

Romans 11:11-24

LESSON: GRAFTED INTO THE PROMISE — August 21, 2016

INTRODUCTION:

¹Paul concluded chapter ten with a quotation from Isaiah describing the nation of Israel as "*a disobedient and contrary people*." Paul begins chapter eleven by giving several examples to show that despite this rebellion God has not totally rejected His people (**11:1-6**). What God has done, however, is harden the hearts of the rebellious Israelites (**11:7-10**). Five witnesses are used to prove there is a future in God's plan for the Jews.

1. The Apostle Paul (**11: 1**). If God has completely turned His back on Israel, then how can the conversion of the Apostle Paul, who was a Jew, be explained.
2. The Prophet Elijah (**11: 2-10**). Elijah thought that the nation had totally departed from God, (I Kings 19) but he discovered that a godly remnant of 7000 remained in Israel.

LESSON: I. GOD'S DESIRE FOR THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL Romans 11:11-12

11:11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. The contrast between stumble and fall is devastating. "*Stumble*" might be a hiccup; an interruption, but a "*fall*" is the idea of a permanent and final downfall—spiritually. Is Israel's problem with Christ permanent and final? Will Israel never accept God's Son, Jesus Christ as the true Messiah? Paul's response is forceful and explicit—God forbid! Of course not! But this has opened up another door.

1. God opened the door of salvation to the whole world. The Lord's messengers were sent to Israel first, but Israel did not want to hear that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of God Himself. Very few received the gospel. In fact, so many rejected the message, that it can be said that Israel, the nation as a whole has stumbled over Christ.
 - a. They have shut their eyes, lest they should see Christ (v.8).
 - b. They have closed their ears, lest they should hear Christ (v.8).
 - c. They have set themselves to bitterly oppose Christ (1 Thes.2:15-16).

God had no other choice but to do the logical thing. The glorious message of His love and of His Son was at stake, therefore, God sent His messengers throughout the world (the Gentile world) in search of any person who would receive the message of His son. God did what the Jews had always failed to do—God threw open the door of salvation to the whole world which in return will provoke the Jews to jealousy. Don't ever think you're the only ones that God will use. If a people reject the message of His son, God will work it out to send the message to another people. So, therefore, through Israel's fall, salvation came to the Gentiles and thereby it could provoke them to jealousy.

¹ http://executableoutlines.com/ro/ro_11.htm
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

11:12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?— Now, if the whole world became rich as a result of God's offer of salvation and it triggered a worldwide coming of non-Jewish outsiders to God's kingdom, how much more their fullness; how much greater a blessing the world will share when the Jews finally accept Christ. The point is that the day of Israel's restoration will cause even a greater blessing to spread out across the world! God has overruled and is going to continue overruling Israel's stumble and fall over Christ, and...

- more and more Gentiles are going to be saved.
- more and more Jews are going to be stirred to accept Christ.
- A glorious restoration of Israel is going to take place. And when that day comes, the whole earth will be greatly blessed; blessed more fully than ever before.

This is why we are to pray for Israel and continue to spread the Good News!

II. GOD'S EXHORTATION TO GENTILE BELIEVERS Romans 11:13-24

11:13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:— Paul now speaks to the Gentiles directly. He was God's primary minister to the Gentiles in the first century, so, Paul honored and did justice to his office by magnifying his ministry to the Gentiles every chance he could.

11:14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. So, Paul stresses every chance he could to magnify his ministry to the Gentiles. Why? Paul had two purposes. So, Paul says by any means,

1. He wanted to arouse the Jews to envy, that is, he wanted to stir them to look at Christ, and to see what Christ had done for the Gentiles; to see the wonderful change Christ had wrought.
2. That many of the Jews might be saved. This would benefit the Jews.

11:15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?— Paul states that if the Jews rejection of Christ meant that they had to be cast aside to bring about the reconciliation of the world, what will their being received back be, but that they were dead and now they live.

11:16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. In preparing to warn the Gentiles, Paul introduces them to two metaphors: **1.)** the principle of dedication of firstfruits to God, and **2.)** the relationship between the root of a tree and its branches. Paul states that if the "*firstfruit*" (The Patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) is holy, then the "*lump*" (the Jewish nation) is also holy. And if the "*root*" (The Patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) be holy, so are the "*branches*" (descendants; Israelites). The root supports the branches. These two metaphors illustrate one central truth: the firstfruit and the root are holy and the lump and the branches will be holy. They produce and support God's plan of salvation.

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

11:17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;—²Farmers and gardeners

world-wide still use grafting today. He removes the branches from the strong tree. Then he binds a small branch of the weaker tree to the stem of the strong tree. This is a difficult task. Only a skilled gardener has a good possibility of success. But if the gardener succeeds, he will have a much better tree. It will be a strong tree that yields good fruit. And the fruit will be plentiful. Paul states that if some of the branches (some Jews) of Israel have broken off through unbelief from olive tree, then the Gentiles, being branches from a wild olive tree were grafted into the life of the Abrahamic root in place of those dead Jewish branches which have been unfruitful. The wild branches (Gentiles) gain sustenance among and with the Jews partaking of the root which still bears a remnant of Jewish believers, and thereby, receive the fatness; the rich nourishing blessings of the olive tree.

11:18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

Paul gives a strong warning to the Gentiles to not boast against those branches that have broken off.

- We must not treat them as inferior beings because they deny Christ.
- We must not insult and ridicule them because they differ from us as Christian believers.
- We must not trample them underfoot because they refuse to believe and be like us.
- We must not boast that we know the truth about the Messiah and they do not.
- We must not glory in our knowledge of Christ, conveying the idea that we are better than the Jews.

