

# **Romans**

## **Chapter 11**

### **Romans 11:1**

“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.”

## Israel is not Cast Away

- Paul in verse 1, asked the question: **has God rejected his people?**
- The word Paul used for **rejected** is *apotheo* which literally means: to **thrust away** from oneself or to **drive away** from oneself.
- It is in the middle voice meaning: **has God (Himself) rejected His people?**
- “For the LORD will not **forsake** his people; he will not **abandon** his heritage;”-**Psalm 94:12**
- Although in Paul’s day and in our present day it would seem to be the case that God has **rejected** Israel but it is not true.

- Some people who falsely think that God has rejected Israel has led them to believe that the Church has **replaced** Israel in God’s covenant plan.
- “The community of believers has in all respects replaced carnal, national Israel.”-Bavinck, Herman
- “The Jewish nation no longer has a place as the special people of God; that place has been taken by the Christian community which fulfills God’s purpose for Israel.”-Waltke, Bruce
- Replacement theologians like to hold onto the promises of God in the Old Testament Scriptures as their own but fail to recognize the curses that come with the blessings as well.

- “The triumphant professing church of the Middle Ages assumed (without bothering to prove) that it had taken over the promises and blessings (but not the curses) that God had promised Israel”.-Tinder, Donald
- The answer Paul would give to Replacement Theology today is his normal response to an absurd question : **By no means!**
- As we have seen before throughout Romans **by no means** is translated **God forbid!**
- Paul’s answer is an absolute rejection of the very thought that God would change His mind concerning **His people**.

## Paul is Evidence

- Paul gives himself as evidence to prove there were some Jews chosen by God who embraced the gospel.
- Paul was an **Israelite**, of the **tribe of Benjamin**, a **descendant of Abraham** and yet God saved him!
- Paul’s point was for people to take his life as evidence. He was a zealous hardened Jew who persecuted those who believed in Christ but now he is evidence that God has not given up on the Jewish people.
- The Lord chose Paul and was using him to spread the good news of the gospel “before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel”-**Acts 9:15b**

- God chose to reveal Himself to the **Jewish people**; therefore the Messiah is Jewish, the writers are Jewish, the culture is Jewish, the religion is Jewish, the traditions are Jewish and the concepts are Jewish.
- “For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has **chosen** you to be a people for his **treasured possession**, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD **set his love** on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples”-**Deuteronomy 7:6-7**
- “the LORD set his **heart in love** on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you **above** all peoples, as you are this day.”-**Deuteronomy 10:15**

## **Romans 11:2-5**

“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? “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.”

But what is God's reply to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace."

## Faithful Remnant

- In Paul's day Israel as a whole rejected the Messiah.
- However, a significant **remnant** came to the gospel **chosen by grace**.
- **God has not rejected His people**, Israel, Who He **foreknew** or had known before hand to believe in Him.
- God has often worked in Israel through a **faithful remnant** as He did in the time of **Elijah**.
- During the days of **Elijah** Israel's departure from God was widespread.

- What Elijah perceived with his eyes, **they have killed your prophets have demolished your altars** and concluded in his mind, **I alone am left** was not the reality of what God was doing with Israel
- God promised Elijah that He had **kept for myself seven thousand** who represented a **faithful remnant**.
- The Lord had **kept for Himself** is important to note.
- “It is important to see the sovereignty of God, those who remain true to Him only do so by His electing and keeping power.”- Garland, Tony
- The same is true today for believers, “who are **kept** by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time”.-**1 Peter 1:5**

## Scripture

- Here in **Romans 11**, Paul uses specifically **Elijah** and his story written in **1 Kings 19**, but it is equally important to pursue his question: **Do you not know what the Scripture says...?**
- The word **Scripture** is the word **graphe** that we have already seen is the **written** Word of God.
- We are responsible to know the Scriptures which are **breathed out by God** and **written for our learning** (**2 Timothy 3:16;Romans 15:4**).

