

The Sufficiency of Grace # 39
Romans 11: 11-24

As Paul continues to speak primarily to a Jewish audience in these parenthetical passages, our text today also has a word regarding the Gentiles. He shared his burden and continued desire for the salvation of Israel, and yet Paul is keenly aware of God's dealings with the Gentiles as well. In fact, there is a direct correlation to God's dealings with the Gentiles and His dealings with the Jews. This was not some haphazard event, but within the sovereign will of God.

Although this was written to a Jewish audience, there is application for our lives in these verses as well. They should prove to be beneficial for us as they describe the dealings of God with all humanity: Jew and Gentile alike. I am certainly thankful that God made the way for our salvation, but we have nothing to boast in within ourselves. Were it not for His abundant grace, we would yet be apart from God, condemned in sin. He alone is worthy of our praise and adoration. We could never earn or deserve such grace, but it is freely offered.

Let's take a few moments to discuss the [assertions](#) Paul makes in this passage as we consider: [The Sufficiency of Grace](#).

I. The Sovereign Plan of God (11-15) – The Jews may have been confused by the teachings of Paul, but he reveals this is all within the plan of God. Consider:

A. Salvation of the Gentiles (11) – [I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.](#)

Although many of the Jews refused to embrace any Gentile being acceptable to God, this too was within His sovereign plan. Jesus came as God in flesh, the Christ who came to provide redemption for humanity. The vast majority of Jews rejected Jesus and stumbled at His claim of being their Messiah. Their stumbling, and eventual fall regarding Jesus, resulted in salvation of the Gentiles. When the Jews rejected Jesus as the Christ, God, through Paul and others like him, presented salvation to the Gentiles. Their rejection resulted in Gentile salvation.

B. Sovereignty among the Jews (11-15) – Paul also reveals the sovereign dealings of God with the Jews in relation to their stumbling at Jesus. Notice:

1. The Approach (11c) – [I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.](#) The Jews were a

prideful people. For thousands of years they had enjoyed the blessing of God primarily to themselves. He dealt with them in ways He did not with other nations and people. When they stumbled at Christ, and salvation was offered to the Gentiles, it stirred jealousy in the hearts of the Jews. God would eventually use their jealousy and zeal for Him to lead to their salvation.

2. The Appeal (12-13) – Now if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? ^[13] For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office. Paul reminds all who hear, Jew and Gentile alike, of the consequences and results of the Jewish rejection. Their blessing from God and salvation offered through Christ was no longer reserved for Israel alone. Their fall (rejection of Christ) resulted in the blessing of God being poured out on Gentile believers. Christ had not come in vain; His sacrifice was not annulled due to the rejection of the Jews. God was determined to bless those who embraced Jesus as the Christ, and if the Gentiles were willing to receive Christ by faith, they would be the recipients of God's abundant blessing.

- Paul declares to all who would listen that he was unashamed of his calling to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. In fact, he sought to magnify and promote his calling among men. We should never be ashamed of God's call on our lives or the work we are engaged in for Him, regardless of the acceptance or approval of society!

3. The Anticipation (14-15) – If by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.* ^[15] For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them be, but life from the dead?* Paul reveals that he will use any means available to reach the Jews for Christ. If he could reach the Gentiles for Christ, and by doing so provoke the Jews through jealousy to do the same, he was willing to use that approach. He knew the Jews rejection of Christ had resulted in salvation being offered to the entire world, and their receiving of Christ would result in their salvation and deliverance from eternal death. Paul fully anticipated many of the Jews to see their need and receive Christ as their personal Savior!

II. The Sanctifying Provision of God (16-22) – Here Paul discusses the salvation of Gentiles and their reaction to such grace contrasted with the rejection and eventual salvation of Jews. Consider:

A. The Purity (16) – For if the firstfruit *be* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*; and if the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches. This fundamental truth applies to all who receive Christ, regardless of nationality. The firstfruit (Jesus Christ our Lord) is holy, so those who follow Him are considered holy. He is the

root of the tree, and if the tree is holy, providing sustenance and stability, the branches are also holy due to their connection with the root. Jesus is the source and provision of righteous acceptance to God and personal purity for all who come to Him.

