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ISRAEL'S SALVATION: THE MEANING OF
"ALL ISRAEL" IN ROMANS 11:26

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
William Chi-Chau Fung

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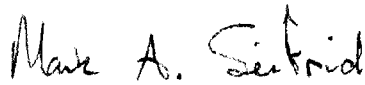
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"ALL ISRAEL" IN ROMANS 11:26

William Chi-Chau Fung

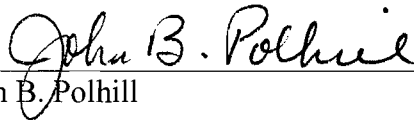
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Date Mark A. Seifrid May 11, 2004

**THESES Ph.D. .F963i
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To Kam See,
my wife of noble character,
to Kam-Yan and Wood-Yan, my delight and joy,
always supportive in prayer, to my parents for
raising me, and to my Savior for
guiding me each
step of my
spiritual
journey.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xi
PREFACE	xiv
 Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION	1
Introduction	1
Thesis	6
Method	7
History of Interpretation	9
Supersessionism	10
Premillennialism and Dispensationalism	12
Two-Covenant Theology	14
Other Views of the Salvation of Israel	17
Interpretations of Romans 11:26a	19
“All Israel” Refers to the Ethnic Nation of Israel as a Whole	20
Objections to Taking “All Israel” as the Ethnic Israel Nation	25
“All Israel” Refers to the Elect among the Israelites throughout History	26
Objections to Taking “All Israel” as the Elect Israel	28

Chapter	Page
“All Israel” Refers to All of God’s People, Jews and Gentiles Altogether	29
Objections to Taking “All Israel” as All of God’s People, Jews and Gentiles Altogether	31
Other Interpretations of “All Israel” in Romans 11:26a	32
Summary	34
2. PAUL’S BASIS FOR THE HOPE OF SALVATION OF ALL ISRAEL	35
Introduction	35
Paul’s Use of the Old Testament	35
Qumran Exegesis	40
Philonic Exegesis	41
Affirmation of Paul’s Hermeneutics	42
Paul’s Hermeneutics	45
Scripture is Inspired and Authoritative	47
Scripture Testifies to the Gospel	47
Scripture Speaks Today	48
Scripture is Spiritual	48
Typology	49
Paul’s Use of Isaiah in Romans 11:26, 27	50
The Theological Context of Isaiah	51
Salvation of Israel in Isaiah	51
Redeemer	53
Zion	55

Chapter	Page
The redeemed Israel/Jacob	58
Covenant	59
Inclusion of Gentiles	60
Context Analysis of Isaiah 59:20	62
Context Analysis of Isaiah 27:9	65
Paul's Combination of the Isaiah Texts	67
Textual Analysis of Paul's Quotation of the Isaiah Texts	69
Conclusion of Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans 11:26, 27	78
The Meanings and Relationship of "Israel" and "Jacob" in the Old Testament	79
"Jacob" in the Old Testament	79
"Israel" in the Old Testament	80
The calling of Israel	85
Israel as the chosen people	87
"Israel" and "Jacob" Used Together	88
Conclusion Concerning "Jacob" and "Israel"	89
3. BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND OF THE USE OF "ALL ISRAEL"	91
Introduction	91
"All Israel" in the Old Testament	91
"All Israel" in the Pentateuch	92
"All Israel" in Pre-Exilic Historical Books (Joshua to Kings)	93
Joshua	94

Chapter	Page
Judges	94
1-2 Samuel	95
1-2 Kings	96
“All Israel” in the Chronicles	97
“All Israel in the Other Exilic and Post-Exilic Books	103
Conclusion of the Meaning of “All Israel” in the Old Testament	104
“All Israel” in Early Jewish Literature	106
“All Israel” in Apocrypha	106
1 Esdras (first century BC)	107
“All Israel” in Pseudopigrapha	109
Testament of Joseph 20:5 (second century BC)	109
Jubilees 50:9 (second century BC)	110
Testament of Reuben 6:8 (second century)	110
Testament of Benjamin 10:2-11 (second century BC)	110
Pseudophilo (first century BC)	111
“All Israel” in Dead Sea Scrolls (200 BC-70 AD)	112
Cairo Damascus 3:8-16 (100 BC)	112
CD 15:5-16:1 (4Q270 6 i21)	114
4Q164 (4QpIsa) 1:1	114
4Q 169 (4QpNah) (50-100 BC)	115
“All Israel” in Philo and Josephus	118
“All Israel” in Rabbinic Literature	118

Chapter	Page
Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1-3 (second century AD)	118
Conclusion of the Usage of “All Israel” in Early Jewish Literature	121
“All Israel” in the New Testament	123
Conclusion	124
4. SALVATION OF ISRAEL IN ROMANS	125
Introduction	125
Biblical and Theological Context of Romans	125
A Gospel for All Who Believe (Rom 1:1-17)	126
All Have Sinned (Rom 1:18-2:24)	127
The Law and Circumcision Cannot Save (Rom 2:12-29)	128
Jews Are Not Better Off (Rom 3:1-31)	129
Salvation by Faith in Christ for All (Rom 3:21-4:25)	129
Faith Does Not Nullify Law (Rom 4:1-25)	130
Grace Abounds (Romans 5-8)	131
Romans 9-11	132
The Fallen Israel (Romans 9)	134
The Elect Israel	135
Righteousness by Faith	135
Israel Has Been Disobedient	138
Israel Has Stumbled But Will Be Restored	139
Israel and the World	140
The Lump and the Olive Tree (Rom 11:16-24)	143

Chapter	Page
Salvation of Israel (Rom 11:25-32)	144
Christ as the Minister of Truth for the Circumcised	144
The Gospel as the Mystery Revealed (Rom 16:25-27)	147
Exegesis of Romans 11:25-32	149
Romans 11:25	150
The mystery	150
Hardness from a portion of Israel	154
Romans 11:26a	159
Interpretation of the phrase καὶ οὕτως	159
The meaning of “all Israel”	164
Romans 11:26b-27	171
The promise of the Scriptures	171
The forgiveness of sins	171
The salvation from Zion	172
The salvation of the Jews	176
Romans 11:28	181
Romans 11:29	183
Romans 11:30-31	185
Romans 11:32	187
Conclusion: Salvation of Israel in Romans	188
5. DISCUSSION, APPLICATION, AND CONCLUSIONS	190
Introduction	190

Chapter	Page
Different Views of Salvation of Israel	190
“All Israel” as the Physical Descendants of Israel	191
“All Israel” as All the People of God	196
Special Interpretations of Romans 11	201
Paul is inconsistent	201
Deuteronomy 32 as background	202
“All Israel” as the Elect Israel	203
Objections to this view	204
The Two-Covenant Theology	207
Evangelism to the Jews	210
Conclusion	213
BIBLIOGRAPHY	218

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
BAGD	W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker, <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the NT and Other Early Christian Literature</i>
<i>BARev</i>	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
BevTh	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie, Tübingen
CD	Cairo (Genizah text of the) <i>Damascus (Document)</i>
<i>DLNTD</i>	<i>Dictionary of the Later New Testament & Its Developments</i>
EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>EvT</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GTA	Göttinger theologische Arbeiten
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>ITQ</i>	<i>Irish Theological Quarterly</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JES</i>	<i>Journal of Ecumenical Studies</i>

<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for The Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for The Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	Journal for The Study of the Old Testament – Supplement
<i>Jub.</i>	<i>Jubilees</i>
<i>KEK</i>	Meyers Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament.
<i>KuD</i>	<i>Kerygma und Dogma</i>
<i>LSJ</i>	Liddell-Scott-Jones, <i>Greek-English Lexicon</i>
<i>m. Sanh.</i>	<i>Mishnah Sanhedrin</i>
<i>NDBT</i>	<i>New Dictionary of Biblical Theology</i>
<i>NICNT</i>	New International Commentary on the New Testament
<i>NICOT</i>	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
<i>NIGTC</i>	New International Greek Testament Commentary
<i>NSBT</i>	New Studies in Biblical Theology
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>RevQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
<i>SAB</i>	Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie, Berlin
<i>SBL</i>	Society of Biblical Literature
<i>SBLMS</i>	Society of Biblical Literature, Monograph Series
<i>T. Benj.</i>	<i>Testament of Benjamin</i>
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i>
<i>T. Reub.</i>	<i>Testament of Reuben</i>

WBC	Word Bible Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
<i>ZThK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

PREFACE

The wisdom, kindness, counsel, and assistance of many have contributed to the present study. The professors at Southern Seminary have been especially supportive of my research. Worthy of special mention are the dissertation committee members: Drs. John B. Polhill, Daniel I. Block, and Mark A. Seifrid. I have learned in their classrooms and in the dissertation writing process. Their scholarship, piety, and humility have been most memorable. I would like to thank them all for their supportive spirit.

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All glory be to my Lord and Savior! Thanks for blessings beyond measure!

William Chi-Chau Fung

Louisville, Kentucky

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY OR RESEARCH

Introduction

In a recent article, Craig Blaising asks “whether in Christian theology there is a future for any ethnic, national Israel at all.”¹ The question concerning the future of ethnic Israel has baffled theologians in the history of the church. The fact that it is still being asked anew today shows that it is still a question of interest and relevance to many. How will the people of Israel be saved? What is Israel’s relationship with God today? Is there a future for an ethnic and national Israel in the plan of God? These are significant theological questions for both Israel and the Church, especially when the Church seeks to build a relationship with the Jews and to develop a mission program for them. This dissertation seeks to answer these questions through a study of Romans 11:25-32.

In the book of Romans, Paul logically and systematically delineates theological concepts of sin, righteousness of God, and salvation by faith through Jesus Christ. In Romans 9-11, he applies his theology to Israel. Do God’s dealings with Israel fit Paul’s theology in chapter 1 to 8? Heikki Räisänen points out that Romans 9-11 is a test case in Pauline exegesis. The conclusions drawn from interpreting these Scriptures readily reflect

¹Craig A. Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” *JETS* 44 (2001): 435.

the author's understanding of many central issues of New Testament interpretations.² As Moo points out, "The first clause of Romans 11:26 is the storm center in the interpretation of Romans 9-11 and of New Testament teaching about the salvation of the Jews in the future."³ In the end time, all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26). Who are the "all Israel"? When and how will "all Israel" be saved? In the past, at least three solutions have been suggested concerning the identity of "all Israel." First, "all Israel" represents all the people of Israel as an ethnic group. Second, "all Israel" represents the elect among the Israelites. Third, "all Israel" represents the total sum of believing Jews and Gentiles. In recent years, the first view has become widespread. Many scholars argue for this view from a two-covenant perspective, or from a premillennial eschatology, which holds that all Jews will turn to Christ at His second coming.

Previous approaches to the problem focus mainly on grammatical and syntactical analysis of Romans 11:25-32. Even though these approaches produce valuable results, there is a lack of a common ground for further discussion. This dissertation seeks to understand the meaning of Romans 11:26a from a different perspective. When the

²Heikki Räisänen, "Paul, God and Israel: Romans 9-11 in Recent Research," in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism: Essays in Tribute to Howard Clark Kee*, ed. Jacob Neusner, Earnest S. Frerichs, Peder Borgen, and Richard Horsley (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 178. See also Peter Stuhlmacher, "Zur Interpretation von Römer 11:25-32," in *Probleme biblischer Theologie*, Festschrift G. von Rad, ed. H. W. Wolff (München: C. Kaiser, 1971), 555; Werner G. Kümmel, "Die Probleme von Römer 9-11 in der gegenwärtigen Forschungslage," in *Heilsgeschehen und Geschichte*, (Marburg: N.G. Elwert, 1978), 2:245-46; and Günter Wasserberg, "Romans 9-11 and Jewish-Christian Dialogue: Prospects and Provisos," in *Reading Israel in Romans*, Romans through History and Cultures Series, ed. Cristina Grenholm and Daniel Patte (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), 176-77.

³Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 719.

Epistle to the Romans was being read out loud in worship in the days of Paul, how would the audience at that time have understood Paul's words, "and so all Israel will be saved"? The meaning of the term "all Israel" seems to be theologically loaded. How would a first-century Christian understand this phrase in the context of the book of Romans? To the audience of Paul, who are the "all Israel"?

Does the term "all Israel" have a consistent meaning as understood by a New Testament audience, or does the meaning of "all Israel" vary according to different contexts? These questions can be answered in one sense by a study of the usage of the term "all Israel" in the literature of the New Testament times, such as the Old Testament, the New Testament, and early Jewish literature.

The meaning of the clause "and so all Israel will be saved" is determined by its context. To understand this clause, scholars have tried to follow Paul's logic in Romans 9-11 and wrestled with the verses preceding Romans 11:26b. Nevertheless, not enough attention has been given to the following verses, whereby Paul provides the ground for his assertion in Romans 11:26. The claim that all Israel will be saved is based upon the promise that a Deliverer will come from Zion, and he will banish ungodliness from Jacob. These verses are quoted from Isaiah 59:20-21 and 27:9. One must understand the meaning of the promise before one can understand its fulfillment. Hence, a thorough study of the passages that Paul quotes is essential for one's comprehension of Paul's statement in Romans 11:26.

Peter Stuhlmacher argues that the Redeemer will not only come "for Zion," but also "from Zion." He refers to Isaiah 2:2-4., 4Qflor 1:12, 4 Ezra 13:35, and Micah 4:1-2., as he contends that Zion will be elevated in the end time, and the Messiah will appear

from Zion and accomplish his work of salvation and gathering of Israel.⁴ Schreiner argues that “Zion” in Romans 11:26b refers to the heavenly Jerusalem, from which Jesus will reappear.⁵ Hans-Martin Lübking contends that only at the return of the exalted Christ, coming from the heavenly Jerusalem will the whole of Israel be saved.⁶

On the other hand, Nanos argues that the clause “the Deliverer will come from Zion” in Romans 11:26 refers to the gospel being carried forth from Zion. “Paul’s role was in the service of Israel’s promised restoration: the Deliverer has come to Zion in that Jesus has been named the Christ of Israel, and now Paul is responsible for bringing this good news out ‘from Zion’ to the dispersed among the nations to complete the restoration of ‘all Israel,’ in this case to Rome.”⁷ It is evident that a variety of interpretations of these verses have been proposed. A proper understanding of Romans 11:25-32 can be arrived at when one firmly grasps the messages and contexts of the Old Testament passages, the context of the book of Romans, and the logical arguments of Paul in Romans 9-11.

Furthermore, Paul quotes Isaiah 59:20-21, a promise given to “Jacob,” to support his argument for the salvation of “Israel” in Romans 11:26. Is Paul identifying “Jacob” with “all Israel”? How do the terms “Israel” and “Jacob” relate to one another in the Old Testament? Who are the recipients of the promise of salvation proclaimed in

⁴Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans A Commentary*, trans Scott J. Hafemann (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), 171.

⁵Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 615.

⁶Hans-Martin Lübking, *Paulus und Israel im Römerbrief: Eine Untersuchung zu Römer 9-11* (New York: Peter Lang, 1986), 124.

⁷Mark D. Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul’s Letter* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 284.

Isaiah 59:20-21, 27:9, and Jeremiah 31:33. Block argues that when “Jacob” is used as a collective name for the people of Israel, it emphasizes the common ethnic origin of the people.⁸ A careful analysis of these Old Testament passages, and a study of the usage and relationship of the terms “Israel” and “Jacob” will shed light on the meaning of Romans 11:26, concerning the salvation of all Israel. We will focus our study in Isaiah texts in which the two terms are used in parallel to each other.

As Hasel points out, the question of the proper context is the root problem of Biblical interpretation.⁹ H. J. Kraus also concedes that the biblical context is decisive in determining the meaning of a given theme or subject.¹⁰ Hence, after we understand the meanings and contexts of Old Testament passages Paul quotes in Romans 11:26, 27, we will see how he applies these texts in Romans 11. The clause “and so all Israel will be saved” will be understood not only in the context of the book of Romans, but also in the context of Paul’s theology of salvation of Israel as revealed in his other letters in the New Testament.

