



Chapter Eleven (Pt. 2 of 2)

INTRODUCTION

NOTE: As you read these studies please examine the scriptures and references that are cited. These studies expose words, phrases, and concepts that have been mis-translated and misunderstood in the churches. Do not take anything herein for granted. Prove for yourself the accuracy of what is written, whether it is of man or of God. Do not summarily dismiss parts as mere opinion on my part. Prove them yourself by honest examination. Don't assume that I am right, or that I am wrong. Pray for God to guide your thinking, and let Him show truth to you – truth which will unite us in Christ.

THIS CHAPTER gives us a concise explanation of the connection between the reconciliation of Israel and the “grafting in” of the nationals (nations). Here we will deal with some difficult passages that are misused by the churches. Typically, the churches twist these passages to support strange pagan doctrines ... which expose the pagan nature of churches.

The God of Israel is a gracious Father. He gave holy spirit (life) to Israel, and saved her often from national death and self-inflicted problems. Then through Jesus He saved her with his ultimate expression of love, sending his Son to call out a remnant from Israel for his new virgin Bride: New Jerusalem. Thus, the Kingdom of God gained a new King (Jesus) and a New Jerusalem: the new Groom and new undefiled Bride.

Beginning with his “firstfruits” (the 144,000) gathered in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, God’s call then spread outward to the nations where the bulk of Israel had been scattered.

In Paul’s day, Israel needed to relearn how she fit into God’s agenda, and how God’s love, through her, would benefit the nations. This is the theme of chapter 11.

ROMANS 11:15 ISRAEL’S RECONCILIATION = LIFE FOR THE NATIONS

For if the casting off of them (Israel) is the reconciliation of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

SEVERAL centuries earlier Israel had abandoned her Husband: Yahweh. At that time God put her away. The marriage and the Old Covenant ended 700 years before Paul. God divorced Israel (all the tribes) and she was taken captive by Assyria and Babylon, and was subsequently scattered through the nations.

God allowed this ... not for the purpose of destroying her, but rather for fairness and righteousness. Israel sold out her God and gave herself to harlotry by taking up with foreign governments/husbands. She was an unfaithful wife to Yahweh. Therefore He had no choice but to put her away. Nonetheless, He did not give up on Israel. He still had plans to save her. Furthermore, He would yet use Israel for her

intended purpose: to reflect God's light to the rest of the world. This was confirmed through Christ.

Israel (the wife) had continually played the harlot by abandoning Yahweh (her Husband) and seeking relationships with other government systems (i.e., husbands). Yahweh eventually had to put her away to show the world that He was a fair and just God. He is the God of all creation, not only of Israel.

Israel had been His covenant nation – His wife: those whom He first knew. God chose Israel to be his messenger to the nations. Israel was Yahweh's covenant people, but not the ONLY people in God's long term plan. In his agenda Israel was to be the "firstborn," but not the only-born. God's relationship with Israel was displayed on the world stage to be observed by all nations ... "for a witness to the nations" (Mtt. 24:14).

So Paul asks the question: If the putting away of Israel proved to be a blessing to all the nations, then the reconciliation of Israel would be an even greater blessing to the nations, would it not? Thus, through His Son, God created a new Israel (New Jerusalem), born out of old Israel.

These became his new messengers to carry his Good News to Israel in the nations, to call them into the new fold. And as the new light of the gospel shined upon Israel in the nations, light spilled over and was also seen by some of the nationals ... as per the parables of "the hidden treasure" and "the great fish net" (Mtt. 13:44, 47-50).

QUESTION: If God divorced His wife, Israel, for the sin of harlotry, then does this mean He later forgave Israel and took her back as his wife?

ROMANS 11:16-18 ROOTSTOCK SHARED THROUGH ISRAEL

For if the firstfruits are holy, so is the lump; and if the rootstock is holy, so are its branches.

And if some of the branches were broken out, and you being a wild olive, were grafted in among them, and began sharing in common with them from the rootstock and the fatness of the olive tree;

Boast not against the branches, But if you boast, you do not bear the rootstock, but the rootstock bears you.

LET'S say you have a vineyard, and you go out early in the season when the crop first begins to ripen, and you pick some of the firstfruits. Then later in the season, when the rest of the crop ripens, you harvest the bulk of the crop. That bulk of the crop is here called "the lump." So, you have the "firstfruits," and you have the "lump." When Paul referred to "the lump" he meant the main body of Israel that began to be harvested in the nations later, after the firstfruits were harvested..

