

prophet complained to God about the people of Israel and said, ³“LORD, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too.”*

⁴And do you remember God’s reply? He said, “No, I have 7,000 others who have never bowed down to Baal!”*

⁵It is the same today, for a few of the people of Israel* have remained faithful because of God’s grace—his undeserved kindness in choosing them. ⁶And since it is through God’s kindness, then it is not by their good works. For in that case, God’s grace would not be what it really is—free and undeserved.

⁷So this is the situation: Most of the people of Israel have not found the favor of God they are looking for so earnestly. A few have—the ones God has chosen—but the hearts of the rest were hardened. ⁸As the Scriptures say,

“God has put them into a deep sleep.
To this day he has shut their eyes so they do not see,
and closed their ears so they do not hear.”*

⁹Likewise, David said,

“Let their bountiful table become a snare,
a trap that makes them think all is well.
Let their blessings cause them to stumble,
and let them get what they deserve.

¹⁰Let their eyes go blind so they cannot see,
and let their backs be bent forever.”*

¹¹Did God’s people stumble and fall beyond recovery? Of course not! They were disobedient, so God made salvation available to the Gentiles. But he wanted his own people to become jealous and claim it for themselves. ¹²Now if the Gentiles were enriched because the people of Israel turned down God’s offer of salvation, think how much greater a blessing the world will share when they finally accept it.

¹³I am saying all this especially for you Gentiles. God has appointed me as the apostle to the Gentiles. I stress this, ¹⁴for I want somehow to make the people of Israel jealous of what you Gentiles have, so I might save some of them. ¹⁵For since their rejection meant that God offered salvation to the rest of the world, their acceptance will be even more wonderful. It will be life for those who were dead! ¹⁶And since Abraham and the other patriarchs were holy, their descendants will also be holy—just as the entire batch of dough is holy because the portion given as an offering is holy. For if the roots of the tree are holy, the branches will be, too.

¹⁷But some of these branches from Abraham’s tree—some of the people of Israel—have been broken off. And you Gentiles, who were branches from a wild olive tree, have been grafted in. So now you also receive the blessing God has promised Abraham and his children, sharing in the rich nourishment from the root of God’s special olive tree. ¹⁸But you must not brag about being grafted in to replace the branches that were broken off. You are just a branch, not the root.

¹⁹“Well,” you may say, “those branches were broken off to make room for me.” ²⁰Yes, but remember—those branches were broken off because they didn’t believe in Christ, and you are there because you do believe. So don’t think highly of yourself, but fear what could happen. ²¹For if God did not spare the original branches, he won’t* spare you either.

11:3 ¹Kgs 19:10, 14. **11:4** ¹Kgs 19:18. **11:5** Greek *for a remnant*. **11:8** Isa 29:10; Deut 29:4. **11:9-10** Ps 69:22-23 (Greek version). **11:21** Some manuscripts read *perhaps he won’t*.

²²Notice how God is both kind and severe. He is severe toward those who disobeyed, but kind to you if you continue to trust in his kindness. But if you stop trusting, you also will be cut off. ²³And if the people of Israel turn from their unbelief, they will be grafted in again, for God has the power to graft them back into the tree. ²⁴You, by nature, were a branch cut from a wild olive tree. So if God was willing to do something contrary to nature by grafting you into his cultivated tree, he will be far more eager to graft the original branches back into the tree where they belong.

God’s Mercy Is for Everyone

²⁵I want you to understand this mystery, dear brothers and sisters,* so that you will not feel proud about yourselves. Some of the people of Israel have hard hearts, but this will last only until the full number of Gentiles comes to Christ. ²⁶And so all Israel will be saved. As the Scriptures say,

“The one who rescues will come from Jerusalem,*
and he will turn Israel* away from ungodliness.

²⁷And this is my covenant with them,
that I will take away their sins.”*

²⁸Many of the people of Israel are now enemies of the Good News, and this benefits you Gentiles. Yet they are still the people he loves because he chose their ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ²⁹For God’s gifts and his call can never be withdrawn. ³⁰Once, you Gentiles were rebels against God, but when the people of Israel rebelled against him, God was merciful to you instead. ³¹Now they are the rebels, and God’s mercy has come to you so that they, too, will share* in God’s mercy. ³²For God has imprisoned everyone in disobedience so he could have mercy on everyone.

³³Oh, how great are God’s riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his ways!

³⁴For who can know the LORD’s thoughts?
Who knows enough to give him advice?*

³⁵And who has given him so much
that he needs to pay it back?*

³⁶For everything comes from him and exists by his power and is intended for his glory. All glory to him forever! Amen.

A Living Sacrifice to God

12 And so, dear brothers and sisters,* I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.* ²Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

³Because of the privilege and authority* God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don’t think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.* ⁴Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, ⁵so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

⁶In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. ⁷If your gift is serving others, serve them well.

11:25 Greek *brothers*. **11:26a** Greek *from Zion*. **11:26b** Greek *Jacob*. **11:26-27** Isa 59:20-21; 27:9 (Greek version). **11:31** Other manuscripts read *will now share*; still others read *will someday share*. **11:34** Isa 40:13 (Greek version). **11:35** See Job 41:11. **12:1a** Greek *brothers*. **12:1b** Or *This is your spiritual worship*; or *This is your reasonable service*. **12:3a** Or *Because of the grace*; compare 1:5. **12:3b** Or *by the faith God has given you*; or *by the standard of our God-given faith*.

