

Exegetical Notes - Romans 11:22-24

**“The Purpose of Israel’s Refusal to Believe:
The Kindness of God”**

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Romans 11:22-24

(In Romans 11, Paul is answering the question, “Did God reject Israel?” In Romans 11:1 he answers that question with an emphatic “NO.” God has not rejected Israel. He then explains that God will call a faithful remnant from among Israel that will profess with their lips that Jesus is the Messiah and believe in their hearts that God raised him from the dead. He then moved to his second point; that Israel’s refusal to accept Christ as Savior opened the door of salvation to the non-Jewish world. Next, he proceeds to warn non-Jews not to rejoice in Israel’s fall from favor. In today’s text Paul admonishes non-Jews to consider God’s kindness and His sternness.)

Verse 22

Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.

- Paul is now speaking a warning to the non-Jewish Christians who have been grafted into the vine of God’s family because the Jews refused to believe in Jesus. (see Romans 11:1-21).
- He warns them that there are two sides to God’s nature. He IS loving and gracious but he IS also stern, not harsh but firm. He is kind and benevolent to his children who follow his plan and are obedient to his word. But to those who disregard his will he is stern. Our blessing and peace are found in doing the will of the Father. It would be unloving of God, as Father, to allow his children to wander from the path which brings them good. So those he loves, he chastises and corrects as does a loving Father.
- The severity of the warning is found in the words “will be cut off.” Those who wander far enough from God will be “cut off” from the blessing of God, but not from the love of God.

Verses 23-24

And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.²⁴ After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!

- But if a branch which was cut off, surrenders its unbelief, it can be grafted back into the vine as the faithful of Israel will be. Nothing is impossible with God.
- If God's plan allowed for the grafting into the vine of "wild olive branches," non-Jews, it can and does allow for the "cultivated branches," Jews, to be grafted back into the vine if they cease their unbelief and embrace Jesus as their Savior.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *The Purpose of Israel's Refusal to Believe: The Kindness of God*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen, Interim Senior/Lead Pastor at Cornerstone Fellowship, Coatesville Pennsylvania. All rights are reserved by *Cornerstone Fellowship* & The Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. They are used here by permission.)