Paul's point is that the bulk of Israel out in the nations is holy ... the same as the "firstfruits" were holy. The firstfruits were the Israelites harvested (brought into the fold) earlier when the gospel was first heard in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria (Acts 1:8).

Then he also compares the rootstock and the branches. The branches share the holiness of the rootstock. Both are holy ... just as the firstfruits and the lump.

The rootstock is the Abrahamic Covenant. God promised that all nations would be blessed through Abraham's seed (Gen. 12:3). The natural branches were the seed of Abraham who drew nourishment from that covenant.

Jesus, Himself, confirmed that covenant:

10. And again he says, Rejoice, you nations, with his people.

11. And again, Praise the Lord, all you nations, and let them praise Him, all you people.

12. And again, Isaiah says, There shall be a root of Jesse, and One that stands up to reign over the nations; in Him shall the nations have hope.

Romans 15:10-12

Jesus was born of Jesse's lineage through David. Jesus was that "root (or scion) of Jesse" planted in Israel.

The "nations" or "nationals" were the people in the lands where the put-away Israelites migrated during their captivity. The "nationals" among whom the Israelites migrated were various White (albeit non-Israelite) people. Israelites lived in exile in those nations, without a nation of their own, until Jesus sent his apostles to inform them that they had been redeemed, and that He was their new King. Thus, the called-out ones became citizens of New Jerusalem, and were no longer strangers and captives without a nation.

When Jesus and his apostles brought the gospel of Christ's Kingship to Israelites living in exile in foreign lands, it amounted to a new birth for them. They had been the "dry bones" of Ezekiel 37. They had been dead, but now they were getting new life. They were being born again and re-claimed by God through a New Covenant. They were the "natural branches" to whom Paul refers.

Some of the natural branches took hold and grew with their new life. Some of them rejected their new life, and God broke them off or pruned them away from the healthy branches. The unbelieving branches that were "broken off" were Israelites who refused to accept Jesus or believe in Him. They refused to repent and believe.

These "natural olives" which turned bad were like the bad figs in the illustration given in Jeremiah 24. That illustration compared good figs with bad figs ... and both were Israelites. The bad figs (bad Israelites) were cast away, and the good figs were kept.

As with the distinction between the good and bad figs, Paul distin-

guished between the good and bad “natural olives.” The bad branches had to be “broken out” or pruned.

Then Paul spoke of other olives: wild olives. These were foreign olives and had no connection to the natural branches (Israel). Wild olives were being gathered and grafted according to the Abrahamic Covenant via the grace of Jesus. The Abrahamic Covenant was a rootstock that was not natural to the foreign olives because they weren't of Abraham's culture. But they were being grafted into the Abrahamic Covenant which promised that ALL NATIONS would be blessed through Abraham's seed.

When Paul refers to the natural branches, he is talking about Israelites. But when he speaks of the “wild olives” (literally “field olives” [field = world – Mtt. 13:38]) this can only refer to non-Israelites.”

Paul warns the non-Israelites (the wild olives) not to boast against the Israelites (the natural branches) since they do not support themselves, but the rootstock supports them both. So Paul says the rootstock bears the branches, both the natural branches and the wild grafted branches

Some may read this and accuse me of suggesting that a non-Israelite can be converted into an Israelite by grafting him into the Israel tree. But that is not what I'm saying, and it is not what Paul is saying. The rootstock is not Israel. **The rootstock is the Abrahamic Covenant**, and Jesus is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant in that He is that “root (scion) of Jesse”:

10. *And in that day there shall be a root (scion) of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the nations seek: and his rest shall be glorious.*

11. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again a second time to recover the remnant of his people...*

12. *And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah (the natural branches) from the four corners of the earth.*

Isaiah 11:10-12

The sharing of God's grace in the nations does not imply race mixing or miscegenation of any sort. The rootstock to which Isaiah and Paul refer is a SPIRITUAL ROOTSTOCK, not a genetic rootstock. But regardless of whether genetic or spiritual, it makes no difference in terms of the illustration because, as I will show, grafting neither alters nor mixes the nature of the graft.