Does the term “all Israel” refer to the whole nation of Israel, the elected Jews, or the whole people of God, including Jews and Gentiles? Each of the above categories can be divided into two sub-categories in terms of the time when “all Israel” will be saved. Does Paul refer to “all Israel” at a specific time in the future after a full number of

⁸Daniel I. Block, “The Foundations of National Identity: A Study in Ancient Northwest Semitic Perceptions” (Ph.D. diss., University of Liverpool, 1982), 254-61.

⁹Gerhard Hasel, *Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 188.

¹⁰Hans J. Kraus, *Die Biblische Theologie: Ihre Geschichte und Problematik* (Neukirchen Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1970), 367-71.

Gentiles have believed, or does he take “all Israel” as representing the people of God in the whole history of humankind? Moreover, a question to be asked is when will this happen, in the Millennium after Christ returns, right before Christ returns, or in the history of the church? Furthermore, how is this going to happen, by the preaching of the gospel, or by the covenant with their forefathers?

Thesis

This dissertation argues that the phrase “all Israel” in Romans 11:26 represents all the elect among the Israelite people in all generations. It represents a complete number of elected Israelites according to God’s calling. Even though believing Israelites have been in the minority in the history of Israel, so are the believers among the Gentiles in the history of the Church. Paul predicts that in the end time, there will be a large number of Jews coming to faith in Jesus Christ. The gospel will be preached continually to the nations, so that a full number of Gentiles will come into the kingdom of God. In the same way, the gospel will also be preached to the Jews, so that a full number of elected Jews will be reached before the second coming of Christ.

The goal of this study is not to commend a certain view of eschatology for Israel and the church because eschatology is formulated by the consideration of the whole revelation of God in the Scriptures. This is beyond the scope of our study. This dissertation seeks to understand Paul’s concept of the salvation of all Israel in Romans 11:26 by a careful exegesis of Romans 11:25-32 with a proper understanding of the meanings and usage of the phrase “all Israel” in its New Testament and Old Testament contexts. It is hoped that the result of this study will provide a helpful conclusion for a formulation of the soteriology and eschatology of Israel and the church.

Method

The goal of this dissertation is to find out what Paul means in Romans 11:26, “and so all Israel will be saved.” We will proceed by first analyzing Paul’s theological grounds for making such a claim. He quotes the restoration passages of Isaiah 59:20-21 and 27:9 in support of his argument. We devote a brief section to discuss Paul’s use of the Old Testament. Then, we analyze how he uses the above Old Testament passages. Paul sees the salvation of all Israel as a fulfillment of the promise that is proclaimed in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The next step in our research is to study the use of the phrase “all Israel” in the Old Testament, New Testament, and early Jewish literature, which includes the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Josephus, Dead Sea Scrolls, Qumran literature, Philo and rabbinic literature. This provides us with a better understanding of the semantic range of the phrase “all Israel.” Furthermore, it informs us how this phrase is used and understood in New Testament times. We focus on the context of the book of Romans and the wider context of how “all Israel” is used in New Testament times, that is, in the Old Testament and in early Jewish literature.

We agree with Gerhard Hasel that “ultimately each individual context determines the meaning in this context. Nevertheless, the variety of usages of single words sheds much light upon the semantic ranges of meaning.”¹¹ Moisés Silva emphasizes rightly the importance of the study of a wider context, “the context of situation.” He asserts that an ancient author assumed, consciously or unconsciously, that

¹¹Gerhard Hasel, *New Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 189.

his readers shared a considerable amount of knowledge with him.¹² Furthermore, James O. Buswell stresses the need to ascertain the meaning of words by studying how they have been used in Scripture and in history. The context, which is important in determining the meaning of words, involves not only the immediate context, but also the context of the book in which a text is, and the ultimate context of the entire Bible.¹³ The context determines the meaning of the words.

Richard Hays also argues that rabbinic Judaism, the Qumran community, Philo's scholastic Alexandrian Judaism and early Christianity can be studied as parallel phenomena because they all regard Scripture (the Old Testament) as the source and authority for their own theological developments. Therefore, it is "a valid and necessary (even if preliminary) task when we inquire independently into the way in which any one of them uses scriptural texts."¹⁴ Consistent with the above hermeneutical arguments, we inquire about the way the phrase "all Israel" is used in the rabbinic literature, Dead Sea Scrolls, Philo, Josephus, Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and in the Christian Bible. If "all Israel" has a consistent meaning in its usage in New Testament times, it will strongly suggest that this is the sense it should be understood in Romans 11:26. If "all Israel" has a variety of meanings in its usage in New Testament literature, we would then decide

¹²Moisés Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 145.

¹³James O. Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), 1: 388. See also Jeffrey Khoo, "Dispensational Premillennialism in Reformed Theology: The Contribution of J. O. Buswell to the Millennial Debate," *JETS* 44 (2001): 701.

¹⁴Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 13.

through careful exegesis which meaning best fits the context of Romans 11:26 and the overall contexts of the epistle of Romans.

After examining Paul's quotation of the Old Testament passages in support of the salvation of all Israel and the study of the usage of the phrase "all Israel" in its New Testament contexts, we will build our case concerning the salvation of all Israel by investigating the contexts of the Book of Romans, followed by an exegesis of Romans 11:25-32. The result of this analysis will be viewed in light of the whole spectrum of biblical teachings regarding the salvation of Israel. It is hoped that this dissertation will produce a coherent and biblical view of the salvation of Israel at the present time and in the future *eschaton*.

History of Interpretation

With the present conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, Christians may wonder how they should respond. Should Christians give unreserved affirmation to the present government of Israel? God has chosen Israel. Out of Israel comes the Messiah, who brings salvation to the world. God's promises to Abraham and his descendents are fulfilled in Christ. The salvation of Israel is at the heart of God's plan for the salvation of the world. How is the restoration of Israel prophesied by the prophets Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Isaiah to be realized? These are questions of interest for many students of the Bible. In order to answer these questions, a careful and detailed study of the Scriptures is necessary.

A brief survey of the views of salvation of Israel and interpretations of Romans 11:26 throughout the history of the church would help us to appreciate the complexity of the problem this dissertation seeks to tackle.

Supersessionism

Supersessionists believe that the Gentile church has replaced Israel. For them, there is no future for an ethnic or national Israel in the salvation plan of God because God has replaced Israel by the church as a punishment for Israel's rejection of Jesus.

Supersessionism first arose after the suppression of the Bar Kochba revolt in AD 135. It was expressed in the writings of Justin Martyr and Melito of Sardis, and in the Letter of Barnabas in the second century. Since then, it has become a widespread view in the history of the church.¹⁵

Early in the second century, Ignatius firmly believed that Christianity, not Judaism, was the successor to the religion of the Hebrew Bible. He seemed to have no awareness of Judaism as a continuing tradition. He spoke of Judaism in the past tense as an outmoded religion.¹⁶ Peter Heinegg considers Ambrose, Augustine, and Bernard of Clairvaux anti-Semitic in one way or another. He also shows a long tradition of anti-semitic sentiment in the history of the Catholic Church. He writes, "As late as the twentieth century (until 1946) anyone entering the Jesuits had to prove the 'purity (non-Jewishness) of his blood,' and any Catholic over fifty may remember praying *pro perfidies Judaeis* on Holy Saturday."¹⁷

¹⁵Blaising, "The Future of Israel as a Theological Question," 435. See also Stephen G. Wilson, ed., *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity*, vol. 2, *Separation and Polemic*, Studies in Christianity and Judaism 2 (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986).

¹⁶Robert R. Hann, "Supersessionism, Engraftment, and Jewish-Christian Dialogue: Reflections on the Presbyterian Statement of Jewish-Christian Relations," *JES* 27 (1990): 332.

¹⁷Peter Heinegg, "Supersessionism, Terminable and Interminable," *Cross Currents* 51 (2001): 422.

On October 28, 1965, the world's Catholic bishops together with the bishop of Rome, Pope Paul VI, signed the *Nostra Aetate*, officially repudiating any theory of supersessionism. The Council further insists that Jews remain God's people today no less than before the first coming of Christ. Since then, the Vatican has embraced the two-covenant view, as reflected in its statement: "The history of Israel did not end in 70 A.D. It continued, especially in a numerous Diaspora which allowed Israel to carry to the whole world a witness—often heroic—of its fidelity to the one God and to 'exalt Him in the presence of all the living' (Tobit 13:4). . . . Jewish refusal to convert to Christianity is not to be understood as anything less than a faithful witness to God."¹⁸

Recently, Susan Frank has conducted a historical research on the interpretation of Romans 9-11 by writers in the period between the middle of the ninth century and the beginning of the fourteenth century. She studies the works of Peter Abelard, Thomas Aquinas, Giles of Rome, and those of five other exegetes of the Roman Church. Most of these commentators argue for an eventual reconciliation of Jews to God, in parallel with the salvation of the Gentiles. By emphasizing the mystery of God's ways of salvation, they argue for God's justice and the Jews' integrity. Frank concludes that Romans 9-11 played an important historical role in protecting Jews living in Christian Europe. Thus, she urges that modern Christians need not reject much of the Church tradition when dialoging with modern Jews.¹⁹

¹⁸Eugene J. Fisher, "The Church's Teaching on Supersessionism," *BAR* 17 (1991): 58.

¹⁹Susan Frank, "The Unbelieving Jews in the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, Chapters 9-11: A Study of Selected Latin Commentaries from Atto of Vercelli (885-961) to Giles of Rome (1274-1316)" (Ph.D. diss., Temple University, 1990), abstract.

On the other hand, Bloesch criticizes supersessionism as downplaying the fact that Christianity represents not the annulment but the fulfillment of the heritage of Israel. According to Bloesch, the Old Testament covenantal promises still apply to Israel even though the covenantal relationship is partially broken. To him, ethnic Israel still plays an important role in salvation history. Redemption is the covenant of Israel reaffirmed and fulfilled in Jesus Christ.²⁰

Premillennialism and Dispensationalism

Premillennialism was the dominant eschatological interpretation during the first three centuries of the Christian era. It was endorsed by the church fathers Papias, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, and Tertullian. From Emperor Constantine to the Protestant Reformers, amillennialism was the predominant eschatological view. Johann Heinrich Alsted (1588-1638) revived the teaching of premillennialism and it becomes widespread in the nineteenth century.²¹ Because premillennialism argues for a future for an ethnic and national Israel at the time of Christ's return, the miraculous reestablishment of the State of Israel in 1948, after the dispersion of the Jews for two and half millennia, gave a strong impetus for the spread of premillennialism.²² However, even among premillennialists, scholars differs in there views as how and when Israel will be saved. There are dispensational premillennialism and historical premillennialism.

²⁰Donald G. Bloesch, " 'All Israel Will Be Saved': Supersessionism and the Biblical Witness," *Interpretation* 43 (1989): 138-39.

²¹Robert G. Clouse, ed., *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1977), 9-11.

²²Blaising, "The Future of Israel as a Theological Question," 437.

Dispensational premillennialists, however, emphasize the restoration of the nation of Israel at the end times. The dispensational eschatology is premillennial.²³ The traditional dispensational view holds that the people of Israel will remain hardened to the gospel until the church is raptured. After that, the Jewish population and the remaining Gentiles will go through the seven years of tribulation on earth. During that time, the Jews will call upon the name of the Lord. At the second advent of Christ, the surviving Israelites will all turn to Jesus, and they will constitute the restored nation of Israel. Thus, the promises of God to Israel in the Old Testament will be fulfilled literally in the Millennium.²⁴

Some historic premillennialists believe that Israel has been replaced by the Church, and that the prophecies relating to Israel must be interpreted in ecclesiastical and not in Jewish terms. Its major proponent George Ladd argues that the New Testament applies Old Testament prophecies to the New Testament church, which consists of both Jews and Gentiles, and in so doing identifies the church as spiritual Israel.²⁵ He argues that God has called his people, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles (Rom 9:24). Paul quotes Hosea 1:9-10 to make his point (Rom 11:25-26). Ladd observes that the Hosea passages refer to the literal, national Israel. Because of Israel's rebellion, God calls them "Not my people" (Hos 1:9). But in the future, there will be a large remnant turning back to the Lord, and God will call them "Sons of the living God" (Hos 1:10).

²³Khoo, "Dispensational Premillennialism in Reformed Theology," 697.

²⁴Steven A. Kreloff, *God's Plan For Israel: A Study of Romans 9-11* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1995), 91-95.

²⁵George E. Ladd, "Historic Premillennialism," in *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views*, ed. Robert G. Clouse (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1977), 23.

Ladd sees this as a prophecy of a future conversion of the Jews. Ladd argues that the church, consisting of both Jews and Gentiles, has become the people of God. “The prophecies of Hosea are fulfilled in the Christian church.”²⁶ On the other hand, Ladd also argues for salvation of the literal Israel in the millennium. “However, the New Testament does not give any details of Israel’s conversion and role in the millennium. So a non-dispensational eschatology simply affirms the future salvation of Israel and remains open to God’s future as to the details.”²⁷

Two-Covenant Theology

Since the Holocaust, a number of Catholic and Protestant theologians have proposed a two-covenant theology as an alternative to supersessionism. They argue that the church cannot be considered the saved people of God without Israel being included. They contend that God’s covenant with Israel is still in force, and therefore the church has not superseded Israel in God’s salvation plan for his people.²⁸ McGarry insists upon the continuing validity of Judaism as a “viable, integrated and fully adequate response to God’s call for faithfulness as found in the Hebrew Scriptures.”²⁹ These scholars argue that Jews and Christians are related to God separately by distinct covenants. Gentiles have a covenant relationship to God through Jesus Christ, while Jews have a covenant

²⁶Ibid., 23-24.

²⁷Ibid., 28.

²⁸Bloesch, “All Israel Will Be Saved,” 130.

²⁹Michael B. McGarry, *Christology after Auschwitz* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), 7-8.

relationship to God through Torah.³⁰ Their argument builds upon E. P. Sanders' covenantal nomism, which argues that the Jews of the first century maintained a covenantal relationship with God by observing the Torah.³¹ According to these scholars, Christian missions to Jews must be repudiated. Many of the proponents of the two-covenant theology do not consider Jesus as the Messiah of the Jews.³²

Proponents of two-covenant theology argue that all who are under Judaism will be saved without needing to accept Jesus Christ as the savior. They are saved based on the Old Covenant. Jesus Christ is the savior for the Gentiles only. Günter Wasserberg also argues that Christianity has to be understood in a way that is not anti-Jewish—an understanding that takes into account the multiple ways to God. “Exclusivity as practiced throughout the centuries is no longer acceptable.”³³

John Gager asserts that Jews do not need to be converted to Christianity. Paul does not regard Jesus as the Messiah for the Jews. Jesus was not the climax of God's dealings with Israel. Jews are still justified by observing the Torah.³⁴ Räisänen has

³⁰Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 440. See also reviews on this topic found in Abraham J. Peck, ed., *Jews and Christians after the Holocaust* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982); and Peter von der Osten-Sacken, *Christian-Jewish Dialogue: Theological Foundations* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986).

³¹E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 75.

³²L. Gaston, “Paul and the Torah,” in *Antisemitism and the Foundations of Christianity*, ed. A. T. Davies (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 66; and J. G. Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 239, 241.

³³Günter Wasserberg, “Romans 9-11 and Jewish-Christian Dialogue,” 176.

³⁴Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism*, 214, 261-63.

convincingly repudiated such views. Gager disregards the fact that both Jesus and Paul preached the gospel first in the synagogues. Paul calls Jesus “Christ” even in Romans 9:5. Paul repeatedly mentions that there is no distinction for Jews and Gentiles with regard to sin and salvation (Rom 1:16; 10:12-13). There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by grace through Jesus Christ (Rom 3:23, 24).

In Räisänen’s view, Paul expected the final conversion of Israel to take place in the course of his and others’ preaching of the gospel. “While a miracle is necessary, it is perhaps not worked through a *deus ex machina* but is worked through the agency of God’s apostles.”³⁵

Blaising argues that the two-covenant theology is fundamentally incompatible with the biblical foundations of the identities and missions of Israel and of the Church. He points out that the primary orientation of the two-covenant theology is not from the Bible, but from modern pluralism.³⁶ Bloesch also warns against a syncretism, which could undermine both the integrity of Judaism as a religion and the uniqueness of the Christ revelation.