- “ In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a **second** time to recover the **remnant** that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros (Northern Egypt), from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea. He will raise a signal for the nations and will assemble the banished of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the **four corners of the earth.**”- **Isaiah 11:11-12**
- “Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you. I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Do not withhold; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the **end of the earth**,”-**Isaiah 43:5-6**

- “Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when it shall no longer be said, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but ‘As the LORD lives who **brought up the people of Israel** out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.’ For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers.”-**Jeremiah 16:14-15**
- “And the land that was desolate shall be tilled, instead of being the desolation that it was in the sight of all who passed by. And they will say, ‘This land that was desolate has become like the **garden of Eden**, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.”-**Ezekiel 36:34-35**
- For then I will **restore** to the peoples a pure language, that they may call on the name of the LORD.-**Zephaniah 3:9**

## **Romans 11:6-10**

“But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, as it is written “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day.”

And David says, “Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them; let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs forever.”

## Chosen by Grace

- In **Romans 11:5**, the **remnant** was **chosen by grace**.
- The **remnant** is **chosen** by the **grace** of God not on the basis of performance or works **otherwise grace would no longer be grace**.
- “Here is perhaps the most direct and absolute contrast in Scripture of two principles: for **grace** is God acting sovereignly according to Himself; **works** is man seeking to present to God a human ground for blessing. The two principles are utterly opposed.”-Newell, William

- The God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament are One and the same and He has always operated sovereignly through the means of **grace**.
- “God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should **change his mind**. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?”-**Numbers 23:19**
- The **elect** among Israel received and **obtained** the **grace** of God but the rest of **unbelieving** Israel were **hardened** because they had refused to believe in Jesus.
- This is really a terrible reality because it expresses what can possibly happen to a person when they reject the message of the gospel of **grace**.

- “The [Greek word] he used here describes a special hardening, with the result that the **hardness** renders the person more difficult to get through to from then on. It is as though a callus had built up over the Israelites that made them less sensitive to God.”-Liddon, H.P.
- God is **actively** involved in a person **obtaining grace** but the unbeliever is **actively** involved in the **hardening** by freely and willfully refusing to listen and obey the message of the gospel.
- “If men will leave God’s flowing spring and willfully march into the desert, the law of thirst will come into effect. If men will leave God’s will and way and walk after their own way, the law of the hardening of the heart will come into effect.”-Barnhouse, Donald Grey
- "... God's hardening permanently binds people in the sin that they have **chosen for themselves**.”-Moo, Douglas

## Spirit of Stupor

- Paul returns for support to the Old Testament **as it is written** and quotes from **Isaiah 29:10** and **Deuteronomy 29:4**.
- God gave Israel a **spirit of stupor** and **eyes that they should not see** and **ears that would not hear**.
- Leon Morris defines **a spirit of stupor** as “an attitude of deadness towards spiritual things.”
- The Old Testament quotes from above illustrate how Israel had failed to **listen to God** and turn away from their worthless idols of wood and stone that have **no eyes to see** nor **ears to hear**.

- Therefore, God **gave them a spirit of stupor** because they did not remember nor were thankful for the blessings that He had done by delivering them out of the hand of their enemies.
- **“The spirit of slumber;** the word signifieth, such a dead sleep, as those have, who are pricked or stung with venomous beasts, out of which they hardly or never awake.”-Poole, Matthew
- It is an insensitivity to the work and grace of God usually accompanied by a **dullness of hearing** shaped by our own high opinion of ourselves.
- “Now these things happened to them as an **example**, but they were written down for our **instruction**, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let anyone **who thinks** that he stands take heed lest he fall.”-**1 Corinthians 10:11-12**

- We have to be careful to **examine** ourselves daily to make sure we are not falling into a **deadness** to the spiritual things of God.
- We have to be careful that we don’t replace the gospel, His Word, and His work with our own critical, self centered, human reasoning like the unfaithful Jewish people had done.
- **“Hear** and give ear; be not **proud**, for the LORD has spoken. Give glory to the LORD your God before he brings darkness, before your feet stumble...”-**Jeremiah 13:15-16a**
- “...pride in the human heart prevents such a reception [of hearing]...In some it is the pride of intellect. In some others it is the pride of self-esteem. Some have a pride of self-righteousness. In some it is the pride of self-love. The pride of self-will also works its share of ruin among people.”-Spurgeon, Charles

## The Table

- In **Verse 9**, **Let their table become a snare and a trap...**
- Paul quotes **Psalm 69:22-23**, which says, “Let their own table before them become a snare; and when they are at peace, let it become a **trap**. Let their eyes be darkened, so that they **cannot see**, and make their loins tremble continually.”
- David also had written: “**You prepare a table** before me in the presence of my enemies;”-**Psalm 23:5**
- The Israelite people refused the **table prepared** by God and created their **own table** which became a **snare** to them.

