

# Romans 11:22-24 Commentary

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## Summary of Romans 9-11

| Romans 9                                      | Romans 10  | Romans 11                                     |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Past<br/>Election</b>                      | <b>Present<br/>Rejection</b>                         | <b>Future<br/>Reception</b>                   |
| God's Sovereignty<br>Israel's Election by God | Man's responsibility<br>Israel's Rejection of<br>God | God's Ways Higher<br>God Not Rejecting Israel |

Romans 11:22 **Behold then** the **kindness** and **severity** of **God**; to **those** who **fell**, **severity**, but to you, **God's kindness**, **if** you

**continue** in His **kindness**; **otherwise** you **also** will be **cut off**.

**Greek:** [ide \(2SAAM\)](#) [oun chrestoteta kai apotomian theou; epi men tous pesontas \(AAPMPA\)](#) [apotomia, epi de se chrestotes theou, ean epimenes \(2SPAS\)](#) [te chrestoteti, epei kai su ekkopese. \(2SFPI\)](#)

**Amplified:** Then note and appreciate the gracious kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's gracious kindness to you--provided you continue in His grace and abide in His kindness; otherwise you too will be cut off (pruned away).

**ESV:** 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.

**ICB:** So you see that God is kind, but he can also be very strict. God punishes those who stop following him. But God is kind to you, if you continue following in his kindness. If you do not continue following him, you will be cut off from the tree.

**NIV:** 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.

**NKJV:** Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

**NLT:** Notice how God is both kind and severe. He is severe to those who disobeyed, but kind to you as you continue to trust in his kindness. But if you stop trusting, you also will be cut off.

**Phillips:** You must try to appreciate both the kindness and the strict justice of God. Those who fell experienced his justice, while you are experiencing his kindness, and will continue to do so as long as you do not abuse that kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off from the tree.

**Wuest:** Behold therefore God's benevolent kindness and His severity; on the one hand, upon those who fell, severity, and, on the other hand, upon you, God's benevolent kindness, upon the condition that you continue to remain in and abide by His benevolent kindness. Otherwise, also you will be cut out.

**Young's Literal:** Lo, then, goodness and severity of God -- upon those indeed who fell, severity; and upon thee, goodness, if thou mayest remain in the goodness, otherwise, thou also shalt be cut off.

| ROMANS ROAD<br>to RIGHTEOUSNESS |                        |                         |                          |                         |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Romans 1:18-3:20                | Romans 3:21-5:21       | Romans 6:1-8:39         | Romans 9:1-11:36         | Romans 12:1-16:27       |
| SIN                             | SALVATION              | SANCTIFICATION          | SOVEREIGNTY              | SERVICE                 |
| NEED<br>FOR<br>SALVATION        | WAY<br>OF<br>SALVATION | LIFE<br>OF<br>SALVATION | SCOPE<br>OF<br>SALVATION | WORK<br>OF<br>SALVATION |

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- [Israelology: Part 5 of 6 - Israel Future \(Part Two\)](#)
- [Israelology: Part 6 of 6 Other Relevant Topics - Illustrations of Israel \(including marriage\)](#)

**Are you confused about God's plan for Israel?** Then I highly recommend Tony Garland's 12 Hour Course on **Romans 9-11** in which he addresses in depth the question of **What Will Happen to Israel?** ([click](#)) or see the individual lectures below)

- [Romans 9:1-5 Paul's Sorrow Concerning Israel](#)
- [Romans 9:6-13 Children of the Promise](#)
- [Romans 9:14-24 The Potter and the Clay](#)
- [Romans 9:25-33 A Remnant Will be Saved](#)
- [Romans 10:1-13 The Righteousness of God](#)
- [Romans 10:14-21 Has Israel Not Heard?](#)
- [Romans 11:1-6 God Has Not Cast Away The Jews](#)
- [Romans 11:7-15 Life from the Dead](#)
- [Romans 11:16-24 Two Olive Trees](#)
- [Romans 11:25-36 The Salvation of Israel](#)