The revisionists argue that Judaism is God’s way of salvation for the Jews, while Christianity is for salvation of the Gentiles. The two religions should respect each other in their missions and presentations. Bloesch contends that the revisionists are wrong in their failure to see that the revelation of God in Christ introduces something

³⁵Räisänen, “Paul, God and Israel,” 191.

³⁶Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 441.

indisputably new. He argues that the Torah can never be obeyed perfectly because of the reality of original sin.³⁷

Other Views of the Salvation of Israel

The rabbinic literature holds that “all Israel has a share in the age to come” (*m. Sanh.* 10:1). N. T. Wright interprets this statement as only those who are members of the “true Israel” will be saved, not those who reject the Torah. He argues in *The New Testament and the People of God* and *Jesus and the Victory of God* that Jesus is the promised Messiah who has fulfilled God’s promises to Israel. Jesus forgives sins, rebuilds the Temple (redefined as his body and his church), brings Israel back from exile, renews the covenant and brings forth a new people of both Jews and Gentiles. According to Wright, the people of God are no longer defined by ethnic or national symbols, but by their allegiance to Jesus and obedience to his words. In other words, God has grouped the true believers of Yahweh in the Old Testament time with Jewish and Gentile followers of Jesus in the New Testament time to be one people of God through the redemption and victory of his Messiah Jesus.³⁸ Wright summarizes Paul’s view of salvation of Israel as follows:

Israel, says Paul, is ignorant of what God has righteously and faithfully been doing in her history. In seeking to establish a status of righteousness, of covenant membership, which will be for Jews and Jews only, she has not submitted to God’s righteousness. The covenant always envisaged a worldwide family; Israel, clinging to her own special status as the covenant-bearer, has betrayed the purpose for which that covenant was made. It is as though the postman were to imagine that all the letters in his bag were intended for him. When Paul says that Israel “did not submit to the righteousness of God” he is clearly referring back to Romans 3:21-26....

³⁷Bloesch, “ ‘All Israel Will Be Saved’, ” 138-39.

³⁸N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 388.

There, Paul declared that “the righteousness of God” had been revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ, the gospel which declares that God has one way of salvation for all, Jew and Gentile alike. When Paul’s fellow Jews rejected Jesus (as Paul did himself to begin with), and when they continue to reject the message about Jesus which Paul proclaims, he sees the underlying reason: they recognize, as he has had to recognize, that it will mean abandoning the idea of a covenant membership which will be inalienably hers and hers alone. So the great argument of Romans 9-11 goes on its way, reaching at its climax the most significant statement, quoting from Jeremiah 31:33 and Isaiah 27:9 – this will be my covenant with them, when I take away their sins (Romans 11:27). As I have argued in more detail elsewhere, Paul holds firmly to the hope that the renewal of the covenant which has taken place in Jesus the Messiah will be effective not only for Gentiles but also for Jews who will come, as he himself has done, to faith in Jesus as the Jewish Messiah.³⁹

In Wright’s article “Romans and the Theology of Paul,” he states clearly that there can be no covenant future for those Israelites who refuse to abandon their “own,” that is, their ethnic status of covenant membership. Nevertheless, for those Israelites who grasp Christ and his righteousness by faith, they can always regain their full covenant status.⁴⁰

Scot McKnight emphasizes Jesus’ role as a Jewish prophet preaching a message of repentance for the nation of Israel. He argues that Jesus has a vision for the nation of Israel; however, McKnight does not spell out the details of that vision other than that Israel would be judged for her sins in AD 70. According to McKnight, Jesus did not see beyond AD 70; rather he saw that event as the end event of history, when God’s final judgment and deliverance will come upon Israel.⁴¹ McKnight also contends that

³⁹N. T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 108-09.

⁴⁰N. T. Wright, “Romans and the Theology of Paul,” in *Pauline Theology*, vol. 3, *Romans*, ed. David M. Hay and E. Elizabeth Johnson (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 57-58.

⁴¹Scot McKnight, *A New Vision for Israel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 129-30.

Jesus' calling of the twelve disciples was a symbol for the restoration of the twelve tribes of Israel and the end-time reconstitution of Israel. During the Passover meal, Jesus actualized a renewal of the covenant. As the disciples participated in the meal, they symbolized a restored Israel. McKnight sees Jesus as the embodiment of the true Israel.⁴²

Interpretations of Romans 11: 26a

Merkle summarizes the three main interpretations of the term "all Israel" in Romans 11:26a as follows: (1) "all Israel" refers to all the elect, both Jews and Gentiles; (2) "all Israel" refers to the ethnic nation of Israel; (3) "all Israel" refers to all the elect Israelites throughout history.⁴³ Klaus Haacker lists five solutions for the interpretation of "all Israel": (1) the whole people of Israel without any exception; (2) the people of Israel as a whole with individual exceptions; (3) the religious Israel; (4) the chosen remnants from Israel; and (5) The church with Jewish and Gentile believers.⁴⁴ We will follow Merkle's division for the sake of simplicity in the following discussion of the various interpretations of "all Israel" in Romans 11:26a.⁴⁵

⁴²Ibid., 5-9. Stein points out accurately that many of the terms McKnight used, such as "restoration" of Israel, the "nation" of Israel are not clearly defined. See Robert H. Stein, review of *A New Vision for Israel*, by Scot McKnight, *Themelios* 25 (2000): 84-86.

⁴³Ben L. Merkle, "Romans 11 and the Future of Ethnic Israel," *JETS* 43 (2000): 709.

⁴⁴Klaus Haacker, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer*, Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1999), 238.

⁴⁵Cranfield lists four interpretations of "all Israel": (1) all the elect, both Jews and Gentiles; (2) all the elect of the nation Israel; (3) the whole nation Israel, including every individual member; and (4) the nation Israel as a whole, but not necessarily including every individual member. See C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical*

“All Israel” Refers to the Ethnic Nation of Israel as a Whole

Blaising argues that the fulfillment of God’s promise for the salvation of Israel occurs in two stages: First, a remnant of Israel is saved by faith in Jesus Christ at present, while the majority of Israel is hardened (Rom 9:6, 27-29; 11:1-5, 26-29). Second, the whole nation of Israel will be saved at the eschatological time by the glorious appearance of Christ in His second coming. For Blaising, Jesus proclaims the coming of the kingdom of God to Israel in two senses, spiritual and national. God’s favor comes upon Israel nationally and upon the individual Jews spiritually.⁴⁶

The challenge of seeing the salvation of Israel as a nation is that the New Testament does not state elsewhere that the whole nation of Israel will turn to Christ at His return. In his reply to Pilate, Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place” (John 18: 36). If one sees God’s promise to David of an everlasting kingdom to be fulfilled in Christ, the Son of David (2 Sam 7:16; Luke 1:30-33), then one does not need to see an ethnic nation of Israel as representing the kingdom of God on earth.

Donald Bloesch sees a final redemption of Israel as a nation in union with the redemption of all elect Gentiles. This redemption is contingent on faith in Jesus as made clear in Romans 10:5-17 and 11:23. Bloesch also claims that Jesus’ words in Matthew

Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, vol. 2, The International Critical Commentary 31 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1979), 576.

⁴⁶Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 437-40. See also Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*, 2: 463, 487-88.

23:37-39 support this interpretation. “I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord’” (Matt 23:27-39).⁴⁷

James Dunn also argues that $\pi\alpha\varsigma \text{ } \text{Ἰσραὴλ}$ must refer to Israel as a whole, as a people whose corporate identity would not be lost even though there may be some or even many individual exceptions. He cites 1 Samuel 25:1; 1 Kings 12:1; 2 Chronicle 12:1 and Daniel 9:11 to support his taking “all Israel” as referring to the whole people.⁴⁸ He has ignored the fact that the term “all Israel” in the Old Testament can take on a variety of meanings. This will be studied in detail in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

Stuhlmacher argues that when the dead have been raised and all the believing Gentiles have come into the redeemed community, then the partial blinding of Israel will also be taken away. The Jewish people as a whole (and not merely the small remnant who have already believed in Christ) will be saved at the glorious return of Jesus at Zion.⁴⁹ According to Stuhlmacher, the Jewish people will be saved by the same Jesus, the same atonement, and the same gospel, only that it is not received by faith but by sight. “Just as Paul was once conquered for the obedience of faith on the road to Damascus through the appearance from heaven of the resurrected Christ, so too will the same thing take place for the majority of Israel at the parousia of Christ.”⁵⁰ Stuhlmacher argues that when the full number of Gentiles have entered into God’s salvation, the partial hardening of Israel

⁴⁷Bloesch, “All Israel Will Be Saved,” 134.

⁴⁸James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, WBC, vol. 38 (Dallas: Word Books, 1986), 681.

⁴⁹Stuhlmacher, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, 172.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 174.

will be taken away. Israel, in its entirety, will be redeemed from sins through Christ who appeared from Zion. The goal of salvation history is about the salvation of all Israel from her hardening of unbelief, not about the salvation of the Gentiles. This is the mystery Paul is revealing in Romans 11:25-26.⁵¹ John G. Lodge further argues that nothing is said about the hardening being punitive or due to the fault of Israel. It is part of God's plan to save the Gentiles and eventually all Israel. "The hardening of some Israelites is the vehicle of mercy for all—even for the ones hardened."⁵²

Stuhlmacher argues that the Jews will in the end be saved when they see the glorious return of Christ. This argument lacks scriptural support. New Testament does not make such an assertion anywhere else. Paul saw the resurrected Christ, and he was commissioned to be the apostle to the Gentiles. Most other Jews believe in Jesus by hearing and accepting the gospel. It is too shaky to argue that the rest of the Jews will believe in Jesus by seeing him. Not many are called to be the apostles to the Gentiles. Furthermore, there is no sense of lifting the hardening of hearts when they are to believe by seeing Jesus.

Johannes Munck argues that at the end time, when the full number of Gentiles have entered into salvation, then all Israel will be saved, which includes every living Jew. "All Israel" means Israel as a nation, and that includes every Israelite. "All Israel" also means the totality of remnants and the hardened. Munck contends that the salvation-history categories, such as Gentiles and Israel, remnants and church are chosen or cast

⁵¹Ibid., 172-73.

⁵²John G. Lodge, *Romans 9-11: A Reader-Response Analysis* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 196.

away in its entirety, but the salvation of the individual is not guaranteed by one's adherence to a particular group. The eternal fate of the individual is decided by Christ with the world court.⁵³

Otfried Hofius argues that "all Israel" is a collective designation for the people of Israel in its entirety, without the connotation of numerical completeness, that is, the sum of all individual Israelites. He further clarifies that "all Israel" means all Israel which at the present time does not yet believe in Christ and thus not yet participate in salvation. He favors taking "all Israel" in a diachronic sense although he adds that a conclusive answer cannot be found. Based on Romans 11:15, he contends that all Israel will be raised from the dead. Their veil of unbelief will be lifted. They will encounter Christ in his second coming. He argues that "all Israel" is not saved by the preaching of the gospel. "Rather, Israel will hear the gospel from the mouth of Christ himself at his return—the saving word of his self-revelation which effects the faith that takes hold of divine salvation."⁵⁴

Throughout the New Testament, beginning with the preaching of Jesus, the gospel was proclaimed first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles (Matt 10:6; 15:24; Acts 1:8; 13:46-49; Gal 2:7-8). If Paul thinks all Jews will be saved in the end, why should he have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in his heart and even wish to be accused and cut off from Christ for the salvation of his kinsmen (Rom 9:1-3). If all the unbelieving Jews be saved at the end, how can they be provoked to jealousy by the salvation coming upon the

⁵³Johannes Munck, *Christ and Israel: Interpretation of Romans 9-11* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), 102.

⁵⁴Otfried Hofius, " 'All Israel Will be Saved': Divine Salvation and Israel's Deliverance in Romans 9-11," *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* supplement 1 (1990): 35-37.

Gentiles (Rom 11:11)? Why does Paul say that they will be cut off because of their unbelief (Rom 11:20)? If Paul's non-Christian Jewish audience understood Paul as saying that they would be saved eventually at the return of Christ, their hearts would then be even more hardened to believe in the gospel.

Richard Bell argues that all Israel will be saved by faith in Christ at His second coming. He understands $\pi\alpha\varsigma\ 'Ισρα\eta\lambda$ diachronically, representing all Jews in all generations. He refers to *Mishnah Sanhedrin* 10:1 and *Testament of Benjamin* 10:11, where "all Israel" is used diachronically. "All Israel has a share in the world to come" (*m. Sanh.* 10:1). "Therefore, my children, if you live in holiness, in accord with the Lord's commands, you shall again dwell with me in hope; *all Israel* will be gathered to the Lord" (*T. Benj.* 10:11).⁵⁵

Bell rejects the idea that Israelites are saved by a special kind of salvation. He insists that they are saved by faith in Christ. "Israelites from every age will believe in the Christ when they see him coming again in his glory."⁵⁶ How would the dead Israelites of the past ages see Christ coming in glory? Must they first be resurrected from the dead? Is Bell suggesting that the resurrected Israelites see the glorious coming of Christ, believe in him and be saved? Does that imply a theology of salvation after death? Bell admits that the phrase $\pi\alpha\varsigma\ 'Ισρα\eta\lambda$ can refer to every single Jew from every age on theological grounds, but not necessarily on linguistic grounds.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Richard H. Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy: The Origin and Purpose of the Jealousy Motif in Romans 9-11*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament 63 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1994), 140-44.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 141.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 152.

Objections to Taking “All Israel” as the Ethnic Israel Nation

O. Palmer Robertson rejects the idea that all ethnic descendants of Abraham will be saved because Scripture gives no hint of a “second chance” for salvation. Furthermore, Paul makes it clear that not all Israel are of Israel (Rom 9:6). Robertson also disputes the view that “all Israel” refers to the mass or majority of Jews living when the hardening of part of Israel is lifted in the future, because if the hardening factor for disobedience is lifted, then logically all Israelites should turn to the Lord, with “all Israel” referring to every Israelites at that time.⁵⁸ Robertson further argues that “Israel” could never be defined along purely ethnic lines. The identification of “all Israel” with all ethnic descendants of Abraham living at some future date contradicts the truth that God does not guarantee a person salvation because he possesses certain external qualifications.⁵⁹

For Paul, there is only one way of salvation for Jews and Gentiles alike, that is, through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 10:12). Merkle rightly points out that if God had a separate plan for saving Israel in the future apart from faith, it would be contradictory to the gospel Paul preached. He does not see Paul speaking of a mass end-time conversion of Jews in Romans 9 and 10.⁶⁰

⁵⁸O. Palmer Robertson, *The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2000), 183.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 185-86.

⁶⁰Merkle, “Roman 11 and the Future of Ethnic Israel,” 709-12. For similar arguments, see also Eckhard J. Schnabel, “Israel, The People of God, and the Nations,” *JETS* 45 (2002): 56.

