

The Book of Romans
11:11-24
04/10/2019 Wednesday PM

Introduction

- In **vv.1-10** last week, we seen where God promised that there would be a remnant of Jews that would be saved.
- Paul was reassuring the Jews that God had not rejected them, but in fact was working all things for their good!
- We now turn to Paul teaching about God’s mercy to the gentiles and explaining how the gentiles are now “children of the promise.”

Romans 11:11-24

¹¹Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. ¹²But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring! ¹³I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry ¹⁴in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. ¹⁵For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? ¹⁶If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches. ¹⁷If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, ¹⁸do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." ²⁰Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. ²¹For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either. ²²Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. ²³And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!

- **V.11** – In this verse Paul returns to his rhetorical questions, “Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery?”
- This is asking if the Jews, who stumbled, did so to the point that they were beyond God’s help?
- Paul answers this emphatically with “Not at all!”
- What has taken place is that “because of their transgressions, salvation has come to the Gentiles...” Why? “To make Israel envious.
- Paul and Barnabas had to come to this sad conclusion after trying to preach to the Jews in their synagogues in **Acts 13:46**, “Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles.”
- This salvation to the Gentiles serves a purpose, “to make Israel envious.”
- Israel had lost sight of the reason for their election as a nation; God had told Abraham in **Genesis 12:3**, “All people on earth will be blessed through you.”
- Instead of accepting Jesus as Messiah and Savior and then taking that good news to all peoples on earth, the Jews were hardened for a time while God got the Good News out in other ways.
- This was God’s plan all along, that the blessings offered to the Gentiles would spur the Jews to faith.
- **V.12** – Here Paul says “if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring!”
- The Jew’s rejection of Jesus meant that the gospel was given to the rest of the world and that included Gentiles.
- Paul is simply pointing out that if the Jew’s rejection lead to blessings, how much more would their acceptance and restoration bring?
- **Vv.13-14** – Paul states clearly here that he is speaking directly to the Gentiles in his audience. He wants them to pay close attention to what he is about to say.
- Paul was uniquely commissioned by God to go to the Gentiles. (**Acts 9:15; Galatians 2:3-10**)
- Paul thought a lot of his “ministry” and specific calling of God to the Gentiles because he had the hope that he would be able to make the Jew’s envious of the Gentile’s blessing and lead some to salvation.
- Even though Paul was the Apostles to the Gentiles, the whole point was to reach the Jews still.

- **V. 15** – “For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?”
- At first glance, this verse may seem to contradict **v. 1** of this chapter.
- However, in **v.1** the word “rejected” is the Greek word *apostato*, which means “putting away.” Here in **v.15** the word “rejection” is the Greek word *apobolei*, which means “casting away or setting aside.”
- Our English translations use the same word, however Paul did not and the idea he had in mind was different.
- God had not “put away” the Jews, but he had “set them aside” for a moment while salvation was offered to the Gentiles. This is the time they were “hardened” as spoken about earlier. However, this is only temporary.
- Again, he restates how their acceptance of Christ will mean “life” to them and blessing for others too.
- **V.16** – “If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches.” Paul is advocating for the Jews in these verses and he wants the Gentiles to respect the Jews.
- He gives two illustrations here about the Jews being “holy”. First the dough vs cake and then the root vs branches.
- The Gentiles must not think too highly of themselves because we have come “out of” the whole.
- **V. 17-18** - ¹⁷If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, ¹⁸do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you.
- God did not tear down the entire tree, but some of the *branches* were broken off because of sin and unbelief.
- These *branches* are Jews who failed to respond in faith to God’s mercy.
- The Gentiles were “grafted in.” Grafting entails inserting a bud or shoot of one plant into a slit in the stem or trunk of another plant. The shoot shares in the nourishment from the main stem or trunk and grows.
- Paul was using this analogy to humble the Gentiles and ensure that they remembered that their blessings were because of the Jews and that they should not boast. They are supported by the root, which is the Jews.
- **Vv.19-20** – ¹⁹You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.” ²⁰Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid.”
- Here again Paul is anticipating the arguments from the audience that would read his letter.
- He understood that the Gentiles would bring up that the Jews were “broken off” so that they could be grafted in. However, Paul reminds them that the Jews were broken off by unbelief yet they stand by faith. He says, be afraid.
- **V.21** – “For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.” The reason they should be afraid is that if God “broke off” the Jews for their unbelief, how much more harshly would he treat the Gentiles?
- **V.22** - “Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.”
- This was a clear message to the Gentiles that they should not be arrogant and take their position for granted either.
- Gentiles do not hold an automatic seat in Heaven no more than the Jews did. They too must “continue in his kindness. Otherwise, [they] also will be cut off.”
- **V.23** - “And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.”
- Paul turns back to the Jews here and says they still have a change if they will stop persisting in unbelief.
- God will graft them in again.
- **V. 24** – “After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!”
- If wild olive shoots can be grafted into a cultivated olive tree, certainly the natural branches can be grafted back into root stock of the cultivated tree.
- We become part of God’s “tree” by faith; we forfeit any potential relationship with God by unbelief.
- Gentiles are orphans graciously adopted into God’s family.
- A wayward Jew who discovers the faith of Abraham is coming home.

Next Week’s Study

Romans 11:25-36