

Romans 11:1-4 Commentary

PREVIOUS

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Click chart to enlarge

Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
[Romans Overview Chart](#) - Charles Swindoll

Source: Dr David Cooper
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ROMANS ROAD to RIGHTEOUSNESS				
Romans 1:18-3:20	Romans 3:21-5:21	Romans 6:1-8:39	Romans 9:1-11:36	Romans 12:1-16:27
SIN	SALVATION	SANCTIFICATION	SOVEREIGNTY	SERVICE

NEED FOR SALVATION	WAY OF SALVATION	LIFE OF SALVATION	SCOPE OF SALVATION	SERVICE OF SALVATION
God's Holiness In Condemning Sin	God's Grace In Justifying Sinners	God's Power In Sanctifying Believers	God's Sovereignty In Saving Jew and Gentile	God's Glory The Object of Service
Deadliness of Sin	Design of Grace	Demonstration of Salvation		
		Power Given	Promises Fulfilled	Paths Pursued
Righteousness Needed	Righteousness Credited	Righteousness Demonstrated	Righteousness Restored to Israel	Righteousness Applied
God's Righteousness IN LAW	God's Righteousness IMPUTED	God's Righteousness OBEYED	God's Righteousness IN ELECTION	God's Righteousness DISPLAYED
Slaves to Sin	Slaves to God			Slaves Serving God
Doctrine				Duty
Life by Faith				Service by Faith
Modified from Irving L. Jensen's chart above				

Rome in the Time of Paul (c. A.D. 60)

Summary of Romans 9-11		
Romans 9	Romans 10	Romans 11
Past Election	Present Rejection	Future Reception
God's Sovereignty Israel's Election by God	Man's responsibility Israel's Rejection of God	God's Ways Higher God Not Rejecting Israel

- R **Ruin** (Romans 1:17 – 3:20) – The utter sinfulness of humanity
O **Offer** (Romans 3:21-31) – God's offer of justification by grace
M **Model** (Romans 4:1-25) – Abraham as a model for saving faith
A **Access** (Romans 5:1-11) – The benefits of justification
N **New Adam** (Romans 5:12-21) – We are children of two "Adams"
S **Struggle w/ Sin** (Romans 6-8) Struggle, sanctification, and victory

Romans 11:1 I [say then](#), [God](#) has not [rejected](#) His [people](#), has He? May it [never](#) be! For I [too am](#) an [Israelite](#), a [descendant](#) of [Abraham](#), of the [tribe](#) of [Benjamin](#). ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [Lego](#) (1SPA) [oun, me aposato](#) (3SAMI) [o theos ton laon autou? me genoito;](#) (3SAMO) [kai gar ego Israelites eimi,](#) (1SPA) [ek spermatis Abraam, phules Beniamin.](#)

Amplified: I ASK then: Has God totally rejected and disowned His people? Of course not! Why, I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin! [I Sam. 12:22; Jer. 31:37; 33:24-26; Phil. 3:5.] ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

ESV: I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. ([ESV](#))

ICB: So I ask: Did God throw out his people? No! I myself am an Israelite. I am from the family of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. ([ICB: Nelson](#))

NIV: I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham,

from the tribe of Benjamin. ([NIV - IBS](#))

NKJV: I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

NLT: I ask, then, has God rejected his people, the Jews? Of course not! Remember that I myself am a Jew, a descendant of Abraham and a member of the tribe of Benjamin.

Phillips: 11:1 - This leads naturally to the question, "Has God then totally repudiated his people?" Certainly not! I myself, for one, am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham and of the tribe of Benjamin. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: I say then, God did not repudiate His people, did He? Far be the thought, for as for myself, I also am an Israelite, the offspring of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. (Eerdmans)

Young's Literal: I say, then, Did God cast away His people? let it not be! for I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin:

Related resources...

- [Summary on the Attributes of God](#)
- [Spurgeon on the Attributes of God](#)
- [Israel of God - Is God "Finished" with Israel in His prophetic plan?](#)
- [Table Comparing/contrasting Israel & Church](#)
- [Does the Church Fulfill Israel's Program? - John Walvoord](#)
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- [Does the Church Fulfill Israel's Program- — Part 2 - Walvoord](#)
- [Does the Church Fulfill Israel's Program- — Part 3 - Walvoord](#)

Online Book by Dr John Walvoord - Israel in Prophecy

- [Chapter I The New State Of Israel](#)
- [Chapter II The Promise To Abraham](#)
- [Chapter III Israel's Future As A Nation](#)
- [Chapter IV The Promise Of The Land To Israel](#)
- [Chapter V The Kingdom Promised To David](#)
- [Chapter VI The Suffering Of Israel](#)
- [Chapter VII The Glorious Restoration Of Israel](#)
- [Selected Bibliography](#)

Online Articles by Arnold Fruchtenbaum related to Israel

- [Israelology: Part 1 of 6 Introduction: Definition of Terms](#)
- [Israelology: Part 2 of 6 Israel Present \(Note: Article begins on Page 2\)](#)
- [Israelology: Part 3 of 6 Israel Present \(Continued\)](#)
- [Israelology: Part 4 of 6 - Israel Future \(Part One\)](#)
- [Israelology: Part 5 of 6 - Israel Future \(Part Two\)](#)
- [Israelology: Part 6 of 6 Other Relevant Topics - Illustrations of Israel \(including marriage\)](#)

