

## THE EPISTLES TO THE ROMANS

### ROMANS 9:1-11:36, VINDICATION OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

#### INTRODUCTION

##### A. Outline of Romans

1. Introduction (1:1-17)
2. The need for God's righteousness (1:18-3:20)
3. Justification: the position of righteousness from God (3:21-5:21)
4. Sanctification: from position to practice (6:1-8:39)
5. Vindication of God's Righteousness (9:1-11:36)
  - a. Election by God (9:1-18)
  - b. Justice of God (9:19-33)
  - c. Israel and the righteousness of God (10:1-21)
  - d. The restoration of Israel (11:1-36)
    - 1) Her rejection is not total (11:1-10)
    - 2) Her rejection is not final (11:11-24)
    - 3) Assurance of her restoration (11:25-32)
    - 4) Praise for God's faithfulness to Israel (11:33-36)

##### B. Introductory notes on Romans 11

1. John Stott, *There is still an Israelite remnant in the present, and there is going to be an Israelite recovery in the future, which will itself lead to blessing for the whole world.*
2. William Barclay, *Israel became insensitive, the nation with the callus on its heart; the Gentiles came by faith and trust into the love of God; but a day will come when the love of God will act like a solvent, even on the callus of the heart, and both Gentiles and Jews will be gathered in. It is Paul's conviction that nothing in the end can defeat the love of God.*

### ROMANS 11: 1-36, THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

#### ROMANS 11:11-24, ISRAEL'S REJECTION IS NOT FINAL

##### A. Paul asks and answers his question concerning the condition of Israel (11-16)

1. Paul's question and answer (11a), *So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means!*
  - a. Paul asks if Israel's fall is permanent.
    - 1) The nation had *stumbled*, meaning *to make a mistake, go astray, to sin.*
      - a) Romans 9:32b-33, *They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."*
      - b) Romans 11:9, *And David says, "Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them;*
      - c) Israel stumbled because of its rejection of Jesus as Messiah.
    - 2) Was their fall irreversible?
      - a) *Fall means to be completely ruined, fall from a state of grace.*
      - b) Paul asks if their stumbling would be a final fall from grace.
      - c) John Witmer, *...the tense of the verb "fell" and its contrast with the verb translated "stumble" imply the idea of falling beyond recovery.*
  - b. Paul answers his question with an emphatic no.
    - 1) He says, *by not means*, which is the 10<sup>th</sup> and last time Paul used the phrase in Romans.
    - 2) He will follow this response with reasons why their fall is not final.

2. Reasons why Israel's fall is not final (11b-12), ***Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!***
  - a. Their corporate sin of rejecting Jesus as Messiah brought salvation to Gentiles.
    - 1) From the Gospels
      - a) Matthew 21:43, *Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits.*
      - b) John 10:16, *And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.*
    - 2) From Paul's ministry
      - a) Acts 13:46, *And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.*
      - b) Acts 18:6, *And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."*
    - 3) Thomas Constable, *God now deals with Gentiles on the same basis as Jews regarding their salvation because Israel as a whole rejected Jesus Christ.*
    - 4) Grant Osborne, *The Jews out of "jealousy" placed him under the ban and cast him out of their synagogues, resulting in his turning to the Gentiles..the Great Commission was fulfilled partly as a result of Jewish opposition.*
  - b. Salvation for Gentiles would make Israel jealous and turn back to God.
    - 1) Deuteronomy 32:21, *They have made me jealous with what is no god; they have provoked me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are no people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.*
    - 2) Acts 13:45, *But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him.*
    - 3) Thomas Constable, *One reason God chose to do this was to make Israel jealous of the Gentiles as the recipients of God's blessings so Israel would turn back to God.*
    - 4) C. E. B. Cranfield, *When Israel, the people whom God has made peculiarly His own, His special possession, see others the recipients of the mercy and goodness of their God, they will begin to understand what they are missing and to desire that salvation which they have rejected.*
    - 5) John Stott, *...provoked to envy, they will be led to conversion.*
  - c. The return of Israel will be of even greater blessing to the world.
    - 1) Paul puts together two conditional clauses in verse 12 which I believe are parallel statements used to emphasize his point concerning Israel.
      - a) *Trespass* and *failure* emphasize the same thing, the nation of Israel's rejection of Jesus as Messiah.
      - b) *World* and *Gentiles* emphasize the same group, non-Jews.
      - c) *Riches* means *a wealth or abundance of something*. Here, Paul is referring to the riches mentioned in verse 11, salvation, obtaining the righteousness of God by placing faith in Christ alone.
    - 2) Paul's point concerns the result of the national repentance of Israel.
      - a) *full inclusion*
        - 1] The word means *fullness, that which is brought to completion.*
        - 2] Note Romans 11:25, *Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.*
      - b) The nation of Israel will be restored and fulfill God's plans for His people.
        - 1] Douglas Moo, *...the present 'defeat' of Israel, in which Israel is numerically reduced to a small remnant, will be reversed by the addition of far greater numbers of true believers: this will be Israel's destined 'fullness.'*
        - 2] Warren Wiersbe, *Today, Israel is fallen spiritually, but when Christ returns, the nation will rise again. Today, Israel is cast away from God, but one day they shall be received again. God will never break His covenant with His people, and He has promised to restore them.*

