



World Christian Fellowship

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Romans 105

Warning to Anti-Semitism.

Romans 11:16-24

Romans 11:16-25, *For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. ¹⁷And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, ¹⁸do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.*

¹⁹*You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."* ²⁰*Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. ²¹For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. ²²Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. ²³And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much*

more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? ²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

There is no better proof of the faithfulness of God than the redemptive history of Israel. No single thing more demonstrates God's faithfulness to His promise than His unfailing love for the nation Israel!

A nation which in fact did everything to negate those promises, everything to violate that love. Still God is true to His promise and true to His love, unchangingly and unwaveringly.

In spite of their sin, rejection, and unbelief, there is still a place for the nation Israel in the plan of God.

That is the reality of **Romans chapters 9, 10 and 11.**

That is the message that Paul is communicating in this great section of the epistle.

An epistle on salvation, to demonstrate how faithful God is to His promise.

- ✓ If God promises you salvation, He will grant it.
- ✓ If God promises you redemption, He will give it.

Israel is a classic illustration.

Some might think that because Israel has as a nation currently rejected Jesus Christ and His gospel of salvation by grace through faith that they are forever set aside and that God will have nothing more to do with them.

For God has promised to save Israel, He has promised to bring Israel to blessing and He will keep His promise.

Paul said, "Yes, Israel is set aside." They are set aside by the sovereign plan of God, **chapter 9**, "and because of their unbelief," **chapter 10**.

Has God cancelled His promises to Israel?

"No" is the answer.

Chapter 11 can be divided three ways to understand better.

- 1. Partial V 1-10**
- 2. Temporary V 11-25**
- 3. Purposeful V 26-36**

Israel will be restored,
Israel will receive fully the promises.

1. Only partial.

Not all Jews are set aside.

Paul gives us three indications that the setting aside of Israel is only partial.

- a) The writer.**
- b) The remnant.**
- c) The revelation.**

2. Temporary

- a) Purpose,
- b) Forewarning,
- c) Promise.
- a) Purpose**

i. Gentile salvation.

V 11, *I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.*

God even overruled the Jewish unbelief.

ii. Jewish jealousy.

"To provoke the Jews to jealousy."

When the Jews stumbled the purpose in God allowing them to stumble was not to destroy them forever, but to bring about Gentile salvation, which would in turn provoke them to jealousy that they too might be saved.

iii. World blessing.

V 12, *Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!*

If a negative can produce such results, what can a positive produce?

Paul says they did not stumble that they should permanently be destroyed, they stumbled for three reasons,

- Gentile salvation which provokes,
- Jewish jealousy and
- brings world blessing.

b) Forewarning.

There has been a danger throughout human history of anti-Semitism, and it has found its way into the church.

It is the underlying attitude that has spawned the British Israelite cult.

The Anglo-Saxon race are the lost ten tribes of Israel and all God's blessings are for us and the Jew is an outcast person, to be despised. The roots of anti-Semitic British Israelism.

It might be easy for Gentiles to look down on Jews because they rejected the Messiah. Because they crucified the Saviour.

In this passage we are warned against that.

V 16, *For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.*

There are two analogies in this verse.

- Portion of dough and lump
- Root and branches.

If the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy.

Quoted from the Old Testament book of Numbers.

Number 15:17-21, *Again the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,¹⁸ “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land to which I bring you,¹⁹ then it will be, when you eat of the bread of the land, that you shall offer up a heave offering to the Lord.²⁰ You shall offer up a cake of the first of your ground meal as a heave offering; as a heave offering of the threshing floor, so shall you offer it up.²¹ Of the first of your ground meal you shall give to the Lord a heave offering throughout your generations.*

The objective was that each time dough was prepared for baking bread among the Jewish people, a little piece of that dough was taken away. That little piece of dough was to be given to the Lord. It was taken to the temple, or it was given to the priest.

It became sustenance for the priest. But it was an offering given to the Lord. It was a first fruits.

Take a portion of a little and gave it to the Lord. God was always teaching them how that everything really belonged to Him. Everything really was consecrated to Him. Everything was set apart to Him.

When they took off a little piece of that larger lump and gave it to the priest, it was a symbolic way of saying,

- I offer all of this to the Lord.
- I want this all to be set apart unto Him.
- I want it all to be consecrated to Him and this symbolizes that desire.

All the dough then was dedicated in the act of giving a small portion.

It was a way of saying, "Thank You, I realize this is Your provision, all of it. I offer it back to You in the sense that as it nourishes my body, I offer myself to You. I want it to nourish me to do Your will and Your purpose and the things that would honour Your holy name."