Are you confused about God's plan for Israel? Then I highly recommend Tony Garland's 12 Hour Course on **Romans 9-11** in which he addresses in depth the question of What Will Happen to Israel? ([click](#)) or see the individual lectures below)

- [Romans 9:1-5 Paul's Sorrow Concerning Israel](#)
- [Romans 9:6-13 Children of the Promise](#)
- [Romans 9:14-24 The Potter and the Clay](#)
- [Romans 9:25-33 A Remnant Will be Saved](#)
- [Romans 10:1-13 The Righteousness of God](#)
- [Romans 10:14-21 Has Israel Not Heard?](#)
- [Romans 11:1-6 God Has Not Cast Away The Jews](#)
- [Romans 11:7-15 Life from the Dead](#)
- [Romans 11:16-24 Two Olive Trees](#)
- [Romans 11:25-36 The Salvation of Israel](#)

Note that when you click the preceding links, each link will in turn give you several choices including an **Mp3 message** and brief transcript notes. The Mp3's are long (avg 70+ min) but are in depth and thoroughly Scriptural with many quotations from the Old Testament, which is often much less well understood than the NT by many in the church today. Garland takes a literal approach to Scripture, and his love for the Jews and passion to see them saved comes through very clearly in these 12 hours of teaching! Take your home Bible Study group through this series if you dare. Take notes on the tapes as the transcripts are a very abbreviated version of the audio messages. This course is highly recommended for all who love Israel! I think you will agree that Tony Garland, despite coming to faith after age 30 as an engineer, clearly has been given a special anointing by God to promulgate the truth concerning Israel and God's glorious future plan for the Jews. Garland has also produced more than 20 hours of superb audio teaching in his verse by verse commentary on the [Revelation](#) (in depth transcripts also available) which will unravel (in a way you did not think was possible considering the plethora of divergent interpretations) God's final message of the triumph and return of the our Lord Jesus Christ as the King of kings and Lord of lords! Maranatha (See [Maranatha - In Depth Word Study](#))!

NON-DISPENSATIONALISTS SPEAK ON ROMANS 11

Charles Simeon (1759-1836- clearly **not** a "dispensationalist") a godly evangelical expositor clearly did not espouse the false doctrine of "[replacement theology](#)" ([another resource](#)) (Teaches God is finished with the nation of Israel and passed all the OT promises to Israel as now directed to the church) which seems to be **increasing in popularity with many evangelicals**, especially brethren of the reformed persuasion (as an aside I am not a dispensationalist, but classify myself as a "simple minded literalist" - see related article on Israel of God)...

AMONGST those who believe the Holy Scriptures, no doubt is entertained, but that the Jews, who have engaged more of God's regard than any other nation upon earth, are yet destined to act a most important part upon the theatre of the world. They are at present, it is true, so scattered and degraded, that, according to all human appearance, they are, so far at least as respects them in their national capacity, irrecoverably sunk. But though for their multiplied iniquities they are cast off by God, their rejection is neither total nor final:—not total; for there is yet among them "a remnant according to the election of grace:" nor final; because God has determined, that in due season he will restore them to his favor, and unite them with the Gentile Church, as one fold under one Shepherd. This is fully declared in the whole preceding and following context: and justly is it represented as a most mysterious dispensation; so mysterious, that the Apostle, after contemplating it, exclaims, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God? how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out [Note: Ro 11:33.]" ([Ro 11:22-24 The Dispensations of God Towards Jews and Gentiles](#))

It is surprising, how indifferent even pious Christians are on the subject of the future restoration of the Jews. Though the Scriptures speak so much of it, the generality are contended to be altogether ignorant of God's designs respecting them. ([Ro 11:25-17 The Future Salvation of All Israel](#))

IT is strange, that, when so much is spoken in the Holy Scriptures respecting the Jews, they should occupy so little the attention of the Christian world. We see them as monuments of God's indignation; but never inquire, or but superficially inquire, either into the reasons of his conduct towards them, or into his ulterior designs respecting them. Were we to say that they were enemies to God for our sakes, we should be told that it was impossible: and were we to speak of them as yet objects of God's love, we should so astonish our hearers, as to make them cry out, in the language of Ezekiel's auditors, "Ah, Lord God, doth he not speak parables [Note: Ezekiel 20:49.]" But the whole of their present state is a "mystery [Note: Ro 11:25.]," a great and stupendous mystery [Note: Ro 11:33.], into which we shall do well to search. For the assisting of you in this inquiry, I have selected the words which we have just read (Ro 11:28-29) ([Romans 11:28-29 The Jews Still Beloved of God for their Father's Sake](#))

Barry Horner has the following discussion of how the respected preacher C H Spurgeon approached the problem of the Jews and the Nation of Israel...

C. H. Spurgeon like Andrew Bonar, his contemporary, held Augustine and Calvin in high esteem, but this pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London did not embrace their essentially (replacement) eschatology. Rather, Spurgeon maintained a fervent interest in the Jewish people and particularly their being reached with the gospel. Preaching on Ezek 24:26 in 1855, just prior to the rise of modern Zionism, he plainly declared,

Not long shall it be ere they [the Jews] shall come—shall come from distant lands, where'er they rest or roam; and she who has been the off-scouring of all things, whose name has been a proverb and a bye-word, shall become the glory of all lands. Dejected Zion shall raise her head, shaking herself from dust, and darkness, and the dead. Then shall the Lord feed his people, and make them and the places round about his hill a blessing. I think we do not attach sufficient importance to the restoration of the Jews. We do not think enough of it. But certainly, if there is anything promised in the Bible it is this. **I imagine that you cannot read the Bible without seeing clearly that there is to be an actual restoration of the children of Israel.** "Thither they shall go up; they shall come with weeping unto Zion, and with supplications unto Jerusalem." May that happy day soon come! For when the **Jews** are restored, then the fullness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in; and as soon as they return, then Jesus will come upon Mount Zion to reign with his ancients gloriously, and the halcyon days of the **Millennium** shall then dawn; we shall then know every man to be a brother and a friend; Christ shall rule with universal sway.