B. The Opportunity (17-18) – *And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;* ^[18] *Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.* The nation of Israel is often referred to in Scripture as an olive tree. Jesus came unto the nation of Israel, and was rejected of many. Those branches that rejected Christ were broken off the tree, and Gentiles, being from a wild olive tree were grafted into the olive tree and now partake of the blessing it gives. Paul reminds the Gentiles of their opportunity for salvation due to the rejection of Jews.

- However, Paul cautions against pride and arrogance. They are not to boast in their newfound position of grace while belittling the Jews who have rejected Christ. They do not bear the Root of the tree, but are born up by the Root. If there is to be any boasting, it is not in their position, but in the Root that affords their position. We have nothing to boast in but Christ. We are no better than those who were removed from the olive tree. We are nothing more than sinners saved by grace, drawing strength from the Root, Christ the Lord.

C. The Humility (19-20) – *Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.* ^[20] *Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear.* Again Paul speaking to the Gentiles, warns of pride and arrogance. Some thought the Jews had been removed from the tree of grace solely for their salvation. Paul brings things into proper focus: the Jews weren't removed because of the worthiness of Gentiles, but because of their unbelief. The Gentiles were grafted in simply because grace was offered and they had responded by faith. Their salvation was not based on merit, but grace alone. (The same is true of us. We have nothing to boast in but the grace and provision of God for the undeserving!)

D. The Severity (21-22) – *For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.* ^[22] *Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.* As a deterrent to pride, Paul offers a stern warning to the Gentiles and all who consider the Gospel. God did not tolerate unbelief and rebellion in the natural branches (the Israelites,) and He wouldn't tolerate it from Gentiles either. They enjoyed the blessing of God through grace because God chose to offer such grace to them. His blessing would rest on those who embraced Christ by faith and sought to live in accordance to His will; but just as He had dealt with rebellion and rejection among the Jews, He would deal with it among the Gentiles and all people. All who reject Christ will be cut off from God.

III. The Saving Power of God (23-24) – In our remaining verses Paul discusses the saving power of God in the lives of people, the Jews in particular. Consider:

A. The Remnant of Israel (23) – *And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.* Many of the Jews, in fact the majority of Israel had rejected Christ, but hope remained. Paul declares that God is able and willing to save all who will receive Christ as their Savior. Israel had rejected Christ and many Gentiles were now grafted into the olive tree, but that did not cut Israel off completely. If they would receive the Gospel and believe in Christ by faith, they too could be added to the family of God in Christ Jesus. A remnant will be saved.

- This was given for Israel, but this abiding truth never changes. It applies to all people. Many today reject Jesus as Savior. The majority today have no desire or interest in salvation. However, the rejection of most does not hinder the salvation of some. God remains able and willing to save all who will come to Him by faith and receive the gracious provision of salvation.

B. The Restoration of Israel (24) – *For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?* Speaking to the Gentile reader, Paul shares a profound truth. If God was gracious enough to graft in a wild branch to the olive tree, how much more willing would He be to graft in natural branches, those of Israel? Salvation had been offered to the Gentiles through Israel's rejection, but salvation was not reserved solely for the Gentiles now. God still has a plan for the restoration and salvation of Israel. Some in Paul's day believed by faith and were saved, but God has a plan yet future for His people. He will deal with them again in the end times, and many will be saved by grace through faith in Christ.

Conclusion: This passage has been encouraging and challenging to me. I have been reminded of the abundant grace of God. None of us deserved the gracious sacrifice Christ made on our behalf. None deserve forgiveness of sin, reconciliation, and eternal life, but it is freely offered to all who will believe, Jew and Gentile alike.

I am thankful for the opportunity I was given and the salvation I received. If God was willing to save me by His grace, He is willing to save anyone. This same grace is being offered to all who will respond by faith today. May we as God's people seek to share the truth of the Gospel in an effort to reach the lost and perishing? If you are unsaved, Jesus wants to save you today, grafting a wild branch in the olive tree. He alone is the Root and source of salvation!