John Stott takes “all Israel” as meaning the great mass of the Jewish people coming to faith in Jesus Christ. He concedes with F. F. Bruce that “all Israel” need not mean every Jew without a single exception. For Stott, Romans 11:26 “is not about a national salvation, for nothing is said about either a political entity or a return to the land. Nor is there any hint of a special way of salvation for the Jews which dispenses with faith in Christ.”⁶¹

He rejects the two-covenant theology, which promotes two different ways of salvation for Jews and Gentiles, because Paul insists upon one olive tree, to which Jewish and Gentile believers both belong (Romans 11). Paul emphasizes that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles in sin (Rom 3:9, 22) and in salvation (Rom 10:12). He predicts that there will be fullness for both Israel (Rom 11:12) and for Gentiles (Rom 11:25). When these two “fulnesses” come in, the new humanity will be realized, consisting of huge numbers of the redeemed, of both Jews and Gentiles.⁶²

“All Israel” Refers to the Elect among the Israelites throughout History

Luther’s interpretation of “all Israel” wavered at times. At one point, he argued that “all Israel” referred to the “whole lump” of Jewish people and not to individual persons. At another point, he argued that the lump is the elected Israelites who have faith in Christ. Luther also followed the interpretation of Augustine, Chrysostom, and Theodore, who argued that the Jews are now fallen, but will be converted and saved after

⁶¹ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Romans*, in *The Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1994), 304.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 302-08.

the full number of Gentiles has come in. According to Theodore Mueller, most Lutheran exegetes contend that both Gentiles and Jews will be brought in through the preaching of the Gospel before the Judgment Day.⁶³

Hays argues that Paul uses Hosea 2:21-22 to confirm God's calling of the Gentiles in Romans 9-10. According to Hays, Paul portrays the Jews as the ones who have stumbled and have been broken off so that they are now included as among the "nonpeople" whom God calls and loves. They shall receive mercy as they turn to Christ. As Gentiles come in, so will the Jews. Hence, after the full number of Gentiles is reached, so also all Israel will be saved (Rom 11). Hays sees "all Israel" as the remnants of Israel.⁶⁴

Holwerda argues that "all Israel" refers to Jewish Israel in its eschatological fullness. This fullness does not mean the salvation of every individual who ever belonged to Jewish Israel. He argues that the Scriptures give adequate reason for believing that individual members can be excluded. He contends that this fullness of Israel is reached by the continuous preaching of the gospel to the Jews, in the same manner as the gospel is to be preached to the nations. When the eschatological fullness of both the Gentile world and Jewish Israel is reached, God's plan of salvation will be fully achieved.⁶⁵

As Paul says, "God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew." There is always a remnant chosen by grace while the rest are hardened (Rom 11:1-8). In the

⁶³Martin Luther, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, trans. Theodore J. Mueller (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954), 145-46.

⁶⁴Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 66-69.

⁶⁵David E. Holwerda, *Jesus & Israel: One Covenant or Two?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 169-75.

history of Israel and the church, the people of God are always in the minority. Jesus said, “few are those who walk the narrow path which leads to eternal life” (Matt 7: 13-14). However, of those who are chosen, not one will be forsaken (John 6:35).

Concerning the interpretation of Rom 11:26a, John Polhill puts it succinctly, “The most obvious meaning is that there would be a major turning of the Jews to the gospel before the Lord’s return.”⁶⁶

Objections to Taking “All Israel” as the Elect Israel

Cranfield argues that Romans 11:25, 26 is the obvious climax of Romans 9-11. The references to τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῶν “the fullness of them” in verse 12, to ἡ πρόσληψις “the acceptance of them” in verse 12, and to the grafting in again of the broken-off branches in verses 23 and 24, expect the final restoration of Israel to be something more than the salvation of the total sum of the remnants of Israel in all ages.⁶⁷ Therefore, Cranfield argues that “all Israel” in Romans 11:26 must refer to the majority of Israel who are not hardened.

In Romans 11, Paul refers to “Israel” in contradistinction to Gentiles. In Romans 11:25, he refers “Israel” to the ethnic Israel. Hence, some scholars argue that it is unlikely that Paul would change the meaning of “Israel” in verse 26 to mean the elect Israel.⁶⁸

⁶⁶John B. Polhill, *Paul and His Letters* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 296.

⁶⁷Cranfield, *Epistle To The Romans*, 2: 577.

⁶⁸Schreiner, *Romans*, 615.

**“All Israel” Refers to All of God’s People,
Jews and Gentiles Altogether**

Calvin considers “all Israel” to refer to all the people of God, both Jews and Gentiles. He argues that when the Gentiles have come in, the Jews will have at the same time returned from their defection to the obedience of faith. Thus, the salvation of the whole Israel of God, drawing from both Jews and Gentiles, will then be completed. Calvin’s arguments rest upon Galatians 6:16, where Paul calls the Church, a congregation of Jewish and Gentile believers, the Israel of God.⁶⁹ However, the interpretation of Galatians 6:16 is highly debatable.

In Revelation 7, an angel halts judgment upon the land and sea until the servants of God are sealed with the seal of God. The number of those who are sealed from the tribes of Israel are 144,000. Schnabel argues that “the servants of our God” are the sealed ones from all the tribes of the sons of Israel. The same group is referred to in verse 9 as the multitude from every nation and tribe. Thus, Schnabel contends that John speaks of the church of Jesus Christ as the restored Israel.⁷⁰ However, one can also argue that the 144,000 sealed ones represent the elect Israelites, while the multitude in verse 9 includes both Jews and Gentiles believers.

The Lutheran scholar Johannes Aagaard contends that the ethnic Israel has become secularized. Therefore, the Jews have the same calling as the Gentiles to acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah, so that they may be the people of God. Aagaard

⁶⁹John Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*, eds. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, trans. Ross Mackenzie (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 255.

⁷⁰ Schnabel, “Israel, The People of God, and the Nations,” 57.

sees the church as the sole eschatological reality of the people of God.⁷¹ Karl Barth interprets Romans 11 as God's mercy coming upon all Israel in the future.⁷² "All Israel" is gathered from Jews and Gentiles: the Gentiles first and the Jews later because the last shall be the first, and the first shall be the last. "And in Jesus Christ, God has also destined them all to participate in his mercy and so to be free." For Barth, "all Israel" is the church with the incorporation of the full number of Gentile and Jewish believers.⁷³

N. T. Wright argues that "all Israel" in Romans 11:26 refers to all the people of God, both believing Jews and Gentiles. He contends that to interpret Romans 11:26a as a large-scale salvation of Jews with no suggestion of Christian faith runs against the flow of argument of Paul in Romans 9-11. It is debatable whether faith based upon the glorious return of Jesus can be considered as Christian faith. Rather, Wright argues for a steady flow of Jews into the church, by grace through faith.⁷⁴ One may argue positively by referring to the faith of Thomas who only believed after he saw the resurrected Christ (John 20:25). However, would it not be too presumptuous to demand that the Jews will have the same experience of the apostles who were at a particular time in salvation history? Furthermore, Jesus said to Thomas, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

⁷¹Johannes Aagaard, "The Church and the Jews in Eschatology," *Lutheran World* 11 (1964): 270-78.

⁷²Karl Barth, *A Shorter Commentary on Romans*, trans. D. H. van Dallen (London: SCM Press, 1963), 145.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 144-47.

⁷⁴N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 246-51.

In a similar line of thinking as Wright, Schnabel argues from Ephesians 2 that God has made a new humanity in Christ, that the identity and boundaries of the people of God are no longer defined by ethnic, legal, or ritual terms, but by faith in Jesus the Messiah. The Church, consisting of both Jews and Gentiles, represents the eschatological restoration of Israel. Schnabel insists that “all Israel” cannot mean “all Jews,” even if that refers to all Israelites living in the time of the Parousia. He argues that the “mystery” in Romans 11:25 cannot be a new revelation in which God promises the eventual salvation of the Jewish people at the time of the Parousia. He contends that such a revelation would contradict both the preceding and the following contexts. According to Schnabel, the “mystery” in Romans 11:25 is that God does not judge Israel immediately. Rather, God let Israel become jealous of the blessings to the Gentiles so that she may repent and receive the blessings as well. The judgment of God comes only when the fullness of the Gentiles is reached. “It is *in this manner* [italics his] that God saves ‘all Israel’ (v.26a).”⁷⁵

O. Palmer Robertson is a recent advocate of this view, even though he argued for “all Israel” as representing all the elect Israelites in all ages in his original article.⁷⁶

Objections to Taking “All Israel” as All of God’s People

Schreiner argues that in Romans 11: 25 the term “Israel” refers to the ethnic Israel in contradistinction to the Gentiles. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that the term “Israel” would have a different meaning in verse 26. Furthermore, verse 28 refers to them

⁷⁵Schnabel, “Israel, The People of God, and the Nations,” 55-56.

⁷⁶O. Palmer Robertson, “Is There a Distinctive Future for Ethnic Israel in Romans 11?” in *Perspectives on Evangelical Theology*, ed. Kenneth S. Kantzer and Stanley N. Gundry (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 209-27; idem, *The Israel of God*, 187.

as enemies of God with regard to the gospel, but as beloved for the sake of their fathers.⁷⁷

Hence, Schreiner contends that “all Israel” refers to the ethnic nation of Israel at the end time. On the other hand, Wright argues that Paul consistently distinguishes between the two “Israels” as in Romans 2:25-29; 9:6; Philippians 3:2-11 and Galatians 6:16.⁷⁸ Lloyd-Jones rejects taking “all Israel” as referring to the church because in Romans 9-11 the term “Israel” is used frequently, and every single time it refers not to the church but to the Jewish people.⁷⁹

Holwerda also rejects the view that “all Israel” refers to all Jewish and Gentile believers together because the context of Romans 11:26 does not support this view. He argues that even though Paul in Galatians 6:16 refers to the Christian Church as “the Israel of God,” in Romans 9-11, Paul’s concern has been the Israel that has been hardened and cut off.⁸⁰

Other Interpretations of “All Israel” in Romans 11: 26a

Kenneth Waters argues that “Israel” in Romans 9-11 is a collective term, which can mean either “whole Israel” or “all Israel.” He differentiates “whole Israel” as represented by the faithful Jews and apostate Jews, while “all Israel” includes faithful Jews, apostate Jews, and Jewish believers in Jesus Christ. He argues that the only group

⁷⁷Schreiner, *Romans*, 615.

⁷⁸N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, 250.

⁷⁹Lloyd-Jones, *The Church and the Last Things*, vol. 3 of *Great Doctrines of the Bible* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1998), 105.

⁸⁰Holwerda, *Jesus & Israel*, 169.

excluded from justification and salvation is idolatrous pagan Gentiles. “Faithful Jews and lawful Gentiles are justified through their fulfillment of Torah. Apostate Jews are justified through their relationship with faithful Jews and Jewish believers in Jesus Christ.” For Waters, Paul upholds “justification through law” when “law” is understood as “Torah” or “Torah obedience,” and that Paul rejects “justification through law” only when “law” is understood as “ritual practices, particularly circumcision.” Hence, on Judgment Day, lawful Gentiles who have not confessed that Jesus Christ is Lord will also be justified. According to Waters, the salvation of all Israel signifies the outworking of God’s covenant faithfulness through “mercy upon all.” He sees the phrase, “mercy upon all” (Rom 11:32) to be the central and foundational theme of Romans.⁸¹

Mark Nanos argues that there are two steps in the restoration of Israel. First, Israel is divided into the remnant and the hardened. The remnant believed in Paul’s gospel; that constitutes the first step of restoration. The second step starts with the initiation of the gentile mission. As the full number of the Gentiles comes into the kingdom of God, the Jews are provoked to jealousy, which triggers them to reconsider the gospel. As a result, some of the brothers and sisters from the “part hardened” come back to join the “remnant” of Christian Jews in the restored Israel, “and thus all Israel shall be saved.”⁸² There is inconsistency and ambiguity in Nanos’ proposal. His two-step restoration of Israel is not much different from the view that advocates the totality of the Israel remnants as “all Israel.” Yet, he rejects reading “all Israel” as “all the remnant of

⁸¹Kenneth Lee Waters, Sr., “The Salvation of Israel in Paul’s Thought and Experience: a Post-Radical Literary Investigation of Romans 9-11 and Its Context” (Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1999), 75-85, 132, 158-62, and 336-37.

⁸²Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans*, 277, 283, 287.

Israel.”⁸³ While he sees “all Israel” as representing the people of Israel as a whole, in the final restoration of Israel, there are only *some* of the hardened part of Israel, who will return to join the remnant of the Christian Jews. According to Nanos, this is how “all Israel shall be saved.”⁸⁴

Summary

We have made a brief survey of various views of the salvation of Israel and the interpretations of Romans 11:26a. Those who advocate salvation of the ethnic Israel as a nation at the return of Christ need more Scriptural support from the New Testament. The view that “all Israel” refers to the totality of God’s people, including Jewish and Gentile believers, does not fit the contexts of the book of Romans, where “Israel” usually refers to the ethnic Israel. So far, taking “all Israel” as representing the totality of the elected Israelites in all ages seems to be more promising, but this has to be verified by exegetical and theological analyses in the following chapters of this dissertation.

In the next chapter, we will focus on Romans 11:26b-27, in which Paul draws Scriptures to support his claim that “all Israel will be saved.” What do these Scriptures mean in their Old Testament contexts? How does Paul use the Scriptures? The answers to these questions will shed light on the meaning of Romans 11:26b.

⁸³Ibid., 276.

⁸⁴Ibid., 277.

CHAPTER 2

PAUL'S BASIS FOR THE HOPE OF SALVATION OF ALL ISRAEL

Introduction

One way to understand Paul's climactic statement in Romans 11:26 is to examine the reasons he gives for the salvation of "all Israel" in Romans 11:26b-27. We will investigate the Old Testament passages Paul quotes in their contexts and study how he applies them for his purpose in Romans.

In this chapter, first we will briefly discuss how Paul uses the Old Testament, that is, his hermeneutical method. Second, we will investigate the Old Testament passages he quotes in Romans 11:26-27. We will study the meanings of these passages in their original contexts, and the way Paul applies them in the context of Romans 11:25-32. Third, since Paul uses a passage about Jacob (Rom 11:27) to support his statement about Israel (Rom 11:26), we will explore how these two terms are used together in the Old Testament.

Paul's Use of the Old Testament

One of the most crucial and difficult problems in understanding Paul is the way he uses the Old Testament.¹ Richard Hays points out, if we are to understand Paul's

¹Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 237.

theological stance toward his own people, we must follow his readings of the texts in which he heard the word of God.² Hays lists five types of questions scholars ask concerning Paul's use of the Old Testament.³ These questions ask how Paul quotes the Hebrew Scripture, and how he interprets them. Often ones solutions to these questions reflect one's understanding of Paul's hermeneutics.

1. Textual Criticism: Which text of the Old Testament does Paul use, LXX or the Hebrew Bible?
2. Incidence of Citation: Which text or which passages does Paul cite?
3. Sources and historical background: To which interpretive community tradition does Paul belong?
4. Theological legitimacy: Does Paul use the Old Testament with exegetical-theological integrity, or does he exploit it for proof-texts and apply it in unusual ways? Does Paul's understanding of the role of Torah within the faith of Israel represent an aberrant caricature of Judaism?
5. Biblical inspiration and authority: How does Paul view Scripture in terms of its origin and authority?

Scholars complain of Paul's idiosyncratic use of the Old Testament, maintaining that he had no regard for the meanings of the Scriptures, that he took the texts out of their own contexts and applied them for his purpose.⁴ Some complain that

²Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), x.

³*Ibid.*, 9.

⁴A. von Harnack argues that Paul used the Old Testament only in a polemical context in Corinthians, Galatians and Romans. He contends that the Old Testament was not important for Paul in the formulation of his theology. Paul did not rely upon the Old Testament in his mission activities to the Gentiles. See A. von Harnack, "Das Alte Testament in den Paulinischen Briefen und in den Paulinischen Gemeinden," SAB Berlin (1928): 124-41. His thesis was followed by G. Klein. See G. Klein, "Römer 4 und die Idee der Heilsgeschichte," *EvT* 23, 1963, 424-47.

Paul used the Old Testament Scriptures as proof-texts for the gospel only.⁵ Some scholars accuse Paul of being arbitrary, tendentious and misconstrued in his use of Scripture. They charge that Paul changes the sequence of the text, disregards the syntax of the sentence, dropping, adding, or altering the text's wording.⁶ Modern readers are especially baffled when New Testament writers use Old Testament texts in ways different from the intention of the original human authors.⁷ In order to understand Paul, we need to understand Paul's interpretive scheme as well as the interpretive frameworks that are popular in his days.

Lindars argues that the Old Testament has no place for Paul; it only serves him as a servant for the gospel, bolstering up arguments and filling out meaning through allusions. According to Lindars, New Testament writers do not care for the original meanings of the Old Testament; they are only concerned with the kerygma, which they need to teach and defend. They are not interested in formulating a theology of the Old Testament as a pedestal upon which a New Testament theology can be erected.⁸

⁵Dietrich-Alex Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums: Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus*, BHT 69 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1986), 253-55.

⁶Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums*, 33. For a more detail listing of such complaints, see Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, 239; and Christian Dietzfelbinger, *Paulus und das Alte Testament: Die Hermeneutik des Paulus, Untersucht an seiner Deutung der Gestalt Abrahams*, Theologische Existenz Heute 95 (München: Chr. Kaiser, 1961), 19.