Speaking on Ezek 37:1-10 in 1864 at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in aid of funds for the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel amongst the Jews, Spurgeon declared,

This vision has been used, from the time of Jerome onwards, as a description of the resurrection, and certainly it may be so accommodated with much effect... But while this interpretation of the vision may be very proper as an accommodation, it must be quite evident to any thinking person that this is not the meaning of the passage. There is no allusion made by Ezekiel to the resurrection, and such topic would have been quite apart from the design of the prophet's speech. I believe he was no more thinking of the resurrection of the dead than of the building of St. Peter's at Rome, or the emigration of the Pilgrim Fathers...

The meaning of our text, as opened up by the context, is most evidently, if words mean anything, first, that there shall be a political restoration of the Jews to their own land and to their own nationality; and then, secondly, there is in the text, and in the context, a most plain declaration, that there shall be a spiritual restoration, a conversion in fact, of the tribes of Israel... Her sons, though they can never forget the sacred dust of Palestine, yet die at a hopeless distance from her consecrated shores. But it shall not be so forever... They shall again walk upon her mountains, shall once more sit under her vines and rejoice under her fig-trees. And they are also to be re-united. There shall not be two, nor ten, nor twelve, but one-one Israel praising one God, serving one king, and that one king the Son of David, the descended Messiah. They are to have a national prosperity which shall make them famous; nay, so glorious shall they be that Egypt, and Tyre, and Greece, and Rome, shall all forget their glory in the greater splendor of the throne of David...

If there be meaning in words this must be the meaning of this chapter. I wish never to learn the art of tearing God's meaning out of his own words. If there be anything clear and plain, the literal sense and meaning of this passage—a meaning not to be spirited or spiritualized away—must be evident that both the two and the ten tribes of Israel are to be restored to their own land, and that a king is to rule over them.

Spurgeon derived a very different meaning from the OT with regard to national Israel than that of Augustine and Calvin. Indeed, when we return to Jer 32:41, it is obvious that Spurgeon's understanding of this passage is fundamentally different from that of Calvin which we previously referenced. So in 1887 he declared,

We cannot help looking for the restoration of the scattered Israelites to the land which God has given to them by a covenant of salt (**See Trumbull's book = [Covenant of Salt](#)**): we also look for the time when they shall believe in the Messiah whom they have rejected, and shall rejoice in Jesus of Nazareth, whom today they despise. There is great encouragement in prophecy to those who work among the seed of Israel; and it is greatly needed, for of all mission fields it has been commonly represented to be one of the most barren, and upon the work the utmost ridicule has been poured. God has, therefore, supplied our faith with encouragements larger than we have in almost any other direction of service. Let those who believe work on! Those who believe not may give it up. They shall not have the honor of having helped to gather together the ancient nation to which our Lord himself belonged; for be it never forgotten that Jesus was a Jew.

Here then we especially draw attention to the more literal interpretation by Bonar and Spurgeon when compared with Augustine and Calvin. But also, with the aid of centuries of hindsight along with the present state of the Middle East at our fingertips, we frankly declare the approach of Bonar and Spurgeon toward the sacred text to be much closer to the truth, that this is the intended meaning of God's inspired Word. Augustine's renowned allegorical hermeneutic was not entirely followed by Calvin, and in this eschatological scenario Calvin did far more consistently and accurately exegete the sacred text as a whole than did his mentor.

I reiterate, however, that the doctrines deduced by these opposing schools of eschatology, the one being Judeo-centric, the other Judeo-eccentric, have profound ethical consequences. On the one hand, Judeo-centricity, as represented by Bonar and Spurgeon, exults in the national seed of Abraham and its promised, fulfilled, territorial glory through sovereign covenant grace. Consequently, it esteems that seed, according to Paul's exhortation in Rom 11:18-20, because it remains "loved because of their ancestors" (Rom 11:28). On the other hand, Judeo-eccentricity, as represented by Augustine and Calvin, dismisses the national seed of Abraham beyond the perimeter of the kingdom of God, except for the condescending inclusion of "a remnant chosen by grace" (Rom 11:5), that has no ultimate, divine, national, territorial validity. Augustine and Calvin were at best tolerant of the Jews; Bonar and Spurgeon were deeply affectionate toward the Jews. Which of these parties approximates the attitude of Paul toward his "kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom 9:3, ESV), and what is it about the doctrine they embrace that produces their kindly disposition? The answers to these questions are abundantly clear and are especially significant with regard to the prosperity of Jewish evangelism in this present age. ([Future Israel - Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must Be Challenged](#) - 433 page book)

Here is a hymn by Horatius Bonar emphasizing that there will be a national Israel (**this was penned before May 14, 1948, the date Israel was re-born as a nation**).

Forgotten; no that cannot be;
other names may pass away,
But thine, MY ISRAEL, shall remain
In everlasting memory.