- 3) The result of Israel's restoration will be *much more* blessing for the world.
  - a) Israel's fulfilling God's purposes will be of great blessing.
  - b) Thomas Constable, *How much more blessing will come to the world when Israel turns back to God than is coming to the world now while she is in rebellion against God!*
  - c) John Witmer, *...even greater riches will be enjoyed by Gentiles after the conversion of Israel at the Lord's return...*
  - d) John Stott, *As for the Gentiles, the blessing they have received through Israel's fall is called salvation or riches; but the blessing which they will receive through Israel's fulness is called much greater riches. What this will be we are not told; Paul leaves us, at least at the moment, to guess.*
  - e) If I were to guess, I would consider the *much more* to include all that is encompassed in eschatology (future): the rapture of the Church, the Millennial Kingdom, new heaven and new earth, and *much more!*
  
3. Paul addresses Roman Christians concerning the importance of the nation of Israel (13-16)
  - a. He uses his position as an apostle to the Gentiles to draw Jews to faith in Christ alone (13-14), ***Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them.***
    - 1) Paul gives Gentiles insight into his ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles.
      - a) Acts 9:15, *But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.*
      - b) C. E. B. Cranfield, *...Paul recollects at this point that what he has just said in vv. 11–12 ought specially to be pondered by Gentile Christians...It would be natural for them to suppose that in turning to the Gentiles Paul was turning his back upon the unbelieving Jews. But quite the contrary is true: his very labours as apostle of the Gentiles have an Israel-ward significance—of good for Israel.*
      - c) He desires to *magnify* his ministry not only for the sake of Gentiles but for Jews, as well.
      - d) James Daane, *The Gentiles are not saved merely for their own sake, but for the sake of God's election of Israel.*
    - 2) Paul magnifies his ministry to Gentiles in order to make Jews jealous so that some will come to faith.
      - a) The salvation of Gentiles would make Israel jealous and turn back to God.
        - 1] Romans 11:11, *So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous.*
        - 2] John Stott, *He knows that when Israel sees the blessings of salvation being enjoyed by believing Gentiles (their reconciliation to God and to each other, their forgiveness, their love, joy and peace through the Spirit), they will covet these blessings for themselves and, it is implied, will repent and believe in Jesus in order to secure them. Thus provoked to envy, they will be led to conversion.*
        - 3] Warren Wiersbe, *If an unsaved Jew visited the average church service, would he be provoked to jealousy and wish he had what we have—or would he just be provoked?*
      - b) *Magnify*
        - 1] It means to *glorify*.
        - 2] He wanted glory and honor to come to his ministry for the purpose of convicting Jews.
        - 3] C. E. B. Cranfield, *...he honours and reverences his ministry to the Gentiles, and so fulfils it with all his might and devotion, in the hope—though we are not to infer that this is the only motive of his labours—that its success may provoke the Jews to jealousy and so bring about the conversion of some of them.*
        - 4] Johannes Munck, *However strange it may sound, the way to salvation of Israel is by the mission to the Gentiles.*
      - c) *save some of them*
        - 1] Romans 10:1, *Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.*
        - 2] *Some* refers to those who are saved through jealousy of Paul's ministry.
          - a] 1 Corinthians 9:22, *To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.*
          - b] It is not a statement by Paul as to the number of Jews whose hearts will be opened by God to the Gospel.
          - c] Douglas Moo, *When Paul says "that I might save some of them," he means that it would be through his preaching that God would bring salvation.*