⁷Klyne Snodgrass, "The Use of the Old Testament in the New," in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts*, ed. G. K. Beale (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 34.

⁸Barnabas Lindars, "The Place of the Old Testament in the Formation of New Testament Theology," *NTS* 23 (1976): 59-75.

Vielhauer insists that Paul came to the Old Testament completely from the perspective of the New Testament, thus ignoring the original meaning of the Old Testament.⁹

On the other hand, there is a host of scholars who argue that Paul is faithful to the message of Old Testament. Marshall points out that Lindars' arguments are based on his assumption that early Christians used the Old Testament only for apologetic purposes. However, there is a firm tradition that Jesus and the early church used the Old Testament for teaching and for liturgical purposes. He argues further that the New Testament authors *thought* they were respecting the context and original meaning, otherwise, they would have argued that the meaning they found was the meaning which God intended (*italics his*).¹⁰ Bell contends that when Paul quotes Deuteronomy 32:21 in Romans 10:19, Paul has the whole of Moses' Song in view.¹¹

Scholars also argue that rabbinic midrash provides the proper historical background for the understanding of Paul's thought.¹² N. Dahl proposes that in Galatians

⁹Philipp Vielhauer, "Paulus und das Alte Testament," *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie der Reformation* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969), 33-62.

¹⁰I. Howard Marshall, "An Assessment of Recent Developments," in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts: Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New*, ed. G. K. Beale (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 203-04.

¹¹Richard H. Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy: The Origin and Purpose of the Jealousy Motif in Romans 9-11*, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament* 63 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1994), 284.

¹²Paul is said to employ midrashic technique when he draws in Old Testament texts with the same linking word or key word to support his argument. An example can be found in Rom 4:1-8, where Paul expounds on the concept of justification by faith. He brings in Gen 15:5 and Ps 32:1-2 to support his argument, and the catchword is "reckon" (λογίζεσθαι), which appears in these Scriptures. See Roger le Déaut, "Apropos a Definition of Midrash," *Int* 25 (1971): 259-82; Merrill P. Miller, "Targum, Midrash and the Use of the OT in the NT," *JSJ* 2 (1971): 29-82; James A. Sanders, *From Sacred Story to Sacred Text* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 20; Snodgrass, "The Use of the Old

3, Paul employs Hillel's rule of contradiction in resolving the tension between gaining righteousness by doing the Law (Lev 18:5) and receiving righteousness by faith (Hab 2:4).¹³ Dahl finds many examples of discussion concerning contradictions in Scripture in rabbinic literature. Even though most of the rabbinic material dates from the second century or after, he argues that the question of contradictions in Scripture must have been an issue even at the time of Paul.¹⁴

How much does Paul rely on the rabbinic ways of interpretation? David Daube comments that two rabbinic interpretive methods are commonly thought to be employed by Paul: catchword linkage of two texts and inference from lesser to the greater. Yet, neither of these is uniquely rabbinic.¹⁵

Hays argues that it is illuminating to read Paul in conjunction with the rabbi, but great caution is necessary in using one to explain the other.¹⁶ Philip Alexander also contends that reading back post-70 Rabbinic traditions into pre-70 Judaism is totally unjustified.¹⁷

Testament in the New," 43; Anthony Tyrrell Hanson, *Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 127-29.

¹³When two biblical passages are in contradiction to one another, Hillel maintains that both passages should be upheld in their own contexts. They should not negate each other. See N. Dahl, *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1977), 159-77.

¹⁴Dahl, *Studies in Paul*, 165.

¹⁵David Daube, "Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric," *HUCA* 22 (1949): 239-65. See also Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 13.

¹⁶Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 11.

¹⁷Philip S. Alexander, "Rabbinic Judaism and New Testament," *ZNW* 74 (1983): 244.

Qumran Exegesis

One of the interpretive methods commonly employed by the Qumran Community is called *peshar*, which is a word derived from Aramaic, meaning “solution.” This method of interpretation seeks to find a solution for the text. For example, the judgment against Babylon in Habakuk 2:7-8 is realized in a wicked priest in Jerusalem who gave much trouble to the Qumran Community. Many scholars have suggested that such “*peshar*” exegesis can be found in the New Testament.¹⁸ Peter’s interpretation of the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:17 as a fulfillment of Joel 2:28-29 is considered an example of *peshar* in the New Testament.¹⁹

Midrash *peshar* includes the following features: (1) merging pertinent verses into one prominent “proof-text,” (2) adapting the grammar to the New Testament context and application, (3) choosing appropriate renderings from known texts or Targums, and (4) creating *ad hoc* interpretations. All these devices aim at expressing the true meaning of the biblical passage as the writer perceives it, or explaining a present reality on the basis of an old text.²⁰ Marshall points out that there is no great distinction between Qumran and rabbinic exegesis. The Qumran methods were not confined to Qumran. They could be more widespread. They might have exerted a greater influence on early Christian literature than was commonly thought.²¹

¹⁸Marshall, “An Assessment of Recent Developments,” 208.

¹⁹Snodgrass, “The Use of the Old Testament in the New,” 41-42.

²⁰E. Earle Ellis, *Paul’s Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Tweeddale Court, 1957), 148-49.

²¹Marshall, “An Assessment of Recent Developments,” 208-09.

Nicole argues that the New Testament writers exercise considerable freedom as they quote the Old Testament. They may quote from the Septuagint, or they may do their own translation from the Hebrew texts. If there is a mistranslation in the Septuagint, they may not take the trouble to correct it, since it does not affect the main points of their argument. Moreover, the New Testament writers did not have the same rules for quotations as we have nowadays. Furthermore, the New Testament writers sometimes paraphrased their quotations, changing the pronouns, the persons, as well as the mood and voice of verbs to suit the connection in the New Testament. In certain cases, they do not refer to a single passage, but summarize the general teaching of the Old Testament on the subject, for example, in Matthew 2:23; 5:31; Romans 3:10; 1 Corinthians 2:9; and Galatians 3:22. Four, the New Testament writers simply refer to the Old Testament passages without intending to quote them. Five, the New Testament writers may record quotations made by Jesus, Paul, Peter or others, who might have spoken in Aramaic.²²

Philonic Exegesis

Philo's exegesis takes an allegorical approach in interpreting Scripture. In Galatians 4, Paul makes an analogy of Haggai and Sarah to the Sinai Covenant and the New Covenant. It is often alleged that Paul is employing allegorical interpretation analogous to Philo's exegesis since the Greek verb ἀλληγορέω "allegorize" is used in Galatians 4:24. Silva argues that Paul may not be using the word the way we use it. Furthermore, the apostle neither rejects the historicity of the Genesis narrative, nor seeks

²²Roger Nicole, "The New Testament Use of the Old Testament," in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts*, ed. G. K. Beale (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 18-25.

to integrate the narrative into his philosophical scheme. These two features are peculiar to Philo's interpretation. Careful comparison between Philo's interpretation and Paul's hermeneutics shows that there are more differences than similarities between the two.²³

Affirmations of Paul's Hermeneutics

Childs questions whether the critics who have evaluated Paul's use of the Old Testament negatively have understood adequately the coherence of Paul's theology in relation to his appeal to the Old Testament. Have they imposed upon Paul a set of modern categories with regard to what constitutes correct exegesis?²⁴ For Paul, Scripture and reality belong together. The objective is to witness to Christ.

Hays points out that Paul's use of the Old Testament is not a textual issue, but a hermeneutical issue. Indeed, Paul is engaged in the act of reinterpreting Scripture to address the concerns of his communities.²⁵ His reinterpretation was based upon the revelation he received in Christ. Hays introduces the concept of intertextuality in the interpretation of Paul's letters. He writes, "The phenomenon of intertextuality—the imbedding of fragments of an earlier text within a later one—has always played a major role in the cultural traditions that are heir to Israel's Scriptures: the voice of Scripture, regarded as authoritative in one way or another, continues to speak in and through later texts that both depend on and transform the earlier." According to Hays, Paul saw himself

²³Moisés Silva, "Old Testament in Paul," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1993), 636.

²⁴Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, 240.

²⁵Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 9.

as a prophetic figure, proclaiming the Word of God as Israel's prophets had done before, in a way that reactivated past revelation under new conditions.²⁶

Many scholars have argued that the Old Testament was important in the formulation of Paul's theology. U. Luz, contends that throughout his letters, Paul does not offer a bizarre reading, an esoteric reading, a Gnostic construct, or a private rumination, but a real interpretation of the biblical texts.²⁷ For Paul, Scripture and reality cannot be separated. "One cannot understand Scripture apart from the reality of which it speaks, namely Christ."²⁸ Christ is the reality to which Scripture testifies.

Richard Longenecker argues that Paul adheres to the original sense of the OT passages. If he extends the meanings, it is because of his Jewish presuppositions of corporate solidarity, or Christian presuppositions of eschatological fulfillment and Messianic presence.²⁹ Hence, a holistic knowledge of the Old Testament is crucial in our understanding of Paul.

Nicole argues that the New Testament writers make particular application of the principles stated in the Old Testament. Old Testament prophecies can be fulfilled in more than one single event. The first audience of the prophecies may conceive the prophecy in a more restricted way, but that does not preclude a greater fulfillment in the New Testament perspective. This is sometimes called *sensus plenior*, a Latin term,

²⁶Ibid., 14.

²⁷U. Luz, *Das Geschicht serständnis des Paulus*, BevTh 49 (1968): 42.

²⁸Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, 241.

²⁹Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 121.

referring to the “fuller sense” God intended for a text beyond the human author’s intention. Snodgrass calls this concept *correspondence in history*, that is, the way God worked in the past is mirrored in the way he works in the present and future. The meaning of a text is not used *up* (italics his) by a single event.³⁰

Dodd agrees that there is a certain shift in context as New Testament writers interpret Scripture. The original scope of the passage is expanded. He argues that Scripture contains the potential of more meaning than the original author explicitly intended.³¹

Furthermore, not all the passages quoted in the New Testament are considered as definite prophecies. They are cited as simply characterizing in a striking way the New Testament situation. When Old Testament passages are quoted in the New Testament, it does not immediately follow that there is a distinct relationship of prophecy to fulfillment, or of antitype to type.³²

Using the example of the suffering servant in Isaiah, George Ladd argues that the literal interpretation of the Old Testament does not work. The suffering servant of Isaiah is sometimes referred to as Israel and sometimes as the Redeemer of Israel (Isa 45:3; 49:3; 50:10; 52:13; and 53).³³ “The fact is that the New Testament frequently

³⁰Snodgrass, “The Use of the Old Testament in the New,” 34, 37-38.

³¹C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-Structure of New Testament Theology* (New York: Scribner, 1953), 130.

³²Nicole, “The New Testament Use of the Old Testament,” 26-27.

³³George E. Ladd, “Historic Premillennialism,” in *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views*, ed. Robert G. Clouse (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1977), 22.

interprets Old Testament prophecies in a way *not suggested by the Old Testament context* The Old Testament is reinterpreted in the light of the Christ event.”³⁴

I. Howard Marshall argues that the New Testament authors *thought* [italics his] that they were respecting the contexts and original meanings of the passages they quoted. Otherwise, they would have explained that the meanings they found were the meanings God intended.³⁵ For Ragnar Bring, the New Testament is the divine interpretation of the Old Testament. “It is God showing the real meaning of what he revealed there in words and events.”³⁶

M. Silva notes that Paul is never content with merely restating the original historical meaning of the OT text, but rather applies it to his present situation. Silva argues that the apostle reflected carefully and thoughtfully on OT texts in their contexts. “Even in the case of quotations that appear somewhat arbitrary, patient consideration of the broad context can be enlightening.”³⁷

Paul’s Hermeneutics

Most of Paul’s citations of the Old Testament are found in Romans, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians. More than half of these are found in Romans. This shows that in his defense of the gospel in the book of Romans, he is heavily dependent upon the Old Testament. Furthermore, over eighty per cent of the Old Testament citations are from the

³⁴Ibid., 20-21.

³⁵Marshall, “An Assessment of Recent Developments,” 203.

³⁶Ragnar Bring, “Paul and the Old Testament,” *Studia Theologica* 25 (1971): 40.

³⁷Silva, “Old Testament in Paul,” 639-40.

Pentateuch, Isaiah, and the Psalter, with Genesis and Isaiah being the favorite books. In Paul's use of the Old Testament, the Prophets rather than the Pentateuch occupy a central role.³⁸ Paul's use of Scripture concentrates on two major subjects: (1) the righteousness of God and the law; (2) the election of Israel and the nations.³⁹ When Paul explains the salvation of Israel in Jesus Christ in the book of Romans, he quotes the Old Testament 54 times. But in several other letters, for example, in Colossians, an apologetic epistle against heretics, there is no Old Testament quotation.⁴⁰ Therefore, the relevance of the Old Testament in the New Testament writings depends on the subject matter that is addressed.

Ellis describes the exegesis of Paul as "grammatical-historical plus." He argues that the apostle does not ignore the historical significance of the text; neither does he play fast and loose with grammar. Rather, Paul assumes grammar and historical meaning of the text, but he goes further to explicate a wider meaning of the Old Testament Scripture than its original application. Paul integrates his exposition into the quotations and thereby expresses the true meaning of the text. Ellis argues that criticism of Paul's quotations of Scripture often fails to recognize this 'added factor' in Paul's hermeneutics. "If Paul's presuppositions as to the nature of the OT and of its history are accepted, little fault can be found with his handling of individual texts."⁴¹

³⁸Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums*, 33.

³⁹Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, 237.

⁴⁰Snodgrass, "The Use of the Old Testament in the New," 36.

⁴¹Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 147-48.

Following the track of the above scholars who speak positively of Paul's hermeneutics, we consider Paul to be a serious and inspired interpreter of the Old Testament. He takes for granted the authority of Scripture. It seems inevitable that one has to understand the Jewish Hellenistic milieu in which Paul wrote his letters before one understands how he applies the Old Testament to his own context. Paul has a clear conviction that his message is a revelation from Christ (Gal 1:12). He also distinguishes the message from Christ and the message from the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 7:10; 7:40). Paul's view of Scripture is briefly summarized below.

Scripture is Inspired and Authoritative

Paul takes for granted that Scripture is the word of God and authoritative for the saints for doctrine and living (1 Tim 3:16). Often he supports his arguments with Scripture. Ellis sees that Paul reveres Scripture as sacred, not for its "letters" alone, but for the meaning, which the letters conveyed. Paul quotes Scripture not as a way of worshipping the 'letter' or parroting the text, but to bring out the true meaning originally implanted there by the Spirit.⁴²

Scripture Testifies to the Gospel

Paul has a clear conviction that what he preached is not out of the blue or invented by himself, but is revealed to him by Jesus Christ and testified by the Scripture (Gal 1:11, 12). Therefore, he can confidently say that the gospel is testified by the law and the prophets (Rom 3:21), and this is what God has always been about.⁴³ Jesus is the

⁴²Ibid., 146.

⁴³Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, 241.

purpose of the law and the fulfillment of the promises. Paul finds in the Old Testament the gospel of Jesus Christ proleptically figured, a gospel proclaiming the inclusion of the Gentiles among the people of God.⁴⁴

Scripture Speaks Today

For Paul, Scripture, the living word of God, speaks not only then but even now (1 Cor 9:9). God's revelation to Moses concerning his free mercy (Rom 9:15; Exod 33:19), Isaiah's cry of the salvation of a remnant of Israelites (Rom 9:27; Isa 10:22), and the declaration of the time of salvation (2 Cor 6:2; Isa 49:8) speak now as then. The Scripture's affirmation of the righteousness that is reckoned to Abraham is written for us (Rom 4:23).⁴⁵ It is Paul's conviction that God's Word is eternal and always relevant. Thus, he can confidently say, "Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope" (Rom 15:4).

Scripture is Spiritual

Paul's interpretation of Scripture is not bound by the letters of its words. He is the minister of the new Covenant and not of a written code. He reads Scripture by the illumination of the Spirit, for the γράμμα "written code" kills, but the Spirit makes alive (2 Cor 3:6). The γράμμα of the Scripture refers to the letters of the Scripture, implying a wooden understanding and application of Scripture. Paul advocates a spiritual understanding of Scripture. He is neither bound by the letters of Scripture, nor given over

⁴⁴Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 13.

