

Eternity Daily Bible Study

Romans 9-16 The Implications of Salvation

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE AIBI

Number: 600

Verses: Romans 11:11-15

Topic: Life From The Dead...

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Romans 11:11-15 MKJV *I say then, Did they not stumble that they fall? Let it not be! But by their slipping away came salvation to the nations, to provoke them to jealousy. (12) But if their slipping away is the riches of the world, and their default is the riches of the nations, how much more their fullness? (13) For I speak to you, the nations; since I am the apostle of the nations, I glorify my ministry; (14) if by any means I may provoke those who are my flesh to jealousy, and might save some of them. (15) For if their casting away is the reconciling of the world, what is the reception except life from the dead?*

Paul has a rather strange argument here that is common in Jewish rabbinical thought, called "from the lesser to the greater". If the lesser event – the slipping away of the Jews from salvation, results in the salvation of the rest of the world, then the greater event, that is the Jews coming back to God, must result in something even greater than the salvation of the nations, indeed it will result in "life from the dead".

This makes the Jews a sort of prophetic litmus test or time clock as if what happens to them has cosmic implications.

Now what does Paul mean by "life from the dead"? Does he mean a revival, a time of spiritual renewal for the entire world, once the Jews come to Christ? Does Paul imply the resurrection from the dead will take place shortly after the Jews are saved in the End Times? Does "life from the dead" mean the spiritual revival of Israel as in the Valley of Dry Bones in Ezekiel 37?

Ezekiel 37:1-14 MKJV *The hand of Jehovah was on me, and brought me by the Spirit of Jehovah, and made me rest in the midst of a valley, and it was full of bones. (2) And He made me pass among them all around. And behold, very many were on the face of the valley. And lo, they were very dry. (3) And he said to me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord Jehovah, You know. (4) Again He said to me, Prophecy to these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the Word of Jehovah. (5) So says the Lord Jehovah to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. (6) And I will lay sinews on you, and will bring up flesh on you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live. And you shall know that I am Jehovah. (7) So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a noise. And behold, a shaking! And the bones came near, a bone to its bone. (8) And I watched. And behold! The sinews and the flesh came up on them, and the skin covered them above. But there was no breath in them. (9) And He said to me, Prophecy to the Spirit, prophesy, son of man, and say to the Spirit, So says the Lord Jehovah: Come from the four winds, O Spirit, and breathe on these dead ones so that they may live. (10) So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the Spirit came into them, and they*

lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army. (11) And He said to me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, Our bones are dried and our hope is lost; we are cut off by ourselves. (12) Therefore prophesy and say to them, So says the Lord Jehovah: Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, and will bring you into the land of Israel. (13) And you shall know that I am Jehovah when I have opened your graves, O My people, and have brought you up out of your graves. (14) And I shall put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. And you shall know that I Jehovah have spoken and have done it, says Jehovah.

Now many prophecies in Scripture have double, triple or even quadruple fulfillments – and this is one of them. It was partially fulfilled by the return of the exiles from Babylon, it is still being fulfilled as the Jews return to their own land today. In the end it will be fulfilled in the End Times when the Spirit finally comes upon Israel with power. Today the bones are “back together” but there is no spiritual life in them yet and we are waiting for that heavenly wind to blow! Just after chapter 37 are chapters 38 and 39 – Gog and Magog! And after that the Temple is rebuilt. So if the Ezekiel order is the prophetic order then we can expect a return of the Jews to their land and to Christ and a might move of the Holy Spirit among them just before the Gog and Magog event and the New Temple. Now the signs are that a Gog and Magog style invasion of Israel by a combined Islamic jihad of Muslim nations is not too many years away. Some time before then the Holy Spirit will visit Israel with salvation!

Paul is really struggling with the falling away of the Jews here: *I say then, Did they not stumble that they fall? Let it not be!* It cannot be permanent! It is not total, God will visit them again – and then the whole world will shake with Holy Spirit power! There is a common theme that God allows even good people to fall – but only so far, and then raises them up again:

Psalms 37:23-24 MKJV *The steps of a good man are ordered by Jehovah; and He delights in his way. (24) Though he fall, he shall not be cast down; for Jehovah upholds his hand.*

Proverbs 24:16 MKJV *for a just one falls seven times, and rises up again; but the wicked shall fall into evil.*

Daniel 11:33-35 MKJV *And those who understand among the people shall teach many; yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by exile, and spoil, for days. (34) And when they stumble, they shall be helped with a little help, but many will join them, with hypocrisy. (35) And many of those who understand shall stumble, to refine and purge them, and to make white, to the time of the end. Because it is still for the appointed time.*

So the Jews have fallen – but only so far, and only for so long, and God will raise them up to salvation, as if He were bringing them up from the grave, and giving new life to dry bones!

Paul then makes another strange statement – that he was preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, in order to save the Jews. Paul's idea was that the Jews would be so bitterly provoked by seeing salvation come to the Gentiles that they would turn to Christ! It is a

bit like saying "If that fool can do it, surely I can too!". Or when parents say to a child "even your little sister can do that!" in order to provoke them into doing it themselves! Paul thought that the Jews had such a low opinion of the Gentile nations that they would say "if they can receive the Holy Spirit, surely I can too!". They would be so incensed with spiritual jealousy that they would investigate the claims of Christ!

13) For I speak to you, the nations; since I am the apostle of the nations, I glorify my ministry; (14) if by any means I may provoke those who are my flesh to jealousy, and might save some of them.

I think Paul knew that this tactic might not be terribly successful for his phrase "might save some of them" does not seem very hopeful. Paul still knows that only a remnant will be saved.

This raises the question about ministry being 'not worth it' if only a few are saved. Many ministries are not spectacularly successful and many a pastor tries this or that in his community so that he "might save some of them". Paul never saw a great revival among the Jews – even though he was a great apostle. He saw revival for a couple of years in Ephesus, and perhaps in some other places as well, but it was rare - even for Paul. In each situation God has His timing when He will bring "life from the dead" and until then we are simply called to be faithful!

Blessings,

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