- b. He states the importance of Jewish repentance to the world (15), ***For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?***
- 1) Jewish rejection of the Gospel meant reconciliation for Gentiles who placed faith in Christ alone.
    - a) Acts 28:28, *Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen.*
    - b) John Witmer, *When a person comes to Christ by faith God's work of reconciliation is appropriated to him and he then has fellowship with God and the spiritual enmity is removed.*
    - c) Douglas Moo, *As in v. 12, "world" refers to the Gentiles, and Paul's point is that Israel's rejection has made it possible for Gentiles, as a group, to experience Christ's reconciling work.*
  - 2) The Jews' return to God through Christ means *life from the dead*.
    - a) Paul was probably thinking of Ezekiel 37:11-14, *Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.' Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD."*
    - b) Douglas Moo, *... if something negative like Israel's rejection means that Gentiles are being reconciled to God, how much greater must be the result of something positive like Israel's acceptance?*
    - c) It is best to assume *life from the dead* refers to resurrection at the end of history.
      - 1] Jewish acceptance will occur at the end of the Church Age.
      - 2] Grant Osborne, *...Paul means a literal resurrection, pointing to the return of Christ and the final resurrection of the saints from the dead.*
      - 3] John Witmer, *Israel's "acceptance" of Christ is related to "the first resurrection" (Rev. 20:4-6), the resurrection of life (John 5:29, KJV). The first resurrection includes dead saints at the Rapture (1 Thes. 4:13-18), martyred Great Tribulation saints raised at Christ's return (Rev. 20:4, 5b), and believing Old Testament saints (Dan. 12:1-2). The second resurrection will include all the wicked dead to be judged at the great white throne judgment (Rev. 20:5a, 12-13).*
- c. He introduces two concepts concerning the future of Israel (16), ***If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.***
- 1) *The dough*
    - a) Dough offered as firstfruits is holy, Numbers 15:21, *Some of the first of your dough you shall give to the LORD as a contribution throughout your generations.*
    - b) The whole lump is holy, as well.
    - c) Thomas Constable, *The first piece of dough (firstfruits) describes the believing remnant in Israel now. The "lump" or "batch" refers to the whole nation. God has consecrated both groups to Himself.*
    - d) John Witmer, *With the cake presented to the Lord, the flour for the cake is taken from the ground meal, but that cake is formed and baked first and presented as a firstfruit. Since it is set apart to the Lord first, it sanctifies the whole harvest.*
    - e) Warren Wiersbe, *God accepted the founder of the nation, Abraham, and in so doing set apart his descendants as well. God also accepted the other patriarchs, Isaac and Jacob, in spite of their sins or failings. This means that God must accept the "rest of the lump"—the nation of Israel.*
  - 2) *The root and branches*
    - a) The root refers to Abraham and Jewish patriarchs, note the Abrahamic Covenant.
    - b) John Witmer, *With a tree, the root obviously comes first and contributes the nature of that type of tree to the branches that come later.*
    - c) Grant Osborne, *A plant's root determines what kind of plant it is, so a holy root always produces a holy tree.*
    - d) The branches refers to the nation of Israel which is holy to God.