⁴⁵Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, 241.

to subjective allegorizing of the text. Rarely does he use allegorical interpretation, except in Galatians 4. Occasionally, he uses the grammar of the text as a point of argumentation: He argues that Christ is the heir of the promise based on the use of the singular form of the word “seed” (Gal 3:16). Yet, he exercises certain freedom in his interpretation as moved by the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, he brings out the more significant meaning of the text without rejecting its historical meaning.⁴⁶ Paul asserts that he teaches spiritual truth to spiritual people. Unspiritual people cannot accept it (1 Cor 2:14).

Typology

Paul uses typology in the exposition of his theology. In Romans 5, Paul depicts Adam as the head of the fallen humanity, while Christ is the head of the redeemed community. Adam is said to be a τύπος (“type”) for Christ (Rom 5:14). The Israelites who have experienced the grace and mighty power of God in the Exodus fell in the desert because of their sins. This serves as a warning τύπος for us not to follow their footsteps (1 Cor 10:6).

Typology differs from allegory in that it regards the events as historical, and it accepts the literal meanings of the texts. Goppelt identifies typological interpretations with two basic characteristics: historical correspondence and escalation, in which the divinely ordered prefigurement finds a greater fulfillment in a future event.⁴⁷

⁴⁶Peter Stuhlmacher remarks that Paul hears and reads Scriptures in the Spirit of faith as the word of the living God. “The Pauline prophecy concerning history (salvation history) thus corresponds to his spiritual interpretation of Scripture.” Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), 173.

⁴⁷Leonard Goppelt, *Typos: Die typologische Deutung des Alten Testaments im Neuen* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1939), 244.

With such understanding of Paul's hermeneutics in his use of the Old Testament, we will proceed to study his quotation of the Isaiah texts in Romans 11:26b, 27, and find out how these texts serve as grounds for his claim in Romans 11:26a that "all Israel will be saved."

Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans 11:26, 27

Early Christians used the Old Testament to prove their Christian theology and to solve their problems. The Old Testament provides the substructure, content, language and imagery for the construction of Christian theology. Snodgrass writes, "Therefore, New Testament concepts must be understood from Old Testament passages. Virtually every New Testament subject must be approached through the contribution of the Old Testament."⁴⁸ Hence, before we can comprehend how Paul applies the Old Testament passages, we need to understand what these passages mean in their own contexts.

In Romans 11:26b, 27, Paul gives the scriptural support for his concluding statement in verse 26a. By quoting a combination of the texts in Isaiah 59:20, 21; and 27:9, Paul argues that all Israel will be saved because God has spoken through Isaiah that a Redeemer will come out of Zion. He will turn ungodliness from Jacob. He will make a covenant with them and forgive their sins. Paul quotes Isaiah heavily in the book of Romans. His concept of salvation is greatly influenced by the message of Isaiah. Therefore, in order to understand Paul's thought in his quotation of the Isaiah texts in Romans 11:26, 27, we need to have an overview of the concepts of the salvation of Israel, the redeemer, Zion, and the inclusion of Gentiles in the contexts of Isaiah. Afterwards,

⁴⁸Snodgrass, "The Use of the Old Testament in the New," 29-30.

we will analyze the specific contexts of Isaiah 59:20 and 27:20. Then we will examine why and how Paul puts these two texts together.

The Theological Context of Isaiah

Since Paul uses the Isaiah passages to support his argument that all Israel will be saved, we should learn what Isaiah teaches about the salvation of Israel. We will study major motifs mentioned in the two Isaiah texts, 59:20 and 27:9, which Paul quotes in Romans 11:26, 27. The four major motifs we will cover are: salvation of Israel/Jacob, the redeemer, Zion, and covenant in Isaiah. We will bring into our discussion relevant texts from the other books of the Old Testament. The specific contexts of Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9 will be handled more in the next section when we study Paul's quotation of the Isaiah texts.

Salvation of Israel in Isaiah. For Isaiah, there is no obedient Israel; only the grace of God (63:7). God constantly calls Israel to repentance (Isa 31:6). The book of Isaiah begins by God's charges against Israel of her rebellion against him (Isa 1:2-3). These charges are repeated throughout the book. Israel is a sinful nation and a rebellious people. They have suffered God's judgment because of their sins (Isa 1:4-7, 21-23; 3:1-26; 5:1-30; 42:18-25; 43:22-24, 27-28; 48:1-8; 50:1; 57:1-13; 65:2-7, 11, 12). Only by God's grace is a remnant saved (Isa 1:8, 9; 4:2-4; 10:20-23; 11:11-16; 27:12-13; 28:5; 37:31, 32; 40:27-31; 41:8-16; 43:1-4; 45:17; 46:3; 65:8-10).

Isaiah repeatedly calls Israel to turn to God from their evil ways. If the Israelites return from their evil ways and learn to do good, then God will forgive their sins (Isa 1:16-18; 43:25; 44:21-22; 58:1-14). Isaiah speaks against those who do not have

a repentant heart (Isa 27:11; 46:8, 12). As a result, only a remnant is saved. Only those who take refuge in the Lord will inherit the land (Isa 57: 13).⁴⁹

Judgment and salvation are presented in parallel with one another in the book of Isaiah. Those who sin will be judged, while those who repent and return from their evil ways will be saved. “Zion shall be redeemed by justice, and those in her who repent, by righteousness. But rebels and sinners shall be destroyed together, and those who forsake the Lord shall be consumed” (Isa 1:27, 28). In that day (a day of judgment), there will be few men in Zion; in that day (a day of restoration), the sins of the daughters of Zion will be forgiven and the remnants of Israel will be holy (Isa 4:1-6).⁵⁰

God sends Israel to exile because of her sins but he will forgive their sins when they turn back from their idol worship (Isa 27:9). In their idol worship, they are a people without discernment, and God has no compassion on them. Yet, there is still a remnant coming from Egypt and Assyria, who will worship the Lord in the holy mountain at Jerusalem (Isa 27: 12-13). On the one hand, the Lord picks his people; on the other hand, at the blast of the trumpet, people come like an army.

While the Lord casts the crown of the proud to the ground to be trodden under foot, he himself will be a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty to the remnant of his people (Isa 28:5, 6). Since the heart of Israel is far from God, they will not understand the

⁴⁹James Scott also notes that Israel’s expected restoration is contingent upon repentance. See James M. Scott, “And then all Israel will be saved,” in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, ed. James M. Scott (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 520-21.

⁵⁰Joseph Blenkinsopp considers this portion of the text as an apocalyptic literature in which the seer clearly distinguishes the different outcomes of the elect and the reprobate in the final eschatological judgment day. See Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 187.

word of the Lord, but the deaf, the blind, the meek and the poor shall know the Lord and rejoice in the Holy One of Israel (Isa 29:13-19). The one who redeemed Abraham will also redeem Jacob (Isa 29:22-24). The “Jacob” in this passage refers not to those whose hearts are away from God (Isa 29:13), but to those who have the same faith and obedience as Abraham.

Even in the midst of the people’s rebellion (Isa 30:1-14), God still calls them to return and trust in him (Isa 30:15), and the Lord promises them restoration if they would cast away their idols (Isa 30:18-26; 31:6). While God punishes the rebellious Israel, he protects Jerusalem like a bird hovering over its nest (Isaiah 31:5). Young proposes a solution to this dilemma by arguing that “God must bring to naught the physical city of Jerusalem and destroy the theocracy, but that towards his own, i.e., the remnant, the delivering and redeeming mercy of God will be shown.”⁵¹

In summary, Isaiah proclaims that Israel has gone astray and has sinned against the Lord. God will judge the rebellious. However, for those who would repent, God will forgive their sins and they will be the glorious and blessed people of the Lord.

Redeemer. Isaiah prophesies the coming of a Davidic king who will rescue God’s people from oppression of the enemies and from sin. He is called “the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” He will rule on the throne of David forever (Isa 9:1-7). He is a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and he will be empowered by the Spirit. He will judge the world and the nations will seek him (Isa 11:1-

⁵¹Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, vol. 2, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), 378.

10). His work of salvation will be proclaimed among the nations (Isa 12:1-6). A throne will be established by the **רַחֲמִים** (“loving-kindness, mercy, grace”) of the Lord. The one sitting on it will rule with faithfulness and righteousness (Isa 16:5). Yahweh is the redeemer and savior of Israel (Isa 41:14; 43:3, 14; 48:20; 49:26; 60:16; 63:16).⁵² For Paul, Christ is the agent through whom Yahweh brings salvation to Israel.

Isaiah describes a servant of the Lord, who will preach good news to Zion (Isa 41:27; 42:1, 49:5, 6; 61:1). He is chosen by Yahweh, empowered by his Spirit to proclaim justice among the nations. He will be a light to the Gentiles (Isa 42:1-7) and bring salvation to the end of the earth (Isa 49:6).⁵³ He will restore Israel (Isa 49:5, 6). He will suffer and bear the sins of his people (Isa 53). For those who mourn in Zion, he will grant them everlasting gladness (Isa 61:3, 7). He will make a covenant with his people forever (Isa 59:20-21). Yahweh will be praised among the nations (Isa 61:8-11).

In summary, God will redeem his people through the Messiah, the suffering Servant. Not only will he be the redeemer of Israel, he will also be the light to the Gentiles. He will bring salvation to the end of the earth. In response to the question of who will participate in the restoration of Israel, Schmid and Steck comment rightly:

Clear statements occur at the literary and material end of the Corpus propheticum. These statements speak about an existing division within empirical Israel between the wicked, who will be destroyed in the final judgment with the world of the

⁵²Wagner notes that “the redeemer” is a frequent title for Israel’s God in Isaiah’s oracles of salvation. See J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letters of the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 289.

⁵³Some scholars argue that the servant here refers not to the Messiah but to Israel, who is to be a missionary of Yahweh to the nations. See W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 61. The reference to the Messiah is clear since he is the one who will restore Israel (Isa 49:5-6).

nations, and the pious, who come from both Israel and the nations. These pious ones comprise the existing, true people of God (Isaiah 56:1-8; 65f.; Zech 13:7-9; 14; Mal 2:17-3:5; 3:13-21; cf. also the catalogue of conduct in Isa 33:14-16). This people is comprised of those “who keep YHWH’s Sabbath, who choose that which pleases YHWH, and who keep his covenant” (Isa 56:4). . . . In short, they are “the chosen ones of YHWH” (Isa 65:9), or even the “servants of YHWH” (Isa 65f.).⁵⁴

Zion. In Isaiah, Zion has several meanings. It can refer to the city of Jerusalem as a geographical location (Isa 1:8; 18:12; 31:4, 9). God will put his salvation in Zion (Isa 46:13). This implies that God will accomplish his salvation in Zion.⁵⁵ The inhabitants of Jerusalem or Judah are called Zion or the daughters of Zion (Isa 3:16; 10:32; 40:9). Zion can refer to God’s people in a general sense (Isa 33:14; 34:8; 49:14). Zion is also depicted as the mother of God’s people. God will bring back her children in her bereavement (Isa 49:21). Sometimes, Zion represents the redeemed Israel whose sins have been cleansed, and they walk in faith and righteousness (Isa 1:27; 33:24; 51:16). “Zion” and “Jerusalem” are frequently used together (Isa 2:3; 31:4, 9; 41:27; 62:1; 64:10).

Moreover, “Zion” is referred to as the city of God. “The Lord has founded Zion, and in her the afflicted of his people find refuge” (Isa 14:32). Zion is the

⁵⁴Konrad Schmid and Odil Hannes Steck, “Restoration Expectations in the Prophetic Tradition of the Old Testament,” in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, ed. James M. Scott (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 55-56. See also O. H. Steck, *Der Abschluß der Prophetie im Alten Testament. Ein Versuch zur Frage der Vorgeschichte des Kanons* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1991), 29f., 91-99, 167-75; idem, *Gottesknecht und Zion. Gesammelte Aufsätze zu Deuterojesaja* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1992), 170-72, 205-7; K. Schmid, *Buchgestalten des Jeremiabuches. Untersuchungen zur Redaktions- und Rezeptionsgeschichte von Jer 30-33 im Kontext des Buches*, WMANT 72 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1996), 66-85.

⁵⁵Burton and Coffman explain that God will effect a greater deliverance that will originate in Zion. See James Burton and Thelma B. Coffman, *Commentary on Isaiah* (Houston, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 1990), 443.

eschatological ideal city of God (Isa 60:14ff). “Then the moon will be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before his elders he will manifest his glory” (Isa 24:23).⁵⁶ God will set salvation as its walls. The righteous nation which keeps the faith may enter it (Isa 26:1-3). God fills Zion with justice and righteousness. There will be salvation, wisdom, knowledge and the fear of the Lord (Isa 33:5, 6). There will be no sickness, and the sins of the people will be forgiven (Isa 33:24). God is worshipped in Zion (Isa 33:20). It is a city where the redeemed (גְּאוּלִּים) and the ransomed (וּפְדוּיֵי) of the Lord will have everlasting joy (Isa 51:10-11). God’s redeemed people are described as a glorious city (Isa 54:11-12).

When Yahweh returns to Zion, it will be a time of redemption for Zion, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God (Isa 52:7-10). It will be a new Exodus (Isa 52:11, 12). Redemption is accomplished by the suffering servant described in Isaiah 53. The people suffer because of their sins. When they are in their desperate despair, the Lord comes to Zion as Redeemer to those in Jacob who turn from transgression (Isaiah 59). In Isaiah, the Lord does not come from Zion, but he comes to Zion to save his people (Isa 59:20). Zion does not represent heaven; it represents Jerusalem, or the ideal

⁵⁶Geoffrey Grogan sees the sun and moon as representing rebellious angelic beings. For him, the locality of the reign of the Lord may be literal or symbolic (Geoffrey W. Grogan, *Isaiah*, in vol. 6 of *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin and J. D. Douglas [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Regency Reference Library, 1986], 153-56); Hans Wildberger argues that the sun and moon may represent those powers which ruled over the history of the peoples and over the destiny of each individual people, would now be shown publicly in their nothingness (Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 13-27*, tran. Thomas H. Trapp [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997], 509-10); Kaiser, on the other hand, argues that the glory of the Lord shines so bright that the light of the sun and moon seem pale by comparison (Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 13-39* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974]), 195.

Jerusalem, or the people of God. However, Isaiah writes about Yahweh coming down from heaven to punish the wicked or to destroy his enemies (Isa 64:1-3; 66:15-17).

In Isaiah 31:4, 5, the Lord will come down to fight against Mount Zion.⁵⁷ He will protect Jerusalem.⁵⁸ The clause **יֵרֵד יְהוָה צָבָאוֹת לְצָבָא עַל־הַר־צִיּוֹן וְעַל־גְּבְעוֹתָהּ** (״So the Lord will come down to fight against Mount Zion and upon the hills״) has no indication that God is coming from heaven to fight the enemies of Israel.⁵⁹ The clause merely means God’s presence and sovereign control in that conflict. Moreover, the

⁵⁷The interpretation of verse 5 has been much disputed. The majority of the commentators argue in verse 5 that God fights against Mount Zion. Two reasons support this view: the lion-prey imagery and the meaning of the phrase **צָבָא עַל**. First, the lion-prey imagery shows the certainty of God’s judgment upon Israel, Egypt, and Assyria (Isa 31:1-4, 8-9). Second, there are four other instances in which the verb **צָבָא** (‘‘fight’’) is used with the preposition **עַל**. In all these cases, the phrase means fight against: The Israelites fight against the Medianites (Num 31:7); the nations fight against Ariel (Isa 29:7); the multitude of all the nations fight against Mount Zion; and the nations fight against Jerusalem (Zech 14:12). Those who argue that the phrase **צָבָא עַל** should be translated as ‘‘fight upon’’ usually base their arguments upon the theological conviction that God’s love for Israel is unconditional and cannot fight against Zion, but he fights the enemies upon Mount Zion. Furthermore, they argue that God’s attitude towards Israel is positive in Isa 31:5 and in the ‘‘hovering bird’’ imagery in v. 4. See John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 574; Grogan, *Isaiah*, 202-03.

