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### [Romans 11:1-10](#)

## Is God Through With Israel?

by Dr. Wayne A. Barber

We begin a very, very exciting chapter. I am simply going to entitle the study of this chapter, "Is God through with Israel?" That is going to be the main topic of Romans 11. It doesn't look good for the nation of Israel when it comes to salvation by faith. God has allowed the Gentiles to come in. The church—the parenthesis between the 69th and the 70th week of Daniel—has been flooded by the Gentiles. They are accepting this righteousness by faith. It doesn't take much for a Gentile to understand that he is a sinner and that he can't live up to it. He has not had the benefit of what Israel has had. But that brings up the question, "Is God through with Israel? Since Israel has rejected Him and His offer, since all the blessings have been laid in front of them and they have turned their backs on it, has God rejected Israel?"

We are entering a very controversial subject. I want you to know from the outset, it will be immediately clear as to where I am in the midst of this controversy. I am on the side of those who believe God has not finished with Israel yet. I will try to explain to you why. If we disagree, then let's continue to believe that God, the Holy Spirit is the same in both of our lives. Whoever is wrong, God will bring us into a unity. But I definitely, adamantly stand that God is not finished with Israel. He has promised certain things to them that He as God is faithful to perform. God will bring those things to pass.

I read an illustration of something that happened over a hundred years ago. The King of Prussia was talking to the chaplain of his army and said, "Listen, can you give me one word that would somehow, in some way, validate the inerrancy of God's Word, that

would validate the fact that it is the truly inspired scripture?" The chaplain looked back at him and said, "Absolutely, with no problem whatsoever." He was sort of taken back and said, "Well, what is that word?" The chaplain said, "Israel. Israel. Israel."

Look at it. It is from the first part of Genesis all the way through the book of Revelation. Israel. Israel. Israel. You pick up your papers today and you will recognize the smallest country in the world is the very center of everybody's attention right now. It is the focus. Everything seems to somehow revolve around Israel. Israel. Israel. You say, "Well, they rejected His offer of righteousness by faith." That is true. You are going to see today that there has never been a time in Israel's history that they have not rejected God and rebelled against God. Moses said that they were stiff-necked, rebellious people. The First Baptist Church of the Wilderness! They were that way from the very beginning and it has never been any different.

Listen to their history. In a great sin against God they said, "We want a king. We don't want a prophet." Do you know what that is equal to? Israel was saying, "We don't want you, God, to rule over us. We want man to rule over us." That was a terrible sin of rejection to God's leadership in their nation. The prophet Samuel said these words after God had said to him, "Samuel, don't be distraught. They have not rejected you. They have rejected Me as being King of their lives." Then Samuel the prophet said this to the nation of Israel: "And Samuel said to the people, do not fear. You have committed all this evil, yet do not turn aside from following the Lord. But serve the Lord with all of your heart, for the Lord will not abandon His people on account of His great name [Not on account of them, but on account of His great name] because the Lord has been pleased to make you a people for Himself."

Listen to Nehemiah. Nehemiah is talking about a time in Israel's life when they got into prosperity and turned away from God. That sounds like the Gentile world of today, doesn't it? They turned away from God and turned to their prosperity and blessings. Well, God would have to raise up an enemy to punish them. When He did, they would be chastened for a while, but as soon as the punishment drifted off, they would immediately go right back to the same sin. It was almost like a cycle. They just kept going through that.

Nehemiah brings that account to our attention beginning in [Nehemiah 9:26-31](#):

But they became disobedient and rebelled against Thee and cast Thy law behind their backs and killed Thy prophets who had admonished them that they might return to Thee. And they committed great blasphemies. Therefore Thou didst deliver them into the hand of their oppressors who oppressed them, but when they cried to Thee in the time of their distress, Thou didst hear from heaven, and according to Thy great compassion Thou didst give them deliverers who delivered them from the hand of their oppressors. But as soon as they had rest, they did evil again before Thee; therefore Thou didst abandon them to the hand of their enemies, so that they ruled over them. When they cried again to Thee, Thou didst hear from heaven, and many times Thou didst rescue them according to Thy compassion, and admonished them in order to turn them back to Thy law. Yet they acted arrogantly and did not listen to Thy commandments but sinned against Thine ordinances, by which if a man observes them he shall live. And they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck, and would not listen. However, Thou didst bear with them for many years, and admonished them by Thy Spirit through Thy prophets, yet they would not give ear. Therefore Thou didst give them into the hand of the peoples of the lands. Nevertheless, in Thy great compassion Thou didst not make an end of them or forsake them, for Thou art a gracious and compassionate God.