Note that when you click the preceding links, each link will in turn give you several choices including an **Mp3 message** and brief transcript notes. The Mp3's are long (avg 70+ min) but are in depth and thoroughly Scriptural with many quotations from the Old Testament, which is often much less well understood than the NT by many in the church today. Garland takes a literal approach to Scripture, and his love for the Jews and passion to see them saved comes through very clearly in these 12 hours of teaching! Take your home Bible Study group through this series if you dare. Take notes on the tapes as the transcripts are a very abbreviated version of the audio messages. This course is highly recommended for all who love Israel! I think you will agree that Tony Garland, despite coming to faith after age 30 as an engineer, clearly has been given a special anointing by God to promulgate the truth concerning Israel and God's glorious future plan for the Jews. Garland has also produced more than 20 hours of superb audio teaching in his verse by verse commentary on the [Revelation](#) (in depth transcripts also available) which will unravel (in a way you did not think was possible considering the plethora of divergent interpretations) God's final message of the triumph and return of the our Lord Jesus Christ as the King of kings and Lord of lords! Maranatha!

**BEHOLD THEN THE KINDNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD: ide (2SAAM) oun chrestoteta kai apotomian theou**

- Ro 2:4,5; 9:22,23; Nu 14:18-22; Deut 32:39-43; Joshua 23:15,16; Ps 58:10,11; Ps 78:49-52; 136:15-22; Isaiah 66:14
- [Romans 11 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Nu 14:18 **The LORD is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression;** but He will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the

third and the fourth generations.'

**Behold** (3708) (**eido**) is **aorist imperative**.

**Kindness** (5544) (**chrestotes** from the adjective **chrestos** = useful, profitable in turn from **chraomai** = to furnish what is needed in turn from **chráo** = lend, furnish as a loan) describes the quality of being helpful and beneficial. Kindness is God's beneficial provision that meets the need of sinful man. **Kindness** is not an apathetic response to sin, but a deliberate act to bring the sinner back to God. **Kindness** reflects benevolence in action, kindness which disposes one to do good but not a goodness qualitatively but a goodness in action and expressed in deed. **Kindness** is that temper or disposition which delights in contributing to the happiness of others, which is exercised cheerfully in gratifying their wishes and which supplies their wants or alleviates their distresses. **Kindness** is not just a sweet disposition but is a serving trait.

Earlier in this letter Paul asked "do you think lightly of the riches of His **kindness** (**chrestotes**) and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?" (Ro 2:4-note)

God's **kindness** does not excuse men of their sin but convicts them of sin and leads them to repentance. In the next chapter of Romans Paul uses **chrestotes** to contrast the attitude and action of sinful men writing "all have turned aside. Together they have become useless. There is none who does **good** (**chrestotes**). There is not even one." (see note on Romans 3:12)

**John MacArthur** writes that **kindness** (**chrestotes**) "connotes genuine goodness and generosity of heart. Our salvation from sin and lostness and death issued wholly from God's kindness, His loving, benevolent, and entirely gracious concern to draw us to Himself and redeem us from sin forever."

**TO THOSE WHO FELL, SEVERITY BUT TO YOU, GOD'S KINDNESS: epi men tous pesontas (AAPMPA) apotomia, epi de se chrestotes theou:**

- [Romans 11 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Those who fell** are the unbelieving Jews, and "**you**" are the believing Gentiles. But what Paul is suggesting is that the positions are reversible. Gentiles can become objects of God's severity, and Israel can become the object of His kindness, depending on the response of each to God.

**Severity** (663) (**apotomia** from **apoténo** = to cut off) describes a cutting off, a severing, as of a man cutting off as the gardener cuts off, with a pruning knife, dead useless boughs, or luxuriant stems, from a fruit tree.