Forgotten! No, that cannot be;
Inscribed upon My palms thou art,
The name I gave in days of old
Is graven still upon My heart.

Forgotten! No, that cannot be;
Beloved of thy God art thou
His crown forever on thy head,
His name forever on thy brow.

Forgotten! No, that cannot be:
Sun, moon, and stars may cease to shine,
But thou shalt be remembered still,
For thou art His and He is thine.⁴

William Newell summarizes Romans 11 as follows...

1. That God has not cast off Israel, a Remnant being always preserved—this Remnant now, “the election of grace.”
2. That all but the election were hardened,—to let the fulness of the Gentiles come in: for the purpose of provoking Israel to “jealousy,”—that they might discover Jehovah’s mercy.
3. That although broken off from the stalk of blessing, they will be grafted back into “their own olive tree.”
4. That this will be at the coming to Zion in Jerusalem of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that then a New Covenant will be made with Israel.
5. That the Gentile will be cut off from the present privilege-place, for not continuing in God’s “goodness” (His grace to sinners); and the place of direct Divine blessing again be taken by Israel, who will return from their unbelief.

6. That this most solemn fact should warn Gentiles against individual self-confidence, and especially against the fearful delusion that Israel has been “cast away” forever, and that the Gentiles have taken their place! God has made no covenants with any nation but Israel; and that nation He will restore, the Gentiles becoming then dependent on blessing, through Israel, throughout the future.

7. That instead of being unfaithful to His promises to Israel, God has simply exercised His sovereignty (1) in cutting off Israel for the present; (2) in calling in the fulness of the Gentiles on the principle of mercy only; (3) in taking away from Israel, whom He exalted and to whom He gave His law, all claims upon Him either by national descent, personal righteousness, or any covenant commitments (for they rejected their promises and crucified their Messiah) : thus shutting them up to the one great principle of mercy. ([Romans 11](#))

I SAY THEN GOD HAS NOT REJECTED HIS PEOPLE HAS HE: Lego (1SPAI) oun, me aposato (3SAMI) o theos ton laon autou:

- 1Sa12:22; 2Ki 23:27; Ps 77:7; 89:31-37; Ps 94:14

Rejected ([683](#)) (**apothéo/apotheomai** from **apó** = from + **othéo** = push away, thrust, drive) means literally to push aside, thrust way (from) or push off. Figuratively as used here it means to reject, repudiate, refuse to listen to, to cast away or to put away (from). Used from Homer onward meaning “to repel,” “to reject,”

Gilbrant - Classical Greek - Appearing in the active form **apōtheō** in classical writings, this verb means “thrust aside, push away”; hence “reject” or “repel.” The middle voice means to “thrust from oneself” something. It is used in a variety of contexts from the “repelling” of a military assault to the “shaking off” of sleep (Liddell-Scott). The active form also occurs in the Septuagint, where apōtheomai replaces 19 Hebrew terms. It is absent from the Pentateuch and appears in the Psalms, Proverbs, and the writings of Jeremiah and Ezekiel more than other books. Frequently the context concerns religious “rejection,” such as God’s rejection of His people (e.g., Jdg 6:13; 1 Sa 12:22 Ps 44:9; 60:1,10; 74:1) or His people’s rejection of Him and His law (Jer 6:19; Ezekiel 5:6; 20:13,16). It can also refer to “spurning” on the human level (Pr 1:8; 4:24; 6:20). The verb apōtheomai occurs six times in the New Testament, and each of these carries a metaphoric sense. An interesting aspect of this word is that five out of six times the word occurs in the context of the relationship between Israel and God. These five cases occur in three passages (Acts 7:27; 13:46; Romans 11:1,2). The first passage contains two references in Stephen’s speech to the High Court. Stephen paralleled their rejection (apōtheomai) of Jesus to the rejection (apōtheomai) of Moses by their forefathers. Later in Acts, Luke records that Paul declared to the Jews in Antioch of Pisidia: “Since you thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles” (Acts 13:46, RSV). These passages indicate one Jewish attitude toward the gospel. But what of God’s attitude toward the Jewish people? Paul took up this question in the third passage (Romans 11:1,2) in which apōtheomai is used. “Has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite . . . God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew” (RSV). Although Israel had rejected God and His Messiah, God had not rejected Israel. Paul saw this verified by the fact that during his time (and ours?), as in the days of Elijah, a remnant remained which belonged to God. The present remnant is “chosen by grace” (Ro 11:5). Paul considered himself to be a part of this remnant (Ro 11:1)(Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

Apotheomai - 6x in 6v in NT- Usage: pushed... away(1), rejected(3), repudiate(1), repudiated(1)

Acts 7:27 "But the one who was injuring his neighbor **pushed** him **away**, saying, 'WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND JUDGE OVER US?'"

39 "Our fathers were unwilling to be obedient to him, but **repudiated** him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt,

Acts 13:46 Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you **repudiate** it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.

Romans 11:1 I say then, God has not **rejected** His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God has not **rejected** His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?

1 Timothy 1:19 keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have **rejected** and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.