- The **table** is a symbol of a close fellowship with God which the Jews had abandoned for their **own table** of strange and foreign gods.
- In the context of **Romans 11:9-10** for both Jews and Gentiles who refuse the **table** of the gospel, given as a free gift by God, man can potentially become **darkened** and **hardened** as they rely on their **own table** of self-righteousness.
- The **darkening** is judicial darkening; a **retribution** from God upon those who refuse to listen to His word because of a proud heart that rejects the **table** prepared for man in the gospel.
- The gospel message becomes a **snare and a trap** when it is refused resulting in a separation from God.

- The light contained in the gospel becomes dimmer and more dim as an insensitivity grows in the heart of a person towards God and His ways culminating in mental darkness and hardness of heart.
- “They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.” **-Ephesians 4:18**
- A hardness of heart results in mental **darkness** so that a person **cannot see** what God is doing which ends with spiritual deadness to the things of God.
- “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” **-2 Corinthians 4:3-4**

## Romans 11:11-14

“So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!

Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. ”

## Israel's Stumbling

- Israel did **stumble** but it was not a permanent hopeless **fall**.
- Paul said in regards to Israel's **fall**. **By no means!**
- There is a big difference between **stumbling** and **falling**.
- Israel has **stumbled** but because they are God's chosen people He has them in His hand so that they do not permanently **fall**.
- The same is for believers today. We may stumble at times but **God keeps** us so that we do not **fall** permanently.
- “The steps of a man are established by the LORD, when he delights in his way; though he **fall**, he shall not be cast headlong, for the LORD **upholds** his hand.”-**Psalm 37:23-24**

## Israel Made Jealous

- The word that Paul uses here in verse 11, for **trespass** means a **lapse** or **deviation** from truth and uprightness.
- Israel's temporary lapse towards the gospel has resulted in **salvation coming to the gentile** nations.
- This happened to **make Israel jealous**.
- When we think of jealousy we usually think of it negatively containing an element of selfishness and control.
- However, the jealousy here in **Romans 11** is meant to arouse Israel from a spiritual deadness awakened to the gospel.
- It is an **envious desire** to want spiritually what they don't have!

- It is a matter for profound regret that just as Israel refused to accept this salvation when it was offered to them, so the Gentiles have all too often refused to **make Israel envious**. Instead of showing to God's ancient people the attractiveness of the Christian way, Christians have characteristically treated the Jews with hatred, prejudice, persecution, malice, and all uncharitableness. Christians should not take this passage calmly."- Morris, Leon
- If Israel's **trespass** means that the **riches** of the gospel has come to the **world** then **how much more** will the **riches** of Israel's reception of the gospel be when in the future the **full inclusion** of Israel will be realized.

- “But Israel is saved by the LORD with everlasting salvation; you shall not be put to shame or confounded to all eternity...But they shall serve the LORD their God and **David their king**, whom I will raise up for them.”-**Isaiah 45:17;Jeremiah 30:9**
- At certain time in the future Israel as a whole will recognize Jesus the Son of David as their King!
- And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a **spirit of grace and pleas for mercy**, so that, when **they look on me**, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him...On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to **cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.**”-**Zechariah 12:10a;13:1**
- The Father will pour out His Spirit upon Israel so that they will look upon the Son and be cleansed from their sin.

