

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to the Book of Romans 11

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this amazing letter that the Apostle Paul has written the believers in Rome and us about the fundamentals of Christianity –

The Gospel of Grace –

And we currently find ourselves in the section of his letter – where Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy – he turns his attention to his fellow Jew.

God had put a burden in his heart for his fellow Jew –

He wanted them to embrace the Gospel of Grace

That God has always dealt with man by grace

Even in choosing the Jews – it was by grace

So, Paul wants to remind the readers of this letter that despite their rejection of Gospel of grace – God is not done with them.

That is the emphasis of Ch 11

God is not done with Israel – the church has not replaced Israel

God is still going to fulfill the promises He made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob –

God is faithful.

Paul wants the believer to understand the connection that we have the Jews

And the significance for us is that - as we grasp this – we can find hope and confidence that all the promises we have in Christ – God will in the same way be faithful to bring them to pass.

Let's pray...

Read Text -

One of my favorite promises in the scriptures – one of the promises that I encourage all of us to hold onto is found in -

Proverbs 24:16

**[Pro 24:16 NKJV] 16 For a righteous [man] may fall seven times And rise again,  
But the wicked shall fall by calamity.**

A righteous man falls seven times – he will rise again.

Amen!!!

Church, this is the heart of God,

When we stumble, when we fall – (because we all stumble and fall) God's desire is to pick us up / God's desire is to dust us off and helps us learn the lesson that is to be learned in any stumbling or fall.

We have trials in our lives

We have temptations in our lives

And sometimes, we take the bait.

But as Solomon says –

Even though we fall seven times – God is at work,

Even though we fall seven times, He is our strength and because He is gracious and merciful and He loves us – He is able to keep us from falling (Jude 24) – another amazing promise.

God wants to pick us up,

He wants to strengthen us

and He wants to keep us from falling.

He is able to keep us upright and standing strong in His life and in His will.

And here is the point church –

What is true for us individually – as believers.

Is true for the nation of Israel (nationally)

This is what Paul has been addressing -

To his fellow Jew –

To those who decided on trying to earn their righteousness through religion and observing ceremonies and rituals that were shadows and pictures that pointed to the Messiah -

To those who are asking the question – is God finished with us?

He is saying – I know you have stumbled, I know you have rejected the Messiah, I know that you feel that God has forsaken you / that God is done with you – but He wants to pick you up and He wants to dust you – He is standing there with open arms to receive you.

You see, church, their rejection of Jesus is not a total rejection of Jesus – because God always uses a remnant –

God always has a group of those who He has set aside.

Let's look at our text -

**[Rom 11:11-24 NKJV] 11 I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall?**

**Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation [has come] to the Gentiles.**

Paul – is asking the question –

Have the Jews stumbled so that they should permanently fall.

Is there rejection of Jesus Christ as Messiah permanent.

Are they going to stay on the ground and never get back up?

Again, Paul is speaking of Jews (collectively)

Because there are going to be individual Jews and individual Gentiles who do stumble and never get back –

There are individuals who are going to find the gospel of grace to be offensive.

So they will walk away from the gospel of grace

They will walk away from Jesus

And God honors their choice –

But for the nation of Israel – Paul says – this is not so.

God is not done with Israel

Their fall is not a permanent one.

Yes, they have stumbled, yes, they have rejected – as they have allowed ceremonies and rituals and religion to blind them from their Messiah.

And so, what Paul is also saying here in this opening verse of our study is that God used their fall, He used their stumbling – for His good.

God used the stumbling of Israel to do great things – we are living proof of this – as it allowed God to bring the message of hope, bring the message of grace, bring the message of salvation to the Gentiles.

This was God's plan of redemption for man -

Going all the way back to Genesis –

When God reached out to Abraham

**[Gen 12:2-3 NKJV] 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."**

God chose Israel

God worked through Israel

The Messiah came through Israel

And God is not done with Israel.

Because there is going to come a time when Israel will come to repentance -

Where Israel will be restored

This past Wednesday night – as we finished Job – we saw Job’s restoration happen – after Job had a true understanding of God and a true understanding of sin and after he forgave his three friend –

This is the same pattern we see throughout scriptures –

Last Sunday – I told you to read Ezekiel 36,37,38,39 regarding Israel’s promised restoration by the Lord.

