SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

Romans 11

God Has Not Rejected His People — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-09 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

God has not rejected Israel: He keeps a remnant by grace, uses Israel's stumbling to bring the nations in, and has set an "until" on Israel's hardening, after which "all Israel will be saved." The whole plan is mercy on the undeserving, and it leaves me — a grafted-in branch — humble, watchful and on my knees in praise.

00 The Text

ROMANS 11 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

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?

3 "Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE."

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."

5 In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God's gracious choice.

6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

7 What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened;

8 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."

9 And David says, "LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP, AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM.

10 "LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED TO SEE NOT, AND BEND THEIR BACKS FOREVER."

11 I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous.

12 Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!

13 But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry,

14 if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them.

15 For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but ☆ life from the dead?

16 If the first piece of dough is holy, the lump is also; and △ if the root is holy, the branches are too.

17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were ⟳ grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree,

18 ▤ do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but △ the root supports you.

19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be ⟳ grafted in."

20 Quite right, ⚠ they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. ▤ Do not be conceited, but fear;

21 for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either.

22 △ Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; ⚠ otherwise you also will be cut off.

23 And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be ⟳ grafted in, for ☆ God is able to graft them in again.

24 For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were ⟳ grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be ⟳ grafted into their own olive tree?

25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that ◷ a partial hardening has happened to Israel ◷ until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;

26 ☆ and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "△ THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB."

27 "THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, △ WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS."

28 From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are ☆ beloved for the sake of the fathers;

29 for ☆ the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

30 For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown ⟳ mercy because of their disobedience,

31 so these also now have been disobedient, that because of the ⟳ mercy shown to you they also may now be shown ⟳ mercy.

32 For △ God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all.

33 △ Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

34 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR?

35 Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN?

36 For △ from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Marked in the text

- **v2** "God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew" — God — His character & actions
- **v4** "I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN" — God — His character & actions
- **v5** "a remnant according to God's gracious choice" — Promise / blessing
- **v7** "the rest were hardened" — Sin / warning
- **v8** "GOD GAVE THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR" — Sin / warning
- **v11** "they did not stumble so as to fall" — Time / place / contrast
- **v11** "salvation has come to the Gentiles" — Promise / blessing
- **v12** "how much more will their fulfillment be" — Promise / blessing
- **v15** "life from the dead" — Promise / blessing
- **v16** "if the root is holy, the branches are too" — God — His character & actions
- **v18** "do not be arrogant toward the branches" — Command / instruction
- **v18** "the root supports you" — God — His character & actions
- **v20** "they were broken off for their unbelief" — Sin / warning
- **v20** "Do not be conceited, but fear" — Command / instruction

- **v22** “Behold then the kindness and severity of God” — God — His character & actions
- **v22** “otherwise you also will be cut off” — Sin / warning
- **v23** “God is able to graft them in again” — Promise / blessing
- **v25** “a partial hardening has happened to Israel” — Time / place / contrast
- **v25** “until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in” — Time / place / contrast
- **v26** “and so all Israel will be saved” — Promise / blessing
- **v26** “THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION” — God — His character & actions
- **v27** “WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS” — God — His character & actions
- **v28** “beloved for the sake of the fathers” — Promise / blessing
- **v29** “the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” — Promise / blessing
- **v32** “God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all” — God — His character & actions
- **v33** “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God” — God — His character & actions
- **v36** “from Him and through Him and to Him are all things” — God — His character & actions
- **v1** “May it never be” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v17** “grafted” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v30** “mercy” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