Each little piece was a symbol of the dedication of the whole.

If the first fruit is set apart, and "holy" here means set apart, consecrated, devoted to God, separated, then the whole lump is consecrated.

Second analogy.

if the root is holy, so are the branches.

Same idea.

If one part of a thing is consecrated to the Lord, so are the branches. If you go out in your field and you say, "I am planting this tree and I am putting this little seedling in, as its roots go down, I dedicate it to the Lord." Then all that comes out of that is going to be dedicated to Him as well.

I put it there for Your glory, for Your honour, I want everything that comes from it to nourish me that I may serve You more fully.

So, in the dedication of the root, there is the implication that the branches belong to God as well.

When any small part is devoted to the Lord, it is emblematic that the whole is devoted to the Lord.

Essentially a principle that was very much a part of Jewish thinking.

For example, when they came and gave the first fruits of their grain to the Lord, they were saying, in effect, "This is but a representative token of the fact that I dedicate all my grain to You."

When they gave the Lord the first fruits, as it were, of their week and they came in on the Sabbath day and they say, "We want to give this day to You, we want to acknowledge that time

belongs to You and worship belongs to You," it was like consecrating all their time.

When they gave an offering of money to the Lord it was like saying, "This is but emblematic that all of that which I possess would be for Your glory."

I trust that you think that way when you give as well.

What is Paul intending by these analogies?

If one portion of the Jewish people are consecrated to the Lord, then all the rest must be also.

Who were the first fruits?

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, the fathers, the patriarchs.

Of course, here mainly in mind Abraham.

- ✓ If God set apart the first fruits, then He was setting apart the whole lump.
- ✓ If God set apart the root, who was Abraham, then He is setting apart the branches.

Jews should know very well that a part of a thing consecrated intends to say that the whole is consecrated. If God sets apart the root and God sets apart the first fruit in the case of Abraham and the fathers, it is to say that He has consecrated to Himself the whole.

The basis for believing that Israel will return to the place of consecrated service, that Israel will return to a place of salvation, that Israel will come back to a place of blessing is the fact that God consecrated the patriarchs to Himself.

God said, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" due to that consecration He has in them consecrated the whole.

If God has set apart the patriarchs as the first fruit of the root, then He has also set apart the lump and the branches. The final restoration of Israel is guaranteed by the consecrating love of God for Abraham. It is implied in God's love of Abraham and His setting Abraham apart as a covenant progenitor.

Isaiah 51:1-2, *"Listen to Me, you who follow after righteousness, You who seek the Lord: Look to the rock from which you were hewn, And to the hole of the pit from which you were dug. ²Look to Abraham your father, And to Sarah who bore you; For I called him alone, And blessed him and increased him."*

What he is saying is, look back to the rock that established relationship between God and Abraham.

That is the basis of the future restoration of the people of Israel. They were consecrated in the consecration of Abraham.

If there is to be no future for the nation Israel, then what Paul is saying here is just not true. But it is true and there is a place for Israel.

Paul continues with that figure of a tree.

V 17, *And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree,*

Paul introduces into his little analogy about the root and the branches a grafting process.

It was customary in Palestine to give new life to an old olive tree when it ceased to bear fruit. Olive trees in Palestine get very old. They go a long, long time.

When you cut an olive tree to make a little olive wood statue, if you do it right you allow 40 years of that wood to sit before you use it. Until all the fluids and oils that are in it finally are drained out so that it is dry and proper. It won't crack in the future. Those trees live a long time. But sometimes when they got very old, they were not as productive.

They would cut off the unproductive old branches and in the process of grafting, even as people do today.

They would graft in a scion, or a shoot from a wild olive tree that would be very productive. The strength of those old roots and mingled with the strength of that new life at the branch would create a new kind of productivity. The analogy is rational.

The trunk of special relationship to the living God.

The branches are Israel.

Jeremiah 11:16-17, *The Lord called your name, Green Olive Tree, Lovely and of Good Fruit. With the noise of a great tumult He has kindled fire on it, And its branches are broken.* ¹⁷ *“For the Lord of hosts, who planted you, has pronounced doom against you for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke Me to anger in offering incense to Baal.”*

Hosea 14:6, *His branches shall spread; His beauty shall be like an olive tree, And his fragrance like Lebanon.*

Israel was the original set of branches on the trunk of covenant blessing. But Israel in unbelief became unproductive and so God came along and cut the branches off.

Grafted the wild olive of Gentiles.

V 17, *And if some of the branches were broken off,*
Not all of them!

Why?

Because there has always been a remnant.