⁵⁸Keil and Delitzsch explain God’s change in tone towards Israel in this two verses as follows: ‘‘But this abrupt **μετάβασις** was intended as a surprise, and was a true picture of the actual fulfillment of the prophecy; for in the moment of the greatest distress, when the actual existence of Jerusalem was in question (Isa 10:33, 34), the fate of Ariel took suddenly and miraculously a totally different turn (Isa 29:2). In this sense, a pleasant picture is placed side by side with the terrible one (cf. Mic 5: 6,7).’’ C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, vol. 7 of *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989), 45. My explanation for the change in tone is that God’s severity is for the rebellious and unrepentant Israel, while his grace is for the repentant and redeemed Israel (Rom 11:22).

⁵⁹John D. W. Watts notes that Jerusalem is destroyed in the next generation. John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, WBC, vol. 24 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985), 409.

context of the passage is not about an eschatological battle. The ones whom the Lord fights are the rebellious Israel, Egypt, and Assyria (Isa 31:1-4, 8-9; 42:23-25). The Israelites have deeply apostatized from God. “Turn to him from whom you have deeply revolted, O people of Israel” (Isa 31:6). God calls Israel to repent and forsake their idols because of the impending judgment. In the midst of God’s judgment (Isa 32:9-14; 33:1, 3), there is always peace for those who trust in him (Isa 32:15-20; 33:2, 5-6). But God is a burning fire for the sinners (Isa 31:9; 33:14).⁶⁰

In summary, Isaiah refers Zion to the earthly Jerusalem and to the people of God. In Isaiah, there is no reference to Zion as heaven. God will establish his salvation in Zion. The Redeemer will come to Zion to save his people from sin. The idealized Zion refers to either the eschatological Jerusalem or the glorious redeemed people of God.

The redeemed Israel/Jacob. Isaiah 20-66 is loaded with messages of restoration for a redeemed Israel/Jacob.⁶¹ While there are only five such passages in Isaiah 1-39, there are sixteen in Isaiah 40-66. In these restoration passages, Israel/Jacob is said to be the servant of God, God’s chosen one, and the seed of God’s friend, Abraham.

⁶⁰Oswalt notes that the flame of God in Zion (Isa 31:9) denotes both God’s sanctity and his destructive power to consume the evildoers. Jerusalem is not exempted (cf. the story of Nadab and Abihu, Lev 10:1-5). “Thus the answer to the question ‘Is Jerusalem inviolable?’ is always no. But does God hover over Jerusalem with special concern and does he invest her with special significance? Yes!” See Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah Chapters 1-39*, 577.

⁶¹These are mostly restoration passages in Isaiah concerning “Israel” and “Jacob” in the same verse. In Isaiah, there are altogether twenty-two such verses. Five of these verses speak negatively of Israel/Jacob: Isa 43:22ff., 42:24; 43:22, 28; and 48:1. The other seventeen verses speak of Israel/Jacob as the chosen and redeemed people of God (Isa 9:8; 10:20; 14:1; 27:6; 29:23; 40:27; 41:14; 43:1; 44:1, 5, 21, 23; 45:4; 46:3; 48:12; 49:5, 6). Isaiah 9:8 is read with the previous paragraph. The word from the Lord is the promise of the eternal Son to rule on the throne of David (Isa 9:1-7).

Israel does not need to be afraid. God will sustain him. He will rejoice in the Lord (Isa 41:8-16; 45:4). The Lord has compassion on Jacob and will choose Israel again (Isa 14:1). Yahweh is the Redeemer and the king of Israel (Isa 41:14, 21; 44:6). Israel will be the witness for God (Isa 43:10-13, 21; 44:8). God will forgive the sins of Israel (Isa 43:25; 44:22). God will sprinkle his spirit upon the descendants of Israel so that they will belong to the Lord, and they will be called by the name Israel (Isa 44:1-5). Israel will glorify God (Isa 44:23). God summons Israel to turn to him because he has redeemed her (Isa 44:22). God has prepared an eternal salvation for Israel (Isa 45:17). The descendants of Israel are justified by God (Isa 45:24-25).

In summary, God has compassion on Israel and will choose her again. He will redeem Israel, and she will glorify God and be a witness for him. Christopher Wright argues correctly that the uniqueness of Israel's historical experience was because of their special role and function in facilitating God's promise of blessings to the nations.⁶²

So Israel's unique historical experience was not a ticket to a cosy state of privileged favouritism. Rather it laid upon them a missionary task and a moral responsibility. If they failed in these, then in a sense they fell back to the level of any other nations. They too, like all nations and all humanity, before the bar of God's judgement, and their history by itself gave them no guaranteed protection Israel was unique because God had a universal goal through them.⁶³

Covenant. The Messiah is given as a covenant for the people (Isa 49:8). The Messiah will establish a covenant with every one who comes to him (Isa 55:1-5). Yahweh will come to Zion to be the Redeemer of those in Jacob who return from sin. He

⁶²Christopher J. H. Wright, *Knowing Jesus through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1992), 40.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 41, 44.

will make an eternal covenant with them and with their descendants (Isa 59:20-21). This covenant bears a striking similarity to the “new covenant” in Jeremiah 31:31-37 LXX (31:31-37 MT). Jeremiah speaks of God’s laws written in the hearts of the people, while Isaiah promises that God’s Spirit will remain in them and God’s word will abide with them and with their descendants.⁶⁴ The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews refers to the “new covenant” mentioned in Jeremiah as the new covenant Christ has established (Heb 8:6-13).⁶⁵

Inclusion of Gentiles. In the last days, the Gentiles will swarm to Zion to learn about the word of God (Isa 2:2-4). Gentiles participate with the restored Israel in worshipping and serving God (Isa 11:10; 14: 1, 2; 56:1-8). God will make himself known to the Egyptians. When they cry to the Lord because of oppressors, he will send them a Messiah (מֹשִׁיחַ), and he will defend and deliver them. The Egyptians and the Assyrians will be among God’s people (Isa 19:19-25). All will bow before God and swear by his name because he is the only God (Isa 45:23). The nations will glorify God (Isa 45:5-6; 45:22-25). This is a “new thing” that God will do: Salvation will be extended to the nations (Isa 42: 5-13; 43:6-7; 19-21; 44:5; 45:22-23; cf. 1 Pet 2:9; Eph 2:19-22).⁶⁶

⁶⁴Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 290.

⁶⁵A. Casarella, “Israel, Twelve Tribes,” in *DLNTD*, ed. by Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1997), 542-44. See also Robert H. Stein, *The Method and Message of Jesus’ Teachings* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1978), 159; Ladd, “Historic Premillennialism,” 25-27.

⁶⁶Westermann argues that the new thing is that liberation from Babylonian captivity is accomplished through the Persian king Cyrus rather than through the armed forces of Israel. See Claus Westermann, *Prophetic Oracles of Salvation in the Old Testament*, trans. Keith Crim (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1991), 40. Walter Brueggemann argues that the new thing is the restoration of the whole creation (*Isaiah*

In that day, Egypt, Assyria, and Israel will be the people of God. “In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrians will come into Egypt, and the Egyptians into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom the LORD of hosts has blessed, saying, ‘Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my heritage’” (Isa 19:23-25).⁶⁷ Israel is not unique as God’s people anymore, but she is the third and the last. In the end, the Lord will gather the nations to see his glory. He will send his servants to proclaim his name among the nations. They will bring back their brothers to Jerusalem as offerings to the Lord like the Israelites offering sacrifices in clean vessels (Isa 66:18-21).

In summary, for Isaiah, the rebellious Israelites were exiled because of their sins against God. In their rebellion, God constantly extends grace to them and calls them to return in repentance. By God’s grace, there will be a remnant of God’s people who will enjoy God’s covenantal blessings. Whoever returns to God from their sins will be accepted. God promises the coming of the Messiah who will take away their sins and establish an everlasting covenant with them. Gentiles will join with Israelites in

40-66 [Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1998], 57-59). Barry G. Webb contends that the Servant would open a new chapter in God’s relationship with his people and with the world. This new relationship will eventually lead to new heavens and new earth (Isa 65:17; 66:22). See Barry G. Webb, *The Message of Isaiah*, *The Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996), 172. Young is probably on the target when he says that the new thing is the wondrous new redemption that was wrought for His people when the promised Messiah died upon the cross of Golgotha. See Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, vol. 3, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 156.

⁶⁷W. D. Davies sees a message of universalism in Isaiah in these verses. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 60.

worshipping and serving God. The future of Zion will be glorious. There will be eternal peace for the people of God, but the rebellious ones will be judged. Isaiah preaches judgment and hope at the same time: Judgment for the rebellious people, and hope for those who would repent of their sins and turn to God. Christopher Wright argues that if Israel, as Yahweh's first-born son, would live by his standards and obey his Law, then God could pursue his goal of bringing blessings to the nations.⁶⁸

Context Analysis of Isaiah 59:20

In Isaiah 59:20, Yahweh is the Redeemer, who will come to Zion (Isa 59:20). In the Hebrew text, "Zion" is most naturally taken in the locative sense, referring to Mount Zion or Jerusalem.⁶⁹ The Redeemer comes to those who have turned back from sin in Jacob and make a covenant with them.⁷⁰ The Lord will put his Spirit in them and his words in their mouth.⁷¹ While the MT emphasizes the repentance of the people as they wait for deliverance from God, the LXX emphasizes the gracious mercy of God,

⁶⁸Wright, *Knowing Jesus through the Old Testament*, 130-31. See also John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 532.

⁶⁹J. Ridderbos argues that "Zion" stands for the people of the Lord who are spiritual, "those in Jacob who repent of their sins." See J. Ridderbos, *Isaiah*, in *Bible Student's Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), 535.

⁷⁰Avraham Gileadi argues that the new covenant is a composite of all former covenants the Lord made with his people, consisting of the promise of a land regenerated to paradisaical glory and protected by the presence of the Lord, and a posterity endowed with the Spirit of the Lord to minister in priesthood. See Avraham Gileadi, *The Literary Message of Isaiah* (New York: Hebraeus Press, 1994), 262-63.

⁷¹Claus Westermann argues that the promise made in the description of the epiphany, that God will intervene, is given two sides to it—against the transgressors and 'for those in Jacob who turn from apostasy.' See Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), 352.

who will come to take away the sins of Jacob and make a covenant with his people.

Oswalt argues that even though Paul's quotation adheres to the LXX text, his use of the passage is in keeping with the sense of the MT. God has now provided a Redeemer for Israel's salvation, but she must turn from her continued rebellion in order to experience God's blessings.⁷² Brueggemann also argues that the assurance of "Redeemer to Zion" is qualified. The promised restoration is not to Zion but to those in Zion "who turn."⁷³ The message of redemption of Zion is already laid out in the first chapter of the book of Isaiah, "Zion shall be redeemed by justice, and those in her who repent, by righteousness. But rebels and sinners shall be destroyed together, and those who forsake the Lord shall be consumed" (Isa 1:27, 28).

Isaiah rebukes Israel of the sin of idolatry in Isaiah 57. In chapter 58, he exposes their sins of social injustice. They oppress their workers. They quarrel, fight and hit with wicked fist (Isa 58:3-4). In chapter 59, Isaiah says they are still a rebellious people. Their sins have separated them from God, and their prayers are not heard (Isa 59:2). Isaiah lists a number of sins of Israel in chapter 59: killing, telling lies, working violence, making mischief, shedding innocent blood, doing injustice, and conceiving evil thoughts, speaking oppression and revolt, denying the Lord, turning away from following God. They seem to be enslaved by their sins. They cannot rescue themselves and no man can save them. Therefore, the Lord comes as a divine warrior armed with righteousness, salvation, vengeance, and fury (Isa 59:16-17). His armor anticipates the battle's outcome,

⁷²Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*, 530.

⁷³Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40-66*, 202.

an event with two aspects: salvation for the devout, and judgment for the transgressors.⁷⁴

Yahweh comes to Zion to save those in Jacob who turn from transgression.⁷⁵

In the context of Isaiah 59, the real enemies of Israel are the sins of the people.⁷⁶ Their sins separate them from God (Isa 59:2). The Redeemer comes to rescue them from the entrapment of their sins (Isa 59:20). For those who do not repent, they will face the judgment of God, and they will be in sorrow while the redeemed of the Lord rejoice (Isa 65:11-15). The Lord will repay them according to their evil deeds (Isa 59:17-18; 63:5-6). If they return to God from their evil ways, their sins will be forgiven. The Lord will make a covenant with them. His Spirit and his word will be with them always (Isa 59:21). This is the redeemed Israel (Isa 62:12). They will be glorious and the blessings of the Lord will be upon them (Isaiah 60-65).⁷⁷

Therefore, Isaiah 59:20-21 is not about Yahweh coming from heaven to defeat the enemies of Israel, to rescue the Israelite people, and to establish a political state in Jerusalem from which the Lord reigns the world. Rather, it is about Yahweh coming as

⁷⁴Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, 351.

⁷⁵John Oswalt argues that there is a fundamental condition for experiencing the compassion of God: turning away from continued rebellion. God's grace is inherent in his character. The only thing that can block its flow is an unrepentant heart. See Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*, 530.

⁷⁶In Isa 1:24, God's enemies are the apostate leaders of Zion. See Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, 25; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 187.

⁷⁷Wright argues, "Just as there will be a 'remnant of Israel', so there will be 'survivors of the nations' (Isa 45:20ff., 66:19ff., Zech 14:16ff.). And the Old Testament sees *both together* (the purified and believing, obedient remnant of Israel along with those of the nations who respond to the appeal to identify with Yahweh and his people) as the eschatological future people of God." Wright, *Knowing Jesus through the Old Testament*, 140.

the Redeemer, to rescue Israel from the bondage of sin.⁷⁸ When Israel is redeemed, they will be the glorious and blessed people of God described in Isaiah 60-66.

The Redeemer will remove ungodliness from the sons of Jacob. This is the covenant the Redeemer makes with them when he forgives their sins. Evidently, the covenant related to the forgiveness of sins refers to the new covenant prophesized by the prophets (Jer 31:31-34; Isa 61:8; 59:20-21; Ezek 36:25-28; 37:23-26).⁷⁹ The condition for forgiveness of sins is clear in the MT of Israel 59:20: the Deliverer will come to save those in Jacob who turn from transgression.⁸⁰

Context Analysis of Isaiah 27:9

There are certain similarities between the context of Isaiah 27:9 and 59:20. God is coming to save his people and to judge the sins of the inhabitants of the land (Isa 26:11-12, 21). He comes as a furious warrior, armed with a sword to slay the Leviathan the fleeing serpent (Isa 27:1). The Leviathan symbolizes the evil force, which is against God and his people.⁸¹ In his grace, God gives his enemies a chance to make peace with

⁷⁸Oswalt argues that God's ultimate purpose in attacking the sin of the world is to redeem the world as typified in Zion. See Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*, 530.

⁷⁹Ridderbos argues that the content of the covenant is the promise of the Spirit and words of the Lord as an everlasting possession (Ridderbos, *Isaiah*, 535).

⁸⁰Westermann notes that the first half of Isa 59:20 signifies redemption and deliverance for Israel in her entirety at God's advent. But according to the second half of the verse, only those who turn away from transgression will be redeemed. See Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, 352.

⁸¹Bruggemann writes, "It is the removal of 'the last enemy' (Leviathan) that liberates the world for the true worship of the one God." See Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah 1-39* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 213, 216.

him (Isa 27:5). When God exercises his judgment, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness (Isa 26:9). God will bless Israel and her fruit will fill the world (Isa 27:6). Wildberger argues that the use of חבל (“the world”) in Isaiah 27:6 has the end of time in view. When Israel flourishes again, the whole world will be full of good gifts.⁸² This fits well with Paul’s expectation that the world will be blessed by coming of the fullness of Israel (Rom 11:12).