- **Full inclusion** or **fullness** is the same word used to describe the **fullness of the gentiles** in **Romans 11:25**.
- The word for **fullness** in **verse 12**, describes a **period of time** when all that is intended to take place will have been accomplished and will come to its completed end.
- It was used during this period to describe when a ship was full with cargo, soldiers, sailors, and oarsmen.
- "While [fullness] probably has a qualitative denotation the context and the parallel with **v. 25** suggest that this **fullness** is attained through a numerical process. Paul would then be suggesting that the present defeat of Israel, in which Israel is numerically **reduced to a small remnant**, will be reversed by the **addition of far greater numbers** of true believers: this will be Israel's destined **fullness.**"- Moo, Douglas

- **How much more** blessing will come to the world when Israel turns back to God in **their full inclusion**.
- God had promised to Abraham that **all the families of the earth** shall be blessed through Israel (**Genesis 12:1-3**).
- At the second coming of Jesus: “The conversion of the Jews will be accompanied by the most glorious consequences for the whole world”.-Hodge, Charles
- “On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea. It shall continue in summer as in winter. And the **LORD will be king over all the earth**. On that day the LORD will be one and his name one.”-**Zechariah 14:8-9**
- “For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.”-**Habakkuk 2:14**

## The Gentiles

- Paul wants the **Gentiles** to pay attention: **I am speaking to you Gentiles (Vs.13)**.
- Gentiles need to be humble towards God’s sovereign plan for Israel and pay close attention so that we don’t misunderstand the present status of the blindness that Israel is experiencing as though God has given up on them.
- “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.”-**Jeremiah 29:11-12**
- The historical context of this promise was given to Israel after their exile to Babylon but there is an application for Gentile believers today and is applicable to Israel in the future.

## Paul's Magnified Ministry

- Paul was an **apostle to the Gentiles** and through his evangelizing of the Gentiles was **magnifying** the **jealousy** of the Jewish non-believers in order to **save** some of them.
- “For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, ‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’ (**Isaiah 49:6**) And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and **glorifying the word of the Lord**, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed...”-**Acts 13:47-48**
- “ But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with **jealousy** and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him.”-**Acts 13:45**
- “The Gentiles are not saved merely for their own sake, but for the sake of God's election of Israel.”-Daane, James

## Romans 11:15-16

“For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.”

## Life From the Dead

- **Reconciliation** involves the restoration of the favor of God to sinners that **repent** and put their trust in Jesus; It changes a relationship from hostility to friendship.
- “But now in Christ Jesus you [Gentiles] who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the **dividing wall of hostility**”- **Ephesians 2:13-14**
- God’s blessing of **reconciliation** is to the **world** or humanity right now through Jesus (**2 Corinthians 5:18**) but in the future He will turn towards Israel in **acceptance**.

- The reconciling of the world does not mean that all men will be reconciled, but that all who will may be reconciled. The scope of reconciliation is the whole world and the instrument is the Gospel.”-Vine, W.E.
- Israel’s **acceptance** is likened to **life from the dead**.
- “Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live...Then he said to me, Son of man, these bones are the **whole house of Israel**. Behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off...And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.”-**Ezekiel 37:5,11,14**

- [The dry bones are] symbolic of the recreation and revitalizing of the **nation** as a whole, as the interpretation shows."-Wright, Christopher
- Israel's **acceptance** could mean God's **acceptance** of Israel; but more than likely it probably means that their **acceptance** of Jesus as their Messiah would result in God's **acceptance** of them.
- "But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God...My servant **David shall be king over them**, and they shall all have one shepherd."- **Ezekiel 37:23b;24a**