In tree grafting, when you graft one kind of scion (shoot) onto another kind of tree, the grafted scion remains the same and does not change into the type of tree into which it was grafted. You can graft a scion (shoot) from one variety of apple onto another apple tree, and that scion will grow its own natural variety of apples. In fact, you can graft multiple varieties of scions onto one common rootstock ... and they all would remain the same as they were before they were grafted. The rootstock would supply nutrients and liquid to the graft, but the genetics of the rootstock would not mix with the genetics of the grafts. Thus, the illustration of grafting implies no genetic miscegenation or cross breeding.

With Paul's illustration, wild olives (non-Israelites) were grafted into the Abrahamic Promise and benefited from the strength of the rootstock. They didn't change into natural branches. In fact, non-Israelites have no need to change their genetics ... even if it were possible (which it isn't). They only need the spiritual rootstock ... God's promise that they would be blessed through Abraham.

The fact that non-Israelites are less likely to relate to Jesus, due to their different cultural backgrounds, is beside the point. According to God's word, it is not only possible, but is actually prophesied to happen.

Isaiah states that God turns away no one who comes to Him in earnest:

1. *Thus says Yahweh, Keep you judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.*

2. *Blessed is the man that does this, and the son of man that lays hold on it; that keeps the sabbath from polluting it, and*

keeps his hand from doing any evil.

3. *Neither let the son of the stranger [the non-Israelite], that has joined himself to Yahweh, speak, saying Yahweh has utterly cut me off from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree.*

4. *For thus says Yahweh unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant;*

5. *Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.*

6. *Also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to Yahweh, to serve Him, and to love the name of Yahweh, to be his servants, every one that keeps the sabbath from polluting it, and takes hold of my covenant;*

7. *Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon my altar; for my house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.*

8. *Yahweh God which gathers the outcasts of Israel says, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered to him.*

Isaiah 56:1-8

Peter stated in Acts 10:34-35:

“...The truth I received is that God is not a respecter of persons (literally, “not a taker of faces”): But in every nation, he that fears Him and works righteousness is acceptable to Him.”

QUESTION: Why do you worry about the differences between races when Paul says in Gal. 3:27-28 that there are no longer any difference between Jew and Greek?

ROMANS 11:19-24 GRAFTING AND BELIEF

You will say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

Very well; they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear:

For if God spared not the natural branches, neither will He spare you.

Behold therefore the kindness and cutting-off of God: on them which fell, cutting-off; but toward you, kindness, if you continue in his kindness: otherwise you also shall be cut out.

And they also, if they do not remain in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.

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

IF YOU still have any question as to who or what these symbolic olives and branches represent, this passage will settle the issue. The elements are 1. The rootstock; 2. The natural branches; 3. The branches that were broken out; 4. The wild olives that are grafted in.

The **rootstock** was the Abrahamic Covenant (which, by the way, is not the Old Covenant of Moses' day). Israel inherited the Abrahamic Covenant, and thus became the **natural branches**.

The **branches that were broken out** were Israelites who lost faith in that covenant.

The **wild olives** were the non-Israelites who were of a "contrary" or different nature from the rootstock and the natural branches.

Long before Paul's day, Israel broke her marriage covenant with God (the marriage covenant was "the Old Covenant" [Ex. 19:5-8] – not the Abrahamic Covenant [Gen. 22:18]), and she became lost in the nations. But God had a rescue plan. In the process of seeking and rescuing lost Israelites, God's light spilled over and was observed by others as well.

In verse 14 Paul says that God's mercy is upon the nations, provoking Israel to jealousy, causing them to return to God.

The reason the natural branches were broken off was NOT merely to make room for non-Israelites. They were broken off because of unbelief. Thus, Paul makes the point that faith was necessary for Israelites to remain attached to the Abrahamic rootstock which, itself, was based on faith. Furthermore, it was faith that caused the newly-grafted (non-Israelite) branches to be grafted in. Thus, belief was required to facilitate grafting, and unbelief (lack of faith) prevented grafting. Unbelief also causes natural branches to be broken off from the rootstock. Any branches that lose faith (belief) – whether natural branches or grafted branches – will be broken out from the rootstock. Belief (faith) is the guiding rule here. Eonian life is the result of faith and of drawing sustenance from the rootstock. That life cannot be maintained without belief (faith).

God did not spare Israel in her unbelief. He brought judgment upon her. He also did not spare unnatural branches for unbelief.