That is who we are dealing with here, folks, a gracious and a compassionate God.

I submit to you that God has not changed His methods, nor His final objective for the nation of Israel. Listen to the prophet Isaiah in [Isaiah 54:9-17](#):

"For this is like the days of Noah to Me; when I swore that the waters of Noah should not flood the earth again, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, nor will I rebuke you. For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, but My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, and My covenant of peace will not be shaken," says the Lord who has compassion on you. "O afflicted one, storm-tossed, and not comforted, behold, I will set your stones in antimony, and your foundations I will lay in sapphires. Moreover, I will make your battlements of rubies and your gates of crystal, and your entire wall of precious stones. And all your sons will be taught of the Lord; and the well-being of your sons will be great. In righteousness you will be established; you will be far from oppression, for you will not fear; and from terror, for it will not come near you...no weapon that is formed against you shall prosper; and every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their vindication is from Me," declares the Lord.

That is exactly what Paul is trying to tell us. God has not forsaken His people. God has promised His people certain things. God is going to carry that out regardless of the fact that they have rejected Him. He has not rejected them. Now there is a big difference there. I want you to see five witnesses to the fact that God has not finished with Israel yet.

Again this is my case. I am stating it. If you disagree with me, that is your prerogative. Let's don't break fellowship over it, just keep praying for one another. The word of God is the authority and I want you to remember that. Much of the argument about this

chapter, that God is finished with Israel, did not come from people's individual search for truth in Romans. It came from a seminary classroom. It came from a tape that we have listened to. It came from a favorite speaker who spoke on that topic. But friend, let's just let the word say what it says. If I am wrong, I am wrong. If you are wrong, then be wrong. Is God finished with Israel?

I want to show you two things out of five this time. There are three more yet to come. First of all, the Apostle Paul in verse 1 begins by establishing the pattern by which God will bring Israel to Himself. Again, this is my view but I want to share it with you. The first sentence answers the whole question whether the church has replaced Israel, which many people are saying. Verse 1 says, "I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be!" I don't know how much simpler you can get. God has not rejected His people, has He? Now, who are His people? You have to look at the context. In chapters 9 and 10 we are dealing with Israel. Here God is speaking to a Gentile audience to let them see that they should never be arrogant and not miss the point of God's intervention in Israel's life and of God's love for these people. Has God rejected His people? May it never be!

The term "rejected" is the term that means to cast away from, to throw out. It is in aorist middle. Has God chosen on His own to throw Israel out? Has He replaced Israel with the church? Now in a sense that is right because we are spiritual Israel and that was the design God had, even with Abraham, that it be by faith. We are a part of that tree that grew up out of the root of faith. And so, therefore, in that sense we are a part of spiritual Israel, but we are talking about the nation of Israel. Has God taken the nation of Israel, thrown them out and replaced them with the spiritual Israel, the church today? Well, let's just see.

Paul says, "May it never be!" The nation of Israel is still the focus of God, in the plan of God. God has a future planned for them. Paul says something about himself here. This is interesting to me, and I want to take some time with it. Have you ever wondered about the conversion of Paul? Watch this. Paul says in 11:1, "For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." He is writing to the church at Rome, and there were obviously many proselyte Jews there. A proselyte Jew is a Gentile who later on in life decides that he wants to convert over to Judaism. He goes through the rituals, particularly the ritual of circumcision, and is brought in. Paul said, "I just want you to know, I am pure blood from Israel." He says it even better in Philippians 3 when he says, "I was circumcised the eighth day," which was the custom for male children. He says also, "I was of the tribe of Benjamin," the same thing he says here. He says, "I was a Pharisee of the Pharisees." He said, "I was a descendant, of course, of Abraham." He said, "According to the law I was found blameless." In other words, Paul is identifying himself here. "If God is through with the nation of Israel, wait a minute, I am an Israelite. I am of Abraham." He says, "I am also of the tribe of Benjamin, the most beloved one of all the tribes."