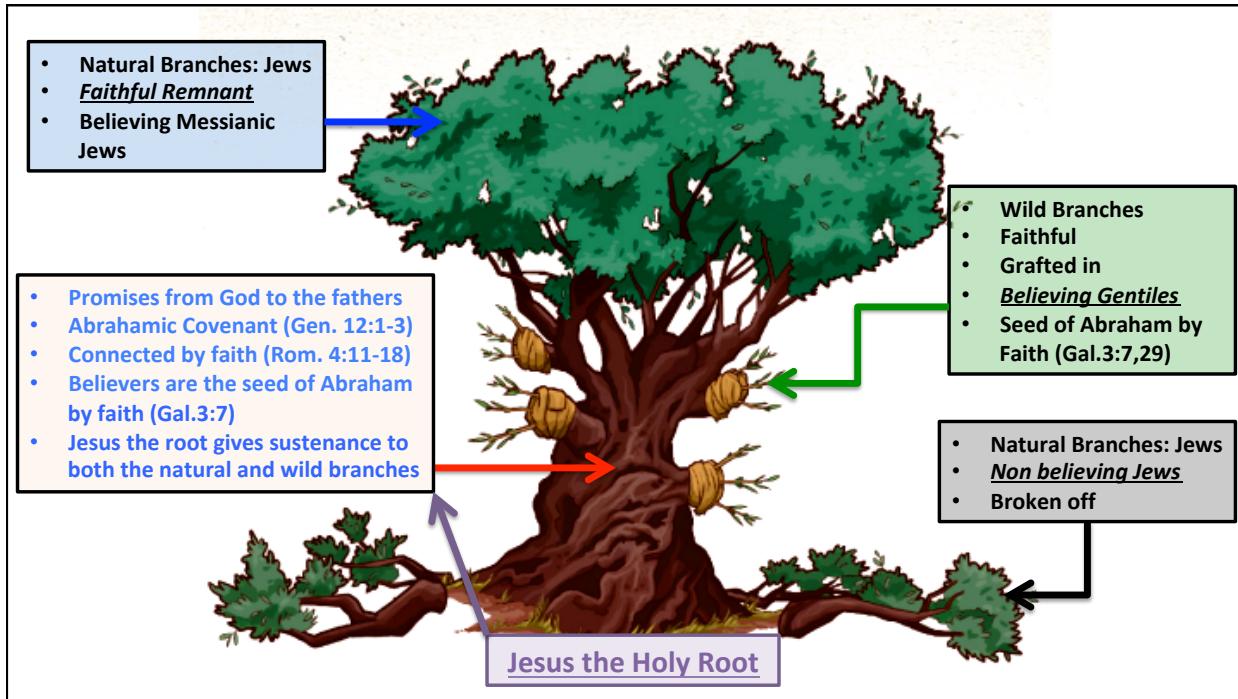
## Firstfruits

- **The dough offered as firstfruits is holy (vs.16).**
- The Jewish law required that a portion of the dough from the first grain of the first harvest be offered to the Lord.
- Setting aside the **firstfruit** of the **dough** to God assured that **whole lump** was **holy or set apart** and dedicated to God.
- The **firstfruit** probably represents the first believing remnant of Jews; the **whole lump** represents the **whole** nation of Israel.
- "Israel was holiness unto Jehovah, the **firstfruits** of his increase ; and the **lump** to be the **whole Israel of God**, of **Galatians 6:16**; that is, Israel, in God's sight as an always beloved nation"- Newell, William

## **Romans 11:17-21**

“But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you.”

Then you will say, ‘Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.’ That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.”



## The Nourishing Root

- The **nourishing root** upholds and gives life to the **branches**.
- The **root** of the **olive tree** is considered to be **holy** so are the **branches holy** (Vs.16)
- Jesus is the **holy nourishing root** and is the source for the branches holiness in Him.
- “There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his **roots** shall bear fruit.”-**Isaiah 11:1**
- “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the **root** and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”-**Revelation 22:16**

- The **root** is Jesus and those remnant of Jews who believe in Him are the **natural branches** (**Romans 11:21**) and the Gentiles who believe in Him are the **grafted in branches** (**Romans 11:17,19**).
- The tree of God's blessing grows up through the **promise** given to Abraham about His **Seed**, which is **Christ** (**Galatians 3:16**).
- The **natural branches** are those first Jewish believers that believed in Jesus.
- Also there are **natural branches** that are **broken off** that are the majority of non-believing Jews who presently have failed to embrace Jesus.
- The **wild branches** that are **grafted in** are the Gentiles who are the recipients of the **promises** which God gave to Abraham and the **root** or source of all the promises is **Christ** (**Galatians 3:14,29**)!

## Arrogant

- The Gentiles are the **grafted in branches** of the olive tree therefore Paul admonishes believing Gentiles to not be **arrogant** towards the **natural branches**.
- “When an old olive tree had lost its vigor, it seems that one remedy in antiquity was to cut away the failing branches and graft in some wild olive shoots. The result was said to be the invigoration of the failing tree.”-Morris, Leon
- The wild tangled **olive tree** that produces no fruit is all together useless and is made up solely of Gentiles but were **grafted in** to invigorate the old **olive tree** of Israel.