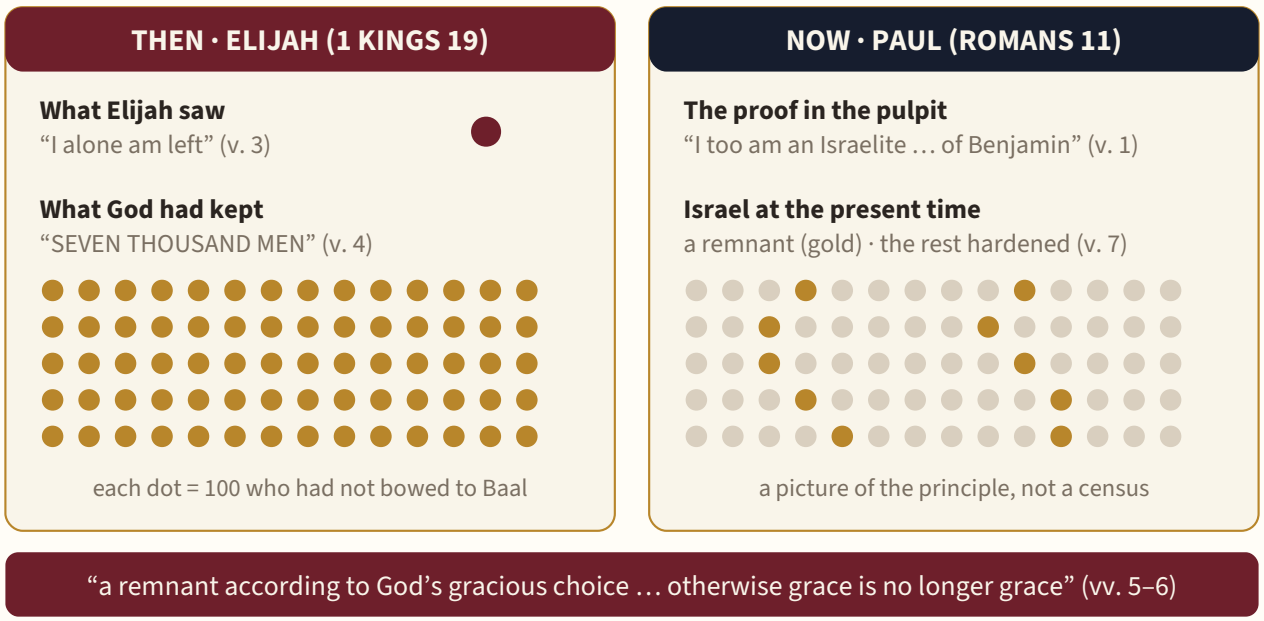
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · 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."

FIGURE · THE REMNANT THEN AND NOW



Elijah counted one faithful man; God counted seven thousand — and Paul says the same grace keeps a remnant "at the present time."

Setting. Romans 9–11 is one argument about Israel. Chapter 9 grounded Israel's story in God's choice ("it is not as though the word of God has failed," 9:6); chapter 10 laid Israel's unbelief at Israel's own feet ("A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE," 10:21). Chapter 11 asks the question that leaves: "God has not rejected His people, has He?" (v1). Paul writes as an Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin (v1; Phil 3:5) to a church in Rome with many Gentile believers ("I am speaking to you who are Gentiles," v13).

Structure:

- vv1–10 — **the remnant:** Paul himself is proof (v1). Elijah thought he alone was left; God had kept seven thousand who had not bowed to Baal (vv2–4). "In the same way then … a remnant according to God's gracious choice" (v5) — by grace, not works (v6). The chosen obtained it; the rest were hardened (v7), as Moses, Isaiah and David foresaw (vv8–10).
- vv11–15 — **stumbled, not fallen:** "May it never be!" Their transgression brought salvation to the Gentiles, to make Israel jealous (v11). If their failure is riches, "how much more will their fulfillment be!" (v12). Paul magnifies his Gentile ministry to save some of his countrymen (vv13–14). Their acceptance will be "life from the dead" (v15).