- 3) Israel has a future.
  - a) John Witmer, *Paul was convinced that Israel's stumbling is temporary rather than permanent and that the nation will be restored as God's people. With two illustrations Paul showed why he believed this...what is considered first contributes its character to what is related to it.*
  - b) Douglas Moo, *...the holiness that characterized the beginnings of Israel is an indelible mark on that people, fraught with significance for her present and her future...Paul is not here asserting the salvation of every Israelite but the continuing "special" identity of the people of Israel in the eyes of the Lord.*
  - c) Paul will develop this illustration in verses 17-24 as noted by John Stott, *It seems to be this 'root' and 'branches' picture which leads Paul now to develop his allegory of the olive tree.*

B. Paul uses an olive tree to illustrate the relationship of the nation of Israel to Gentile Christians (17-24)

1. Identification of figures in the olive tree illustration.

a. *Branches*

- 1] These represent physical descendants of Abraham, note Romans 11:16b, *if the root is holy, so are the branches.*
- 2] *Broken branches* are unbelieving Jews cut off from covenant blessing and responsibility, Jeremiah 11:16-17, *The LORD once called you 'a green olive tree, beautiful with good fruit.' But with the roar of a great tempest he will set fire to it, and its branches will be consumed. The LORD of hosts, who planted you, has decreed disaster against you, because of the evil that the house of Israel and the house of Judah have done, provoking me to anger by making offerings to Baal.*

b. *Wild olive shoot*

- 1] Those who remain grafted in are believing Gentiles.
- 2] Those who are potentially cut off are unbelieving Gentiles.
- 3] 1 Corinthians 12:2, *You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led.*

c. *Root*

- 1] This represents Abraham and the patriarchs.
- 2] The *nourishing root of the olive tree* represents the privilege and opportunity of a relationship to Abraham and covenant blessings, Romans 9:4, *They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises.*
- 3] Thomas Constable, *We might add to the illustration by saying that the roots derive their nourishment from God Himself.*

2. A note concerning this illustration

- a. In horticulture, a wild shoot would never be grafted into a cultivated tree.
- b. Only cultivated shoots would be grafted into wild trees.
- c. Paul is not concerned with the norms of horticulture here. He is concerned with the working of God which defies human understanding. He is teaching the unsearchable riches of the Gospel of grace.

3. A warning to Gentile Christians concerning pride (17-21)

- a. The danger of arrogance (17-18), ***But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you.***

1) *Some*

- a) Paul emphasizes that there is a remnant in Israel despite unfaithfulness.
- b) John Stott, *There is still an Israelite remnant in the present, and there is going to be an Israelite recovery in the future, which will itself lead to blessing for the whole world.*

2) *and you*

- a) Paul speaks to Gentiles who received covenant blessings by placing faith in Christ alone.
- b) They share with Jews the *nourishing root of the olive tree*, blessings promised to Abraham which he received by faith.
- c) Important note by Thomas Constable, *They became partakers with the Jews of the blessings that come through the roots. Paul did not say that the Gentiles became part of Israel, only that they partake with Israel of the blessings of the root. This is a very important point. The olive tree is not the church in which God has united Jewish and Gentile believers in one body (Eph. 3:6).*

