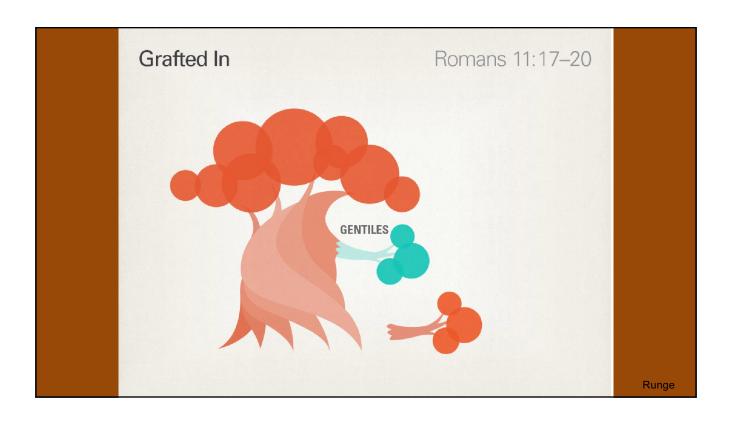




Verse 19- You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in."

Notice that the entire tree wasn't chopped down or all the branches broken off. Only some. Jesus has not forsaken Israel and replaced it with the Church. There is always a faithful remnant.

Israel's unbelief began with them thinking they were uniquely special and better than Gentiles. Paul warns Gentiles not to fall into the trap of thinking they're better than Jews because the gospel is available to them.



Verse 20- Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear;

The reason that many Jews were broken (pruned) from the tree is that they rejected Jesus as the Messiah. Many still do today.

The only measure of being part of this symbolic tree is faith in Jesus. The Gentiles shouldn't be conceited (lit. "high-minded") but humble (low in spirit).

The opposite of self-conceit is fear of God (reverence).

Verse 21- for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either.

Paul continues the illustration of the Olive Tree of Faith. God chose Abraham and his descendants to be a light to the nations, but they became self-righteous and rejected the Messiah.

If God pruned Jews off the tree, He equally prunes Gentiles who do not believe. Ultimately, it's about faith, not ethnicity.

Chapter 11

Verse 22- See then the kindness and severity of God: to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; for otherwise you too will be cut off.

Paul is bringing his thought to a conclusion. God is equal in all His attributes. He is no more kind than He is severe (apoténo = to cut off), and He always acts in the correct way. In other words, God can be kind or can cut off justly.

In the following verses, Paul is careful to note that "cutting off" should not be equated with losing our salvation. Paul is referring to Israel and Gentiles as nations.

Verse 23- And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again.

Paul is confident that unbelieving Israel will be grafted back into the Olive Tree of Faith. I believe we see them again in Revelation 12- ("a woman clothed in the sun") and Revelation 14 ("the 144,000 who had His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads").

Again, the context here is not personal salvation but fellowship with God.

Chapter 11

Verse 24- For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

If God pruned unbelieving branches from the tree, He would be able to graft them back on.

Normally, pruned branches are cast into the fire to be burned (John 15:6- If anyone does not remain in Me, he is thrown away like a branch and dries up; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.)

Verse 24- For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

Paul is referring to Israel's fellowship with God. He says it would be easier to graft part of the tree that was originally part of the tree than a wild branch from another tree.

Notice that there is only one Olive Tree of Faith. There isn't a separate tree for Jews and Gentiles.

Chapter 11

Verse 25- For I do not want you, brothers and sisters, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;

Paul reminds the reader that he is writing to fellow believers in Jesus. He doesn't want them to be "informed" (not *ignorant*- KJV) about why God hardened the hearts of the majority of Israel.

He made a way for all Gentiles to come into a saving relationship with Him. Salvation has always been available to anyone who believers, but only some individual Gentiles have been saved.

Verse 26- and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written: "The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob."

Paul is not writing that every Jew who has ever been born will be saved. That would be contrary to the message of salvation by "grace through faith" he preached throughout his ministry. Salvation comes by faith, not ethnicity.

Paul quotes Isaiah 59:20-21. "All Israel" refers to the Jews in the Tribulation who come to faith in Jesus (Revelation 7:4, 12:1-2).

Chapter 11

Verse 27- "This is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins."

Paul finishes his quotation of Isaiah 59:20-21:

"A Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those in Jacob who turn from wrongdoing," declares the LORD. "As for Me, this is My covenant with them," says the LORD: "My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring," says the LORD, "from now and forever."

Verse 27- "This is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins."

God is faithful to his covenant (promise) even when we aren't. Although the Jews hardened their hearts in unbelief, and God continued the process, there will be a return to the faith by Israel at the end of time.