**Apotomia** thus has the root (no pun intended) meaning of cutting right off, or cutting quickly, and corresponds to the verb **ekkopto** (cut off), with which this verse ends. And in this context, **pipto** (fell) means to fall down so as to be completely ruined. Paul is therefore speaking of an extremely serious spiritual condition, in which people fell from spiritual opportunity into judgment. (Related topic: **God's wrath**)

**IF YOU CONTINUE IN HIS KINDNESS OTHERWISE YOU ALSO WILL BE CUT OFF: ean epimenes (2SPAS) te chrestoteti, epei kai su ekkopese (2SFPI):**

- Ro 2:7; Luke 8:15; John 8:31; 15:4-10; Acts 11:23; 14:22; 1Corinthians 15:2; Galatians 6:9; 1Thessalonians 3:5,8; Hebrews 3:6,14; 10:23,35-39; 1John 2:19; Jude 1:20,21
- [Romans 11 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Continue** (1961) (**epimeno** [see word study] from **epí** = upon, in or at + **méno** = abide, endure, continue, stay or remain > **epí** intensifies the meaning and so this word is a strengthened form of **méno** and gives the force of adherence to and persistence in what is referred to) means literally to tarry, to stay at or with, to abide in, to continue in. The most common usage of **epimeno** in the NT is the literal picture of one abiding, remaining on, tarrying or staying at a place (Ac 10:48, 21:4, 10, 28:12, 14, 1Co 16:7, 8, Ga 1:18) Figuratively **epimeno** means to persist in (Jn 8:7), to persevere or to continue in an activity (Acts 12:16) or state, such as in a state of sin in Romans 6:1 (note), in the faith in Colossians 1:23 (note), in the work of teaching in 1Ti 4:16. In which of these are you "persisting", beloved?

**MacArthur** believes this should be interpreted as follows: The previous phrase ("those that fell") looks at the past. Paul then warns those in the present who have identified with the saving gospel that they must continue in His kindness or they, too, will be judged

severely like those in the past who were near the blessing and fell. That is a familiar NT idea, which affirms the reality of true, saving faith by its continuity. That is the perseverance of the saints that evidences their genuine conversion (Jn 8:31 15:5-6; Col 1:22-23 Heb 3:12-14, 4:11, 1Jn 2:19).

Not everyone interprets this verse in the above manner. For example Bible Believer's Commentary says:

"It must be constantly borne in mind that Paul is not speaking of the church or of individual believers. He is speaking about the Gentiles as such. Nothing can ever separate the Body of Christ from the Head, and nothing can separate a believer from the love of God, but the Gentile peoples can be removed from their present position of special privilege."

**Nelson's Study Bible:** If Gentiles continue in God's goodness, they will not be cut off, and if Jews turn to God in faith, they can be grafted in again. This is not a reference to individual salvation but to God's program for Jews and Gentiles.

**Beet** - All exultation of Gentiles over Jews is now shut out. Not only has the spiritual life of the Gentiles come through the Jews, but the present state of the Jews tells what will become of the Gentiles if they cease to believe.

**Charles Hodge** - "Nothing in this language is inconsistent with the doctrine of the final [Perseverance](#) of believers (or see [Perseverance - Hastings' Dictionary](#)), even supposing that the passage refers to individuals, for it is very common to speak hypothetically in this way and say that an event cannot or will not come to pass unless the requisite means are employed, when the occurrence of the event has been made certain by the prior intention and promise of God (see Acts 27:31). The foundation of all such statements is the simple truth that he who intends the end also intends the means; and he brings about the end by providing the means. And when rational agents are concerned, he provides the means by rational considerations presented to their minds and made effectual by his grace, when the end contemplated is good. This passage, however, has no legitimate bearing on this subject. Paul is not speaking about the connection between individual believers and Christ, which, as he has fully taught in chapter 7 and elsewhere, is indissoluble, but about the relationship of communities to the church and its various privileges. No promise or covenant on the part of God guarantees that the Gentiles will enjoy these blessings through all generations, any more than there was any such promise to protect the Jews from the consequences of their unbelief. The continuation of these favors depends on the conduct of each successive generation. Therefore Paul tells the Gentile that he must continue in the divine favor: Otherwise, you also will be cut off. ([Romans 11 - Hodge's Commentary on Romans](#))

