



# Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



## The Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

### Chapter 11

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# Introduction

- St. Paul begins chapter 11 by showing that despite this rebellion God has not totally rejected His people (1-6)
- God hardened the hearts of the rebellious Israelites which led to the salvation of the Gentiles (7-10)
- God provoked Israel to jealousy in an attempt to win them back to Him (11-15)



# Introduction

- St. Paul then explains the grafting of the gentiles into Israel and if any Israelite repents of their unbelief, they too can be grafted back in (16-24)
- St. Paul concludes this chapter by explaining that God's mercy and plan of salvation are available to all (25-32)
- St. Paul ends this chapter with a doxology praising the wisdom and knowledge of God (33-36)

# Israel's Rejection Not Total (11:1-10)



- St. Paul is an Israelite, and yet elected. Therefore this proves that God has not cast away Israel
- The nation foreknown and chosen is not totally and eternally cast off
- Elijah assumed that all Israel had fallen into the idol worship but there were true worshipers left (1 Kgs 19:18)
- Now also there are faithful ones left in Israel who are elected because they accepted the grace of God

# Israel's Rejection Not Total (11:1-10)



- This election is not earned by the works of the Jewish law but because they accepted the offered Grace of God
- Israel has not obtained justification by the law
- The elect who accepted Christ have obtained it
- The rest were blinded because they closed their eyes
- God has given them a spirit of stupor by withdrawing His Spirit from them (Isa 29:10)

# Israel's Rejection Not Total (11:1-10)



- Let their very blessings prove a curse to them, and their enjoyments only take vengeance on them (Ps 69:22, 23)
- Table could be their law
- Darkness shall come upon them because they love darkness rather than light
- Bow down their back: this implies a condition of bondage on account of their sins



# Israel's Rejection Not Final (11:11-32)



- God, for wise reasons, has cast off Israel for a time, but that finally the nation will be converted
- The rejection of the gospel by the Jews, accelerated the preaching among the Gentiles
- In the parable of the Prodigal Son, the elder brother, was filled with jealousy when he saw the younger son accepted by the father
- In contributing to the conversion of the Gentiles their fall has been riches

# Israel's Rejection Not Final (11:11-32)



- In the remaining part of the chapter the apostle shows the grand results which will follow the final conversion of the Jewish nation as a body
- St. Paul was active in seeking to convert as many Gentiles as possible, hoping thus to provoke to jealousy his Jewish brethren
- Their unbelief caused the preaching of the gospel of reconciliation to the Gentiles
- St. Paul describes a resurrection of spiritual life



# Israel's Rejection Not Final (11:11-32)



- The first fruits are Abraham and the patriarchs
- If the first fruit of the nation has been saved, it is an assurance that the whole nation can be saved
- The figure is that of a tree, with the patriarchs as the root
- The olive tree is the chosen family of Abraham, with his believing children
- The Jews, the natural branches of this olive tree, were broken off by unbelief

# Israel's Rejection Not Final (11:11-32)



- The Gentile Christians are not natural branches but wild olive, were grafted in and became Abraham's children
- With Jewish Christians, these Gentile Christians became partakers of all the blessings belonging to Abraham's seed
- The riches of Grace for a Gentile Christian are due to the fact that he is grafted in upon the Abraham's stock, and becomes his child by faith

# Israel's Rejection Not Final (11:11-32)



- Perhaps the Gentile believer might boast over the Jewish: The Jewish branches were broken off, that we Gentiles might be grafted in
- Is this not boasting of the Gentile ? It is not
- Had they believed, they would have remained
- The Gentile will be grafted in when he believes
- Unbelief would cut off the Gentile branch as well as the Jewish one

# Israel's Rejection Not Final (11:11-32)



- This fear is not opposed to trust, but to pride
- Severity is shown in breaking off the Jewish branches on account of their unbelief; goodness, in admiring Gentile believers
- As Gentile believers will be cut off unless they continue in God's goodness, so will the Jews again be grafted in if they abandon their unbelief
- They are not cut off by a decree of God casting them away, but by their own unbelief

# Israel's Rejection Not Final (11:11-32)



- If wild branches were grafted into the good olive tree, the Gentiles grafted into the spiritual stock of Abraham, how much more likely is it that the natural branches, the Jews, shall be grafted again into their own olive tree
- St. Paul is about to unfold a mystery concerning the conversion of Israel
- He unfolds it lest the Gentile Christians should be wise in their own eyes

# Israel's Rejection Not Final (11:11-32)



- This blindness, or hardening, had been due to Israel's sins, especially of unbelief
- This is until the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in
- After the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, the Jews, as a people, shall be saved
- As it is written (Isa 59:20, 21) the Deliverer, Christ shall convert to righteousness the descendants of Jacob, the Jews



# Israel's Rejection Not Final (11:11-32)



- The Lord's covenant unto them is to take away their sins
- Their rejection of the gospel had proved a blessing to the Gentiles
- Though enemies of God, God still remembered that they were children of Abraham and did not cast them out forever, but loved them
- God does not change His purposes or fail to keep His covenant

# Israel's Rejection Not Final (11:11-32)



- Formerly they were without God, but had now obtained mercy
- This was due, indirectly, as shown, to the Jewish unbelief
- The mercy shown to the Gentiles shall be a means of converting the Jews by provoking them to jealousy
- Thus the Jews may also obtain mercy
- God did not give them His Grace from the beginning that He may have mercy upon all later

# Hymn of Praise to God (11:33-36)



- In this wonderful plan for the salvation of the Jews and Gentiles there is a profound depth of riches, wisdom, and knowledge
- The depth of the knowledge is shown in the latter part of Ro 11:33; the wisdom is described in Rom 11:34; and the riches in Rom 11:35
- St. Paul teaches us to revere the knowledge of God, and not curiously search it beyond that which God has revealed unto us

# Hymn of Praise to God (11:33-36)



- Because God is above all most wise, it is very absurd and plainly godless to measure Him by our folly (Isa 40:13; Jer 23:18)
- Because He is debtor to no one, no man can complain of injury done to him (Job 41:11)
- Because all things are made for His glory, therefore we must ascribe all things to His glory, much less may we contend and debate the matter with Him



# Conclusion

- What does it mean: Through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles? (v. 11)
- What's meant by: For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? (v. 15)
- What does the holy olive tree stand for?
- To whom does the apostle say: Do not be haughty, but fear (v. 20), and why?
- In v. 26 it says: And so all Israel will be saved. Does he mean today's Israel as a nation?