

Romans – Chapter 11b

Summary of Chapter 11:1-16

- God had promised in the OT that He would not reject His people
- Just like in Elijah’s day, God knows those who are faithful to Him
 - Not all of ‘Israel’ is the ‘true Israel’ (See 2:28-29; 4:9-12; 9:6-8)
- Many of the Israelites were hardened due to their unbelief (Isaiah 29:10)
- Israel may have stumbled, but they haven’t fallen – they can still come to God if they respond with the obedience of faith
- Paul was sent to preach to the Gentiles
 - He hoped the Jews might see what they are missing and ‘save some’

Chapter 11b: All Israel Will Be Saved

Highlight: **All**

God the Gardener & His Olive Tree (17-24)

¹⁷ 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, ¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰ That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear.

Why should the Gentiles ‘not be arrogant’ (vs 18) and ‘not become proud, but fear’ (vs 20)?

For more on boasting, see Romans 2:17, 23; 4:2

God the Gardener & His Olive Tree (17-24)

²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. ²² 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. ²³ 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. ²⁴ 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.

The word 'if' is used three times in this passage. What are the three 'ifs'?
Rewrite in your own words:

1. If _____
Then _____
2. If _____
Then _____
3. If _____
Then _____

The Mystery (25-27)

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. ²⁶ And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written,

Isa 59:20-21 { *"The Deliverer will come from Zion,
he will banish ungodliness from Jacob";
27 "and this will be my covenant with them
when I take away their sins."*

REASONS WHY “IN THIS WAY ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED” DOESN'T MEAN A FUTURE LARGE-SCALE CONVERSION OF JEWS TO CHRIST:

1. Paul has already stated clearly multiple times that the name 'Israel' does not simply apply to ethnic Israel (see Romans 9:6-8). Paul can use the word 'Israel' to refer to two different things in one sentence (ethnic Israel and the true people of God).
2. The entire purpose of using Elijah and the remnant as an illustration (11:2-6) is to show that some of ethnic Israel will not obey, yet God is still faithful and knows the true Israel.
3. Even if there is a future large-scale conversion of Jews, it still means that the vast majority of Jews through the past 2000 years have rejected Christ and are lost. So even if suddenly all Jews turn to Christ, it is still a small proportion of total Jews through history who will be saved. Therefore, 'all Israel' will still only be a small minority and the problem remains.
4. There is no indication through the rest of the scriptures about a future, large-scale conversion of the Jews (See 1 Thess 2:14-16)
5. If 'all Israel will be saved' at some future time, there is no reason *why* future Jews would be more receptive to the gospel than they are now. Since we understand that God does not force anyone to be saved, there is no reason why the future will be different from now.
6. Jesus made it clear that many of the Jews would not be saved (Matthew 8:10-12). Paul was desperate that *some* of them *might* be saved (Rom 11:14) by believing in Christ (Rom 11:23).
7. Romans 11 is not addressing the future of ethnic Israel, but the present. This is shown by:
 - a. Paul first offers his own life/salvation as proof that God has not cast off His people (vs 2)
 - b. Paul says in verse 5, that “*at this present time* there is a remnant according to the election of grace”. Just as in Elijah’s time there was a faithful remnant, so in Paul’s day there is a faithful remnant.
 - c. Verses 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.*”
Paul is not speaking of future conversion of the Jews, but present day conversion. He is even hoping that his own ministry will “*make my fellow Jews jealous*” in order to “*save some of them*”.
 - d. Verse 30-31: “*For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but **now** have received mercy because of their disobedience, so they too have **now** been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may **now** receive mercy.*”
The three uses of now show that Paul is not speaking of a future time.
8. In the New Covenant, God’s people are now not distinguished by ethnicity (Rom 4:19-21; 10:12; Gal 6:14-16). It makes no sense why God would abolish ethnic barriers only to re-establish them in the future.

From Disobedience to Mercy (28-32)

²⁸ As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. ²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹ so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. ³² For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

Romans began by explaining that all were disobedient. It has shown us that God's plan was to "have mercy on all" (Jew and Gentile). Mercy is at the centre of God's plan. What does it mean to have mercy?

Who Can Know God's Thoughts? (33-36)

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

Isa 40:13 { ³⁴ "For who has known the mind of the Lord,
or who has been his counselor?"

Job 41:11 { ³⁵ "Or who has given a gift to him
that he might be repaid?"

³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

God's ways are 'inscrutable' (that is, impossible to understand). What things about God do you find inscrutable? Think about Romans 1-11.

Questions

How would we summarise this chapter?

What can I apply from what I have learnt? How does this chapter change my choices and behaviour?

What is something I can pray for based on this text?