

Romans 11:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

Analysis

For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world—apobolē (ἀποβολή, "casting away") parallels "fall" and "diminishing" (v. 12). Israel's temporary rejection facilitated katallagē kosmou (καταλλαγή κόσμου, "reconciling of the world")—Gentile salvation. Paul now poses his strongest a fortiori argument: **what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?** (ei mē zōē ek nekron, εἰ μὴ ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν).

The phrase "life from the dead" could be metaphorical (spiritual revival) or literal (physical resurrection). Many Reformed interpreters see this as the general resurrection—Israel's restoration will coincide with or trigger the eschaton. Others see it as metaphorical: the revival of Israel will be so glorious it resembles resurrection. Either way, Paul envisions Israel's future salvation as cosmically significant, ushering in the ultimate redemption. If their rejection blessed the world massively, their acceptance will bring eschatological consummation.

Historical Context

Jewish expectation linked national restoration to the resurrection of the dead (Ezekiel 37:1-14; Daniel 12:2). Paul uses resurrection language to convey the magnitude of Israel's future salvation—it will be nothing short of new creation.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the progression from 'reconciliation' to 'life from the dead' show the escalating glory of God's plan?
2. Does 'life from the dead' refer to the literal resurrection, or to spiritual revival, and what are the implications?
3. How should the hope of Israel's future glory affect Christian eschatology and mission today?

Interlinear Text

εἰ	γὰρ	ἡ	ἀποβολή	αὐτῶν	καταλλαγή	κόσμου
if	For	G3588	the casting away	of them	be the reconciling	of the world
G1487	G1063		G580	G846	G2643	G2889
τίς	ἡ	πρόσληψις	εἰ	μὴ	ζωή	ἐκ νεκρῶν
what	G3588	shall the receiving	if	G3361	life	from the dead
G5101		G4356	G1487		G2222	G1537 G3498

Additional Cross-References

Luke 15:24 (Parallel theme): For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

Luke 15:32 (Parallel theme): It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

Revelation 11:11 (Parallel theme): And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

Ephesians 1:10 (Parallel theme): That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

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