- Gentiles who think of themselves to be special and **arrogant** towards the Jewish people Paul says **remember that the root supports you not you who support the root.**
- “In a sense the converted Jew is the only normal human being in the world. Everyone one else is from one point of view a special case dealt with in an emergency situation. That is how we [Gentiles] got in, God sort of opened the back door and let us in. But the ones who really belong to God are the Jews. **It is healthy for us to remember this.**” -Lewis, C.S.
- The Gentiles have been **grafted** into **olive tree** of Israel and have become beneficiaries of the biblical religion of Israel and the promises made to Abraham (**Romans 9:1-5**).
- Jesus, the root, is Jewish and to be **arrogant** towards the Jewish people is be **arrogant** towards the people who gave us our Redeemer (**Romans 9:5**).

## Humble Fear

- It is **true** that some of the **natural branches** were **broken off** so that the **wild branches** of the Gentiles **might be grafted in.**
- The reason the **natural branches** were **broken off** was because of their **unbelief** but Paul says to the Gentiles **stand fast through faith.**
- Don’t become puffed up and proud like the Jewish people and think that since I am a part of the people of God I don’t have to have **faith** (**Romans 9:6-8**).
- Since God did not spare the **natural branches** because they refused to believe in Jesus then the only hope for the Gentile believers is to rely upon the work of Jesus upon the Cross through faith so **do not become proud, but fear.**

- Fearing the Lord is humility. Humility is freedom because it looks beyond one's self to God for strength and wisdom. Pride says I don't need God for strength. Humility says I have no strength without him.
- "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom."-**Proverbs 11:2**
- "The fear of the Lord is the only fear that imparts strength... Those who fear God are simultaneously humbled and are strengthened...they are kept gentle and kept from being overbearing in their [own] strength."-Reeves, Michael
- If we start to rely on our own importance through good performance of behaviors or a moral arrogance towards others who we deem lost then pride hinders our relationship with God and we lose our Holy root.

- But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble...Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you."-**James 4:6,10**
- When we separate from the Holy Root, i.e. Jesus then **neither will God spare you.**
- "If indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the **hope of the gospel** that you heard... Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, **rooted** and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving."-**Colossians 1:23a,2:6**

## **Romans 11:22-24**

“Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again.”

For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.”

## God's Kindness

- The word for **kindness** used here has the same root word as used for **grace**.
- What would keep a Gentile believer from **continuing in God's kindness**?
- We can lose God's kindness if we forsake faith for works, self righteousness, and pride of moral superiority as Israel had done.
- Those **who have fallen** are the unbelieving Jews and **you** referred to here in **Vs.22**, are the believing Gentiles.
- The roles may be reversed and Gentiles can become the object of the **severity of God** and the Jews can become the object of His **kindness**.

- “Though they [Israel] were the chosen people they began to think they were the **choice** people. They became confident that they were **in** no matter how they lived simply because they were Abraham’s descendants...So Paul says, Don’t fall into the same presumption!”-Keller, Timothy
- We believers in faith must always remember that we only occupy a position in the **olive tree** because of God’s **kindness** and **grace**. If some of the **natural branches** have fallen because of **unbelief** so could some of the **wild branches be cut off**.
- It is belief that will result in Him grafting in Jews **if they do not continue in their unbelief (vs.23)** in the future because God is able to graft them in again for **God has the power to graft them in again**.

## How Much More

- Paul used here one of his favorite phrases in Romans **how much more** (5:9,10,15,17;11:12,24) to describe how God can do the impossible.
- If God did the hard thing by **grafting in the wild branches** i.e., believing Gentiles into the **olive tree** of Israel.
- Then it should not be hard that God will do the easier thing towards the **natural branches** by grafting Jews **back into their own olive tree**.
- Paul refers to the **olive tree** as the Jewish people's **own olive tree (Vs.24)**.