Now, what is he saying? Is he saying that because he is a Jew by birth, an Israelite, his conversion proves that God is not finished with Israel? I don't think that is exactly what he has in mind here. I don't think Paul is saying, "The fact that I am saved is proof that God is not finished with Israel." For the first eight chapters of Acts, the whole church was made up of converted Jewish people. You don't get to the Gentiles until you get past chapter 8. So we know that there is something going on here. I think he is saying, "The way I was converted sets the pattern for the way God one day will bring Israel to Himself."

Now, if you think about Israel, remember they rejected God's plan of righteousness by faith. What does it mean to be an Israelite who is as adamant and disobedient and obstinate as chapter 10 says they were? Well, let's just take a man by the name of Saul who later became Paul. Let's just take him before he got converted. He was schooled by Gamaliel, the greatest teacher of the Law ever in the city of Jerusalem, from the time he was about 12 years old. He was born and raised in Tarsus of a Jewish family. Here was a beautiful picture of exactly what Israel was, adamantly against righteousness by faith. That is why he says in [Philippians 3](#), "according to the Law found blameless." Paul was a man who was working his way into the kingdom, a man who was sold out on all that Israel represented.

God changed Saul's life. Have you ever thought about that? Let me just walk you through this just for a second. In [1 Corinthians 15:8](#) look what Paul says about his salvation experience, not the fact that he was saved, but the things about the way he was saved. It says, "And last of all, as it were to one untimely born, He appeared to me also." Now "untimely born" means born out of season. What does this mean? Is he talking about the fact that he was an apostle born out of season? I am certain that could be true because they cast lots and Matthias was the 12th disciple. But did God have Paul in mind and should he have been the 12th one? Could he be saying, "I am an apostle born out of due season?" Certainly that has tremendous weight. But wait a minute, "As one born out of season, an Israelite born out of season, sold out to everything Israel is sold out to, absolutely totally focused on the fact that righteousness is by works, not by faith. One untimely born."

You know, three times in the book of Acts Luke mentions the conversion of Paul. Why? Why does he keep bringing it up? Well, in [1 Timothy 1:16](#) look at what he says. "And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost [the first one], Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life." Now let me just suggest something to you. The word "example" there in that passage, *hupotuposis*, is a word that means exact pattern. If I was an artist and I was going to draw a picture and I had a sketch of what I was going to draw, that sketch has got to be exact. I mean, absolutely exact. I have something here that I am going to draw by. I am going to make sure that every detail here is exact to this

detail because this is correct, this is the pattern, this is the example.

Now if you took the fact that Paul was saved by grace and by the mercy of God, which he was, and that was a pattern for other people who came to know the Lord, whether Jew or Gentile, it falls short. If it is an exact pattern, if it is something that everyone is measured by, something is missing. For instance, how many people do you know who were stopped in a road and blinded for three days for God to get their attention? Then he was sent off into the desert for three years and taught by the Holy Spirit of God. If it is an exact pattern, then something has got to fit here. If everything else has to match the sketch, then what is he saying? He is not saying, "It is the fact that I am saved that proves God is not finished with Israel yet." How many people do you know who have been to the **third heaven**? (**Click** for more discussion of **The Third Heaven**). We only have two specifically recorded, and that was Paul and the apostle John. John got to write the book of Revelation, which was the account of his going into the third heaven. But you see, the things that happened to Paul are so uniquely different than could never be the sketch, could be the pattern for others that were going to come to know the Lord Jesus, unless you just milked it down and said it was only by grace and the mercy of God. That applies to all of us.

What is he saying? I don't think it is the fact that he was saying just what he was thinking. I think if you are talking about the way he was saved, with that being a pattern for the way that God one day will get Israel's attention and turn them to Himself, that makes a ton of sense. Paul says, "I am an Israelite. I am of the tribe of Benjamin, a descendant of Abraham. God is not finished with Israel yet because I am one who was born untimely. I was one whose salvation was a pattern, was an example for those who would later come to know Him for eternal life." You see, we know something about Israel that others don't know. We know from the word of God in the book of Zechariah that God is going to take one third of the nation of Israel and save them at the end of the 70th week of Daniel, that terrible time, especially the last three and a half years, the great day of our Lord, the great time of tribulation. And at the end of that time, the end of the fire and all the things that happen, God is going to bring a people and turn them to Himself. They are going to suddenly realize that it is Jesus and He is the one who they have slain.