- vv16–24 — **the olive tree:** holy firstfruits, holy lump; holy root, holy branches (v16). Some natural branches broken off; a wild olive grafted in (v17). Do not be arrogant — the root supports you (v18). They were broken off for unbelief; you stand by faith — so fear (vv19–21). Behold the kindness and severity of God (v22). God is able to graft them in again — "how much more" the natural branches (vv23–24).
- vv25–32 — **the mystery:** a partial hardening "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved" (vv25–26), with Isaiah's Deliverer and the covenant of forgiveness (vv26–27). Enemies for the gospel's sake, beloved for the fathers' sake (v28); the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (v29). Disobedience and mercy, Gentile and Jew, in turn — "God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all" (vv30–32).
- vv33–36 — **the doxology:** the depth of God's riches, wisdom and knowledge; no one His counselor, no one His creditor; "from Him and through Him and to Him are all things" (vv33–36).

Repeated words, with counts (NASB95): "graft/grafted" ×6 (vv17, 19, 23 twice, 24 twice); "branch(es)" ×6 (vv16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24); "olive (tree)" ×5 (v17 twice, v24 three times); "Gentiles" ×5 (vv11, 12, 13 twice, 25); "Israel" ×4 (vv2, 7, 25, 26) plus "Israelite" (v1); "mercy" ×4 (v30, v31 twice, v32) with "disobedient/disobedience" ×4 (v30 twice, vv31, 32); "root" ×4 (vv16, 17, 18 twice); "kindness" ×3, all in v22, with "severity" ×2; "grace" ×3, all in v6; "rejected/rejection" ×3 (vv1, 2, 15); "Him" ×6 in the doxology (v35 twice, v36 four times); "May it never be" ×2 (vv1, 11); "how much more" ×2 (vv12, 24); "jealous/jealousy" ×2 (vv11, 14); "hardened/hardening" ×2 (vv7, 25); "unbelief" ×2 (vv20, 23); "natural" ×2 (vv21, 24).

Contrasts: stumble ⟷ fall (v11). Transgression and failure ⟷ fulfillment (v12). Rejection ⟷ acceptance; reconciliation of the world ⟷ life from the dead (v15). Natural branches ⟷ wild olive (vv17, 24). Unbelief ⟷ faith (v20). Kindness ⟷ severity (v22). Partial hardening ⟷ "all Israel" (vv25–26). Enemies ⟷ beloved (v28). Disobedience ⟷ mercy (vv30–32). And the biggest one: God's unsearchable ways ⟷ every human counselor and creditor (vv33–35).

Shape of the chapter: two questions answered "May it never be!" (vv1, 11), one picture (the olive tree, vv16–24), one revealed secret (vv25–32), and one hymn (vv33–36). It starts with a man (Paul) and ends with God ("to Him be the glory").

Chapter theme (my words): God has not cast off His people. He keeps a remnant by grace, uses Israel's stumbling to bring the nations in, warns the grafted-in branches against pride, and has set an "until" on Israel's hardening — after which all Israel will be saved. It is mercy from beginning to end, and it ends in worship.