- The **olive tree** and the promises given to Israel concerning Jesus, the **root**, are theirs and we believing Gentiles are the **wild olive tree** and are outsiders but by God's wonderful grace towards us get to participate in the promises given to Israel.
- “Therefore **remember** that at one time you **Gentiles**...that you were at that time separated from Christ, **alienated** from the commonwealth of Israel and **strangers** to the covenants of promise, having no hope and **without God** in the world. But now in **Christ Jesus** you who once were far off have been brought **near** by the blood of Christ.” -**Ephesians 2:11a,12-13**
- “How few of us Gentile believers understand and bear in mind that we are beneficiaries of those promises which God lodged in Abraham as a root of all the promises we inherit in Christ!” - Newell, William

## God is Faithful

- The truth is that God will be faithful to Israel even when Israel is not because “...it **depends** not on **human will** or **exertion**, but on **God**, who has mercy”-**9:16**
- “Then what advantage has the Jew?...What if some were unfaithful? Does their **faithlessness** nullify the **faithfulness** of God? By no means!”-**Romans 3:1a-4a**
- God’s faithfulness can be relied upon for believers today!

- “**God is faithful**, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”-**1 Corinthians 1:9**
- “He who calls you is **faithful**; he will surely do it.”-**1 Thessalonians 5:24**
- “But the **Lord is faithful**. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one”-**2 Thessalonians 3:3**
- The Father has called Gentiles into fellowship with His Son and He can be relied upon and is **faithful** to see us through to the end!
- We can rest assured in His **faithfulness** not wavering concerning this promise but “fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.”-**Romans 4:21**

## **Romans 11:25-27**

“Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.’”

## Don't be a Know It All

- We would like to think that God agrees with our opinions about everything but Scripture encourages us to not **be wise in your own sight** (**Vs. 25**).
- People think they are wise in their own sight about the things of God but **do you not know what the Scripture says**.-**Romans 11:2**
- “Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!”-**Isaiah 5:21**
- “...all of us possess knowledge. This knowledge puffs up... If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know.”-**1 Corinthians 8:1b-2a**
- If we think we know it all then we really don't know anything. The only knowledge is that which comes through the whole counsel of the Scriptures!

- Paul had communicated the truth from **Scripture** concerning how God had dealt with the present state of Israel.
- Gentiles should not speculate about the reasons God had rejected the Jews and be overjoyed by their own skill and genius to have determined the cause of their current blindness.
- Paul did want vain speculations so he cut short all inquiry by stating the truth about Israel's present and future state.
- **Scripture** is always the final authority; it is what Paul used to argue that God is not even close to being done with His chosen people.

## The Mystery

- Paul says to the Gentile believers that he doesn't want us to be **unaware**.
- The word used in the original Greek literally means to be **ignorant** or to not **understand**.
- It is the **mystery** concerning Israel that Paul wants the Gentiles to understand.
- The word **mystery** in todays world usually means a puzzling crime that has an unrevealed or unknown plot or something that is difficult or impossible to understand.
- In the Bible the word **mystery** refers to a truth that has been concealed but has now been revealed.

- **Mystery** in the scriptural sense is a truth that can be known but only in that we must have God reveal it and the Holy Spirit instruct us these matters.
- "...the **mystery** was made known to me by revelation...which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been **revealed** to his holy apostles and prophets **by the Spirit**. This **mystery** is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel." -**Ephesians 3:3a,5-6**
- The mystery in Ephesians is of the Gentiles being fellow heirs with Israel.
- Here in **Romans 11:25**, it is the conversion and restoration of the Jewish people that is the **mystery** to be revealed and understood from Scripture.

- This **mystery** has two parts which here in vs. **25-27** Paul unfolds for us.
- The first part of the mystery is that a **partial hardening has come upon Israel**; and secondly, that this **partial hardening** should continue until the **fullness of the Gentiles has come in**.
- Today Christ is building His Church made up primarily of Gentiles. God is calling out from the nations of the world to take a **people for His Name (Acts 15:14)**.
- At some time in the future the **full number of Gentiles** will have come in, i.e., the total number of Gentiles whom God has purposed to be saved.
- The Greek word that is used here for **fullness** has the meaning towards the **number of the Gentiles** who enter into salvation; which then triggers God returning His saving work back towards Israel.

- The number Gentiles that come to salvation is known only to God and will continue after the removal of the Church throughout the Great Tribulation as John tells us, “After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from **every nation**, from all tribes and peoples and languages...These are the ones coming out of the **great tribulation.**”-**Revelation 7:9a;14a**
- The **fullness of the Gentiles** is different than what Jesus referred to as the times of the Gentiles “**Jerusalem** will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the **times of the Gentiles** are fulfilled.”-**Luke 21:24b**
- The **times of the Gentiles** is political in nature and refers to the period beginning with the Babylonian captivity of Jerusalem and the succeeding kingdoms that rule over Jerusalem until the end of the Tribulation.

