

Bible Study of Romans Romans 11 (2)

A trial worth doing ...

The other day I was introduced to a simpler and yet highly effective method for increasing the discussion of the portion studied. This method does not *cancel* the thorough preparation needed *before* you came to the Bible study. Use the questions below, and even write a response, to work through this portion. But instead of discussing the questions and answers, you may want to make a trial of the following *discussion method*.

It is the four F's method in which you all try to contribute, on basis of your study, meditation and prayer, the following 4 questions:

Facts: what happened in this portion or what happenings are referred to?

Feelings: what did you feel when you read this passage? What feelings did it stir up?

Findings: What did you learn from this passage? What new insights or understanding did you gain?

Futures: How will you grow from this or how will this affect your life? What are you doing with the teaching in this passage?

Feel not obligated to veer off the 'established course' but sometimes an alternative method can bring some new life in the discussion time. May God bless it all.

Romans 11:12-23

In the first study on this chapter, we learned that though God rejected the greater part of the Jewish nation, He has not cast away His elect people among them. Paul himself as well as other Jews of his days had been shown grace. Just as in Elijah's day when God had reserved for Himself seven thousand men, so at the present time (Paul's time) there is a remnant chosen by grace (11:1-6). The rest God hardened and blinded through their unbelief (11:7-10).

In this hardening certain people (Romans 9:17, 18; 11:7,8) God is dealing with fallen sinful guilty creatures – not with innocent people. This hardening is a *judicial punishment* (punishment resulting from a judgment of God inflicted as result of their sins). God abandons sinners to their own corrupt nature. When God hardens an individual He is not forcing a good person, who wants to do right, to do evil but is punishing a sinner by giving him or her up to sin. Condemnation is always the result of personal crimes. We are in ourselves sinful and commit sin involuntarily. For their punishment, they are hardened and finally perish in their sins. Their destruction is the execution of a just sentence of God against sin. God knows what men left to their own inclinations will do; and as to those who are finally condemned, He determines to abandon them to their depraved inclinations, and hardens them in their rebellion against Him. (Freely quoted from Haldane)

1. How can the fall or decay of the Jews be the riches of the world of Gentiles?

2. Paul refers to 'their fullness' but what is meant with that?

3. What does Paul's question reveal?

vs. 13-14

4. That Paul is mainly set apart to minister to the Gentiles is a fact, but to boast about it seems uncalled for, as he wrote, "I magnify mine office." How do we explain such a statement in connection with the context?

5. Are we to live so that we make others jealous on what we received by grace? If so, how are we to do this? In what ways can we improve this among our own church family and for those beyond? Some churches allow testimonies in their services.

Vs. 15

6. Is this new information or further teaching on what he wrote earlier, if so, where earlier?

7. Is this 'revival from the dead' speaking about the Jews or Gentiles?

In the next verses, Paul adds a third argument to prove the future conversion of the Jewish nation. His own example of not being cast off was his first proof. The second place, he referred to the remnant according to the decree of God's election which proved that they are not devoted to destruction like Sodom and Gomorrah. His work of salvation among the Gentiles was to provoke the Jews to jealousy. He used two comparisons to evidence the truth of the hope for a final restoration of Israel as nation.

Vs. 16

8. Who are meant with the 'first fruits' and why are they 'holy?'

9. Is the 'root-branches' a different comparison as the 'first-fruits/lump?'

Vs. 17

10. What are the various things Paul taught here about the Gentiles' relationship to the Jewish nation?

vs. 18

11. Why did Paul need to insert this warning? How can we be guilty of this?

vs. 19-21

12. What is the intention of those who might say the objection in vs. 19 to Paul's instruction in vs. 18?

13. What does Paul's answer reinforce as to the cause of anyone's salvation?

Vs. 22

14. What concluding argument did Paul add to the warning against the Gentile believers?

Haldane concluded, God's goodness is no evidence that He will not punish the guilty; and the most dreadful punishment of the guilty is consistent with the existence of supreme goodness in the Divine character. That God will yet lay righteousness to the line, and judgment to the plummet, is not seen in His treatment of Israel, whom He had so long spared after they had sinned against Him. Let none imagine, then, that He will spare them if guilty, because they have the name of being His people. Rather let them dread the more terrible vengeance on that account. The evidence that we are the true objects of the goodness of God here mentioned, is, that we continue in it, by continuing in the Gospel.