Turn to [Zechariah 12:10](#). Here Zechariah is talking about the future. This has never taken place in the life of Israel. He says in [verse 10](#), "And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born. In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. And the land will mourn, every family by itself;..."

[Zechariah 13:1](#) continues, "*In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity.*"... [13:6](#) "*And one will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' Then he will say, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'*"

Do you see what he is talking about here? It says in verse 7, "'Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the man, My Associate,' declares the Lord of hosts. 'Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered; and I will turn My hand against the little ones. And it will come about in all the land,' declares the Lord, 'that two parts in it will be cut off and perish; but the third will be left in it. And I will bring the third part through the fire, refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them; I will say, "They are My people," and they will say, "The Lord is my God."'"

God says to Israel there is going to be a day in the future that He is going to establish them in righteousness. That has not yet taken place. The righteousness they are pursuing right now is by works and it is a false righteousness, but one day He will establish them in righteousness. One day He will save one third of Israel in the land and bring them through the fire, through the difficult times that we are talking about. Then they will turn to Him and call Him their God and He will call them His people. Has God thrown Israel away because Israel as a nation has rejected God? I think not. And the Apostle Paul, to me, is the pattern by which God will bring a nation to Himself. He stopped a man who was the epitome of what Israel is, stopped him in his tracks and turned him around and saved him. He will do the same thing with the nation of Israel. God could do it today, but God does what He does in the appointed times that He Himself has appointed. I believe Paul's dramatic conversion, the way in which he was saved, sets the pattern for Israel later on.

You may say, "Well, I can't buy that." Alright, let's push that argument aside. We come to argument number two. The second argument I want to share with you is, we have the persistence of God with Israel. I hear people say and have read theologians who come up with the idea that Israel has rejected God. Now what is new about that? When has there been a time in Israel's history that they have not rejected God? They are a stiff-necked, rebellious people. They have rejected God through their whole history and just because they rejected Christ in the present time when Paul is writing does not mean that God uses that rejection to throw them away. God has made promises to them.

What Paul does is he takes you back to those difficult times and difficult judgments that God has already made on Israel and shows you that even in the midst of those judgments that sound so severe, God persistently has kept for Himself a remnant out of Israel. He has always had a people, folks. He has always had a people.

Look at [Romans 11:2](#): *"God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew."*

I love that. God foreknew us and God also foreknew Israel. Remember back in chapter 9 we saw that not all Israel is Israel. We know that the true root is based on faith because Abraham, Isaac and Jacob become the first-fruits. Then out of Isaac came the nation of Israel. So we know then that he is not talking about all of Israel, but He foreknew those.

Now foreknowledge certainly means that God knew ahead of time those who would respond to Him by faith, but I think it probably has an even more mysterious meaning. God entered into a relationship with them long before they ever existed and nothing is going to stop that relationship for all of eternity. Remember, God never ever prepared a man for destruction. Man prepares himself for destruction. He hardens his own heart. God just finishes the process. But when it comes to salvation, folks, it is God who prepared the vessels of mercy. He knew us before we ever knew Him. He chose us. No man comes to Jesus except the Father draws him.

By the way, let me just share a thought on that. I was in a meeting one night sharing that, that no man comes to Jesus except the Father draws him. I was kind of confused as to how to explain that because you are getting into realms that I don't have the words for. A man came running to me at the end of the message and said, "Praise God, son, praise God." I said, "For what?" I thought I had confused the whole bunch. He said, "Oh, I know today that I am chosen." I said, "How did you know? How did you know?" He said, "Oh, because I am drawn. I am drawn. The drawing showed me that I was chosen because no man comes to Jesus except the Father draws him." What a beautiful picture he drew for me.

God foreknew Israel. He foreknew. He always had a remnant for Himself.

Well, Paul goes back to the time of Elijah. What a great time to go back to because at the present time when Paul was writing this, it didn't look good for Israel. But I want to tell you something, back in Elijah's time, it looked even worse for Israel. He recites this. He is trying to logically bring people to understand that just because the judgments of God have been severe upon Israel, just because Israel has rejected and rebelled as according to their own history, it still does not mean that God has finished with them. For God has always had a remnant in His people.