This brings to mind II Peter 2:1-4, which recounts God's judgment upon some Israelites. As you consider this passage you may recognize that churches have twisted the meaning of this passage to fit strange pagan myths. But here is what Peter actually says:

1. *But there were false prophets also among the people (Israel), even as there will be*

false teachers among you who secretly shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2. *And many shall follow their destructive ways, through whom the way of the truth will be blasphemed.*

3. *And through covetousness shall they with feigned words [or fakery] exploit you: whose destruction slumbers not.*

4. *For if God spared not the messengers (Israelites) that sinned, but cast them into dark pits of Tartaroo to be kept in judgment.*

II Peter 2:1-4

The King James translators put "hell" in place of "Tartaroo." Some translations preferred to render it "tartarus hell." But the Greek text says only "Tartaroo."

Commentaries confess that they don't know what the word "Tartaroo" means, but they assume it means a burning hell because the churches have defined it thus. Pagan theologians invented their own definition of this word, and mainstream dictionaries simply followed suit. They all admit they don't know what it means, so the pagan definition was adopted by default.

Fortunately, for us there is a better way to arrive at truth than to rely on pagan mythology. It just so happens that there was a location in Asia called "Tartary" or "Tartaroo." This region was associated with the Mongolian Tartars. The term "Tartaroo" predates the Tartars of the middle ages, but the history of the Tartars, and Tartaroo, gives us a clue as to the possible meaning of the original word. "Tartary" or "Tartaroo" – the region of Mongolian Tartars – is remembered for its godlessness and spiritual darkness. It connotes a lack of the light of Christ. "Pits of darkness" didn't mean literal caves or pits under the ground. Rather it was a metaphor for regions devoid of the light of Christ. Therefore, "Tartary" (Tartaroo) or "dark pits of Tartaroo," are areas devoid of the light of Christ. Thus, the term represents God's judgment upon Israelites ... in regions where God withdrew his light and left the condemned inhabit-

ants in outer darkness.

When the reprobate Israelites were put away (sent away, divorced) they had the choice of repenting and seeking God's grace, or continuing in their rebellion in a Tartaroo-like darkness without God's presence and without the faith and light of Christ.

9. *The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to hold (imprison) the unjust, being cut off in a day of judgment.*

20. *For if after they have escaped the corruptions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.*

21. *For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.*

22. *But it is happened to them according to the true proverb, The dog returned to his own vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.*

II Peter 2:9, 20-22

Peter then prompts them with examples of their ancestors who were not spared, and some who were spared. Noah and his immediate family were spared, while others around him (including relatives) were not spared. Lot and his daughters were spared out of Sodom and Gomorrah, while the rest were not spared.

Once you are disabused of pagan superstition, and the mythological "Hell" doctrine, then you can see that Peter was referring to flesh-and-blood mortals. The word "angel" means "messenger." God commissioned Israelites to be his messengers. Therefore, it is apparent that Peter is talking about Israelite messengers who sinned and "fell." They were put away into the outer darkness of Godless foreign regions. It happened in Moses' day, and it happened again in 700-600 BC when Israel went into captivity. It can still happen today.

We know that these were Israelites because verse two refers to false

prophets among the people (among Israel) upon whom swift destruction came.

Mythology mongers have taken the Bible and turned it into a wild and fantastic tale of so-called celestial beings falling to Earth from the sky. Pagan mythology uses metaphoric illustrations (as sometimes used in the Bible) and presents them as literal nonsense.

In Hebrews 3 we read more about God's judgment upon Israelites of Moses' day:

7. *Wherefore as the holy spirit says, To day if you will hear his voice,*

8. *Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness (Nu. 16):*

9. *When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.*

10. *Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.*

11. *So I swore in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.*

12. *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*

13. *But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

14. *For we are made partakers of Christ (i.e., branches on the rootstock), if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end;*

15. *While it is said, Today if you will hear the voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation.*

16. *For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.*

17. *But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?*

Hebrews 3:7-17

This passage refers to the Chil-

dren of Israel at the time of their exodus out of Egypt – many of whom sinned, provoked God, and **fell** in the wilderness.

18. *And to whom did he swear that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?*

19. *So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

Hebrews 3:18-19

Unbelief is the problem in all cases. Unbelief caused the natural branches to be broken out, but belief made it possible for them to be grafted back in. Belief also made it possible for the unnatural branches to be grafted in. Belief is all-important. Paul tells the non-Israelites that if Israelites were not spared for unbelief, then beware because neither will non-Israelites be spared.