The Gentile believer has no right to elevate himself over the Jews, nor over anyone else. The Gentiles are not holding up the root, but the root is holding them up. Every Gentile believer owes a debt to Jewish people. "...*Salvation is of the Jews*" John 4:22.

11:19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Paul continues to give a strong warning to the Gentiles, in that they must fear complacency and unbelief.

- Saying that they are more acceptable to God because they have replaced the Jews as the true followers of God.
- Saying that they are safe and secure in Christianity because Christianity is the religion that acknowledges God's Son.

The Gentiles must remember that not all branches have been broken off, discarded, or unfruitful—just the unrepentant Israel; those not bearing fruit are broken off. The life of the tree of Abraham has not been removed. But the Gentiles have been given a chance to be grafted into the root and partake and receiving the fatness; the rich nourishing blessings that the root provides for both Jews and Gentiles. This means that there is only one family of God and both branches are part of the same olive tree. But, those branches were not broken off so the Gentiles might be saved.

11:20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded,

² <http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/romans-lbw.htm>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

but fear:— But, the branches were broken off because of unbelief. And the Gentiles stood in faith; they owed their position to their faith. This will not be a cause for any merit or haughty thinking, but, stand in awe of what God has done and continue to be reverent.

11:21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. This further shows us not to boast, for, if God spared not the Jews because of their unbelief, how much more will He not spare you (Gentiles). The Jews were the natural branches; the Gentiles (including us) are the unnatural branches.

- The Jews had the godly heritage; we (Gentiles) had the wild ungodly heritage.
- The Jews had the fathers, the followers of the only living and true God, we (Gentiles) had heathen fathers.
- The Jews had the Word of God and the Savior, we (Gentiles) had neither.
- The Jews had the prophets of God; we (Gentiles) had the false humanistic priests of the World.

11:22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. The Gentile believer must take a sharp look at the goodness and severity of God.

1. The severity of God is seen in the "*spiritual fall of Israel*." The word "*severity*" means abrupt, sharp, rough, cut off.
 - a. The Jews had committed the very sins the Gentiles are being warned about in this passage.
 - b. They had developed an attitude of arrogance and boasting toward other people, refusing to carry the Word of God to them.
 - c. They had felt high-minded and complacent, feeling safe and secure; thinking themselves to be more acceptable to God than other people.
 - d. In addition, the Jews had rejected God's prophets down through the centuries until they eventually killed God's very own Son. In one brief word, their sin was unbelief. As a result, the judgment and severity of God fell upon them.
2. The goodness of God is seen in the grafting in acceptance of the Gentiles by God. The word "*continue*" means to remain, be steadfast, abide, preserve, endure. The idea is both position and relationship. It is a picture of a person who is remaining and abiding in the house of God's goodness.

11:23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. The Gentile believer must know that Israel's restoration is a probable event.

1. The restoration of Israel is conditional. Note the word "**if**"-- "*if they abide not still in unbelief*." No person comes to God unless he believes in His Son Jesus Christ.
2. God is able to graft the Jews back into the olive tree. Two things are meant by this.
 - a. God is able because of His enormous love. God will accept any person who approaches Him through His Son Jesus Christ.
 - b. God is able because of His enormous knowledge and power.

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

11:24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?—

3. The grafting in the natural branches (the Jews) is much more likely than the calling of the Gentiles was. In the words "*much more*", Paul is confident that God is not only able, but God is willing to graft the Jews back into the olive tree. Paul proclaims that the Jews will turn to Christ and be restored into a right relationship with God. If He was able to graft a wild branch into the tree, how much more can He graft the natural branch?

SUMMARY:

Paul presents the question of whether Israel had stumbled to utter ruin. Then he qualifies the answer to that question with God forbid. But through their fall salvation came to the Gentiles. It opened the door for others to come to Christ, and thereby, it could provoke them to jealousy. So, if their stumble means riches for the world and their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more shall their restoration; how much greater a blessing the world will share when the Jews finally accept Christ (**11:11-12**).

Paul speaks to the Gentiles being God's primary minister to the Gentiles honoring his office by magnifying it by any means that he may provoke those of his flesh to jealousy to save some of them (Jews). If the Jews' rejection of Christ meant that they had to be cast aside to bring about the reconciliation of the world, what will their restoration; their being received back be? It would be that they were dead and now they live. So, Paul concluded that if the firstfruit is holy, then the lump is holy. And if the root is holy the branches are also holy. But, if some of the branches are broken off, and the Gentiles, a wild olive tree, was grafted in among the holy branches, and became with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against those branches that have been broken off. The Gentile believer has no right to elevate himself over the Jews. Every Gentile believer owes a debt to the Jewish people. The Gentiles are not holding up the root, but the root is holding them up. And if Gentiles are going around saying that the branches were broken off so that they might be grafted in, well, don't get so haughty, but stand in faith, for the Jews had unbelief and were broken off. If God spared not those branches, He won't spare the Gentile branches either. God is both kind and severe. Severity had fallen on those (branches; a portion of Jews) who fell and did not believe, but goodness had fallen on the Gentiles. Only, if they continue in His goodness, otherwise they would in turn be cut off. And then again, those who will leave their unbelief, though broken off, God is still able to graft them in again. Finally, since the Gentiles wild by nature were cut out of the olive tree and were grafted into the good olive tree, how much more shall God be ready to graft the Jews back in again into their own olive tree (**11:13-24**).