[Romans 11:2](#) *"Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? Elijah is having a bad day. He said, "'Lord, they have killed Thy prophets, they have torn down Thine altars, and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life.'" Have you ever felt that way? "I am the only one, Lord. I am the only one who loves You."*

God says something back to him that sort of pops his bubble in verse 4. "But what is the divine response to him? 'I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.'" Elijah, you only missed it by 6,999. Yeah, you are one of them, but I have 6,999 more. He mentions only men, not necessarily others.

So then, we have then the fact that God had a remnant. In the bleakest hour of Israel's history, when they had killed the prophets and they had rebelled against God, God still kept for Himself 7,000. The word "**kept**" is *kataleipo*, which means to reserve. It is in the aorist active indicative. God did it and takes all responsibility for His actions. He did it in the midst of a difficult time.

Paul is reminding us of the history of Israel. It has always been bleak when it comes to the nation of Israel. That is why Moses said what he said about those people. From generation to generation it was like one cycle after another of rebellion and rejection. But in the midst of all the judgments, in the midst of all the punishments, God kept for Himself a remnant. So just by the fact that Israel has rejected God does not in any way mean that God has rejected them. At no time has the nation of Israel been true to God and to His plan of righteousness by faith. But this remnant has been saved by God's grace. Remember, never was that remnant according to any work that they did. These were those who by faith it was reckoned unto them as righteousness.

[Romans 11:5](#): *"In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God's gracious choice." He reaches all the way back to Elijah's day and the time of Israel and brings them right up to the present and said, "You see, even right now in Israel, who has rejected God's plan of righteousness by faith, He still has a remnant. I am one of them, even right now. Times haven't changed much."*

[Romans 11:6](#) goes on, "But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace."

You know what? Some people can even make faith a work by thinking that it is their faith that saves them. No, it is your faith in the grace that God extends to you. It is not your faith, it is His grace and His faithfulness. By faith you turn and cry out for that. I hear so believers who don't even understand this. There are believers who are still trying to live as if it is up to them. They get in a pit of despair and they try to crawl out of that pit. Have you ever tried to crawl out of a pit of despair? Let me tell you something that works a little bit better. Cry out to Him and let Him by His grace lift you out of that pit! There is a huge difference in you crawling out and God delivering you from the pit. You see, that is what grace is. It is what God can do, not what man can do.

Well, God saved a remnant by His sovereign grace during a time when it seemed no one believed in God. But what about the others? What about that part of Israel that didn't believe God? Did anything happen to them? The judgments are clear, and Paul brings this out. He says in [Romans 11:7](#), "What then? That which Israel is seeking for, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened." His point is that those that God always had in the midst of the hard times, the remnant, were chosen. God has done that all the way through to the end. The rest were hardened.

Now, [Romans 11:8](#) gives a pretty bleak picture of how God has brought His judgment upon Israel as a whole nation because of their rejection of righteousness by faith. Not because of their zeal, not because of their sincerity, but because of their rejection of His plan of righteousness by faith in Christ Jesus. Verse 8 says, "just as it is written, 'God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes to see not and ears to hear not, down to this very day.'" "A spirit of stupor" is the idea of numbness, the feeling you may get after you've been stung by a bee.

The idea is that Israel chose to reject the goodness of God. It was laid in front of them. Therefore, in a sense, God stung them and numbed them. The way He numbed them was, He blinded them and deafened them to the very thing that they had right in front of them. Look at what Paul says in Corinthians about the law of Moses. There is a veil. Why? Because the law puts you into a different framework of thinking. You think you can work your way into righteousness. No, you can't. Therefore, you are blinded when you look at it that way. But when you recognize you can't and turn the other way, you can see the grace that God has in Christ.

Now watch verse 9: "And David says, 'Let their table become a snare and a trap, and a stumbling block and a retribution to them.'" Paul does this a lot in [Romans 9-11](#). He goes back to the Old Testament, but he doesn't teach out of the context of the Old Testament. He takes a thought that they had, runs up to the New Testament and applies it to what he is saying. He was such a scholar of the Old Testament scriptures, writing to people who also knew them. He takes [Psalms 69:22-23](#) and summarizes it into four words. But let me just read [Psalms 69:22-23](#) for you: "May their table before them become a snare; and when they are in peace, may it become a trap. May their eyes grow dim so that they cannot see, and make their loins shake continually."