These were two different olives with two different natures. It stands to reason that a natural olive branch could be grafted back into its own rootstock more easily than a wild olive could be grafted in. The gospel was sent expressly to the natural branches, but others in the nations heard it as well. Many heard it, received it, and became followers of Christ.

GRAFTING DOESN'T CHANGE GENETICS

As I stated before, "grafting in" does **not** imply race mixing or miscegenation. Grafting is not cross-breeding. Grafting means plugging into a source of nourishment ... it has nothing to do with procreation.

As the graft metaphor illustrates: nourishment (spirit) – not genetics – is shared through grafting.

As I have already pointed out, in horticulture when a branch from one tree is grafted into another tree, the grafted branch does not change its species. It merely receives new nourishment from the new source. If you graft an orange branch into a lemon rootstock, the orange graft continues to be an orange branch, and it continues to produce oranges ... not lemons. It doesn't become a lemon, or

even part lemon. It remains 100% orange. And interestingly, it is a common practice for orange growers to graft orange scions onto lemon rootstocks.

Faith is not limited to one race. A non-Israelite can develop faith the same as an Israelite. However, races were created separate and should remain separate. It is the natural order of God's creation. The idea of mixing races is a phenomenon of modern-day confusion. We Israelites are commissioned to be examples to the world so that others may see God's holiness and salvation through us.

Miscegenation destroys one's race. The change is not reversible in the flesh.

The terms "holy" and "saint" both come from the Greek "hagios" which means "SEPARATE." Holy spirit, therefore, is motivation to be separate. Saints, by definition, choose to be separate. **Being holy means choosing to be separate!**

Israel is to be "holy" (separate) both spiritually and racially. Race mixing destroys genetic holiness (separateness), just as religion mixing destroys spiritual holiness (separateness).

ROMANS 11:25 FULLNESS OF THE NATIONS

For brethren, lest you should become arrogant, I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery; that hardness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the nations has come in.

THE mystery, which Paul explains, is that hardness (blindness) was upon unrepentant Israel "until the fullness of the nations had come in" – or, in other words, until the gospel had done its work in the nations.

It is interesting how the churches interpret the word "mystery." The typical church view of a "mystery" is an occult enigma ordained to prevent us from understanding it. Church dogma contains mysteries that members must believe but never understand. Church members must accept and believe unknowable, unreasonable, nonsensical mysteries ... with nonsensical blind faith.

The Catholic church, of course, is particularly fond of mysteries. Some years ago I met a lady who was raised in a Catholic home and as a child was sent to a Catholic school. She told me of her experience.

One day in one of her classes, her teacher stated that Catholics believe in the doctrine of the Trinity. The nun told her that the Trinity Godhead is simultaneously one person and three persons. The little girl raised her hand and said, "I don't understand." The nun replied, "You're not supposed to understand. It's a mystery." She was told to not try to make sense of it.

Needless to say, this was confusing to the girl. The

nun then mentioned that God died on the cross ... even though He cannot die. The girl raised her hand again and said, "Sister, I can't understand this. This doesn't make sense." By now the nun was getting impatient with the girl. In fact, she became so angry she threw a book at the girl, hitting her on the head and knocking her unconscious.

The next thing the girl knew, she was being picked up off the floor. They called her mother, and the little girl and her mother went to the principal's office and were told, "Your daughter will be deemed a heretic if she doesn't accept Catholic mysteries, and she will be excommunicated. Furthermore, if we excommunicate her she will go to Hell."

So her mother took the girl aside and said, "Look, we don't want you going to Hell. So would you please quit questioning these things, and just accept them?" The little girl, realizing she was in a tight spot, replied, "OK, I won't ask any more questions." The blow on the head, and the threat of going to Hell, did the trick. Intimidation convinced her to shut up and at least pretend to accept the religious nonsense of the church. She learned that church people are protective of their superstitions and pagan traditions.

Pagan gods don't make sense. They are unknowable, illogical, and capricious. The churches have adopted this pagan model for their gods, like the "unknown god" Paul refers to when speaking to the Athenians in Acts 17:23. Church doctrine is generally Paganism ... with Biblical names and titles substituted for pagan names and titles. And yet churchgoers remain blindly loyal. How paganized does a church have to get before its members begin to ask questions?