Not all the branches were at any time broken off. Some of them remained. They were the remnant who produced fruit.

But some had to be broken off. In grafting that was always true because the branch that was unproductive would still tend to sap some of the strength and it would crowd the tree so that air and sunlight couldn't penetrate the grafted branch, which needed all the air and sunlight it could get.

So, they would cut off the unproductive branches and then graft in the wild olive. That is how we have been grafted in.

We have come to be a people of blessing. We are the spiritual children of Abraham. We have entered into the blessing of Abraham because we have become spiritual children of Abraham. Covenant blessing that flowed through Abraham has flowed to us, as it were, because of the grafting on.

Matthew 22:9-10, *Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.'* ¹⁰ *So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.*

Matthew 21:43, *“Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.*

The grafting in of the church, the grafting in of the Gentiles.

V18, *do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.*

Paul is saying how could you boast against the branches that were cut off?

How ridiculous?

You don't carry the root, the root carries you.

You are not the source of your own blessedness.

You can't say that the Jews were sent out and they were cut out and we were brought in because we are so blessed in and of ourselves. Not so.

You are blessed by being connected to an Abrahamic root.

You are blessed by becoming people of an Abrahamic covenant through spiritual heritage.

If we Gentiles have any blessing from God, it is because we are blessed through faithful Abraham.

We are blessed, to put it in the terms of Genesis 9, in the tents of Shem. We are blessed because we have been grafted into the stock of Semitic blessing.

Salvation is of the Jews.

John 4:22, *You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.*

We draw all our fatness. We partake all the blessing because we are grafted into the covenant of salvation that God made with Abraham.

So, there is no reason to boast as if we are the root. We aren't. We have just been grafted onto a root of blessedness by the grace of God.

Galatians 3:6-9, *just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."⁷ Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. ⁸ And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."⁹ So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.*

God said to Abraham, "Through you is going to come blessing."

Why?

Because through his loins came the Messiah.

Through the people from the loins of Abraham came the Scriptures.

We are attached to the trunk of Abraham that we experience blessedness.

Galatians 3:13-14, *Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"),¹⁴ that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

It's the blessing of Abraham.

God said to Abraham, "I am going to redeem all the nations through you. I am going to bring salvation through you."

Only as we enter the tent of Abraham, who wrote the Scripture, and the Messiah Himself, are we blessed.

How ridiculous would it be to boast against the branches that were cut off as if we are the source of our own blessing.

We owe our blessedness to the covenant God made with Abraham.

V 19, *You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."*

If I can't boast that I am the root, at least I can say I am a better branch than the one that was there.

Paul recognizes there will be a fight to maintain an anti-Semitic attitude, an anti-Jew feeling.

Somebody may be tempted to say that after all we are better than apostate Jews.

I will boast over the branches if I can't say that I am the source of my own blessedness. Surely, I am superior to them. Attitude towards the Jews are to be looked down upon.

In the past when even Jews became Christians, Gentile congregations were very reluctant to allow them to become a part.

We forget that there has always been a remnant of truth. That the branches haven't been broken off in all cases. But even the ones that have been broken off, we can't boast against them.

V 20, *Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.*

- The issue isn't who is better and who is worse.
- The issue isn't Gentiles are superior to Jews,
- The issue isn't racial,
- The issue isn't ethnic,
- The issue isn't the superiority intellectually or any other thing,

The issue is about Faith.

They didn't believe, you believe, that's all.

Because of unbelief.

Faith is the only issue.

Romans 9:30-32, *What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith;³¹ but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.³² Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.*

Why did they not attain righteousness?

Because they sought it not by faith but by works.

Paul has been making clear ever since the beginning of the epistle to Romans that salvation is by faith.

Do not be haughty, but fear.

Don't think high about yourself.

Don't have lofty thoughts about your superiority.

The only difference between you and an apostate Jew is he didn't believe, and you did believe. That's the only difference.

You are no more or less worthy in and of yourself of salvation. It's just that they didn't believe, and you did. That too by the grace of God!

V 18, we don't boast as if we are the source of our own blessedness.

V 19, we certainly don't boast because we are better than the branches that got cut off.

V20, the only issue is believing and not believing.

So, don't be proud but be afraid, or fearful.

A healthy fear is a lot better than pride. Pride always comes before a fall.

1 Corinthians 10:12, *Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*

Fear what?

V 21, *For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either*

If the people who were the people of the covenant, who came out of the loins of Abraham, who were natural to the trunk of blessing, if God didn't spare that highly privileged and beloved people.

If God didn't spare them in their unbelief, He won't spare Gentiles in their unbelief either.