Apotheomai - 70x in non-apocryphal Septuagint-

1 Sam 12:22; 2 Kgs 4:27; 17:20; 21:14; 23:27; 2Chr 35:19; Job 18:18; 34:33; Ps 43:2; 44:9, 23; 60:1, 10; 62:4; 74:1; 77:7; 78:60, 67; 88:5, 14; 89:38; 94:14; 108:11; 119:10; Pr 1:8; 4:24; 6:20; 14:32; 15:32; 19:26; Jer 2:37; 4:30; 6:19; 7:29; 23:17; Lam 2:7; 3:17, 31, 45, 54; 5:22; Ezek 5:6, 11; 11:16; 16:45; 19:5; 20:13, 16, 24; 21:10, 13; 43:9; Hos 4:6; 9:17; Amos 2:4; 5:21; Jonah 2:4; Mic 2:6; Mic 4:6-7; Zeph 3:19.

Micah prophesied of **the last days** (Micah 4:1) when the Messiah would return and regather those Jews who had been temporarily rejected...

Mic 4:6 "**In that day**," declares the LORD, "I will assemble the lame, And gather the outcasts, Even those whom I have **afflicted** (Lxx = apotheo/apotheomai). 7 "I will make the lame a remnant, And the **outcasts** (Lxx = apotheo/apotheomai) a strong nation, And the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion From now on and forever.

Here are some other representative uses...

1 Samuel 12:22 "For the LORD will not **abandon** (Hebrew = natash - leave, forsake, permit; Lxx = apotheomai) His people on account of His great name, because the LORD has been pleased to make you a people for Himself.

2 Kings 17:20 The LORD rejected (Heb - maas = to reject, cast away, despise; Lxx = apotheomai) all the descendants of Israel and afflicted them and gave them into the hand of plunderers, until He had cast them out of His sight.

2 Kings 21:14 'I will **abandon** (Hebrew = natash - leave, forsake, permit; Lxx = apotheomai) the remnant of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies, and they will become as plunder and spoil to all their enemies

Psalms 43:2 For You are the God of my strength; why have You **rejected** (Heb - zanach = spurn, discard; Lxx = apotheomai) me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

Psalms 44:23 Arouse Yourself, why do You sleep, O Lord? Awake, do not **reject** (Heb - zanach = spurn, discard; Lxx = apotheomai) us forever.

Why this question? Read Romans 10:21 (remember there were no chapter breaks in the original Greek manuscripts)...

But as for Israel He says, "ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE."

Has God thrust away Israel from Himself (middle voice = reflexive). The form of the question in the Greek text expects a negative answer. God did not permanently reject Israel even though they repeatedly rejected Him (Isa 30:12 "you have rejected this word") God did reject them for a while, the prophet Hosea recording...

My God will cast them away Because they have not listened to Him; And they will be wanderers among the nations ([Hosea 9:17](#))

Paul is not raising a question to cause one to doubt God's faithfulness to fulfill His covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He is driving home the fact that God did not cast Israel away permanently. Israel is God's elect nation. He foreknew them. He chose them, and they are His. The fact that most of the nation rejected the Messiah is not proof that God is finished with Israel although sadly this is what is taught by many, especially since about 100AD and rejuvenated in 400AD by Augustine's teaching in the City of God that the church had replaced Israel. At stake is whether God can be trusted to keep His unconditional promises to that nation.

MAY IT NEVER BE: me genoito (3SAMO):

Far be the thought. Certainly not! Of course not! By no means! May such a thought never enter our mind! Perish the thought! Once again Paul uses the strongest form of negation in the Greek grammar. Israel's rejection is to be neither total nor final.

In **Jeremiah** God emphasizes that the order of of the moon and the stars for light will have to cease before He rejects His people...

"If this fixed order departs From before Me," declares the LORD, "Then the offspring of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me forever." Thus says the LORD, "If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out below, then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done," declares the LORD. (Jeremiah 31:36,37)

And again in **Jeremiah** God says that...

"If My covenant for day and night stand not, and the fixed patterns of heaven and earth I have not established, then I would reject the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, not taking from his descendants rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them." (Jeremiah 33:25-26)

In Amos God reiterates His promise declaring...

Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth. Nevertheless (a very important qualifier!), I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob," Declares the LORD. (Amos 9:8,9)

FOR I TOO AM AN ISRAELITE A DESCENDANT OF ABRAHAM, OF THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN: kai gar ego Israelites eimi (1SPA1), ek spermatos Abraam, phules Beniamin:

- Ro 9:3; Acts 22:3; 26:4; ; Philippians 3:5

An **Israelite** is a descendant of Jacob (Israel) and thus an heir of the promises God gave to that nation.

Paul is also a physical **descendant of Abraham** (Covenant: Abrahamic), the one to whom God gave the covenant promises.

- [Tribe of Benjamin](#)

In **Acts** Paul defends himself before the Jews testifying...

"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, just as you all are today. (Acts 22:3)

"(before Agrippa) So then, all Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, which from the beginning was spent among my own nation and at Jerusalem (Acts 26:4)

Writing to the **Corinthians** defending his apostleship Paul asked...

Are they (his distracters, who were false apostles, deceitful works, who were disguising themselves as apostles of Christ) Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. (2 Corinthians 11:22)

Paul is clearly an **Israelite** descended from **Abraham** and of the tribe of **Benjamin** and if God saved him, He could save other Jews.

This chapter gives a beautiful illustration of the interweaving of God's providential arrangements. The circumstances under consideration are seen to be to one another as cause and effect:

- (1) Israel's downfall has resulted in the carrying of the gospel to the Gentiles (Ro 11:11, 12, 15, 30)
- (2) but this present mercy to Gentiles will lead to the obtaining of mercy by Israel (Ro 11:26, 31)
- (3) the mercy thus shown in the restoration of Israel will result in universal blessing (Ro 11:15)

Scofield summarizes Romans 11 as follows...