- 3) Instruction for Gentile Christians concerning pride
  - a) Christians must not be arrogant because God accepted them but rejected some of His chosen people.
    - 1] Grant Osborne, *The movement of the blessings is from Abraham to the Jews and then to the Gentiles. In fact, the Gentiles in the church are Abraham's offspring (4:11–13, 16–18; 9:7–8) and are dependent entirely on what they have received from him.*
    - 2] Thomas Constable, *Gentile believers might conclude that their salvation is what was responsible for the continuing existence of Israel (cf. v. 14). Really it is God's faithfulness in honoring the Abrahamic Covenant that is responsible for that.*
    - 3] Douglas Moo, *These Gentile Christians appear to have concluded that the unprecedented degree in which the doors of salvation were open to Gentiles after the coming of Christ meant the closing of those same doors to Jews. At the same time, these Gentile believers were apparently convinced that they belonged to a new people of God that had simply replaced Israel.*
    - 4] Warren Wiersbe, *The Gentiles entered into God's plan because of faith, and not because of anything good they had done.*
  - b) Paul affirms that grafted in branches do not nourish the root since the root nourishes the branches.
    - 1] Douglas Moo, *Gentile Christians who boast over Jews are demonstrating an attitude of disdain for the Jewish heritage. Yet it is that very heritage upon which the Gentile Christians themselves depend for their own spiritual standing.*
    - 2] John Witmer, *To be so blessed by God and His grace, however, is no reason to boast, which Paul warned against.*
    - 3] C. E. B. Cranfield, *No amount of boasting on the part of the branches which have been grafted in can reverse their relation to the root.*
    - 4] Warren Wiersbe, *No matter how far Israel may stray from the truth of God, the roots are still good...He will keep His promises to these patriarchs. This means that the olive tree will flourish again!*
- b. The importance of faith (19-21), ***Then you will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.***
  - 1) Gentiles were grafted in because of Jewish unbelief.
    - a. Paul affirms for the sake of argument that Gentiles gained access to Israel's covenant blessings when the nation rejected its Messiah.
    - b. John Witmer, *...the real reason the branches were broken off was Israel's unbelief and that any Gentile as a grafted-in branch stands...by faith.*
    - c. C. E. B. Cranfield, *'Branches were broken off in order that I might be grafted in'—that is how a self-complacent egotism sees the matter. And to such an egotist this half-truth seems a conclusive proof of his own superior importance and a sufficient justification for his contemptuous attitude.*
    - d. Douglas Moo, *It is the egotism of Gentile Christians who present God's manifold plan as having the salvation of themselves as its focus that Paul wishes to expose and criticize.*
  - 2) Gentiles were grafted in because of faith not self-worth.
    - a. Romans 5:2, *Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*
    - b. Thomas Constable, *...the Gentile believer who may feel superior to the unbelieving Jew needs to remember that the only reason he is where he is is because he has simply believed God. He is not there because he has done some meritorious work that would be a ground for boasting...*
    - c. C. E. B. Cranfield, *And if faith is the decisive factor, then self-complacency and feelings of superiority are out of place.*
    - d. Douglas Moo, *In response to the Jews' tendency to boast in their status and accomplishments, Paul emphasized that the gracious nature of God's dealings with human beings excluded all boasting. It is faith, and faith alone—characterized by humility and receptivity—that is the only way to establish or to maintain a relationship with God (3:27–4:5).*

- 3) Gentiles should be fearful not prideful since unbelief is the cause of spiritual ruin.
  - a. 1 Corinthians 10:12, *Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.*
  - b. Philippians 2:12, *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,*
  - c. Thomas Constable, *If he had been speaking of individual believers, we might conclude that this verse provides some basis for believing that a believer can lose his salvation. Paul's point was, if God set aside Israel temporarily because of unbelief, He could do the same with Gentiles because of boasting.*
  - d. John Witmer, *Do not be arrogant (lit., "Do not think high" of yourself; cf. 12:16) but be afraid, have a proper fear of God...If God is righteous in temporarily putting aside Israel as a whole for unbelief, He certainly could put aside the Gentiles for boasting and haughtiness.*
  - e. Douglas Moo, *A failure to continue in faith—thus a failure to display an appropriate "fear" of God—has led to judgment for many Jews. And if God so judged Jews, who had a natural connection to the tree and its sustaining root, he will surely judge those who have been grafted in as alien branches.*
  