Paul speaks of a "mystery" ... but not in the way that the pagans define mystery. If you research the word in Greek (*musterion*) you'll find it does not mean "something unknowable." Rather, it means **SOMETHING NOT YET REVEALED OR UNDERSTOOD.**

Mysteries cease to be mysteries once they are understood. Indeed, Paul explained this "mystery" ... and made it no longer a mystery. The goal of a true Christian is to solve mysteries – not enshrine them. Pagans enshrine mysteries, and then use them to create fear and superstition to manipulate and control people.

Paul said he didn't want his Roman brothers to be ignorant of the mystery. He didn't want them to merely accept something they didn't understand. He wanted to explain this mystery to them, make them understand it, then it would no longer be a mystery.

So Paul explained this mystery to them and disabused them of their ignorance. He destroyed the mystery, and replaced it with knowledge. True Christians resolve mysteries. Pagans, however, preserve and enshrine mysteries.

The mystery Paul explained is this: hardness (blindness) in part had happened to Israel, until the fullness of the nations should come in. PART OF ISRAEL WAS HARDENED (as Pharaoh was hardened to facilitate the demonstration of God's love for Israel). Something extraordinary was happening in Paul's day, something that Israelites who were hardened couldn't understand or explain because their spiritual eyes were not functioning. But to those with eyes

and ears, Paul's words were understood.

The reason some branches had been broken off and others were being grafted in, is because part of Israel was in disbelief. God was using their blindness to facilitate a work that He was doing in the nations. Part of Israel would remain blinded until this work, this "fullness of the nations," was accomplished.

"The fullness of the nations" would come to pass when the gospel had fully done its work in the nations ... to bring repentance and redemption to Israelites, and to introduce Israel's God to as many non-Israelites as would hear and see. The gospel was sent to Israelites, but in the process of going to Israel it was also heard by non-Israelites, and SOME of them benefited from it.

QUESTION: If we begin to question the divine mysteries of the Christian faith, wouldn't that be divisive to not only our faith, but our unity?

ROMANS 11:26-36 THE NATIONS LEARN OBEDIENCE THROUGH ISRAEL'S DISOBEDIENCE

And according as it is written, all Israel will be saved in this manner: The Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

For this is my covenant to them, when I shall take away their sins.

As concerning the gospel, they (*Israel*) are enemies for your (*nationals*) sakes: but concerning the calling-out, they (*Israel*) are beloved for their fathers' sakes.

For the gifts and calling of God are without regret.

For as you (nationals) sometime disbelieved God, yet now you were shown mercy through their (Israel's) disbelief:

Even so these (Israel) now disbelieve resulting in mercy to you (nationals) so that they (Israel) also may obtain mercy.

For God has concluded them all together in disbelief, that He might have mercy upon all.

O the depth of the riches and of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unquestionable are his judgments, and his ways above fault!

For who knew the Lord's mind? or who has been his counselor?

Or who has first given to Him, so that it should be repaid to him?

For because of Him, and through Him, and for Him, are all things: to whom be glory into the ages, Amen.

THese passages are often misunderstood. At first glance verse 26 seems to say that ALL Israel will be saved. But upon closer examination Paul didn't exactly say that. Instead, his statement is preceded and followed by qualifying phrases: "according as it is written" (per prophecy) and "in this manner" (per his explanation that preceded the statement). Therefore, Israel's salvation is defined by those qualifiers.

The salvation to which Paul referred would reach to all Israel – but it would be up to each Israelite to choose to accept and keep that salvation or reject it ... as in verse 11 where he says that "salvation has come to the nations." Not all people in the nations, Israelite or non-Israelite, would accept that salvation. It is one thing for salvation to come ... and yet another thing for that salvation to be received and kept. Jesus offered salvation to all Israel. All Israel was issued forgiveness,

and they all were called to repent and return to God. He issued a general amnesty. Some heard and responded to the call, and some heard and rejected the call. Those who responded positively became "the called-out." Those who did not respond positively returned to their old ways ... like the sow and the dog. Thus, salvation came to all Israel, but only the called-out accepted and believed.

The salvation of Jesus is like saving a drowning man. You can pluck the dying man out of his would-be watery grave just in time to save his life. But after being rescued he may choose to return to his former error, and put himself back in danger of drowning ... unless he repents and changes his ways. By this logic, Jesus rescued Israel and gave them new "life" (spiritual life). But that life remained only with the ones who valued and believed in it. All Israel was saved and offered life. But not all Israel valued and kept that life. The called were many, but the called-out were few (Mtt. 22:14).

