

# God's Remnant of Grace --- November 8, 2019

Romans 11:1-6

*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. <sup>2</sup>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? <sup>3</sup>“Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE.” <sup>4</sup>But what is the divine response to him? “I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.” <sup>5</sup>In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s [c]gracious choice. <sup>6</sup>But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.*

## Introduction

When we lived in Los Angeles while going to seminary, we attended Grace Church where John MacArthur pastors. Almost every Sunday night there would be a baptism service. I remember one man in particular who was baptized. The man's name is John Eastman, and he is a Jew. Those who were being baptized would give their testimonies before being immersed, and his testimony was a powerful testimony of how the Lord saved him.

A believer walked him through a study of Isaiah 53 which focuses on the suffering of the Messiah for sinful man. This Jewish man was jolted into realizing that this passage perfectly predicted the life and death of Jesus the Messiah. God convinced him that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah. I was awestruck as this man, through tears, told of his life and salvation. He later went to seminary and is now a chaplain in the military. He is an example of the Jewish remnant today—one whom God has saved and kept for Himself.

One of the greatest demonstrations of God's faithfulness, sovereignty, and grace is His interaction with the nation of Israel. The Jewish nation has been an example of stubbornness and apostasy. Nonetheless, God has remained faithful to them for literally thousands of years.

In our last study, we saw that the transition between Romans 8 to Romans 9 seems abrupt and disconnected on the surface. However actually, there is a tremendous flow from all the preceding chapters in Romans to Paul's focus on the Jews. The reason why Paul introduces the subject of the Jews in chapters 9-11 is to put on display the faithfulness and grace of God. Basically, Paul

states that if you question God's faithfulness to you as a believer, look at the Jews.

Paul anticipates an accusation that may have gone like this, "Paul, you say that God promises that nothing can cause His love to fail towards the believer. You say that He is faithful. But what about God's promises to the Jews? Has He disregarded His promises to the nation of Israel? Has He failed to keep His promises to them? And if He rejected them, how can I know that I am safe?"

Paul's response begins in Romans 9:6, "*But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; . . .*" Paul states that God has not failed the Jews. God is faithful. Even though Paul wrote that nothing can separate us from the love of God, some may say, "Well that is basically what God said to the Jews." How can God be faithful to the Jews, if it seems that now He is putting them aside? Paul's answer is found in Romans 11:1, "*I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be!*"

We saw that Paul has already hinted earlier in Romans concerning God's faithfulness to the Jews in spite of their unfaithfulness. Back in Romans 3:3-4 as Paul refers to the Jews, he says, "*What then? If some were unfaithful, their unfaithfulness will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? 4May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar.*"

As I said, one of the greatest demonstrations of God's faithfulness is His interaction with the nation of Israel. The Jewish nation has been an example of stubbornness and apostasy. Nonetheless, God has been faithful to them.

A further objection that one might bring concerning God's faithfulness to the Jews is that, for the most part, the nation of Israel is an apostate nation. That objection was true during Paul's time and it applies even to our modern day. The Jews as a whole are secular—even atheists. Even those who are religious reject Jesus as the Messiah. If God is faithful to them, how come they are in the condition that they are in?

In our text this morning, Paul responds to this objection by pointing to the doctrine of election, and the biblical teaching concerning God's focus on a remnant. God's promises to the Jews have always applied to a remnant of the nation, not the entire nation; not all of Israel will be saved, only a remnant. In fact, when you consider all of Scripture, you find that God is a remnant saving God (even when dealing with the Gentiles).

You find evidence of this focus beginning in Genesis and going through Revelation. God saved Noah and his family from the flood and judged the rest of mankind. Noah and his family are a definite remnant of the entire human race. God saved Lot and his family out of Sodom and Gomorrah before destruction came; they were a remnant. Only two of the original 2 million Jews who left Egypt made it to the promised land—a remnant. Only a remnant were faithful in captivity, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and some others; and only a remnant returned from the Babylonian captivity.

Jesus taught that only a remnant of the whole human race will be saved. He said in Matthew 7:13-14, *“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. <sup>14</sup>For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”*

Paul taught that a remnant of the Jews will enjoy the promises made to Abraham, David and the New Covenant. We saw in our study of Romans 9:27, *“Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, ‘THOUGH THE NUMBER OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL BE LIKE THE SAND OF THE SEA, IT IS THE REMNANT THAT WILL BE SAVED; . . . .’ ”*

So we see a pattern in the eternal God—namely, He focuses on the remnant. Concerning His promises to Israel, God always had the remnant in mind, never the entire nation. So it is ludicrous to say that because the majority of the nation of Israel rejected their Messiah, that God is done with the Jews. Paul's whole point in this chapter is that not all of the nation rejected the Messiah. Paul is a Jew and he did not reject the Messiah. The apostles and others accepted their Messiah. So as we consider God's faithfulness to the Jews in our study, we will learn that He has always kept His promises with a remnant of the nation. He is faithful.

