their defect.

Their defect. Has now caused the wealth of the nation. So this. You really have to understand.

This is a parallel. A parallelism. Fall. And loss. Goes together with wealth. Wealth is repeated twice. The wealth of the nation. But. Realize that this wealth. Is also available for that [00:56:02] remnant among the Jews. They also benefited from the same wealth. As Paul explains in Ephesians 2. The same wealth. Of course was enjoyed by this little remnant. But the majority of the nation. Had rejected it. And were now provoked to jealousy. And so Paul goes on to say. You know. If. In turn. They will come back then. There will be. God will reinstitute them. And that is then their fullness.

When God is going to fulfill all his promises. That is their fullness. That you have at the end of verse 12. And then Paul explains this in more detail in verse 13. I speak to you nations in as much as I am apostle of nations. This is his special ministry. His special ministry was to reach nations. And you remember what I said. Acts 22. When they heard that. They wanted to lynch him. [00:57:04] But the Lord had said in Acts 9 to Ananias. This is a chosen vessel unto me. And the Lord had already then explained to him that he was going to go out to the Gentiles. And is repeated in Acts 22 and Acts 26. Galatians 1 and 2. In 1st Timothy. You find how Paul mentions this ministry he had for the nation. And so he could say. I glorify my ministry. It's not that he boasted in himself. He glorified this ministry that God. The God of all grace had given to him. In order then through that ministry. Towards the Gentiles. To provoke Israel. So that they also would accept this riches of God's grace. That is what he says in verse 14. If by any means I shall provoke to jealousy. So in other words. The more Gentiles would be reached by the gospel. The more Paul [00:58:06] would provoke his own countrymen. To jealousy. Them which are my flesh. As he says here. And you remember he said it already in chapter 9. He talked about his kinsmen after the flesh. And he wanted to reach them. And now you see how God would allow Paul to reach them. Through a detour as it were. The detour was. Go through to the Gentiles. Get many saved. And then that will cause them to be jealous. And they also will want to be saved. And he says. And shall save some from among them. Again we see it's God's dealings. We know that not all would be saved. The majority as we've seen. The wider circle is still without God. But there is part of them. And they would listen. They would respond. Now then verse 15. If their casting away. Be the world's reconciliation. I [00:59:06] was thinking of an example.

And I found a very good example. That illustrates this. This casting away. We have seen is for a time. Is partial. It's not definite. It's not forever. But even that casting away. Would lead to the wealth of the world. And here to the world's reconciliation. As it says here. That is God's offer of grace. As described in 2nd Corinthians 5 for example. Paul says they're ambassadors of Christ. God as it were speaking to us. We say on behalf of Christ. Be reconciled with God. That message had an effect. And the effect is called here the world's reconciliation. Now if that was caused by the fact that the Jews were cast away. Then Paul says well let it be for the time being. Because ultimately when they will be received. The [01:00:07] reception will be life from among the dead. And again you have to realize this. This will be fulfilled after the rapture. When God will fulfill all his promises to the to Israel. As you will see the next time Lord willing. Then that will be fulfilled. But in the meantime. There may be those who will be provoked to jealousy already now. And who will humble himself. Who will receive the gospel. They already will be part of that wealth. And of that revelation. Reconciliation now. But now to come back to my example. Jonah. What happened to Jonah? He was cast overboard. Casting away. The casting away. What was the effect? The immediate effect. That the people on the ship. They worship God. What was the ultimate effect? The whole city of Nineveh got saved. That is the reception of life from among the dead. That is the ultimate effect. And that is what we will [01:01:07] see in the millennium of course. When all the nations will benefit from Israel. That is cast away now. Like Jonah. But will be a blessing for the whole world. That is God's plan for Israel. So we'll stop here. Because I was almost tempted to go on till verse 21. But I thought it would be a bit too much. And the rest of the chapter is also quite difficult. So if I can just briefly summarize. What we have seen is God. God is righteous always. In his sovereignty. In his dealings. He's always right. You've seen how the Jews lacked in the response. There was no faith. And how God therefore turned to the Gentiles. But now in chapter 11. We have seen then that yet. While this is the case. There is a remnant. Paul belonged to the remnant. There was a remnant in [01:02:05] the past. Even in the gloomy days of Elijah. So God keeps a remnant for himself. That is his sovereign grace. That is his election. Matter of election. He will do that. And so there will be a remnant in the future. Secondly we have seen. Yes. If the people has been cast aside for a while. Set aside for a while. That doesn't mean final. God has a program for them also. In the meantime. He will use the Gentiles who respond to the gospel. To lead them to jealousy. And so Paul had a very active part in this ministry. And may the Lord use us also. That we may be available as vessels. Vessels fit for the master's use. So that we would also may provoke people to [01:03:04] jealousy. In a good sense. So that they will want to be saved. Now one word before we close. And that was Ephesians 2. I just would like to mention that. I said already. God's ways is one thing.

God's purpose is another thing. And God's ways lead to the fulfillment of his purpose. And so when you see God's purpose in Ephesians. God's counsel. Then it would be good to see what his counsel is now today. For today. It is summed up in verse 11. Wherefore in Ephesians 2 verse 11.