## All Israel will be Saved

- Paul draws a direct connection between the fullness of the Gentiles **and in this way** (vs. 26) Israel will be saved or delivered.
- When Paul says, **all Israel will be saved** he does not mean that every individual Israelite will be saved.
- Paul quotes from **Isaiah 59:20**, but he only uses the first part of the verse in Isaiah, “And a Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob **who turn from transgression**, declares the LORD.”
- Paul is speaking here of the **remnant of Israel** who **turn away from transgression** and look to Jesus and be saved “for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”-**Acts 4:12**
- The Lord at this time will **banish ungodliness** from Israel and in keeping with His **covenant will take away their sins**.

- “And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls.”-**Joel 2:32**
- “For this is **the covenant** that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people...For I will forgive their iniquity, and **I will remember their sin no more.**”-**Jeremiah 31:33a;34b**
- “From the midst of their fiery refinement, the elect remnant of Israel will see Jesus Christ, their Messiah and call on Him as their Savior and Lord. **Israel will thus be saved** and restored to covenant relationship with the Lord.”-MacArthur, John

## **Romans 11:28-29**

“As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.”

## **God is not Fickle**

- Through the eyes of people today the Jews as **regards to the gospel are the enemies** so that the **gospel** message could go to the Gentiles.
- In regards to God’s view of the Jews they are still **beloved for the sake of the forefathers** in regards to election.
- God is not fickle in regards to His unconditional promise that He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the patriarchs who He chose by grace.
- The Greek word for **irrevocable** means literally **not to be repented of**, or to change one’s mind.

- For the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of.-  
**(vs.29)** ASV
- God did not choose Israel because Israel was special. He did it solely by mercy and grace.
- The word for **gifts** has the same root word used for grace and it is a **divine grace** that seeks and saves man as a free gift by God.
- “...it **depends** not on **human will** or **exertion**, but on **God**, who has mercy”-**9:16**
- “The **calling** is not an invitation, but it is the effectual calling of God without repentance...The failure of Israel and our failures likewise do not alter the plan and purpose of God”.-McGee, J. Vernon

## Romans 11:30-32

“For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy.

## God's Mercy

- **Just as you were at one time:** The Gentiles as a whole rejected the one true God, the God of Israel out of our **disobedience**.
- The Gentiles **but now have received mercy** that is not getting what we deserved eternal damnation.
- This temporary change came about because Israel in their **disobedience** rejected the Lord Jesus Christ. And they rejected Him because they chose to seek a righteousness of their own by works (**Romans 9:30-32**).
- In the present Church Age the situation has been swapped the Gentiles are putting their faith in Jesus accepting God's free gift of the salvation and the Jews are still in rejection by their **disobedience** but will one day **receive mercy** as well.

## Romans 11:32-36

“For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all. Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.”

## God's Unsearchable Wisdom

- All mankind has been **consigned to disobedience** in order that the mercy and goodness of God will shine through into the darkness of the human heart.
- God is great and there is no comparison to Him in anything known to man. His **riches** go far beyond what we can ever think or imagine.
- “So that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ”-**Ephesians 2:7-8**
- Who can bring a **gift** to God that He might be **repaid** for such great a salvation that He has **freely given** to us in His Son?

- “I have heard many Christians say, 'Why are the heathen lost when they haven't heard the gospel? God has no right to condemn them!' My friend, God has every right imaginable. He is *God*. And what He is doing is right. If you don't think it is right, your thinking is wrong. And if you don't think He is being smart, you are wrong. God is not stupid. You and I may be stupid, but God is not.”-McGee, J Vernon
- The Father is so **unsearchable** and so wonderful that at some point all we can do is overflow with appreciation for His greatness, compassion, mercy and grace revealed to us in the atoning work of His Son.
- Who is “the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the **image of God**...the glory of God in the **face** of Jesus Christ.”-**2 Corinthians 4:4b;6b**