## Review

We saw in our last study that we have been focusing on God's dealings with the Jews for 8 months now. It has been a fascinating study that has included God's sovereign election, man's responsibility before God, Gentile inclusion in God's design in salvation, and salvation by grace through faith as opposed to good works.

We saw that God's faithfulness is an extremely important attribute in light of our struggle with our own sin, selfishness, and failures. Will God reject us when we fail in a number of ways that believers fail? Paul would say, just look at the

Jews. Get a glimpse of God's covenant faithfulness to the Jews in the following passages.

*Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments; . . . .*

*Deuteronomy 32:3-4 For I proclaim the name of the LORD; Ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.*

*Zechariah 8:7-8 Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, I am going to save My people from the land of the east and from the land of the west; and I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness."*

God is faithful. He has been and will be faithful to the Jewish nation, and He is faithful to His church. His faithfulness is not deterred by the failures of His people. Even we as believers are guilty of being unfaithful to God at times; and yet, He remains faithful to us.

*2 Timothy 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.*

*Philippians 1:6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*

I told you that I have come to the point in my study of this section where I am willing to say that if a person claims that God is through with the Jews, he is impugning the character of God, whether he realizes it or not. If you claim that the Church replaces Israel thus God has rejected that nation, you call into question the very integrity of God and/or you doubt His sovereign ability to keep what He promises. As I said when you see a reference today to the nation of Israel, your knee-jerk response should be, "Glory to the faithful omnipotent God, who keeps His promises to a thousandth generation."

We saw that God has made promises to you as a believer in Romans and throughout Scripture. He has promised to forgive your sin; He has promised to sanctify you; He has promised that nothing will separate you from Him; He has promised to provide for you; He has promised to cause all things to work together for good in your life; He has promised to be with you during this life and as you pass from this life to the next in a way that no one else can. We could go

on for quite a while concerning His promises. How can you know that He will keep these promises? Look at the Jews. He made promises to them, and He has maintained their existence and will fulfill His promises to that nation.

Israel's very existence as a nation is tied to the promises of God without question. God chose Abraham and the nation of Israel that came from him. God made promises and covenants that are unconditional, meaning they were not conditioned upon them doing something. God determined to fulfill His promises no matter what they did.

The Jews are a testimony to the fact that God always keeps His promises. The Bible makes clear that God can be trusted—that God keeps His word. If He says something, that is exactly what He means and that is precisely what will come to pass. Hebrews 10:23 says, *“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”*

We saw that Paul explains God's plan for the nation of Israel. His plan is still yet future even to this day. He states that Israel is being set aside for a time. I told you we will follow MacArthur's outline for this chapter over the next few weeks because he, from what I have read, has the clearest understanding. Israel's being set aside is: Partial (verses 1-10), Passing (verses 11-25), and Purposeful (verses 26-36).

Today is a time period in which there is a partial and a passing and a purposeful setting aside of the nation Israel—not a total and permanent and judgmental, final setting aside. You find promises throughout the Old Testament that affirm that, even though Israel has sinned grossly, God will never forsake them.

In Psalm 89:31-37, God affirms His promise concerning the Davidic covenant even when Israel had grossly sinned against God. *“If they violate My statutes And do not keep My commandments, Then I will punish their transgression with the rod And their iniquity with stripes. 33But I will not break off My lovingkindness from him, Nor deal falsely in My faithfulness. 34My covenant I will not violate, Nor will I alter the utterance of My lips. 35Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David. 36His descendants shall endure forever And his throne as the sun before Me. 37It shall be established forever like the moon, And the witness in the sky is faithful.”*

Jeremiah 31:35-37 *Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for light by day And the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; The LORD of hosts is His name: “If this fixed order departs From before Me,” declares the LORD, “Then the offspring of Israel also*

*will 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.*

Based on these verses by themselves, I do not know how anyone can claim that God is through with the nation of Israel. Last time in our study we began looking at the first point Israel's Setting Aside is only Partial, verses 1-10. We saw that Paul provides three groups of people to prove that Israel's setting aside is only partial. He points to: Paul himself; The Remnant; and Future Israel.

There are three groups of people that Paul points to in order to show that Israel's setting aside is only partial: first, the apostle Paul; second, there is the remnant of Jews in every generation that God saves; third, there is a future generation of Jews that will be purged and then all that are left will be saved. So we are working through these three groups.