Some claim "Israel" now represents the church today or all believers throughout history (Calvin). Others have erroneously supposed that the ten tribes of the north (the "lost tribes") migrated to Europe, Britain, and ultimately North America after the Assyrian captivity in 721 B.C. (British-Israelism).

Chapter 11

Verse 27- "This is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins."

Thus, all the promises of God to Israel pertain to the descendants of the Jews (Britain and America).

Verse 28- In relation to the gospel they are enemies on your account, but in relation to God's choice they are beloved on account of the fathers;

Unbelieving Jews are enemies of the gospel. Paul should know as he was once a Jew who vigorously persecuted Christians. Now, as a believer, he himself was persecuted, and according to tradition, was ultimately martyred outside the city limits of Rome by beheading.

The Jews are enemies of the gospel but beloved by God at the same time. They will eventually return to the faith of their fathers. It is important to note that they are not saved by their ancestry.

Chapter 11

Verse 29- for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

Gentiles, newly grafted into the Tree of Faith, might object to God's continued mercy on unbelieving Israel, but God is faithful even when we are not.

The spiritual gifts given at salvation belong to us forever, and the calling of God to salvation cannot be lost or taken back.

Verse 30- For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience,

Paul reminds Gentile believers of their own ethnic history. Just as the Jews now are rebelling against God now, so were the Gentiles in time past.

In verses 30–31, Paul forms a carefully constructed sentence marked by a series of correspondences between the Jews and Gentiles (Morris):

Chapter 11

Verse 30- For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience,

Verse 30 Verse 31

you they

at one time now (the first now)

were disobedient become disobedient

now (the second now)

received mercy receive mercy

their disobedience mercy to you

Verse 31- so these also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy.

Paul reminds the Gentile readers that Israel is in a season of disobedience to the gospel of Christ, just as the Gentiles had been. One day, however, the Jews will again see the mercy God is currently showing to the once disobedient Gentiles. They will believe in Christ and turn to receive mercy from God, as well.

God is making Israel jealous of His now special relationship with believing Gentiles for a purpose (Romans 11:11–14).

Chapter 11

Verse 32- For God has shut up all in disobedience, so that He may show mercy to all.

Paul is not promoting universalism, the idea that all people will be saved by God. He has made it clear that faith is the beginning of a saving relationship with the Lord.

God "shut up" salvation for the Gentiles in Romans 1:24, 26, 28, and for the Jews in 11:25.

At the end of the age, God will show mercy to both Jews and Gentiles.

Verse 33- Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

Paul is ending his discussion concerning the disobedience and ultimate return to God by both Jews and Gentiles. This will be a response from both groups based on their faith in Christ.

He breaks into a doxology (doxa = glory), a hymn of praise.

Chapter 11

Verse 33- Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

Praise God from whom all blessings flow Praise Him, all creatures here below Praise Him above the Heavenly host Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost Amen

Verse 33- Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

Paul begins this section of Scripture in sorrow (9:1) and ends in an exuberating song (11:33-36)!

His doxology is a nine-line poem or hymn. It is framed by a three-member opening line- the riches, wisdom, knowledge of God, and by a three-member concluding line- from him, through him, to him.

Chapter 11

Verse 34- For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor?

Paul continues his hymn of praise by asking two questions taken from Isaiah 40:13 to illustrate just how little God needs from us:

Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, Or as His counselor has informed Him?

Who has known the Lord's mind? The answer is so obvious that Paul does not bother to respond. Nobody has ever known God's mind.

Verse 34- For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor?

The second question is as nonsensical as the first. Who has been God's counselor? Who has God gone to for counseling?

Paul wants his readers to contemplate the difference between His vast mind and our own. He is so far above us our only response should be to believe and trust Him.

Chapter 11

Verse 35- Or who has first given to Him, that it would be paid back to him?

The third and final question Paul asks comes from Job 41:11:

Who has been first to give to Me, that I should repay him? Whatever is under the entire heaven is Mine.

Who could ever give to God anything valuable enough that God would be in their debt?

Put simply, God does not need us, but we need Him.

Verse 36- For from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Paul takes his readers back to Genesis as he uses three prepositions to describe God- "for," "through," and "to."

First, there was nothing before God who has always been. He created all there is for His own purposes.

Second, all things are through God. This means that He holds them together and sustains everything that is. He actively keeps the universe running.

Chapter 11

Verse 36- For from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Third, all things are to Him. Everything that exists has been made for God's purposes, and they reflect glory back to Him. Nothing exists that doesn't serve His great plan and purpose for all things.

Paul finishes his hymn with a statement of worship. Glory will flow to God forever, and Paul affirms that it is exactly as it should be. He ends this section of his letter with a formal "amen"- "let it be so."