**Bible Knowledge Commentary** - In these verses Paul summarized his whole discussion of God's sovereign choice in temporarily putting Israel aside corporately and proclaiming righteousness by faith to all mankind. Consider (*ide*, "see, behold") therefore the kindness (*chrestoteta*, "benevolence in action"; also used of God in 2:4; Eph. 2:7; Titus 3:4) and sternness of God. "Sternness" translates *apotomian*, used only here in the New Testament (*cf.* the adverb *apotomos* in 2 Cor. 13:10 ["be harsh"] and Titus 1:13 ["sharply"]). God's sovereign choice involved severity toward the Jews who stumbled (*fell*; *cf.* Rom. 11:11) in unbelief and were hardened (*v.* 25), but that same decision displayed the goodness of God toward individual Gentiles. God's continuing His goodness to the Gentiles depends on their continuing in His kindness. If Gentiles do not continue in God's kindness, they also will be cut off. This does not suggest that a Christian can lose his salvation; it refers to Gentiles as a whole (suggested by the *sing. you*) turning from the gospel much as Israel as a nation had done.

Because of God's blessing of ancient Israel as a nation, many Jewish unbelievers shared in that blessing. In the same way, because of God's blessing on the church, many unbelievers within the church taste that blessing. But if they fall away, God's patience will be exhausted and His offer of grace withdrawn, that blessing by association will be of no value when unbelievers face the living God in judgment and are eternally cut off from Him. Those who in unbelief refuse God's kindness in the offer of salvation are destined to be cut off by His severity.

**Steven Cole** - WE SHOULD FEAR BECAUSE WE BEHOLD THE KINDNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD. Romans 11:22: "Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off." We tend to skip over *behold*, but it occurs over 1,000 times in the Bible as a flashing warning light to say, "Slow down! Open your eyes! You need to think about this." We're all prone to behold God's kindness, but we aren't so apt to behold His severity. "To those who fell" refers to the Jews who were currently cut off from God's mercy due to judicial hardening (Ro 11:8-10, 25). But Paul says that if the Gentiles do not continue in God's kindness, they too will be cut off. As I said, this is a warning to all Gentiles, but we need to take it to heart individually. Some use verses like this to argue that believers can lose their salvation. But the same man who wrote Romans 11:22 also wrote Romans 8:28-39, which is one of the strongest passages in the Bible in favor of the security of believers. He isn't contradicting himself. Rather, Paul consistently taught that by God's strength, genuine saving faith perseveres over the long haul. But one way that we persevere is through the many warnings in Scripture not to fall away (1 Cor. 10:1-12; Gal. 5:2-4, 21; Eph. 5:5-10; Col. 1:23; 1 Thess. 3:1-5; Heb. 6:4-12; 10:26-31). **H. C. G. Moule** explains ([Romans 11 Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges](#) *italics his*), "Grace imparts *perseverance* by imparting and maintaining faith, (1Pet. 1:5) and it freely uses *all* means by which such faith is properly animated and energized. Amongst such means are these warnings

of the results that must follow *if faith loses* hold of its object." **Thomas Schreiner** comments (Romans [Baker], p. 609), "Those who brush aside the warnings as unnecessary, concluding that they are protected from God's wrath no matter how they behave, are presuming upon God's grace." If someone falls away from the faith and is cut off from God's mercy, it is evidence that he never truly had believed in the first place (1 John 2:19; Mt. 7:21-23). If we do not judge our spiritual pride it shows that we never really understood or trusted in God's grace. **Conclusion** - Martyn Lloyd-Jones wisely observed (Romans: To God's Glory [Banner of Truth], p. 125), "The best corrective against pride ... is to know God, His character and the truth about Him." And the main place to behold the kindness and severity of God is at the cross. There the severity of His righteous judgment did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all (Rom. 8:32). There the kindness of His tender love forgave all our sins and adopted us as His beloved children the instant we trusted in Christ. Guard yourself against any form of spiritual pride by remembering that salvation is by grace alone and by maintaining faith in Christ and fear before the kindness and severity of God. ([Guarding Against Spiritual Pride \(Romans 11:16-24\)](#))