This week – I want us to -

Turn to Zechariah 12

**[Zec 12:10 NKJV] 10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for [his] only [son], and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.**

There is coming a day – when the Nation of Israel will turn to their Messiah

They will recognize that Jesus is their Messiah

But Paul tells us – that their rejection of the Gospel of Grace – not opened the way for the Gospel of Grace to be preached to the Gentiles -

Their rejection of the Gospel of Grace also provoked them to jealousy

They began to hear stories of how God was working through the pagan gentile nations

–

How Gentiles were having a personal relationship with Yahweh and how they were being blessed by God – how they were experiencing favor, hope, grace, mercy and peace.

How those, in Christ, had assurance of salvation.

This was something that the Jews believed was exclusive to them because they were physical descendants of Abraham –

It provoked them to start asking questions -

“Why are the gentiles celebrating the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?”

Here is a little application for us -

Our relationship with Jesus Christ – our walk – should provoke the nonbelievers around us to jealousy.

Our faith – should make other people jealous.

They will see our lives, they will see our response to trials and they will see the peace that only Jesus can give us – by His grace.

and they will want what we have – whether they are Jew or Gentile.



And so church – we are to live our faith out, in a way that makes other people thirsty for the God that we serve.

Doesn't mean we are perfect – because we are not

Doesn't mean that we have all the answers – because we don't –

But we serve a God faithfully who does know all the answers and we trust Him

Jesus said we are the salt of the earth – we are going to look at this in a few weeks in our midweek in the Gospel of Matthew.

Saltiness provokes thirst

Be salty church -

**12 Now if their fall [is] riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!**

This is what Paul is saying here –

If their stumbling – their rejection of the Gospel of Grace - resulted in a blessing to the world, what do you think will happen when God's very chosen people wake up and one day embrace Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

You see what God has done through failure –

You see what God has done through stumbling

But God wants to do much more –

I had you make a note of that phrase – because this is not the first time that Paul has used it in this letter –

**[Rom 5:8-10 NKJV] 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. 10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.**

God is always interested in doing much more in our lives, church.

But many times because of our stumbles – we live our life as a believer on our heels instead of continuing to press forward to what He has called us to do in our lives.

Being a believer / being a disciple of Jesus is all about the much more's that God has for us.

We don't look back –

The enemy may remind us of our past

The enemy wants us to not get back up – to quit.

But those in Christ – we don't look back – we press forward.

**[Luk 9:62 NKJV] 62 But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."**

**[Phi 3:14 NKJV] 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**

He wants to do much more in our lives

He wants to do much more in our marriages

He wants to do so much more in our children's lives, in our grandchildren's lives – in the lives of our loved ones, our coworkers.

He wants to do much more in the ministries that we serve –

But in order for Him to do much more – we have to stay out of the way and not try to control how God is going to do much more in our lives.

You see – we tell God, Ok God - Take these circumstances away from my life and then

You can do much more.

Or give me a better job – then You can do much more

Take this illness away from me – then You can do much more

But what if God doesn't want to take the circumstances away at this moment and He still wants to do much more in our lives.

You see church,

He uses our faults and failures and He wants to do much more in our lives in the midst of our current circumstances.

The same thing applies to the Nation of Israel that Paul is addressing.

And in doing so – God demonstrates His faithfulness to not only Israel but to us as well.

**13 For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, 14 if by any means I may provoke to jealousy [those who are] my flesh and save some of them. 15 For if their being cast away [is] the reconciling of the world, what [will] their acceptance [be] but life from the dead?**

Paul's boasting about the ministry that God has called him to do.

He is magnifying the work of God in his life.

He is excited.

Paul had this confidence in his calling and it instilled in him this courage to serve the Lord with gladness and perseverance.

Paul is an example for us – as we read earlier – of a guy who puts his hand to the plow and doesn't look back.

He paid the price as God refined him – all the challenges he went through

He had a servant's heart to love those that God put in the ministry that God put him in.

Jew and Gentile alike.