### God's Remnant of Grace

Last week we considered Paul as an example that God is not through with the Jews. You can go back and listen to that on the website. The next group that shows God's setting aside of the Jews is only partial is the biblical teaching concerning the remnant.

#### Remnant

*God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew*  
Romans 11:2

*His people* obviously refers to the nation of Israel. The people in verses 1 and 2 are the same people at the end of chapter 10 in verse 21. The people in 10:21 are defined as the nation of Israel.

*Whom He foreknew*—Foreknew refers to a predetermined love. God had predetermined to love the nation of Israel and to keep promises with a remnant of that nation. We have considered foreknowledge earlier in our study of Romans in chapter 8. In reference to those who are saved in verse 29, Paul writes, *“For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; . . . .”*

We saw that the problem with terms related to *foreknowledge* is that, if we break it down into its two essential parts, the word can easily be misunderstood. The

first part of the word is “fore” meaning “before,” and the second part is “knowledge.” So the word seems to refer only to knowing something before it happens. Certainly, God does foresee all that happens in this existence, so that is for sure part of the meaning.

But the biblical use of foreknowledge goes far beyond just seeing what is going to happen in the future . The thrust of “foreknowledge” is the combination of “fore” beforehand, and “knowing” which points to an intimate knowledge of a person, not what that person is going to do, but who that person is. It refers to a special relationship.

For example, the term “knowledge” is used in Genesis referring to Adam knowing Eve in an intimate manner and the result was the birth of Cain. Or with Joseph and Mary when people saw she was with child, and Joseph had not known her. Or when the gospels say that Mary never knew a man, it doesn't mean she never knew a man existed or didn't know the name of one. It meant she never had a relationship with a man. She never had an intimate love relationship.

So “foreknowledge” points to God setting His special love upon a person or people and therefore choosing that person or people to salvation and to be His people. This use of the word “knowing” in regards to knowing someone intimately is how the Old Testament uses this concept in numerous places. For example in speaking of the nation of Israel in Amos 3:2, God says, *“You only have I known among all the families of the earth.”*

This does not refer to God's knowledge in the general sense of knowing all things. If that was the sense, then it would have said that God only knew Israel and was unaware of other people in the world. In this passage, the word has the meaning to “set a special love upon” and therefore “to chose” them. In fact, in the NASB it says, “You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth.”

This same idea is found in the New Testament in reference to “foreknowledge” or “to foreknow.” There are a number of passages that use “foreknowledge” in the sense of a close, intimate relationship involving God. We read this in 1 Peter 1:20-21 when Peter speaks of Christ, he writes, *“For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you <sup>21</sup>who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”*

The meaning here is obviously not that God knew events beforehand. It is clear

that Christ Himself was foreknown and fore-ordained to be a sacrifice before the foundation of the world. Foreknowledge is a guaranteeing word, just like the word "His." Paul refers to "His people," because that ties them in with Him. *"Whom He foreknew, He predetermined to love."* So when God chose Israel, it was a predetermined love relationship.

*Deuteronomy 7:6-8 For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. 7The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

Pastor and Bible teacher John MacArthur writes, "Now if God has predetermined before the foundation of the world to set His love upon this people Israel, He's not going to change His mind. He did not love them to damn them. He did not call them and elect them and choose them and draw them to Himself for ultimate cancelling of His promises."

The proof of God's faithfulness to His chosen people is the Remnant. In every period of the history of Israel, there has always been a remnant of saved Jews. Paul provides an example of the remnant by pointing to Elijah.

*Romans 11:2-5 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." 4But what is the divine response to him? "I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL." 5In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God's gracious choice.*

We have seen this concept of remnant before in our study of Romans. Remnant refers to a piece of a whole. You can go down to the flooring store and get a remnant of carpet that was left over from a big job. It is a small portion of a larger whole. The same is true at Joanne's Fabrics. You can get a remnant of cloth that comes from a larger bolt of fabric.

In similar fashion, God has always had a faithful group of people in His nation. The promises made to Abraham, and David in the New Covenant have never applied to the whole nation but only to the elect—the remnant. That was the

point of Romans 9. Esau was a descendant of Abraham, but he was not part of the nation that received the promises. And so it has been the case ever since. The whole nation has never been God's focus.