**Romans 11:23** And they **also**, **if** they do not **continue** in their **unbelief**, will be **grafted** in, for **God** is **able** to **graft** them in **again**.

**Greek:** [kakeinoi de, ean me epimenosin \(3PPAS\) te apistia, egkentrithesontai: \(3PFPI\) dunatos gar estin \(3SPA\) o theos palin egkentrissai \(AAN\) autous.](#)

**Amplified:** And even those others [the fallen branches, Jews], if they do not persist in [clinging to] their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again.

**ESV:** 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.

**ICB:** And if the Jews will believe in God again, then God will accept the Jews back again. God is able to put them back where they were.

**NIV:** And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

**NKJV:** And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

**NLT:** And if the Jews turn from their unbelief, God will graft them back into the tree again. He has the power to do it.

**Phillips:** And as for the fallen branches, unless they are obstinate in their unbelief, they will be grafted in again. Such a restoration is by no means beyond the power of God.

**Wuest:** And, moreover, those also, if they do not remain in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to again graft them in.

**Young's Literal:** And those also, if they may not remain in unbelief, shall be grafted in, for God is able again to graff them in;

**AND THEY ALSO IF THEY DO NOT CONTINUE IN THEIR UNBELIEF, WILL BE GRAFTED IN: kakeinoi de, ean me epimenosin (3PPAS) te apistia, egkentrithesontai (3PFPI):**

- [Romans 11 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Continue** ([1961](#)) (epimeno from epí = upon, in or at + méno = stay or remain) means abide in, continue in, tarry in, abide or stay in.

**Moule on will be grafted in** - Every Jewish convert from the first age till now has been an example of this statement. St Paul is not yet dealing with the question of a conversion of Israel *en masse*; he has in view individual Gentile faith and individual Jewish faith; and he regards each Jew as (ideally) once a branch in the sacred Tree, but cut out of it, and awaiting a gracious re-engrafting. ([Romans 11 Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges](#))

**Hodge** - The principle which the apostle had just stated - as applicable to the Gentiles, is applicable also to the Jews. Neither one nor the other, simply because Jew or Gentile, is either retained in the church or excluded from it. As the one continues in this relation to God, only on condition of faith, so the other is excluded by his unbelief alone. Nothing but unbelief prevents the Jews being brought

back, "for God is able to graft them in again." That is, not merely has God the power to accomplish this result, but the difficulty or impediment is not in him, but solely in themselves. There is no inexorable purpose in the divine mind, nor any insuperable obstacle in the circumstances of the case, which forbids their restoration; on the contrary, the event is, in itself considered, far more probable than the calling of the Gentiles. ([Romans 11 - Hodge's Commentary on Romans](#))

#### FOR GOD IS ABLE TO GRAFT THEM IN AGAIN: *dunatos gar estin (3SPA1) o theos palin egkentrissai (AAN) autous*

- Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 23:39; 2Corinthians 3:16
- [Romans 11 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**For** - Always pause and ponder this **term of explanation**.

**God is able** - See in depth study on this great Biblical Truth! Our God IS able! What are you experiencing even as you read this? Do you need to be reminded that He is able to come to your aid in the midst of your adversity or affliction. Mark it down beloved - our God is able!

