

## Israel Judicially Blinded Romans 11:7—11

Israel had closed her eyes to the truth and in return God closes Israel's eyes to the truth. This is called judicial blindness.

Judicial blindness...means that when people harden their hearts toward God and close their eyes to the light, He confirms their action and keeps them in the dark. (Page 100)

When man closes his eyes to God's truth he becomes progressively more and more unable to see. We sometimes call it judicial blindness. It is a sort of self-inflicted penalty. It becomes a just judgment of God upon those who reject His light to confirm them in their blindness. Israel did not believe the report (John 12:37), therefore (vs. 38) God sent blindness upon them and they could not believe. (Page 197)

Charles F. Baker *Understanding the Gospels*

This is why Jesus would deal with Israel in parables. They refused to understand and rejected the light Jesus gave them. Israel's rejection of that light resulted in a judicial blindness.

**Matthew 13:13** "Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

We can see a picture of Israel's blindness in Acts during Paul's first missionary journey. He met up with Bar-Jesus, a Jew on the island of Cyprus. It's interesting to see the Gentile, Sergius Paulus, interested in hearing the gospel message while the Jew, Bar-Jesus, opposing the message trying to turn Sergius Paulus away from the faith.

**Acts 13:11** "Now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and not see the sun for a time." And immediately a mist and a darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking those who would lead him by the hand.

### Verse 7

We know that Israel was God's elect nation (Deuteronomy 14:2) for Him to reveal Himself to the world. Paul then says that the elect among Israel obtained righteousness while the rest were hardened. There are obviously two different groups in view here. Israel, as a nation, was chosen (elect) for God to reveal Himself through to all mankind (Romans 9:4). When national Israel rejected their Messiah, the very Person they were to make known to the world, God chose another group, a nation that is not a nation—the Little Flock (Romans 10:19, Luke 12:32). This Little Flock will be given the Kingdom (Millennial Kingdom) while those who appear religious (through works) will not.

We do need to make a distinction between the Little Flock and the remnant that Paul is a part of. The Little Flock were believing Israelites who were promised the Millennium Kingdom. John the Baptist preached the Gospel of the Kingdom (Luke 16:16) and it was this gospel that was accepted by this Little Flock of believers. Paul was not a part of this Little Flock but was a Body believer saved under the Gospel of Grace. Both groups are remnants of Israel, saved through Jesus Christ but under two different economies (dispensations). The first emphasized the blessings that would come to Israel through their belief in the Messiah with blessings that would trickle down to the Gentiles. The second emphasizes the blessings to the Gentiles in spite of Israel's rejection of her Messiah. This last group is pointed out in verse 5. We also see a reference to the two groups in Galatians 6 where Paul refers to Body believers and Kingdom believers (the Israel of God).

**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.

**Galatians 6:16** And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

## Verse 8

This is a quote from Deuteronomy 29:4 with Paul directing it to those in Israel who have rejected their Messiah. Israel had gone through the desert, saw all the signs and wonders, had their clothes last for 40 years, were sustained with water and food but yet they were without understanding of how God protected and loved Israel. I believe that there was a remnant in Deuteronomy who did believe and could see God working in every step through the desert but the vast majority of Israel remained blind to God's day-to-day workings. They were blind to God's presence and leading and would stay that way until God opens their eyes and heart to see His leading.

Paul now uses this passage to say that nothing has changed since that time. Most of Israel were in a spiritual stupor, sleeping, unaware of what God was doing in their lives. When asleep, you are unconscious to what is going on around you. You are unable to see or hear in a clear manner. Israel is in this condition even to this day.

## Verses 9—10

Paul now adds a quote from Psalm 69 as he continues to focus on the blind segment of Israel. The table seems to reference a festive occasion and speaks of prosperity, safety and well-being. The description of this table can be found in Psalm 23. Israel was and would have continued to be richly blessed if they only had acknowledged their Messiah, but instead of blessings they reaped curses. They had every blessing laid out before them right within their reach but they chose another path, the path of self-righteousness. God's many blessings would be bestowed upon Israel if they would only be obedient. Curses took the place of blessings because they followed their own desires. These curses were the "reward" for their disobedience.

**Psalm 69:21—23** <sup>21</sup>They also gave me gall for my food And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. <sup>22</sup>May their table before them become a snare; And when they are in peace, may it become a trap. <sup>23</sup>May their eyes grow dim so that they cannot see, And make their loins shake continually.

**Psalm 23** <sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. <sup>2</sup>He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, <sup>3</sup>he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. <sup>4</sup>Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. <sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. <sup>6</sup>Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Their backs are bent over under a load they cannot possibly bear. Israel went their own way seeking their own righteousness and now they must pay the price. Jesus promised them that His yoke was bearable.

**Matthew 11:29—30** "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

## Verse 11

This verse is very important in our understanding of God's dealing with Israel. It's easy for a blind person to stumble and fall. Israel, as a blind nation, easily stumbled over the Rock of Offense, Jesus Christ.

**1 Peter 2:7—8** <sup>7</sup>This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone," <sup>8</sup>and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.

However, this stumbling did not lead to a fatal fall. Instead, Israel's sin of rejection led to salvation being given to the Gentiles, which would hopefully lead to Israel's jealousy. Note that salvation was going to go to the Gentiles before this time, but it would be offered through the ministry of Israel. In fact, we could see that happening in early Acts. The Jews were to believe in Jesus Christ as their Messiah and that was to spread to Judea, Samaria and then the rest of the world. When Israel rejected Christ in Jerusalem, the Kingdom program faltered and eventually ceased. It will be revived in Revelation when the Gospel of the Kingdom is finally spread throughout the whole world (probably by the 144,000 Israelites during the Tribulation).

**Matthew 24:14** "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

**Isaiah 49:6** Indeed He says, ' It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

So with Israel's stumble, salvation was given directly to the Gentiles, bypassing Israel as God's messenger. This was a major change in God's dealings with man. For 1,500 years God worked exclusively through Israel as His conduit to mankind. Now everything has changed. God is now going through individuals instead of nations. His plan for Israel has been put on hold but will resume after the end of this dispensation marked by the rapture.

For a complete set of notes and additional mid-Acts materials please visit [www.MidActsTruths.com](http://www.MidActsTruths.com)