- 4) Concerning the importance of Israel
  - a. God will keep His promises to the patriarchs.
  - b. Warren Wiersbe, *First Timothy 4 and 2 Timothy 3, along with 2 Thessalonians 2, all indicate that the professing church in the last days will depart from the faith. There is no hope for the apostate church, but there is hope for apostate Israel!...No matter how far Israel may stray from the truth of God, the roots are still good. God is still the "God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Ex. 3:6; Matt. 22:23).*
  
2. A concluding note concerning the kindness and severity of God (22-24), ***Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.***
  - a. Paul calls the reader to consider two actions of God, kindness and severity, C. E. B. Cranfield, *both of which are the expression of God's holy and faithful love.*
    - 1) Severity is for unbelieving Jews *who have fallen.*
      - a) *Severity* is used only here in the New Testament.
      - b) It comes from a word which means *to cut*, based on *justice*.
      - c) Paul possibly chose this word which reminds one of the word for *broken off* in verses 17 and 19.
    - 2) Kindness is for believing Gentiles *who continue in His kindness.*
      - a) *Kindness* may be considered the application of God's grace, based on *love.*
        - 1] Romans 2:4, *Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?*
        - 2] Ephesians 2:7, *so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*
    - b) *Continue in His kindness*
      - 1] *Continue* means *to persist, to persevere.*
      - 2] 2 Timothy 4:16, *Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.*
      - 3] Note 2 Timothy 2:13, *if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.*
      - 4] John Witmer, *If Gentiles do not continue in God's kindness, they also will be cut off. This does not suggest that a Christian can lose his salvation; it refers to Gentiles as a whole (suggested by the sing. you) turning from the gospel much as Israel as a nation had done.*
      - 5] Douglas Moo, *For the goodness of God is not simply a past act or automatic benefit on which the believer can rest secure; it is also a continuing relationship in which the believer must remain.*
      - 6] Consider the difference between relationship and fellowship.

- b. God can reverse the positions.
  - 1) Believing Gentiles who turn to disbelief will be cut off.
  - 2) Unbelieving Jews who turn to belief will be grafted in by the power of God, 2 Corinthians 3:16, *But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.*
  - 3) Thomas Constable, *Belief is what resulted in God grafting in the Gentiles (v. 17), and belief could result in Him grafting in formerly unbelieving Israel.*
  - 4) John Witmer, ... *if the unbelief which caused Israel's rejection by God is removed, God is able and will graft the people of Israel (the natural branches) back into the spiritual stock to which they belong (their own olive tree).*
  - 5) C. E. B. Cranfield, ...*we may wonder why Paul felt it necessary specially to stress the power of God here. The best explanation is perhaps that he wanted to guard against an assumption which he felt Gentile Christians would be liable to entertain, when puffed up by the presumptuous confidence he had just condemned in the preceding verses, namely, that Israel, once rejected for its disobedience, cannot ever again be established in God's covenant favour and that it has once and for all been replaced by the Church...God remains free as regards the disobedient, just as he remains free as regards the obedient.*
  - 6) Grant Osborne, *The Gentiles dare never assume they are in and Israel is out. God has brought the Gentiles into his family as part of the process of bringing Israel back to him (11:11, 14), so there is no place for pride.*
- c. Paul explains God's ability to do the easier thing since He has already done the harder.
  - 1) As already noted, horticulturists graft only cultivated shoots into wild trees, not wild shoots into cultivated trees. God is able to do anything that does not contradict His nature.
  - 2) Thomas Constable, *If God did the difficult thing, namely grafting wild branches onto cultivated stock, it should not be hard to believe that He will do the easier thing.*
  - 3) Henry Liddon, *The restoration of converted Jews to the Patriarchal communion must from the nature of the case be more natural than the conversion of the heathen.*

<b>CONCLUSION</b>
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- A. God is not done with Israel because He is our faithful God who keeps his promises.
- B. The church has taken the place of Israel concerning God's promises to the patriarchs.
- C. The righteousness of God is obtained by faith from Abraham to the last Gentile convert. There is no room for boasting by anyone since God's blessings come only by His grace.