Wherefore remember that ye once nations in the flesh. Who are called uncircumcision. By that called circumcision in the flesh. Done with the hand. That ye were at that time without Christ. [01:04:03] Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. And strangers to the covenants of promise. Having no hope. And without God in the world. That was our condition. But now verse 13. In Christ Jesus who once were far off. Are become nigh by the blood of the Christ. Now if you read the whole chapter. You'll see that also the believers from among the Jews. Have this privilege. So it is very important. And this is already a. As it were an introduction to the next topic. About the tree. It's important to see that it's not. That God was going to. Integrate the nations then. Into Israel. So that the nations would be blessed with the blessing of Israel. No. God would take. Out from. Among the nations. And out from among the Jews. A remnant. Put them together. And together [01:05:04] they would form this new entity.

Which is the church of the living God. That is. Really God's purpose. And that's a wonderful topic. And much more could be said of this of course. But I. Think we really have to understand it. Because many people. Think that the olive tree is. Really be as believers from among the Gentiles. We have been brought into the fold of Israel. No that's wrong conclusion. So you can't go wrong two ways. That's what I want to say. If you say Israel. That is set aside. We are now the Israel of God. Wrong. Other on the other hand. If you would say. Believers from among the Gentiles. Have been brought into the tree. And so. Brought into. The blessings of Israel. Would be another wrong conclusion. And so we have to guard our way. That the Lord may keep us. From falling into these extremes. And follow. His instructions as he's given here in Romans 11. [01:06:03] Realize this is a difficult topic. But if there is a question. Please feel free. Yeah. So revelation.

Excuse me. Romans 11 verse 15. The question is. Whether there is any reference to the millennial blessings. Yeah. What I suggested. Is ultimately yes. Ultimately. The reception. Their reception. Is life from among the dead. That will be fulfilled. In the millennium. Ezekiel 37. Other passages. Also Jeremiah 33. Confirmed it. But of course. Today. In a sense. This happens also. When a Jew. Comes to know the Lord. It's a reception of life from among the dead. So there's a present day application. But the final fulfillment is future. No. But it is. Yeah. So. First of all. It is a spiritual thing.

[01:07:14] In order to receive this life. It is as life from among the dead. It is on a new foundation. Resurrection. That is true for us too. Today. Now. Israel will have to go through a process. And that's described in Ezekiel 37. A process in which they will be renewed as it were. And that is like resurrection from among the dead. It's compared with that. And then not only that. When he links them with the past. When those. Ezekiel 37. Sees those bones. And that is what Israel is now before God. Dead.

When the spirit of God will. Breathe into them. They will come to life. But that's exactly what [01:08:02] we have here. Life from among the dead. They are spiritual dead. So it's not talking here about dead bodies. He's talking about spiritually dead people. Now to answer your question then in connection with the resurrection. When will that take place? All the true believers belong to the first resurrection. And that will close with the martyrs. That will be killed in the great tribulation. They will also be raised from among the dead. And will be in heaven. All the people who will be raised from among the dead. Will be a heavenly people. So whether they belong to Israel of the past. Whether today. They all are heavenly people. Although there are differences of course between the church. And but I don't want to enter into that. And those who will not belong to that first resurrection. They will be raised of course at the end. And then be cast into the lake of fire. Okay. No. Okay. Does then in the present time also there has been a remnant according to election [01:09:19] of grace. The remnant here literally is a remnant in Israel. No. I have said they are now part of the church. But after the rapture there also will be a remnant. And of course they will be the nucleus for the people of Israel in the millennium. And that's why I said we have to keep that for the next time. Because we will see that in verse 26. All Israel will be saved. Then it is not a remnant. Then it will be all Israel. But it's really to understand that that remnant that God will preserve even during the great tribulation. They will constitute the whole nation of Israel. They will all be righteous. Isaiah 60. So then it will be not longer a remnant. Then that remnant will [01:10:06] be all Israel. That is a new part of God's program then. Absolutely true. All Israel is not a church.

It has nothing to do with the church here. The remnant during the time that Christ is rejected is now part of the church also. That is the point to understand. No. It's part of the church because the other part is Gentile believers. Those who are waiting for the Messiah are waiting for him [01:11:06] to come

and they don't believe that the Lord Jesus is the Messiah. So they are lost. And they will accept the Antichrist as the Lord has said in John 5. They are not a remnant. The remnant today is those who really believe. Who really have repented. Have repented like Paul did. So you may have great privileges as those Jews have. But if there is no repentance there is no link with God and you don't belong to that remnant. Although God in his providence, and that's another story, he will preserve those people also. That's part of the mystery. We cannot understand that. God will preserve them also but they are right now not part of the remnant. But of course when after the rapture they will turn to the Lord in repentance they will be that remnant. [01:12:20] They are lost. When there is no faith, real faith, they are lost. So there has to be real faith and that can only be the case when there is real repentance. That's it. [01:13:15] Okay, but that's why I said that's God's providence. I'm sure that God preserves those Jews with that attitude to create from among them that believing remnant that will be there after the rapture. Romans 1 to 3. Romans 1 to 3. Romans 1 to 3 make that very clear. And that is [01:14:15] they had rejected the way of salvation. So what other way can they have? Yeah, exactly. That's why I said providence. That's God's providence. He will preserve them just as this preacher said to that king there in those days. God's preserved them and that's in itself a miracle. You see that. But that doesn't mean that they are saved. Yeah. Exactly. There's no other way. So that's why I [01:15:03] say may the Lord help us to provoke them to jealousy in that sense that he will really repent.