Israel has not been forever set aside is the theme of this chapter.

- (1) The salvation of Paul proves that there is still a remnant of Israel (Ro 11:1).
- (2) The doctrine of the remnant proves it (Ro 11:2- 6).
- (3) The present national unbelief was foreseen (Ro 11:7-10).
- (4) Israel's unbelief is the Gentile opportunity (Ro 11:11-25).
- (5) Israel is judicially broken off from the good olive tree, Christ (Ro 11:17-22).
- (6) They are to be grafted in again (Ro 11:23, 24).
- (7) the promised Deliverer will come out of Zion and the nation will be saved (Ro 11:25-29).

That the Christian now inherits the distinctive Jewish promises is not taught in Scripture. The Christian is of the heavenly seed of Abraham (Ge15:5,v6 Ga3:29) and partakes of the spiritual blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant (Ge 12:2, note); but Israel as a nation always has its own place and is yet to have its greatest exaltation as the earthly people of God.

Romans 11:2 [God](#) has not [rejected](#) His [people whom](#) He [foreknew](#). Or do you not know [what](#) the [Scripture says](#) in the passage about [Elijah](#), [how he pleads](#) with [God against Israel](#) ? ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [ouk aposato \(3SAMI\)](#) [o theos ton laon autou on proegno. \(3SAAI\)](#) [e ouk oidate \(2PRAI\)](#) [en Elia ti legei \(3SPAI\)](#) [e graphe? os entugchanei \(3SPAI\)](#) [to theo kata tou Israel.](#)

Amplified: No, God has not rejected and disowned His people [whose destiny] He had marked out and appointed and foreknown from the beginning. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

ESV: God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? ([ESV](#))

ICB: God chose the Israelites to be his people before they were born. And God did not leave his people. Surely you know what the Scripture says about Elijah, how he prayed to God against the people of Israel. Elijah said, ([ICB: Nelson](#))

NIV: God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah--how he appealed to God against Israel: ([NIV - IBS](#))

NKJV: God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying,

NLT: No, God has not rejected his own people, whom he chose from the very beginning. Do you remember what the Scriptures say about this? Elijah the prophet complained to God about the people of Israel and said, ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: It is unthinkable that God should have repudiated his own people, the people whose destiny he himself appointed. Don't you remember what the scripture says in the story of Elijah? How he pleaded with God on Israel's behalf: ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: God did not repudiate His people whom He foreordained. Or, do you not know absolutely in the case of Elijah what the scripture says, how he pleads to God against Israel? ([Eerdmans](#))

Young's Literal: God did not cast away His people whom He knew before; have ye not known -- in Elijah -- what the Writing saith? how he doth plead with God concerning Israel, saying,

GOD HAS NOT REJECTED HIS PEOPLE WHOM HE FOREKNEW: ouk aposato (3SAMI) o theos ton laon autou on proegno (3SAAI):

- Ro 8:29,30; 9:6,23; Acts 13:48; 15:18; 1Peter 1:2

Not (3756) (ouk) conveys absolute negation of what follows. In short God has not rejected the nation of Israel! Yes, at present most are non-believers, but in the end times one-third will be saved (the remnant).

Rejected (683) ([apothéo/apotheomai](#) from [apó](#) = from + [othéo](#) = push, thrust, drive) means literally to push aside, thrust way (from) or push off. Figuratively as used here it means to reject, repudiate, refuse to listen to, to cast away or to put away (from).

Foreknew (4267) ([proginosko](#) from [pró](#) = before + [ginosko](#) = know) is literally to know before. As [proginosko](#) is used of God's eternal counsel it includes all that He has considered and purposed to do prior to human history. In the language of Scripture, something foreknown is not simply that which God was aware of prior to a certain point. Rather, it is presented as that which God gave prior consent to, that which received His favorable or special recognition. Hence, this term is reserved for those matters which God favorably, deliberately and freely chose and ordained.

God's foreknowledge is not that He God chooses those He chooses because He looks down the corridors of time and He knows

who will accept Him. These Jews **did not accept** Him but in fact rejected Him and yet Paul states that God has not rejected them. God had chosen Israel as His covenant people from eternity past and entered into a relationship with them that will never be destroyed.

Foreknew is not a reference simply to God's omniscience—that in eternity past He knew who would come to Christ. Rather, it speaks of a predetermined choice to set His love on certain Jews and to establish an intimate relationship... in other words to be His elect. Therefore God's "foreknowledge," as is evident from His calling of Israel long before Israel was a nation, involves not just pre-knowledge but pre-planning.

Henry Alford explains **foreknew** as that "which, in His own eternal decree before the world, He selected as the chosen nation, to be His own, the depository of His law, the vehicle of the theocracy, from its first revelation to its completion in Christ's future kingdom."

Israel stood before God's eyes from eternity as His people, and in the immutability (see also) of the sovereign love with which He made Israel His, lies the impossibility of her rejection.

OR DO YOU NOT KNOW WHAT THE SCRIPTURE SAYS IN THE PASSAGE ABOUT ELIJAH HOW HE PLEADS WITH GOD AGAINST ISRAEL: e ouk oidate (2PRAI) en Elia ti legei (3SPAI) e graphe os entugchanei (3SPAI) to theo kata tou Israel:

- Genesis 44:15; Exodus 32:1; Acts 3:17; 7:40; Philippians 1:22
- Nehemiah 9:30; Luke 4:1; 1 Corinthians 6:2; Hebrews 1:1
- Numbers 16:15; Jeremiah 18:19-23; John 4:1-3,11

Scripture (1124) (see in depth study of **graphe**) - The Scripture speaks (says) the heart of God.