Romans 9:6 *But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; . . . .*

In other words, God has always been selective. He never purposed to save all the children of Abraham. It was not the children of Ishmael, but the children of Isaac that were chosen. And it was not the children of Esau but the children Jacob that inherited the promises. In fact, Paul describes a true, elect Jew back in Romans 2:28-29, *“For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.”*

Here is the main point. God has always—even as far back as Isaac and Ishmael, and Jacob and Esau—focused on His elect. It has never been the case that God had in mind all of the nation. So why do some people in the Church say that because the Jews rejected their Messiah, that God is through with them? As I said before, not all of the Jews rejected their Messiah. The apostles did not reject Christ. There were 500 at the Ascension that did not reject Christ. God has always kept for Himself a remnant of believers within the nation of Israel.

In our study this morning, Paul provides a helpful picture of this concept of a remnant. He points to the time of Elijah. So I want you to turn over to 1 Kings 18 for a moment in order to understand to what Paul is referring. These were dark days in Israel. Israel was in a state of apostasy. Disastrous consequences were being poured out on the land and the people because of a vile, wretched, evil queen whose name was Jezebel. Jezebel was the queen of Israel and the priestess of the false god Baal at the same time. She became queen by marrying a wicked king of Israel by the name of Ahab. Ahab was in the line of the kings. He did evil in the sight of God, and he married this wicked, Baal-worshiping priestess by the name of Jezebel.

Because Elijah was God's prophet and represented YHWH, Jezebel hated Elijah. Elijah wanted to call the nation back to God, and so he challenged the priests of Baal to a contest. Elijah said to king Ahab in 1 Kings 18:19–21, *“Now then send and gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, together with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table. 20So Ahab sent a message among all the sons of Israel and brought the*

*prophets together at Mount Carmel. 21Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people did not answer him a word."*

Elijah summoned all of the northern tribes of Israel to meet at Mt Carmel for a contest. Did you catch that Jezebel was feeding all these prophets. She infiltrated Israel and got the people worshipping the Baal.

You remember the confrontation how Elijah tells them to bring two oxen and had the false prophets of Baal build an altar to their gods, and he would build an altar to YHWH. Whichever God answered by fire, He is the true God. Well, the false prophets of Baal worked themselves up into a frenzy, yelling and screaming and cutting themselves, calling out to Baal to consume the sacrifice, but nothing happened.

Elijah stood there taunting them, "Well maybe you better yell a little louder, he might be asleep." And he mocked them, "Maybe he's on a vacation," and that only infuriated them. They exercised their cultic ritual all day until evening and nothing happened. Then it was Elijah's turn. Elijah had the people pour gallons and gallons of water on the sacrifice before he started. He saturated the sacrifice and everything around it to show that nothing hinders the eternal God.

*1 Kings 18:36-40 At the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, today let it be known that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and I have done all these things at Your word. 37Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that You, O LORD, are God, and that You have turned their heart back again." 38Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. 39When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The LORD, He is God; the LORD, He is God." 40Then Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal; do not let one of them escape." So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.*

This was a massacre. They took the priests of Baal about a thousand feet down to the foot of the mountain, and Elijah just massacred all these prophets. That was a great moment. One pastor said, "You got to know that those guys didn't just get in line and bend their necks and somebody said, "Next." This was an amazing feat of strength on behalf of Elijah. This was similar to Samson killing a thousand men with the jawbone of a donkey."

And you know what Elijah expected as a result of God demonstrating Himself in

this fashion? Immediate revival, immediate restoration to the worship of the true God. He expected a national repentance. He expected repentance to take place instantaneously. But nothing happened.

By the way, so much for power evangelism, right? People today say, we need more miracles and healing, then people will believe. Could you imagine if God answered from heaven with fire? We would think that people would get saved in droves, but not so. People will not respond because by nature, people love their sin.

Elijah became depressed about the unchanged apostasy. 1 Kings 19:1-3 tells the next part of the story. *“Now Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. 2Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So may the gods do to me and even more, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.” 3And he was afraid and arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.”*

So Jezebel sends a message to Elijah and said, “I'm going to have your head by tomorrow at this time.” What does Elijah do? He runs. This is an old man running for his life. You've got a guy who is not afraid of 850 men but one woman totally terrorizes him. Some of you might relate to that.

Elijah was hopeless. He thought this great victory was going to bring a great revival. It's kind of like preaching the greatest sermon of your life, and everyone falls asleep in the middle. 1 Kings 19:4 reads, *“But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, 'It is enough; now, O LORD, take my life.' ”*

He said, "I've had it, it's enough. Take my life, just get me out of here." Elijah is a depressed man at this point. Then he actually prayed against his people. This is told in 1 Kings 19:9-10. *“Then he came there to a cave and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and He said to him, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' 10He said, 'I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.' ”*

This is a “woe is me” mentality. This is a lack of trust in the Lord. But we must admit that we have all had our “Elijah moments”, right? We have all been unbelieving and focused on self, and we have pity parties at times. We must

keep in mind that Jezebel had truly killed a lot of God's prophets. So her threat was no idle threat. 1 Kings 18:4 says that *“when Jezebel destroyed the prophets of the LORD, Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them by fifties in a cave, and provided them with bread and water.”*

So here is Elijah saying, "Nobody spiritual is left, nobody cares anymore, they just murder the prophets, they tear down the altars, they forsake the covenant." He prays against his people who are so apostate, so evil. And that is where Paul picks up in Romans chapter 11 as his illustration of needing to understand a remnant.