Paul wanted to share the gospel with his fellow Jew – from the beginning – he got up and went to a synagogue

When he would enter a new city – go to the synagogue

But Paul understood that his main ministry was to the Gentiles and he understood that this would provoke the Jews to jealousy – because that is God's plan was from the beginning.

Now – don't get thrown off by the word jealousy – this is not a bad jealousy -

And as a result of that jealousy and their response to the work of grace and the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts – they too would be saved.

Again, I mentioned it last week – there are church teaching bad theology that God is done with the Jews.

That the church has replaced the Jews.

And it leads to antisemitism – even in the church.

This bad theology pushes away the Jew

But Paul tells us that God is still stirring the Jews to jealousy by the work He is doing in the lives of the believer.

**16 For if the firstfruit [is] holy, the lump [is] also [holy]; and if the root [is] holy, so [are] the branches.**

Paul wants us to fully understand that the rejection of the Gospel of Grace by the Jews is only temporary – it's not a permanent thing

And wanting the Gentiles to fully understand and appreciate Israel's place in God's plan Paul is using two illustrations here to make exactly the same point.

And here is the point -

What is considered first contributes its character to what is related to it.

Let me explain – the first illustration that Paul uses – firstfruit and the lump

In Numbers 15:18-21, the Children of Israel were supposed to make a heave offering – a cake with the flour from the first grain when they entered the Promised Land

So they would make a big thing of dough – they would set apart a lump for the cake and in doing so, the entire dough was set apart.

Abraham was that lump that was set apart by God for a specific purpose and calling.

And the argument that Paul is making is that if this is true of him – then it is also true of his posterity (Israel) as a whole.

Because they are all connected – they are coming from the same source.

If Abraham was set apart by God for His redemptive purposes – then so to must be the case with those who descended from him.

So God is not finished with them

**17 And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, 18 do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, [remember that] you do not support the root, but the root [supports] you.**

The branches that were broken off – refers to the Jews who did embrace the gospel of grace –

But I had you make a note that it says that some of the branches were broken off – meaning not all the branches were broken off – referring to the remnant.

We talked about that last week –

How God always uses a remnant.

The Jews that had come to faith in Jesus Christ.

The wild olive tree is you and me – the Gentiles who come to faith in Jesus Christ

We are the part being grafted into God's redemptive plan through Jesus Christ

And the root – points back to Abraham -

We are participating in God's redemptive plan with the Jews – we are not replacing the Jews.

And so what Paul is warning the Gentiles – to not overestimate our privileged position - by seeing ourselves spiritually better than them.

It doesn't mean that we are more favored.

It doesn't mean that God has put us in a position higher than them.

The privileges and freedoms that we enjoy as believers did not originate because of us –

And if we are not careful – the believer can fall into the same trap that many of Jews fell into

Thinking that salvation is about us – that God saw something better and us and chose us – and Paul is saying that this is untrue.

Every blessing, every privilege – everything that we are is because of what God has done – not because of us.

Our standing is not based upon anything that we have done but everything that He has done.



**19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." 20 Well [said]. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.**

Israel was broken off because of their unbelief

Israel was not broken off because we have a special claim on God that they don't have.

We the Gentiles have simply been grafted in because we are now doing what they as a people, up to this point, had failed to do – which is to stand by faith.

**21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. 22 Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in [His] goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.**

Keep in mind – that Paul is addressing the Gentile peoples as a whole –

Paul is not addressing the individual believers – Paul is not talking about losing one's salvation here.

He is saying that as the Gentile peoples – we can fall into the same trap as Israel

Refusing to stand in faith – beginning to think that we can meet standard of righteousness or merit God's favor by doing works.

If God did not spare His chosen people, what makes the Gentile people think that God will not do the same to them -

Again, I want to stress – this is referring to Gentiles people – not the individual believer.

The only way to remain grafted in is by faith

**23 And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who [are] natural [branches], be grafted into their own olive tree?**

Paul says here – Israel's breaking off – it is not permanent

If they repent of their unbelief and take their stand in faith

God is going to graft them back into the olive tree and once again, they will become productive branches.

The bottom line is that we must continue to cling to Jesus.

Continue in God's goodness

We abide in Jesus

**(John 15:4-8 NKJV) "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. {5} "I**

am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. {6} "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

We abide in Him

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I

accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