So instead of being boastful and proud that we have been grafted in as over against apostate Jews who have been cut off, we ought to be afraid. Because Israel's unique privileges provided no protection for them against their unbelief.

Then certainly our lack of such privilege will provide no protection for us either.

Ephesians 2:11-13, *Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth*

of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

We are a no people.

We are strangers to the covenants of God.

We are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.

We have no hope,

We are without God in the world,

We are far off.

We have become a people by grace, but if God acted the way He did against His own natural branches, then if we as a church, enter into unbelief, He will cut the church off just as fast as He cut Israel off.

Will that happen?

It will happen.

Because of a rejection of the truth of Scripture,

Because of the attacks on the deity of Jesus Christ which go on in seminaries and institutions across the world.

Many churches there is a remnant. There are true Gentiles.

But the day is fast coming when the Lord is going to cut off the Gentiles just like He cut off the natural branches.

Revelation 2:15-16, *Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. ¹⁶ Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.*

Jesus says that I will come against that church, and I will cut those branches off.

He will cut you off from the place of blessing.

He will cut you off from the place of usefulness.

Revelation 3:16, *So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.*

The Lord is going to destroy that false, unbelieving church.

The destruction of it is given in **Revelation 17th Chapter**.

There that church is called the mystery Babylon, the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. That abominable harlot, prostitute, unbelieving church is going to be absolutely destroyed. In fact, it is destroyed by the beast.

Revelation 17:16, *And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire.*

The church now the recipient of the blessing of God, is the church safe?

No.

If Israel was cut off for unbelief, we will be cut off for unbelief. There will be left there the remnant of believing Gentiles, just as there is left there the remnant of believing Jews.

The church has no invulnerability.

He will damn the church.

He will damn the unbelieving, the apostate church just as He damned an apostate Israel.

V 22, Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

Fell **pipt**, never to get up again. Those who fell never to rise, those apostate unbelievers, severity. Strong word.

It means to cut right off, to cut short.

It's a very severe act as if something is going along and suddenly, cut off instantly.

The word is **apotomia**, to cut off shortly.

To be in the place of blessing we must believe.

When Israel ceased believing, they were cut off and only the remnant remained. It doesn't mean they lost their salvation. The trunk of blessing is just that. The nation as a whole was blessed.

God blessed that nation. Some of the people who were even unbelieving in that nation were blessed because He blessed the whole nation.

There are people in the church of Jesus Christ today, who are blessed by just being a part of this association, even though they don't believe.

But the time is going to come when that apostate church will be cut off and there will be no more blessedness. The only thing that's going to be left is going to be the remnant of true believers.

Christianity is going to go just like Judaism did.
That's the promise of Scripture.

We have the same sins in the church, self-centeredness, pride, idolatry, adultery, unbelief, all of it. Much of the visible church today is apostate and headed for judgment.

So, there is no place for boasting, as if we are better than Israel. The same fate awaits the apostate church that awaited apostate Israel.

Gentiles are going to get the same thing Jews got. The only people who maintain their place in the trunk of blessing are the faithful Jew and Gentile, the physical and the spiritual seed of Abraham.

So, the blindness of Israel is only temporary, and it has a definite purpose and a definite warning.

c) Promise.

V 23, *And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.*

If they will believe, they will be grafted in.

If they will abide not in unbelief, if they will come to faith.

Will they?

Zechariah says they will.

Zechariah 12:10, *“And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will*

mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

The day is coming, I believe it's in the tribulation time, when they will believe.

In the tribulation the apostate church will be cut off and Israel will be grafted back in, and they will again become the people of blessing.

The destiny of Israel can be reversed.

God is able to do it.

V 24, *For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?*

A probable.

It's not only possible, but also probable.

If we wild olive branches got grafted in, how much more is it probable that the original branches should be grafted in?

Not only that, but it's also promised.

V 25, *For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.*

It is going to come when the fullness of the Gentiles has arrived, then comes the grafting in of Israel.

What is the fullness of the Gentiles?

That's the church.

When God has all His redeemed in the church gathered together to Himself in the rapture. Destroy the apostate church on earth and graft back Israel in the tribulation and then comes the millennial kingdom and the world blessing.

So, it is possible, probable, and promised.

V 26, *"So all Israel shall be saved."*

The issue is one simple thing.

Faith.

Jew or Gentile, if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are grafted into the place of blessing, where the life of God flows through and produces fruit.

Those Jew and Gentile, along with all the others of all the ages who have come to faith in God, who have embraced the Saviour, are grafted in, be they natural branches or unnatural, they are in the place of blessing.

Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?