

“Israel’s Fall From Grace Is Not Final”

Romans 11:11-24

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Teaching Aim: To illustrate that national Israel’s fall from grace is only a temporary fall, it is not final. To recognize their temporary rejection of Messiah has opened the door for the Gentiles to receive the blessings of the New Covenant if they turn to Christ. To understand God is not done with national Israel, in the final days there will be a massive turning to Jesus by the Jews that coincides with the Second Coming of Christ.

Part I: Israel’s fall from grace is not final (Rom. 11:11-15)

1. What is the significance of Ezekiel’s *“Valley of Dry Bones”* prophecy in **Ezek. 37:1-14**? Who and what do the bones in this vision represent? What can we learn about the restoration of Israel as a nation from this prophecy? According to the New Covenant and **Jer. 31:34b-36**, when, and only when, will God’s covenant promises with Israel be broken? Will this ever happen?
2. Did Israel fall permanently because of their unbelief in Christ (**vs. 11**)? What has happened as a result of Israel’s fall and God’s hand of blessing being placed on Gentiles who receive Jesus? Is this all part of God’s eternal plan? (See **Rom. 8:28**)
3. According to **verse 12**, what have the Gentiles received because of Israel’s temporary fall from favored nation status? How do you see the riches spoken of in **verse 12** relating to our salvation? What is Paul referring to when he speaks of Israel’s future *“fullness”*? How will this *“fullness”* bring about even greater blessing to the believing Gentiles?
4. What special mission did God give to the apostle Paul (**vs. 13**)? (See **Acts 9:15-16**) How could Paul’s ministry become even better according to **verses 13b and 14**? Does Paul have within himself the ability to save anyone, or must the salvation message be brought to people through the gospel message? (See **Acts 16:31; Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5-6**) According to **Rom. 9:2-4 and 10:1-3**, how did Paul feel towards his fellow Israelites? Does it break your heart when you see your loved ones and friends rejecting Christ? If so, why? How can you more effectively share the gospel to your loved ones?

5. According to **verse 15**, was the temporary casting away of the nation Israel a good thing or a bad thing for the rest of the world? Why? What will Israel's acceptance by God mean to the rest of the world (**vs. 15**)? How will the phrase "*life from the dead*" apply to Israel as a nation when they repent at the turn of Christ? (See **Rom. 11:25-26**)

Part II: Gentile believers are grafted into the olive tree made up of true believers (Rom. 11:16-18)

1. Paul used two different illustrations in **verse 16**, what were they? The idea here is that if the firstfruits are consecrated to the Lord, the rest will be set apart to God as well. Who do many people believe the lump of dough and the root of the tree symbolize? (See Commentaries) Why should these verses be an encouragement to everyone who loves Israel?
2. In the Old Testament, the olive tree is often used to symbolize the nation of Israel. In **verse 17**, which branches were broken off and why? How does Jesus respond to the tree and the vine branches that do not remain in Him according to the following metaphors? (See **Matt. 7:15-20; John 15:5-6**) What lesson is being taught to us in this passage? What metaphor is used for the Gentiles in **verse 17**? What act "*contrary to nature*" do we find God performing here? What is meant by Gentile believers becoming partakers "*of the root and fatness of the olive tree*?"
3. What warning is given to the Gentiles in **verse 18**? Why might some be tempted to boast against "*the branches*" (meaning the nation of Israel)? Has the church ever been guilty of anti-Semitism in the past? Do we still find anti-Semitism in the church at large today? If so, where? What is "*replacement theology*?" (Hint: Search Online) Is anti-Semitism (meaning hatred toward the Jews) prevalent in most of the world today? How many countries actually offer support to Israel? Why do you think God gives such a strong warning to the church? Who "*is*" the most famous Jew to ever live? Is He still living?

Part III: Do not become haughty, remember it is by grace through faith in Christ alone that we are saved (Rom. 11:19-24)

1. According to **verses 19 and 20**, why were the branches (representing the unbelieving Jews) broken off? What is the only way that the Gentiles will be allowed to stand and not fall? (See **Eph. 2:8-9**) Who is the only One able to bring us to salvation? (See **John 14:6; Acts 4:12**) Do Gentile believers have any reason to be proud? Should they be looking down on the Jews and condemning them for rejecting Jesus? Why or why not?
2. According to **verse 20**, what attitude should Christians “*not*” have? What thought should alarm us? (Hint: see **verse 21**) Who are the “*natural branches*” in **verse 21**? Do **verses 20 and 21** indicate that a true believer can lose his or her salvation? Why or why not? (See **John 3:16; 10:27-29; 1 John 5:11-13**)
3. List as many attributes of God as you can. What attributes demonstrate God’s “*goodness*” and “*severity*?” What are some examples of receiving God’s goodness? When do we receive God’s severity? (See **John 3:36**) According to **verse 22**, what will happen to the person or the nation that rejects Christ? Why can’t we be saved by simply attending church and being religious? (See **Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5-7**) What makes Jesus absolutely necessary to our salvation?
4. What encouraging promise is found in **verse 23** relating to the nation of Israel? What must happen for unbelieving Israel to be grafted back into the olive tree? Why do you think so many Jews have rejected Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord? (See **2 Cor. 4:3-4**) How can we as Christians be more effective in reaching out to Jewish people? How can we be more effective in reaching out to the spiritually lost and dying people of this world as a whole?
5. Normally the sprout of a “*cultivated tree*” is grafted into a wild tree, not the opposite. What special work of God is spoken of in **verse 24**? How does this metaphor relate to believing Jews and believing Gentiles today? What are some ways that Gentile believers are indebted to Israel? (See **Rom. 9:4**)

6. According to **verse 24**, is it easier to graft a wild olive shoot into a cultivated olive tree, or is it easier to graft the wild olive shoot back into the original olive tree that it came from? What can we learn about the future of the nation of Israel from this passage?
7. Right before **Ezek. 37** (“The Valley of Dry Bones” chapter) we find an incredible teaching in **Ezek. 36:24-27**. What promises are made to the nation of Israel in this encouraging section of Scripture? Who takes responsibility to see that these promises are fulfilled? According to **verse 27**, how is this work of God contrary to nature? Who brings about spiritual life and causes the Israelites to desire to follow and obey Him? What can we learn about the future of Israel from **Ezek. 37:24-27**? According to these verses, will the nation of Israel as a whole (but not necessarily meaning every single Israelite) come to faith in Christ at some point in the future? (See **Zech. 12:10**) If so, when?
8. Have you received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord? If not, why not do so in prayer right now? If you have received Christ, why not rededicate your life to loving and serving Him with zeal?

MINER’S CORNER – *Manna to live by!*

- The Jews fall from grace through the rejection of Jesus at His first advent is not a permanent fall, the Jews will turn to Christ in mass when He returns at His Second Coming.
- By being grafted into the cultivated olive tree, Gentile believers participate as heirs to the promises given to Abraham and the patriarchs.
- Olive trees produce olives, olives produce oil, oil produces light; the role of both Israel and the Church is to bear the light of Christ to a lost and dying world.
- There is no place for anti-Semitism in the church, we too are of the seed of Abraham.
- Gentile nations following Christ must continue “*in Christ*” or risk being cut off from God’s blessing.