Know (1492) (**eido**) means to know in an absolute manner and thus speaks of a positive knowledge such as Paul's Jewish readers would be expected to possess.

About Elijah (en Helia) is the idea "in the case of Elijah" or "in the history of Elijah" that is to say, that part of the Hebrew Scriptures relating to Elijah. The Scriptures were frequently so designated in Jewish writings.

The prophet was deeply depressed, having fled for his life from Jezebel. Paul applies Elijah's experience to the doctrine of Israel's remnant of believers during the age of the church (1Ki 19:8-19).

Pleads (Intercedes, appeals) (1793) (**entugchano** from **en** = in + **tugcháno** = to reach a mark, to get, to obtain) according to Vine means "primarily "to fall in with, meet with in order to converse"; then, "to make petition," especially "to make intercession, plead with a person," either for or against others". Present tense pictures Elijah continually pleading with God. Not for but against Israel!

Romans 11:3 "Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE." (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [Kurie. tous prophetas sou apekteinan. \(3PAAI\) ta thusiasteria sou kateskapsan. \(3PAAI\) kago hupeleiphthen \(1SAPI\) monos. kai zetousin \(3PPAI\) ten psuchen mou.](#)

Amplified: Lord, they have killed Your prophets; they have demolished Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

ESV: "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life." ([ESV](#))

ICB: "They have killed your prophets, and they have destroyed your altars. I am the only prophet left. And now they are trying to kill me, too." ([ICB: Nelson](#))

NIV: "Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me"? ([NIV - IBS](#))

NKJV: "LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"?

NLT: "Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars. I alone am left, and now they are trying

to kill me, too." ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: 'Lord, they have killed your prophets, and torn down your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life'. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: Lord, your prophets they killed. Your altars they demolished. And as for myself, I was left alone, and they are seeking my life. (Eerdmans)

Young's Literal: 'Lord, Thy prophets they did kill, and Thy altars they dug down, and I was left alone, and they seek my life;'

LORD, THEY HAVE KILLED THY PROPHETS THEY HAVE TORN DOWN THINE ALTARS: kurie, tous prophetas sou apekteinan (3PAAI) ta thusiasteria sou kateskapsan (3PAAI):

- quotes Lxx of 1Ki19:10, cf 19:14
- 1Kings 18:4,13; 19:10-18; Nehemiah 9:26; Jeremiah 2:30
- 1Kings 18:30,31

1Kgs 19:10 And he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, torn down Thine altars and **killed Thy prophets** with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

John MacArthur - When his life was threatened by Jezebel, even the godly and normally fearless Elijah became fearful and despondent, thinking in self pity that he was the only believer left on earth. (Commentary on Romans)

Prophets (4396)(**prophetes** from **próphemi** = literally to tell beforehand in turn from **pró** = before, in front of, forth, on behalf of + **phemí** = speak, tell) is primarily a forth-teller or one who speaks out God's message, primarily to their own generation, usually always calling the people to God's truth for them at that moment, often using the phrase "Thus saith the Lord." The prophet is one who speaks before in the sense of proclaim, or the one who speaks for, i.e., in the Name of (God).

AND I ALONE AM LEFT AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE: kago hupeleiphthen (1SAPI) monos kai zetousin (3PPAI) ten psuchen mou:

- See study of "remnant"

Left (5275) (**hupoleipo** from **hupo** = under + **leipo** = leave) literally "leave under" means to leave behind or remaining or in passive to be left behind. Only here in NT but multiple uses in Septuagint. Paul is quoting 1 Ki. 19:10; 1 Ki. 19:14 where Elijah feels he is the only one left. In Zechariah 13:8 in the end times 2/3's of Israel will be cut off but "the third will be **left** (hupoleipo) in it," which refers to the remnant of Israel.

Uses in the Septuagint - Gen. 27:36; Gen. 30:36; Gen. 32:24; Gen. 44:20; Gen. 45:7; Gen. 47:18; Gen. 50:8; Exod. 8:9; Exod. 8:11; Exod. 10:12; Exod. 10:15; Exod. 10:19; Exod. 10:24; Exod. 10:26; Exod. 23:11; Exod. 26:12; Lev. 23:22; Jos. 10:8; Jos. 12:4; Jos. 13:1; Jos. 21:26; Jos. 23:12; Jdg. 6:4; Jdg. 7:3; Jdg. 21:7; 1 Sam. 5:4; 1 Sam. 11:11; 1 Sam. 14:36; 1 Sam. 25:22; 1 Sam. 25:34; 2 Sam. 8:4; 2 Sam. 9:1; 2 Sam. 9:3; 2 Sam. 17:12; 1 Ki. 9:15; 1 Ki. 15:29; 1 Ki. 17:17; 1 Ki. 18:22; 1 Ki. 19:10; 1 Ki. 19:14; 2 Ki. 7:13; 2 Ki. 13:7; 2 Ki. 17:18; 2 Ki. 19:30; 2 Ki. 20:17; 2 Ki. 24:14; 2 Ki. 25:12; 1 Chr. 13:2; 1 Chr. 18:4; Ps. 106:11; Prov. 2:21; Prov. 11:26; Isa. 4:3; Jer. 5:10; Jer. 24:8; Jer. 49:11; Jer. 50:20; Ezek. 12:16; Ezek. 14:20; Ezek. 14:22; Dan. 2:44; Dan. 10:8; Dan. 10:17; Joel 2:14; Amos 5:3; Amos 6:9; Obad. 1:5; Hab. 2:8; Zeph. 3:3; Zeph. 3:12; Zech. 9:7; Zech. 10:10; Zech. 12:14; Zech. 13:8; Mal. 4:1

Seeking (2212)(**zeteo**) implies giving attention and priority to and deliberately pursuing after. The most common sense of this word is to "seek". Webster says that to seek means to go in search or quest of, to look for, to try to discover, to search for by going from place to place. To inquire for; to ask for; to solicit; to endeavor to find or gain by any means.