02 Interpretation

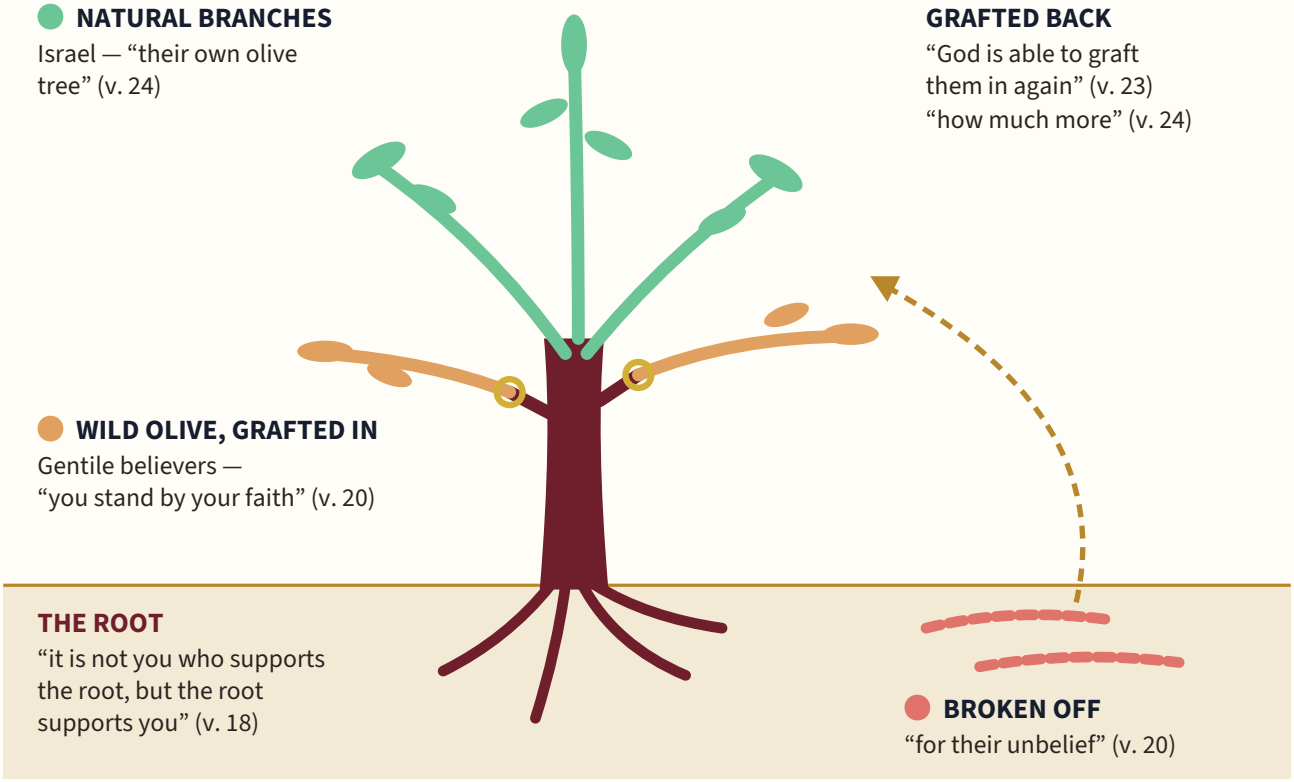
WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · ROMANS 11:29

“for ☆ the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.”

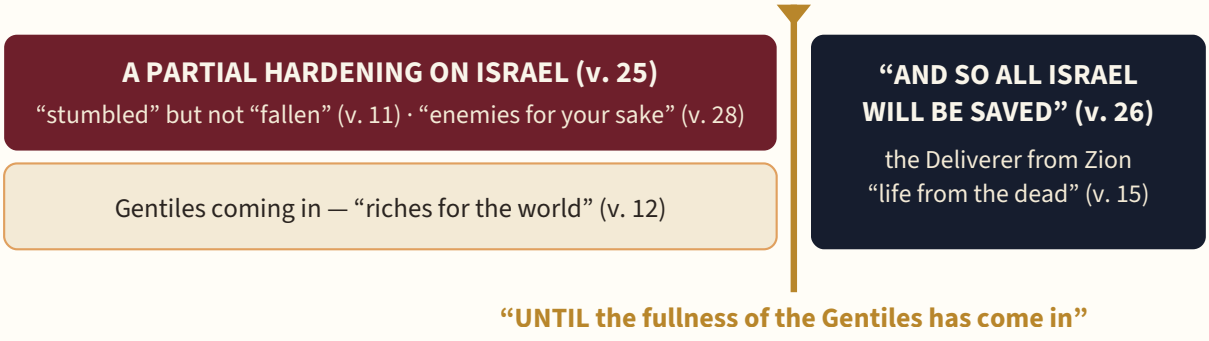
FIGURE · THE OLIVE TREE (ROMANS 11:16–24)

“Behold then the kindness and severity of God” (v. 22)



One tree, one root: natural branches broken off for unbelief, wild branches grafted in by faith, and the broken branches able to be grafted back.