In verse 28 Paul is speaking to non-Israelites. In this verse "you" means non-Israelites, and "they" means Israelites. The Israelites ("they") were being called out. The call was not addressed to non-Israelites, but some heard it as it went to Israel.

Two different factions are clearly delineated.

Paul says, "they" (Israelites) are enemies for "your" (nationals) sakes." Israelites were issued a call from God, through Jesus. That call echoed through the nations and was heard also by some non-Israelites.

Furthermore, Paul points out that once the fullness of the nations was brought in (when the call had gone to all the nations) then more Israelites would notice the non-Israelites who had come to Christ, and would get jealous and also come to Christ. So this process of grafting worked two things: it brought non-Israelites to Christ, and through jealousy it also brought more Israelites to Christ.

The bottom line is this: whether you are an Israelite or a non-Israelite, there's no help for you outside of Christ. Everything comes down to this.

God has concluded everybody in unbelief ... until they accept Christ. Without his grace, everybody is in the same predicament.

God's grace came to Israel first, then secondarily to the nationals.

SOLVING THE MYSTERY

Verse 33 tells us that God's ways are above ours. His ways are unquestionable and faultless, and man is unable to disprove or gainsay Him. This is NOT to say that God's ways are unknowable. They are knowable when they are revealed. However, even before they are revealed they are beyond question. Man's knowledge may be questioned, but not God's. In I Corinthians Paul says that men know only in part:

9. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10. But when that which is complete is come, then that which is in part shall fail.

12. For now we are looking through an obscure mirror; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then I shall know also as I am known.

I Corinthians 13:9-10, 12

Men can know only in part. That's why men should continue to learn all their lives. To learn is to change. Learning makes knowledge more complete, and the old knowledge fails. Man's knowledge is always in part.

Pagan philosophy teaches that mysteries are sacred, and that we should worship the mysteries and never expect to understand them. That is the method of pagan religions (as in churches). That is how Priestcraft controls and manipulates people. People who will not solve things are asking to be deceived. Willingness to be deceived equals being deceptive. Churchgoers commonly let themselves be deceived by mindlessly accepting mysteries without questioning them. People who like to be deceived are themselves deceivers.

"Knowing in part" does not mean accepting mysteries. "Knowing in part" does not mean "not knowing."

"Knowing in part" is knowing ... but not knowing all. It is the normal state of every man who is learning and growing. Men should be in a continual process of asking questions and looking for answers ... refusing to settle for nonsensical mysteries.

GOD IS JUST

Paul often asks rhetorical questions. For instance, he asks who has ever known God's mind? And from whom did God ever need counsel? From whom did God ever receive, so as to be in debt? All of the answers are obvious. God is above all, and everything comes from Him. His creation depends upon Him, not the other way around. All things are from Him, including the privilege of knowing and following His Son.

Man cannot criticize or advise God, any more than a toddler can criticize or advise his mother. God wants us to examine his ways, and prove them, but we simply cannot be God's judge ... any more than the clay can judge the potter. We must believe that God is God. That's the basis for faith. If you can't begin with at least that much, then your eyes do not see and your ears do not hear.

And so, when God does something that we don't understand, or that we dislike, we must approach it carefully ... and never make the mistake of thinking that God is wrong. Never take God in vain or for granted. Rather, we must ask Him to let us understand ... and we must have faith that He can make us understand.

People, including churchgoers, tend to imagine themselves as ultimate arbiters of all truth, thinking that truth must align itself with them ... in stead of the other way around. Anything, therefore, which does not align with their thinking and prejudices, is summarily dismissed as "silly" or "unreasonable" ... based upon their own preferences. This tendency has produced as many standards and religions as there are people. Each has his own set of standards and his own definition of "God."

Man's problem is that he does not yet know that he is not God. Man

knows only in part; man is inept without God ... a lesson learned by Job through great tribulation.

We are investigating, proving, learning, and growing. As long as we have breath in our bodies we must continue learning. Otherwise we are spiritually dead.

How many people have lived their entire lives in a state of spiritual death? As someone once said, it is a shame to reach the end of your life, never having lived.

QUESTION: How can I know whether or not I am one of the "called-out"?