**Able (1415)** (**dunatos** from **dunamai** = be able, have power by virtue of inherent ability and resources) (See also the great word **dunamis**) pertaining to having the ability to perform some function or being in a position to, be able, be capable able to do something (Related topic: **God's Omnipotence**)

**Graft (1461)** (**egkentrizo** from **en** = in + **kentrizo** = make a puncture from **kéntron** = a prick or sharp point, emphasizing fact of the incision required in grafting) means to insert by making a puncture or small opening and thus to engraft. Our hearts are hardened by sin and need to be "pricked" by the Word of truth that they might be convicted of sin, righteousness and the judgment to come.

Paul's argument is that if the hard thing, the thing contrary to nature, i.e. the grafting of wild branches into the cultivated olive, has been accomplished, one should not find it difficult to believe that God will restore the broken-off branches (Israel) of the cultivated olive to their former position. Since in tree culture this would be impossible because of the deadness of the branches after they were removed, Paul is indeed talking "contrary to nature."

How will "God graft them in again"?

The prophet **Zechariah** records Jehovah's promise that one day in the future "it will come about ... that I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born. ([Zechariah 12:10](#))

**H C G Moule** - Every Jewish convert from the first age till now has been an example of this statement. St Paul is not yet dealing with the question of a conversion of Israel en masse; he has in view individual Gentile faith and individual Jewish faith; and he regards each Jew as (ideally) once a branch in the sacred Tree, but cut out of it, and awaiting a gracious re-ingrafting. ([Romans 11 Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges](#))

**Romans 11:24** For **if** you were **cut off** from **what** is by **nature** a **wild olive tree**, and were **grafted contrary** to **nature** into a **cultivated olive tree**, **how much more** will **these who** are the **natural** \* branches be **grafted** into their **own olive tree** ?

**Greek:** [ei gar su ek tes kata phusin](#) exekopes (2SAP1) [agrielaiou kai para phusin enekentristhes](#) (2SAP1) [eis kallielaiou, poso mallon houtoi oi kata phusin egkentristhesontai](#) (3PFPI) [te idia elaiia.](#)

**Amplified:** For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and against nature grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much easier will it be to graft these natural [branches] back on [the original parent stock of] their own olive tree.

**ESV:** 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.

**ICB:** It is not natural for a wild branch to be part of a good tree. But you non-Jews are like a branch cut from a wild olive tree. And you were joined to a good olive tree. But those Jews are like a branch that grew from the good tree. So surely they can be joined to their own tree again.



**NIV:** 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!

**NKJV:** For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

**NLT:** For if God was willing to take you who were, by nature, branches from a wild olive tree and graft you into his own good tree--a very unusual thing to do--he will be far more eager to graft the Jews back into the tree where they belong.

**Phillips:** And, in any case, if you who were, so to speak, cuttings from a wild-olive, were grafted in, is it not a far simpler matter for the natural branches to be grafted back onto the parent stem?

**Wuest:** For, as for you, in view of the fact that you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into the good olive tree, how much more will these who are according to nature be grafted into their own olive tree.

**Young's Literal:** for if thou, out of the olive tree, wild by nature, wast cut out, and, contrary to nature, wast grafted into a good olive tree, how much rather shall they, who are according to nature, be grafted into their own olive tree?

**FOR IF YOU WERE CUT OFF FROM WHAT IS BY NATURE A WILD OLIVE TREE AND WERE GRAFTED CONTRARY TO NATURE INTO A CULTIVATED OLIVE TREE: ei gar su ek tes kata phusin exekopes (2SAPI) agrielaiou kai para phusin enekentristhes (2SAPI) eis kallielaiou: (Ro 11:17,18,30 )**

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**For** - Always pause and ponder this **term of explanation**.