FIGURE · A HARDENING WITH AN END DATE



all along: "a remnant according to God's gracious choice" (v. 5) — Paul himself (v. 1)

HOW THE FOUR VOICES READ "ALL ISRAEL"

Guzik — the nation as a whole (not every Jew), before and tied to Christ's return

Sproul — the full complement of elect Israel, in a future visitation of the Spirit

Spurgeon — restored to their land and converted to Christ (sermon on Ezekiel 37)

Henry — the Jews converted as a body, grafted back into the one church

The hardening is partial (a remnant all along) and temporary ("until"); read the bottom panel to see where the four teachers agree and differ.

Has God rejected Israel? (vv1–10) No — and the rejection is not total. Paul is himself the proof (v1). Elijah's complaint (1 Kings 19:10) met God's answer: seven thousand kept (1 Kings 19:18). Sproul calls Elijah's despair "the Elijah syndrome" — the faithful man's conviction that he is the last one — and says God's preservation is why the church can never be erased. Guzik: God has often worked in Israel through a faithful remnant. Henry: "It is his free and almighty grace that makes the difference between them and others." The rest were hardened (v7). All three hold both truths: the hardening is a judgment on Israel's own refusal (Henry: "They shut their eyes, and would not see; this was their sin"; Sproul: "Their blindness was a punishment for their sin"), and it is God's act.

Why did Israel stumble? (vv11–15) Not to fall for good. Guzik: "You can recover from a stumble, but if you fall you're down." God used Israel's misstep to open the door to the nations, and He means the Gentiles' joy to make Israel jealous (Deut 32:21; Rom 10:19). Sproul compares the "how much more" of v12 to Jesus' argument from the unjust judge; Henry reads "their fulfillment" as Israel filling up again the place left empty in the church, and "life from the dead" as the prodigal's homecoming (Luke 15:32).

The olive tree (vv16–24). Who is the root? The teachers differ in detail: Guzik says the root is Israel (and the firstfruits the first Jewish Christians); Sproul says, "They are the root; we are the wild olive branch"; Henry says the tree is the visible church (Jer 11:16) whose root of administration is Abraham, while Christ is the root that feeds it. They agree on the point Paul presses: the Gentile branch is there by grace through faith and must not boast. Henry: "Men graft to mend the tree; but God grafts to mend the branch." The "if you continue" of v22 is a real warning — Guzik: not salvation by works but continuing in grace; Sproul: apostasy can pollute the church as it did Israel. And v23 is a real hope: "God is able to graft them in again."

What is the mystery, and who is "all Israel"? (vv25–27) The hardening is *partial* (Paul is a Jew) and *temporary* — "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in." Sproul: the word "until" "has a terminal dimension to it." Then "so all Israel will be saved." Here is where the four voices must be heard on their own terms:

- **Guzik:** ethnic Israel as a nation, not "spiritual Israel," not every last Jew — "Israel as a whole will be a saved people," and this is "a necessary condition for the return of Jesus Christ" (Matt 23:39; Zech 12:10). He mentions Calvin's reading (all the redeemed, Jew and Gentile) and rejects it.
- **Sproul:** not the church, not every Jew, but "the full complement of God's elect from Israel," in a future visitation of the Spirit after the fullness of the Gentiles; no dates; "I do not believe that God has two agendas." He wondered aloud whether, since 1967, God might be close to working again with ethnic Israel.
- **Spurgeon** (on Ezekiel 37, not Romans 11): a political restoration "to their own land" and a spiritual conversion, both still future, and saved the same way any sinner is saved — by Christ.
- **Henry:** the Jews, "though for the present they are cast off," will be "taken in again" as a body "when the fulness of time is come" — grafted back into the one church.