END OF ROMANS CHAPTER ELEVEN (Pt. 2)

ROMANS ELEVEN (Pt. 2)

POINTS TO REMEMBER:

1. Paul's Letter to The Romans was written to his Israelite kinsmen in Rome, instructing them in the Gospel of The Kingdom. However, in Chapter 11, some verses were to non-Israelites ("wild olives"). For instance:

13. "*I speak to you nationals,...*"

17. "*... you, being a wild olive ...*"

2. Millions of Israelites were exiled or taken out of Palestine between 600-700 BC when they went into captivity. These exiled Israelites settled in Asia, Europe, and other countries. Some ended up in Rome.

Then, in the 5th century BC, the Persian King Cyrus permitted a few thousand Israelites of the Babylonian captivity to return to Jerusalem.

Then, in the years just preceding Paul's ministry, some of these repatriated Israelites were again driven out of Jerusalem and Judea due to political and religious persecution by Jerusalem's wicked hierarchy.

Some of these recent exiles also were in Rome and heard Paul's letter.

3. The nations benefited from God's rescue of Israel. Some of the nationals observed it and learned from it. Israel's God was thus glorified in the eyes of the nationals, and some of them developed faith in Israel's God.

3. Paul's illustration of "grafting" represents tapping into the spirit of God ... NOT mixing with the genetics of Israel. Non-Israelites of Paul's day were "grafted" into the "rootstock" ... which was the spirit of Abraham (not the flesh).

4. Shoots (scions) grafted to a different tree always retain their own genetics. The graft always retains its own genetic integrity separate from the tree. Grafting is not genetic.

5. Faith (belief) is required for the graft to succeed. Without faith, the graft will not grow. Likewise, the

natural branches also require faith to grow. Otherwise they get cut off.

6. Anyone who comes to God must do so through faith. Genetics do not make men believe. Only spirit can do that ... regardless of race.

7. In the Bible, a "mystery" is not unsolvable or unknowable. It is merely something that is not yet revealed or understood. A solved or revealed mystery ceases to be a mystery.

ANSWERS:

pg. 2

God forgave Israel, but He did not remarry her. To do so is against his law which forbids remarrying a former wife (Dt. 24:1-4). Instead, He gave birth to a new Bride, a reborn remnant called out from fleshly Israel.

God gave this new bride (called New Jerusalem - Rev. 21:1-3) to his Son, Jesus, and their marriage was the New Covenant. The venue of this new spiritual city is Christendom: the Kingship (Reign) of Christ. It began two millennia ago.

Old Israel and her Old Covenant represented the weakness of flesh; New Jerusalem and the New Covenant represent the new-born spirit and eonian life in Christ.

pg. 3

To suggest that Paul claimed that racial differences were no longer viable is silly. God created the different and unique races. To intentionally blind ourselves to his created order is, at best, folly.

Secondly, the terms "Jew" (Judean) and "Greek" (Hellen) are nationalities, **not races**. The quote from Gal. 3:27-28 is not about race or genetics. It is about new life in Christ.

Jesus did not do away with race and gender. Paul was referring to "the raising" – i.e., the new birth: "eonian life" ... which did not pertain to race or gender.

This question was taken up also by Jesus who said that the raising is not about fleshly pursuits like marriage, but about spirit (Mtt. 22:30). Jesus was not announcing a change in God's created order for biological life. Rather, He was defining a change in the spirit that drives men. Race, gender, and taking wives pertain to biologics, not to eonian life.

pg. 7

In the true Christian faith there are truths yet unrevealed and yet unlearned – but there are **no** "unknowable mysteries."

Paganism is fake mysteries and fake religion: i.e., superstition. Pagans enshrine mysteries (superstitions), because doctrinal enigmas enhance a mythological approach to religion.

Pagan religion never makes sense. It calls confusion "faith."

On the other hand, real faith comes from a true acquaintance with the object of faith: in our case, God. Knowing God gives us faith in Him.

Faith does not come from accepting unanswerable and nonsensical mysteries. Unanswerable mysteries cause confusion, and confusion destroys faith.

pg. 8

This is a difficult question to answer ... because only those who are truly called out CAN know the difference.

In essence, if you have to ask the question ... it may mean you have not yet come out. Or, perhaps, you are newly called out and have not yet discerned the difference.

In any case, if you think you may not yet be called out, you should strive to listen more carefully. It is possible that you haven't been listening.

God calls at His discretion. Listen carefully and prayerfully; use your spiritual ears ... and you'll hear.