Romans 11:2-5 *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.” 4But what is the divine response to him? “I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.” 5In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s gracious choice.*

Elijah thought he was the only person left in the nation that was true to God. And God says, “Not so, there are seven thousand that I will protect because they have not gone into apostasy and idol worship.”

Notice God says, “I have kept for Myself.” That is sovereign election and sovereign keeping of His people, reserved by God, for God. God always keeps a remnant. The nation may be apostate, but God keeps a remnant. During the time of Elijah, there were 7,000 who had not bowed the knee. During the time of Isaiah there was only a tenth of the nation who made up the remnant. During the time of the Babylonian captivity there were people like Daniel, like Ezekiel, like Shadrach, like Meshach, like Abednego, like Mordecai, like Esther. They were part of the remnant in captivity, while the rest of the people were rejecting the truth of God.

Even when Jesus came, the whole nation of Israel was apostate, but God had His remnant. His remnant was John the Baptist and his followers. His remnant was Anna and Simeon who were at the temple waiting for the Messiah. Romans 11: 5 says, *“In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s gracious choice.”*

Even at the time of Paul writing this letter, the whole of Israel had not rejected the Messiah. There was a remnant. There was the Church at Jerusalem. Three thousand people converted at the day of Pentecost, thousands and

thousands more in Acts 4 and 5. By the time you get to Acts 8, they filled Jerusalem with their teaching. Then there were Jews in every town that Paul and Barnabas preached in that were saved. There was a remnant of tens of thousands of them, no doubt, by the time the Apostle Paul penned the epistle to the Romans.

There remains a remnant even today. There are believing Jews today, and in the future there will be a remnant of believing Jews. We will see in our study that there will be those Jews who reject the activity of Antichrist during the 7 year Tribulation to come. There will be the 144 thousand Jews sealed so that they cannot be killed and they are sent out as missionaries to reach the world with the gospel during the tribulation. There will always be a remnant. Then at the end of the Tribulation, Christ will come and purge out the non-elect out of the nation of Israel and then He will establish the New Covenant with those who are left.

*Romans 11:25-27 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; 26and 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.”*

That is a reference to Christ, the Deliverer, coming out of Jerusalem and removing the non-elect from Jacob, Israel. Then He will establish His Covenant (the New Covenant) with them and take away their sins.

Paul says that the remnant is proof positive that God has not cancelled His promise to Israel. He continues to perpetuate through the remnant a godly seed so that ultimately He can redeem the whole nation. God has set aside the nation of Israel for a time and has established the church age. But even in this Church Age, there are a remnant of Jews who God keeps.

## Conclusion

*Romans 11:5-6 In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s gracious choice. 6But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.*

Do you see all of the threads that Paul is tying up here. All of Romans is about God's righteousness by grace through faith in Christ Jesus. Paul has been pointing to the Jews as this magnificent historic example that puts on display

God's sovereignty, God's grace, and God's election. My friend, far from the God being done with the Jews, God is putting forth the Jews as a cosmic example of His grace. Do you see it?

MacArthur again says, "They are saved not by their own will but by the will of God. They are saved not because they chose God but because God chose them. They are saved because God elected them. And were they chosen because they were worthy? Is that what it says? No, it was the election of what? Of grace, not the election of honor, not the election of reward, but the election of grace, undeserved favor.

"God predetermined before the foundation of the world to choose some Jews on which to set His saving love and His saving blessing which would be His remnant. And so they are elect, according to His grace, not of works lest any man should boast. And salvation is as always the election of grace. Unconditional, undeserved, unearned grace resulting from the sovereign free choice of God. So all through history God has kept choosing out a remnant so that He could preserve His godly seed, ultimately to fulfill the promise to save the nation."

Verse 6 is a comment on the election of grace where we will pick it up next week. *"And if by grace then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace."* What he is saying here is the election of grace is what chooses the remnant. And if it's grace, then it's no more works. Otherwise grace isn't grace. If you earned it, it isn't grace, right? Salvation is by grace. God's grace and man's works are mutually exclusive. And so God has a remnant according to grace.