

Study in Romans

Doctrine > God's Plan for Israel > Divine Sovereignty in Israel's Future >
Illustration to the Gentiles of the Olive Trees
Romans 11:11-24

After asking the question, "Is God done with the nation of Israel?" at the beginning of this chapter and answering it by discussing the remnant that God has chosen to be saved, Paul returns to ask the question again, meaning he is not finished with its answer. He now introduces us to God's purpose behind His plan to allow them to commit *the* transgression, namely, of rejecting their Messiah, Jesus. God is using His blessing of the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy and thereby save some of them now and the entire nation in the future.

"...I will go away and return to My place until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face; in their affliction they will earnestly seek Me."

- Hosea 5:15 NASB

Paul uses an illustration of two olive trees, one cultivated and one wild, to picture how He has grafted the Gentiles into the nourishing root of God's promised blessings. He also uses the illustration to warn the Gentile believers not to become conceded with their privileged position for God can remove them from blessing as easily as He added them, and reattach the severed natural branches, namely, the Jews.

1. The question again: Has Israel committed a sin beyond recovery? (v. 11a; cf. Hosea 5:15)
2. The answer: Salvation has come to the Gentiles and jealousy to the Jews (v. 11b)
3. Paul's reasoning for boasting of his ministry as Apostle to the Gentiles (vv. 12-15; cf. Eph. 3:1-10)
4. Illustrations introduced (v. 16)
 - a. The lump and first fruits
 - b. The root and branches
5. Warning to Gentiles using the illustration of the olive trees (vv. 17-24)