

ROMANS XI

July 27, 2024

God's planning far surpasses human ways.

Let us not judge, but let us love and praise.

With Romans XI we come to the third and last of St Paul's three full Chapters meant to explain to Gentiles how so many members of the Chosen Race of the Old Testament can be at that moment causing scandal by refusing the New Testament. On his own missionary journeys St Paul repeatedly met with violent opposition from the Chosen Race, so he knew very well how badly they can behave. See I Thess. II, 14–16, where he says they "displease God" and "oppose all men," but "God's wrath has come upon them at last." St Paul would not have been surprised at all by their latest and cruellest "mowing of the lawn" in Gaza.

However, in Romans XI there is no trace of any such "anti-Semitism" (as the Chosen Race chooses to call it, by which they mean any opposition whatsoever to anything that anyone of their Race does or says). St Paul may well have guessed that any such evocation of their crimes would have turned the Gentile

readers of his Epistle only further away from understanding the infidelity of the Jews' rejection of Christ. Instead he gives three major reasons why the Providence of God may have allowed that infidelity. Firstly (1–10), it is only partial; secondly (11–24) it is highly useful, and thirdly (28–32) it is only temporary. By lifting his readers to a much higher level than Jewish crimes, St Paul prepares the way to end his three Chapters, IX to XI, with a brief hymn to the glorious mystery of God's unsearchable ways (33–36).

Thus God has not Himself rejected His people of the Old Testament, because in every generation there is a remnant of

Jews saved by grace. St Paul himself is Jewish by blood, and when Jews truly convert to Christ, they can make excellent Catholics, because unlike Gentile converts, they are, so to speak, returning home. So a chosen minority of Jews reach their heavenly goal, even if a large majority are blinded (1-10).

Secondly, the infidelity of Jews is highly useful, because the Gentiles' conversion is designed to provoke them to jealousy, and if their rejection of Christ opened the way for Gentiles to be saved in God's Church, then their reversion to Christ at world's end will be the resurrection of the Gentiles. Moreover, the basic Jewish vine-stock (e.g. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) is still holy, even if many Jews have broken off it, and so let Gentile Christians, who are mere grafts onto that vine-stock, remember that they too can break off it, even if they can be re-grafted onto it. In any case, all Gentiles depend, as Christians, on that vine-stock for their Christianity (11-24).

And thirdly, the infidelity of the Jews to the Gospel of Christ and to the New Testament is only temporary, because at world's end, when the Gospel has been preached to all the Gentiles, the remaining Jews will convert collectively, i.e. as a whole, albeit with exceptions. For indeed the Jews are still the chosen, gifted and called People of God. The Sacred Heart has never forgotten His own People, as He will show when He converts them just before the end of the world. In the meantime they disbelieve in Him in order to obtain the same mercy which He granted to the once disbelieving Gentiles (30-32).

And by way of conclusion for all three Chapters on the mystery of the Chosen Race of His Old Testament rejecting His New Testament, St Paul glorifies the marvellous and unfathomable ways of God. For 2000 years since the Incarnation Our Lord has not been understood by the large majority of His own People, and moreover, since "The higher they are, the harder they

fall," then not only did they reject Him, but the Chosen Race of God made themselves into the chosen instruments of Satan, as we have seen since last October in Gaza, in such wilful cruelty towards the Palestinians as to have been condemned all over the world. And did God exterminate them, or did St Paul rail against their enmity to God and man (I Thess. II, 16)? No, God made use of their inhumanity as a constant scourge to lay across the backs of unfaithful Catholics to bring these latter back to Him, and He inspires St Paul to discern what profit He draws from their enmity towards Him. Let us imitate St Paul, if we can.

Kyrie eleison