Life (5590)(**psuche** or **psyche** from **psucho** = to breathe, blow, English = psychology, "study of the soul") is the breath, then that which breathes, the individual, animated creature. However the discerning reader must understand that psuche is one of those Greek words that can have several meanings, the exact nuance being determined by the context. It follows that one cannot simply select of the three main meanings of psuche and insert it in a given passage for it may not be appropriate to the given context. The

meaning of psuche is also contingent upon whether one is a dichotomist or trichotomist. Consult Greek lexicons for more lengthy definitions of psuche as this definition is only a brief overview.

Elijah stood for God and seemingly he stood alone. When threatened by wicked Queen Jezebel, Elijah's mood became one of utter dejection & he fled in because of his fear. But as God reminded this great prophet, He always has a believing **remnant** (in Israel's day and our day) no matter how dark the day & no matter how great the unbelief. It is a basic teaching of the Word that the majority will fall from the faith, so God takes the remnant and begins over again. Not only did God always have a believing **remnant** (cf [Isa1:9](#)) but He always used them and blessed them as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Are you discouraged, feeling like you're the only one who is zealous for the Lord and the things of eternity? When you become discouraged and feel that you may be the only faithful Christian left, read Elijah's story in 1 Kings 19 and focus on God's greatness and then in all things give thanks.

Romans 11:4 But **what** is the **divine response** to him? "I HAVE **KEPT** for **Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.**" ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [alla ti legei \(3SPA1\)](#) [auto o chrematismos? Katelipon \(1SAA1\)](#) [emauto eptakischilious andras. hoitines ouk ekampsan \(3PAA1\)](#) [gonu te Baal.](#)

Amplified: But what is God's reply to him? I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal! [1 Kings 19:18.] ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

ESV: But what is God's reply to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." ([ESV](#))

ICB: But what answer did God give Elijah? He said, "But I have left 7,000 people in Israel. Those 7,000 have never bowed down before Baal." ([ICB: Nelson](#))

NIV: And what was God's answer to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." ([NIV - IBS](#))

NKJV: But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

NLT: And do you remember God's reply? He said, "You are not the only one left. I have seven thousand others who have never bowed down to Baal!" ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: And do you remember God's reply? 'I have reserved for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal'. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Young's Literal: but what saith the divine answer to him? 'I left to Myself seven thousand men, who did not bow a knee to Baal.'

BUT WHAT IS THE DIVINE RESPONSE TO HIM: alla ti legei (3SPA1) auto o chrematismos:

Divine response ([5538](#)) (**chrematismos**) carries the idea of divine answer in the form of an oracle or revelation.

I HAVE KEPT FOR MYSELF SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL: katelipon (1SAA1) emauto heptakischilious andras hoitines ouk ekampsan (3PAA1) gonu te Baal:

Numbers 25:3; Deuteronomy 4:3; Judges 2:13; 1Kings 16:31; 2Kings 10:19,20; Jeremiah 19:5; Hosea 2:8; Hosea 13:1; Zephaniah 1:4)

Kept ([2641](#)) (**kataleipo** from **kata** = intensifies meaning + **leipo** = leave behind) literally means to leave but in a stronger sense than **leipo**. In the present context **kataleipo** means to leave remaining and so to have left or to reserve. God reserved 7000.

Paul takes this quotation from the Hebrew of 1Kings 19:18, with the addition of the words "**for Myself**" by which stress is laid upon the electing prerogative and power of God (His personal possession!)

"Yet I will leave 7,000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him." (1Kings 19:18)

Bowed (2578) (**kampto**) means to bend, such as the knees as in this verse.

Baal (896) (Transliterated from Hebrew **Baal - see in depth on site study**) means master, lord, owner, possessor. Those who were bowing to Baal were treating "him" (who is no god at all) as their mastery. Utter futility!

- [Baal - 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica](#)
- [Baal \(1\) - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#)
- [Baal - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)
- [Baal \(1\) - Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible](#)
- [Baal \(2\) - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#)
- [Baal - Kitto's Popular Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature](#)
- [Baal - Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature](#)

The preservation of the faithful remnant was a work of God, another reflection of God's Sovereignty in SALVATION which contrasts with MAN'S RESPONSE (responsibility) as most bowed to and kissed Baal. Although they had the truth about the Holy God they made a personal choice to be reject the truth about God and worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator Who is blessed forever. God did not predestine them to kiss Baal. Furthermore He did not predestine them to ultimately to be thrown into the Lake of Fire. But on the other side He did predestine some to be part of the **remnant** who believed and obeyed from a new heart. If He had not predestined this **remnant** Israel would have been like Sodom and Gomorrah with no survivors (Ro 9:29 fr Isa 1:9) and so would we today.