So all four expect a future saving work of God among the Jewish people. What they do not share is the frame: Guzik ties it to the Second Coming and Israel as a nation; Spurgeon adds the land; Sproul speaks of the elect remnant reaching its full number; Henry pictures Israel rejoining the one church. I stand with the national reading — God is not finished with Israel as a people — and I want to hold it the way Paul does, with tears for my Jewish neighbors and no pride in being a grafted branch.

Irrevocable (vv28–32). Two standpoints at once: enemies "from the standpoint of the gospel," beloved "from the standpoint of God's choice … for the sake of the fathers." Sproul uses David's kindness to Mephibosheth for Jonathan's sake. Henry: "we never find God repenting that he had given a man grace, or effectually called him." Then the great leveling: God locked Jew and Gentile in the same cell of disobedience so the only way out would be mercy (v32; Gal 3:22).

The doxology (vv33–36). Paul cannot explain God, so he worships Him. Guzik: "The fact that Paul can't figure out God makes him glorify God all the more." Sproul: theology begins and ends in doxology; "What can you give to God that He does not already own?" Spurgeon pictures Paul putting his pen back into the ink bottle and falling on his knees. Henry: "Men's riches of all kinds are shallow, you may soon see the bottom; but God's riches are deep."

Word study (Greek):

- **foreknew — *proginōskō* (G4267):** to know beforehand; God's people are those He set His love on in advance (v2; 8:29).
- **remnant — *leimma* (G3005):** what is left over; only here in the NT; God "kept" them (v4–5).
- **choice — *eklogē* (G1589):** election, selection; "a remnant according to God's gracious choice" (v5); again in v28.
- **hardened — *pōroō* (G4456) / hardening — *pōrōsis* (G4457):** to petrify, to callus; partial and "until" in v25.
- **stupor — *katanyxis* (G2659):** numbness, a dulled sense; only here, from Isa 29:10 LXX.
- **stumble — *ptaiō* (G4417) / fall — *piptō* (G4098):** a misstep versus going down for good (v11).
- **transgression — *paraptōma* (G3900):** a false step, a trespass (vv11–12).
- **make jealous — *parazēloō* (G3863):** to provoke to jealousy (vv11, 14; 10:19; Deut 32:21).
- **fullness — *plērōma* (G4138):** fulfillment, full number — Israel's (v12) and the Gentiles' (v25).
- **acceptance — *proslēmpsis* (G4356):** a receiving, a welcome; only here (v15).

- **wild olive — *agrielaios* (G65); cultivated olive — *kallielaios* (G2565); graft — *enkentrizō* (G1461):** all found only in this chapter.
- **kindness — *chrēstotēs* (G5544) / severity — *apotomia* (G663):** generous goodness / a cutting sharpness (v22).
- **mystery — *mystērion* (G3466):** a secret God has now revealed (v25).
- **Deliverer — *rhyomai* (G4506):** the Rescuer, the One who sets free (v26; cf. 7:24; 1 Thess 1:10).
- **irrevocable — *ametamelētos* (G278):** without regret, never taken back (v29).
- **shut up — *synkleiō* (G4788):** to lock in on every side (v32; Gal 3:22).
- **unsearchable — *anexeraunētos* (G419); unfathomable — *anexichniastos* (G421):** cannot be searched out; cannot be tracked by footprints (v33).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **The first answer is a man.** Paul points to himself before he quotes a prophet.
2. **The remnant is kept, not self-made.** God said, "I have kept for Myself."
3. **The Elijah syndrome** — I am rarely as alone as I feel.
4. **A stumble is not a fall** — Israel tripped; it did not die.
5. **God grafts to mend the branch** (Henry) — grace runs "contrary to nature."
6. **Kindness and severity, together** — the warning is addressed to Gentile believers.
7. **"Until" has an end** — the hardening is partial and temporary.
8. **Not "spiritual Israel"** — Guzik and Sproul both read "Israel" ethnically in v26, though they describe the future differently.
9. **God does not take back His gifts** — and that is my security too.
10. **Theology that ends on its knees** — Paul drops his pen and worships.