**Hodge** interprets the "**for**" - The connection indicated by gar (for,) is not with the preceding clause, God is able to graft them in again, because what follows does not prove the power of God to restore the Jews to their ancient privileges, but that their restoration is a probable event. The connection, therefore, is with the main idea in the context, as expressed in Romans 11:23, "They shall be grafted in." This may be expected, he says, for, etc. The Gentiles were of the wild olive, having no natural connection with the tree into which they were grafted. The Jews were its natural branches. In itself considered, therefore, their reunion with their native stalk was more probable than the grafting in of the Gentiles. The opposition, however, between *kata phusin* (by nature) and *para phusin* (contrary to nature), does not refer to any natural fitness of the Jews, as a race, for the true religion, in opposition to the unsuitableness of the Gentiles. According to the Scriptures, there is no difference, so far as their relation to God is concerned, between the different races of men, since all have sinned. They are all alike unfit for the service and enjoyment of God, and alike unable to save themselves. And, on the other hand, they are alike susceptible of the salvation of the gospel, which is adapted to all classes of men. The words in question are used only to preserve the figure of a tree and its branches. The simple meaning, therefore, of this verse is, that the future restoration of the Jews is, in itself, a more probable event than the introduction of the Gentiles into the church of God. This, of course, supposes that God regarded the Jews, on account of their relation to him, with peculiar favor, and that there is still something in their relation to the ancient servants of God, and his covenant with them, which causes them to be regarded with special interest. As men look upon the children of their early friends with kinder feelings than on the children of strangers, God refers to this fact to make us sensible that he still retains purposes of peculiar mercy towards his ancient people. ([Romans 11 - Hodge's Commentary on Romans](#))

This passage does **not** teach that the national promises to Israel have been abrogated and are now being fulfilled by the church. This idea, taught by amillenarians, is foreign to Paul's point, for he said Israel's fall is temporary. (Related topics Millennium; Israel of God)

**HOW MUCH MORE SHALL THESE WHO ARE THE NATURAL BRANCHES BE GRAFTED INTO THEIR OWN OLIVE TREE: poso mallon houtoi oi kata phusin egkentristhesontai (3PFPI) te idia elaiia:**

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For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and against nature grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much easier will it be to graft these natural [branches] back on [the original parent stock of] their own olive tree. (**Amplified**)

**How much more** - This phrase is used 24 times in the NAS often in a positive or encouraging context - Deut 31:27; 1Sam 14:30; 21:5; 23:3; 2Sam 4:11; 16:11; 2Kgs 5:13; Job 4:19; Pr 11:31; 15:11; 19:7; 21:27; Ezek 14:21; Matt 7:11; 10:25; 12:12; Luke 11:13; 12:24, 28; Ro 11:12, 24; 1Cor 6:3; Philemon 1:16; Heb 9:14

That is, it is **much more** probable that Jews, the natural (physical) descendants of Abraham, should be brought into the spiritual privileges contained in the promise given to their own patriarchal ancestor, for nationally Israel has a covenant relationship with God already, which is not the case with Gentiles. If you doubt that statement, note how a Gentile would become a believer in the OT (after the time of Abraham) - somehow he would have to associate himself with the Jews (e.g., **Ruth the Moabitess** - read Ru 1:16-note, **Naaman the Assyrian**, 2Ki 5:1-27, note especially 2Ki 5:15, 18-19).

The great lesson of this passage is certainly that just as the Jews of the Old Testament became proud, assuming that they alone knew God, the same thing may happen to Gentiles in the New Testament era.

Gentile believers must not yield to the temptation to disrespect the Jews. If it had not been for the grace of God, Gentiles would never have been grafted into the life of God which the Jews enjoyed. The new life which enables them to produce fruit grows from the same root that the old stock of Israel grows.

NT believers must not assume that they are better than the Jews because they were cut off for their unbelief. Every church must never forget its reliance upon the divine grace of God, else her end will be the same as that of the old branches. The process of being grafted into the life of God finds its basis in the grace of God. We must never lord the grace of God over those who have been cut from the tree, for it is much easier to put the natural branches back, than to graft different branches in their place. We therefore must rest totally on the grace of God for our salvation, as the remnant does.