

3. Consider the kindness and sternness of God. (22-24)

...sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. (22)

And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 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! (23-24)

“a cultivated olive tree”—Abraham’s descendants

- Jews were “cut out”—because of unbelief
- Gentiles—who believe—were “grafted in”
- Jews —who believe—will be “grafted in again”

If God has made Gentiles true “children of Abraham”
—how much more can He bring Jews into “their own tree”?

Important realities for us...

We can trust that God has a plan for the world (Jew and Gentile)—and His promises will never fail.

God is “stern”—yet is also “kind” to give grace and bless faith.

We (who did not deserve to be “grafted in”) must be certain to “stand by faith” and “continue in His kindness.”

Did God Reject His People?

Romans 11:1-24

Matthew 21:33-46

God has not rejected Israel completely. (11:1-10)

Question: “Did God reject His people?”

Answer:

1. Paul himself is an example of God’s faithfulness to His promises. (1)

“I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham...” (1)

2. God “foreknew” His people—so He will always “reserve” faithful followers for Himself. (2-4)

“God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew.” (4)

Illustration of Elijah... (1 Kings 19:1-18)

There is now a “remnant” of Jews who have faith—among a multitude who do not believe God.

3. Though many are “hardened” in their rejection of God, there is now a “remnant chosen by grace.” (5-10)

So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace. (5-6)

What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened... (7-10)

God has not rejected Israel finally. (11-24)

Question: “Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery?”

Answer:

1. The Jewish “stumbling” (over Jesus) is not “beyond recovery.” (11-12)

Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. (11)

But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring! (12)

2. The Jewish rejection has opened the way to the nations; but God still receives Jewish believers. (13-16)

I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? 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. (13-16)

Paul warns Gentiles not to “boast” over unbelieving Jews—and to be certain to “continue in His kindness.” (17-21)

If 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, do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. (17-18)

You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.” Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either. (19-21)