Cross-references: Gen 12:3; Deut 29:4; 32:21; 1 Kings 19:10, 14, 18; Ps 69:22–23; Isa 27:9; 29:10; 40:13; 59:20–21; Jer 11:16; 31:33–37; Ezek 37:1–14; Zech 12:10; Job 41:11; Matt 23:39; Luke 15:32; 21:24; Rom 9:6; 10:19–21; 16:25; Gal 3:22; Eph 2:11–22; 3:3–8; Phil 3:5.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · ROMANS 11:22

"⚠ Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; ⚠ otherwise you also will be cut off."

Command to obey — "Do not be arrogant toward the branches … do not be conceited, but fear." I am a wild olive branch. I did not grow on this tree; I was cut out of a scrub tree and grafted in by grace. That leaves no room for pride — not over Israel, not over the men in my group who are still far off, not over the brother who fell. Today I'll pray by name for one Jewish friend or neighbor, and for one man I've quietly written off.

Sin to confess — the Elijah syndrome. I know the feeling of "I alone am left." In ministry, in a hard season, I start believing nobody else is faithful and everything rests on me. That is self-pity dressed up as zeal, and it is a lie — God had seven thousand Elijah could not see. I confess it, and I'll thank God this week for three men who are standing faithfully beside me.

Warning to heed — "otherwise you also will be cut off." God's kindness is real and so is His severity (v22). I don't stand by my record; I stand by faith (v20). Continuing in His kindness means staying close to the root — the Word, prayer, the fellowship — not drifting toward the edge to see how far I can lean.

Promise to trust — "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." If God has not given up on a nation that rejected its own Messiah, He has not given up on the man in a cell who thinks he burned his last bridge. That includes me on my worst day. What God gives, He does not take back.

Example to follow — Paul's heart for his people. Paul magnified his ministry to the Gentiles so his own people would be moved to want what we have (vv13–14). My life should make someone jealous for Jesus — not of my comforts, but of my peace, my joy, my freedom. And I'll keep watching Israel with hope: the "until" of verse 25 has an end, and "all Israel will be saved."

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Elijah thought he was the only faithful one left. When have you felt that way — at work, in your family, inside a facility — and what did it do to your prayers? (11:2–5; 1 Kings 19:10, 18) *God had seven thousand Elijah could not see; you are rarely as alone as you feel.*
2. "If it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works." Where are you still quietly trying to earn a place in the tree? (11:5–6; Eph 2:8–9) *Grace mixed with works stops being grace; the branch only receives the sap.*
3. Paul wanted his life among the Gentiles to make his own people jealous. Would anyone who watches your life want what you have in Christ? (11:11, 14; Deut 32:21) *Jealousy is God's strategy here — a joy so visible that others want it back.*
4. "Do not be arrogant toward the branches." Where have you looked down on someone whose fall made room for your blessing? (11:17–21) *The root supports you; you do not support the root.*

5. “Behold then the kindness and severity of God.” Which of the two do you find easier to believe about God, and why? (11:22; 2:4) *Both are true at once; the kindness is meant to keep us, the severity to warn us.*
6. “The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.” What does that say to a man who believes he has burned his last bridge with God? (11:29; Phil 1:6) *If God has not given up on a rebellious nation, He has not given up on you.*

Worship. Paul ends eleven chapters of the deepest doctrine ever written by putting down his pen and falling on his knees. I don’t have to figure God out to trust Him. His riches are deep, His judgments unsearchable, His ways untraceable — and every one of them ends in mercy. From Him, through Him, to Him: my salvation, my calling, my tomorrow.

Prayer. Father, thank You that You have not rejected Your people, and that You grafted a wild branch like me into the rich root. Keep me humble and keep me close. Break the Elijah syndrome in me and open my eyes to the seven thousand. Remove the hardening from Israel in Your time; let the Deliverer come from Zion and turn ungodliness from Jacob. Make my life a reason for someone to want Jesus. To You be the glory forever. Amen.

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