What is the table? The table is the table of blessing. Any time you set the table before someone, you are thinking of the blessings that God has given. In the context, I would think that it was all that the prophets had shown them of the marvelous spiritual blessings that they had. What a privileged people! He says, "Let their table that has been set before them, all that has been clearly given to them that they have rejected, become a snare and a trap and a stumbling block and a retribution." Boy, what a word picture he draws for you.

The word for "**snare**" is really the word "trap." The word *pagis* is the word for trap, meaning for something to suddenly catch you. You are unguarded. It is unexpected, and it catches you. The word for trap is the word *thera*. It is the word usually used for a hunt for wild beasts. It comes from the word for wild beasts. But used in this way it means destruction. This trap is going to become destruction for them. This table of blessings becomes a trap which is going to destroy.

A "stumbling block" is the word *skandalon*. I have an idea what *skandalon* is. It is the little trigger part of the trap that you put the bait on, so that when something takes the bait it causes the trap to shut.

I like the kind of mousetrap that has a little lid on it. It is supposed to have a smell or something that attracts mice. I add to it, though. I put a whole spoonful of peanut butter on top of it. I want to make sure that I attract the mouse. When that mouse comes up and he touches that bait that is on that little lip there, that is a hair trigger and that trap comes shut.

That is the word *skandalon*. That is the word Paul uses here when he says "stumbling block." The picture to me is so clear. He is saying, "Let Israel's blessings become the trigger that springs the trap of destruction which is in repayment for the rebellion to the goodness of God." That is exactly what happened.

The word "retribution" is the word that means God will pay them back exactly as He knows how and only as He knows how to pay. It's an exact repayment. If I repaid, it would be overdoing it or under doing it. God never overdoes or under does. He is righteous. Therefore, He repays, retributes as needed. It is a pretty tough judgment.

[Romans 11:10](#) says, "Let their eyes be darkened to see not, and bend their backs forever." The words "bend their backs forever" has the idea of bending a bow. It has the idea in a figurative way of meaning oppression or affliction. Look at the nation of Israel, folks. There has been a lot of affliction and a lot of oppression over the years. But just because the judgment that is quoted here way back in the Old Testament is so severe, don't ever think that to mean that God is finished with Israel. As a matter of fact, if He was finished with Israel when He made that judgment, then Paul would not have been a believer in the New Testament. You see, that judgment was made way back in the Old Testament. Oh, the judgments against Israel have been there and been there and been there. But in the midst of those judgments, God has always had a people whom He has chosen by His grace to be a part of His eternal plan.

There is a day coming when the judgment is going to get worse than it has ever been. Daniel says it will be to break the rebellion of

My people. But out of that will come that remnant, the third part, that God will bring to Himself. That will be their great day of atonement. Why would you use the thought that God has rejected His people just because they have rejected Him and His judgments have been so severe? That has been the history of Israel all along. It has never changed. Why would it be any different in the future? God has persistently had a remnant in Israel.

The next several verses clarify even more what I am saying. Has God finished with Israel? I think not, and I have no apologies in saying that. God still has that nation on His agenda, but they don't realize it. Prime Minister Rabin, who was assassinated, made the statement, "The scripture has nothing to do with the land that Israel has right now." That is why he was so liberal in giving it away. It is almost as if scriptures have nothing to say about Israel. Oh yes, they do, folks. And God's hand is all over Israel, even right now. God is going to deal with them, and I believe that is why Paul brought himself up. You may disagree, but I believe it is. God is going to deal with Israel one day just like He did with Paul. If you had asked somebody, "Do you believe that Paul could ever be saved?" the day before he was saved, they would say, "Are you kidding me? That man is so hard-nosed, righteousness by works, you will never get that man to change." The next day, God stopped him, blinded him and changed him. And God is going to do that with Israel one day. He is going to take them through the fire and refine them and turn them to Himself. There is going to be great mourning in Israel for the one whom they have pierced.

You ask, "Well, how can I apply this to me? What can I do about it? How can it apply to my life?" I tell you how it applies to my life. What is hitting me in chapters 9, 10 and 11 is the fact that I don't even deserve to be standing in the pulpit. I don't deserve anything. But a gracious God showed His compassion upon my life. Think about that. Have you lost sense of that? We act as if we deserve something. We act as if it is ours and we can do something for God.

Paul says in chapter 12, "I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,..." He says, "Don't you ever think for one second that you can do anything that is pleasing in God's eyes unless it is out of total faith and dependence on His ability in you to do through you what He has commanded you to do.