God will come to judge the sinners but he will save those who make peace with him. Israel is not an exception. Her sins have to be forgiven before she can be blessed. God will rescue Jacob and take away the sins of his people when Israel turns away from worshipping idols (Isa 27:9).⁸³ Polaski argues that Isaiah 27:7-11 presents two groups of people: one group is punished, but will be forgiven when they destroy their altars (Isa 27:7-9); the other group loses their once-fortified city and forfeits any claim to divine blessings (Isa 27:10-11).⁸⁴

This condition of repentance is also stated in the second ὅταν clause of Isaiah 27:9 (LXX): when they would break down their idols, that is, when they would turn from

⁸²Wildberger, *Isaiah 13-27*, 594. Aune and Stewart also note that there are two groups of expectations of restoration of Israel in Jewish apocalyptic literature: one group expects the restoration of a national Israel in the land of Palestine; the other group expects the restoration of the present fallen world to its Edenic conditions. See David E. Aune with Eric Stewart, “From the Idealized Past to the Imaginary Future: Eschatological Restoration in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature,” in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, ed. Scott, James M. (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 150.

⁸³Otto Kaiser understands this verse as referring to the cessation of idolatry and all cultic activity outside Jerusalem, which is a condition for the participation of the brother nation to the north in the coming age of salvation. Kaiser, *Isaiah 13-39*, 228.

⁸⁴Donald C. Polaski, *Authorizing an End: The Isaiah Apocalypse and Intertextuality* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 297.

their sins of idol worship.⁸⁵ Paul does not quote this part of Isaiah 27:9 in Romans 11:27 because idol worship may not be the prominent sin of the Jews in his days, but the requirement for repentance is implied in his quotation.

It is also interesting that Paul chooses Isaiah 27:9 to express the forgiveness of the sins of Jacob. The context of this verse shows that Israel is forgiven when she is in her desolate state, being oppressed by her enemies (Isa 27:7-11).⁸⁶ While the people is considered to be without discernment, and God has no mercy upon them, the Lord gathers the Israelites one by one, not the nation as a whole (Isa 27:11, 12). The perishing and the outcasts from Assyria and Egypt will come to Jerusalem to worship the Lord (Isa 27:13). This is the remnant that the Lord saves.

Paul's Combination of the Isaiah Texts

Why does Paul choose these two texts in Isaiah and combine them in such a way?⁸⁷ He could have just quoted Isaiah 59:20, 21, which describes the coming of the

⁸⁵Oswalt argues that smashing the idols is both the cause and result of the forgiveness of sins. "On the one hand, smashing the idols is necessary if forgiveness is to be received; on the other hand, the announcement of forgiveness supplies the motivation to do the smashing." Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah Chapters 1-39*, 499.

⁸⁶Walter Brueggemann notes that Isa 27:7-11 are exceedingly difficult verses because the city that is the object of Yahweh's wrath is not easily identified. Three options have been proposed for the identification of the city: Jerusalem, the "world capital" of the preceding chapter, and Samaria. Brueggemann opts for Samaria as the city of wrath. For more discussion, see Brueggemann, *Isaiah 1-39*, 215.

⁸⁷Stanley argues that the combination of Isa 59:20 and 27:9 into a unified quotation was not original with Paul because both the "Zion" theme (the word occurs only here and in Romans 9:33) and the covenant emphasis play almost no role in Paul's theology. That is, Paul quotes from a passage familiar to him from earlier usage. See Christopher D. Stanley, "'The Redeemer Will Come ἐκ Σιών': Romans 11:26-27 Revisited," in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders

Messiah to make a covenant with his people, followed by the giving of the Spirit and the word of God.⁸⁸ The fact that Paul excludes Isaiah 59:21 and includes Isaiah 27:9 shows that, in Paul's mind, repentance for the forgiveness of sins is important in Israel's restoration.⁸⁹ As we have seen, Isaiah repeatedly calls Israel to repentance (Isa 31:6). Israel will suffer judgment from God if they do not repent (Isa 1:4-7, 21-23; 3:1-26; 5:1-30; 48:1-8; 50:1; 57:1-13; 65:2-7; 11, 12). In his grace, God has prepared a salvation for them, but they need to return from their evil ways and trust in God (Isa 1:8, 9; 9:13; 10:20-23; 11:11, 16; 28:5; 27:5; 37:31, 32; 46:3; 65:8-10). By combining the two texts, Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9, Paul brings out the overall Isaianic message of salvation. In this way all Israel will be saved: by repenting of their sins and receiving the redemption of the Messiah. Reidar Hvalvik makes the same observation:

By adding another word about God taking away the sins of Israel, Paul shows how he interprets the salvation of the Jews: It means salvation from sin and ungodliness. If this is sound reasoning, it means that the important words in the quotation are not to be found in the first line (concerning 'the Deliverer'), but in the second and in the last. When Paul says that 'all Israel shall be saved', this is supported by the words

(Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993) 122-24. Such an interpretation stems from an over emphasis of the "Zion" theme (referring "Zion" to the heavenly Jerusalem or the ideal Jerusalem rather than the earthly Jerusalem) which is not warranted by the text in Rom 11:26-27. Furthermore, Paul does talk about the covenant in his letters (Rom 9:4; 11:27; 1 Cor 11:25; 2 Cor 3:6; 3:14; Gal 3:15, 17; 4:24; Eph 2:12).

⁸⁸Wagner has made the same observation, but he does not provide a confident explanation as to why Paul substitutes the last part of Isa 59:21 with Isa 27:9. Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 293-94.

⁸⁹Christopher Wright argues rightly that repentance is necessary for Israel's restoration and for God to finish his wider agenda of blessing the nations through Israel. He further notes that "the covenant promise of God is axiomatic and fundamental and all our hope of salvation hangs upon it. But no doctrine of election, no covenant theology, no personal testimony of redemption, can relieve us of the imperative necessity of faith proving itself in active obedience." Wright, *Knowing Jesus through the Old Testament*, 38, 70, and 131. See also Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*, 530.

ἀποστρέψει ἀσεβείας ἀπὸ Ἰακώβ ('he will banish ungodliness from Jacob') and ἀφέλωμαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν ('I take away their sins').⁹⁰

This is also the message Jesus proclaimed at the beginning of his ministry:

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near" (Matt 4:17). Peter preached the same message to the Jews in the day of the Pentecost: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Therefore, it seems consistent with the message of the New Testament that salvation comes through faith and repentance, for both the Jews and the Gentiles.

Textual Analysis of Paul's Quotation of the Isaiah Texts

In this section, we will first see how Paul alters and combines the Isaiah texts. Why does he make his changes? What are the theological implications in Paul's quotation of the Isaiah texts? At this point, we will focus our discussion on the Old Testament background of Paul's quotations in Romans 11:26, 27. Chapter four of this dissertation will deal more fully with the exegetical issues of these two verses.

Romans 11:26, 27: ἥξει ἐκ Σιών ὁ ρυόμενος, ἀποστρέψει ἀσεβείας ἀπὸ Ἰακώβ. καὶ αὕτη αὐτοῖς ἡ παρ' ἐμοῦ διαθήκη, ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν.

The deliverer will come out of Zion, he will turn ungodliness from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them, when I forgive their sins.

Isaiah 59:20, 21 (LXX): καὶ ἥξει ἕνεκεν Σιών ὁ ρυόμενος καὶ ἀποστρέψει ἀσεβείας ἀπὸ Ἰακωβ καὶ αὕτη αὐτοῖς ἡ παρ' ἐμοῦ διαθήκη εἶπεν κύριος τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐμὸν ὃ ἐστὶν ἐπὶ σοί καὶ τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἔδωκα εἰς τὸ στόμα σου

⁹⁰Reidar Hvalvik, "A Sonderweg for Israel: A Critical Examination of a Current Interpretation of Romans 11: 25-27," *JSNT* 38 (1990): 95.

οὐ μὴ ἐκλίπη ἐκ τοῦ στόματός σου καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ σπέρματός σου εἶπεν γὰρ κύριος ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα

And the redeemer will come for the sake of Zion, and he will remove ungodliness from Jacob. And this is my covenant to them, said the Lord: My Spirit which is upon you and the words, which I have given to your mouth, will not leave from your mouth and from the mouths of your descendants forever said the Lord.

Isaiah 59:20 (MT) וְבָא לְצִיּוֹן גּוֹאֵל וְלִשְׁבֵּי פֶשַׁע בְּיַעֲקֹב נָאֻם יְהוָה
וְאֲנִי זֹאת בְּרִיתִי אִתְּחֶם אָמַר יְהוָה רוּחִי אֲשֶׁר עָלַיָּךְ וּדְבָרֵי אֲשֶׁר־שִׁמְחִי
בְּפִיךָ לֹא־יִמּוּשׁוּ מִפִּיךָ וּמִפִּי זֶרַע וּזְרַעַךְ אָמַר יְהוָה מִעַתָּה
וְעַד־עוֹלָם: ס

And he will come to Zion as Redeemer, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, says the LORD. "And as for me, this is my covenant with them, says the LORD: my spirit which is upon you, and my words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, or from the mouth of your children, or from the mouth of your children's children, says the LORD, from this time forth and for evermore.

Isaiah 59:20 (Targum):

וַיֵּיחִי לְצִיּוֹן פְּרִיק וּלְאַחְבָּא מְרוּדִיא דְּבֵית יַעֲקֹב לְאַוּרִיתָא אָמַר יוֹי

And he will come to Zion as a Redeemer and to turn back the rebels of the house of Jacob to the Law, says the Lord.

Isaiah 27:9 (LXX) “διὰ τοῦτο ἀφαιρεθήσεται ἡ ἀνομία Ἰακωβ καὶ τοῦτο ἐστὶν ἡ εὐλογία αὐτοῦ ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι αὐτοῦ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ὅταν θῶσιν πάντας τοὺς λίθους τῶν βωμῶν κατακεκομμένους ὡς κονίαν λεπτὴν καὶ οὐ μὴ μείνη τὰ δένδρα αὐτῶν καὶ τὰ εἶδωλα αὐτῶν ἐκκεκομμένα ὥσπερ δρυμὸς μακράν

Therefore by this the transgression of Jacob will be taken away, and this is his blessing when I forgive his sin when they shall have broken to pieces all the stones of the altars as fine dust, and their trees shall not remain, and their idols shall be cut off, as a thicket afar.

Isaiah 27:9 (MT)

לְכֵן בְּזֹאת יִכָּפֵר עוֹן־יַעֲקֹב וְזֶה כָּל־פְּרִי הָסֵר חֲטָאתוֹ בְּשׁוּמוֹ כָּל־אַבְגֵּי
מִזְבֵּחַ כְּאַבְגֵּי־גֶר מִנְּפֻצוֹת לֹא־יִקְמוּ אֲשֶׁרִים וְחִמָּנִים:

Therefore by this the guilt of Jacob will be covered, and then all the fruit of his sins will be removed when he makes all the stones of the altars like chalkstones crushed to pieces, no Ashe'rim or incense altars will remain standing.

Psalm 13:7 (LXX): “τίς δώσει ἐκ Σιών τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἐν τῷ ἐπιστρέψαι κύριον τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀγαλλιᾶσθω Ἰακωβ καὶ εὐφρανθήτω Ἰσραὴλ.”

Who will give from Zion salvation of Israel when the Lord brings back the captives of his people. Let Jacob be glad and Israel rejoice.

In Romans 11:26-27, Paul quotes Isaiah 59 from verse 20 to the end of the first clause of 59:21, “and this [will be] my covenant with them.” Then he joins them to the subjunctive clause of Isaiah 27:9a, “when I would forgive his sin.” Paul adheres closely to the LXX texts of Isaiah, but he changes the wordings at significant points, reflecting his theology. This unique combination of Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9 indicates Paul’s own work and his reinterpretation of Isaiah texts.⁹¹

First, Paul begins the second clause of Romans 11:26 with καθὼς γέγραπται (“just as it is written”), and he eliminates the first two καὶ conjunctions of Isaiah 59:20. This seems to be natural for a smooth flow of the language. Stanley considers the change insignificant.⁹²

Second, where the Hebrew text of Isaiah 59:20 has “the redeemer will come to Zion (לְצִיּוֹן),” “Zion” is taken in the local sense, referring to Jerusalem. The LXX translators translated this clause as “the Deliverer will come for the sake of Zion (ἕνεκεν Σιών ὁ ῥυόμενος), taking Zion as referring to the people of God, and translating לְצִיּוֹן as ἕνεκεν Σιών (“for the sake of Zion”). This translation is legitimate since Zion can represent the city Jerusalem or the people of God in Isaiah.

⁹¹Ibid., 95.

⁹²Stanley, “The Redeemer Will Come ἐκ Σιών,” 122-23.

Paul changes the wording of the first clause of Isaiah 59:20 in a very special way. He argues that the Redeemer will come out of Zion (ἐκ Σιὼν). He follows neither the MT nor the LXX. No other ancient version of Isaiah 59:20 supports this reading except a few manuscripts of the Greek text that may depend on Paul's quotation.⁹³

Paul is so familiar with the book of Isaiah that he may have taken the idea and the phrase ἐκ Σιὼν ("out of Zion") from Isaiah 2:2, "For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem (ἐκ γὰρ Σιὼν ἐξελεύσεται νόμος καὶ λόγος κυρίου ἐξ Ιερουσαλημ)." ⁹⁴ However, it is more likely that Paul was influenced by Psalm 13:7 (LXX), "O that salvation for Israel would come from Zion (ἐκ Σιὼν)! When God restores the fortunes of his people, Jacob will rejoice and Israel be glad." The same verse is repeated in Psalm 52:7 (LXX). The Lord will bring salvation to his people from Zion (ἐκ Σιὼν). Jacob/Israel will rejoice when they see the salvation of God. The word pair Jacob-Israel also appears in these two verses. Psalm 13:7 and Isaiah 2:2 may have influenced Paul in his use of the phrase ἐκ Σιὼν in Romans 11:27. Therefore, when Paul writes the deliverer will come out of Zion (ἐκ Σιὼν), it is most likely that he refers

⁹³Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 284. The manuscripts that support the Pauline wordings are minuscules 22^c, -93, 564^{*}, 407, 534, the Bohairic Coptic version, and quotes by Epiphanius, Hilary, and Jerome. See also Christopher D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature* (Cambridge: University Press, 1992), 167.

⁹⁴Wagner argues that by using ἐκ Σιὼν, the language of Isa 2:3-4 and Mic 4:2-3, Paul depicts the Lord's coming in person from a restored Zion to bring deliverance to his people who are scattered among the nations. Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 284. The Isaiah and Micah texts speak of a restoration of Zion and Jerusalem, when the word of God comes forth from Zion. How this prophecy is to be fulfilled is debatable. To read from these texts of the Lord's coming in person is to say more than the texts do.

to the salvation that is accomplished by Jesus in Jerusalem, which is now being preached by his disciples from Jerusalem to the end of the world.

Stanley and others argue that the clause “the deliverer will come out of Zion” refers to the second coming of Jesus from heaven bringing salvation to his people. The idea that Yahweh will establish his rule from Zion (ἐκ Σιὼν) is also expressed in other Old Testament passages: Psalms (LXX) 49:2; 52:7; 109:2; 127:5; 133:3; Amos 1:2; Micah 4:2; Joel 4:16; and Isaiah 2:3.⁹⁵ These texts have the phrase ἐκ Σιὼν (“out of Zion”), but they all refer to the earthly Jerusalem. None of these texts support a reading of ἐκ Σιὼν as referring to God coming down from heaven. A brief look at the contexts of these passages will prove this point.

The phrase ἐκ Σιὼν occurs in the Old Testament eleven times: Psalms (LXX) 13:7; 19:3; 49:2; 52:7; 109:2; 127:5; 133:3; 134:21; Amos 1:2; Mica 4:2; Joel 4:16. Psalms 13:7 and 52:7 speak of the salvation of Israel coming from Zion. In Psalm 19, the psalmist prays for the strength of the Lord from Zion (Ps 19:3). Zion here refers to Jerusalem where the temple of God is located. Psalms 127:5; 133:3; 134:21 all refer to the blessings of the Lord from Zion, which is Jerusalem in the contexts of these psalms.

Psalm 49:2 describes God coming in consuming fire and swirling tempest to judge his people. The Lord calls upon the heavens *above* and the earth as witnesses to testify against his people (Ps 49:4, 6). God speaks not from heaven but from the earthly

⁹⁵Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 167. See also Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 314; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, WBC, vol. 38b (Dallas: Word Books, 1988), 682; Joachim Jeremias, “Einige vorwiegend sprachliche Beobachtungen zu Römer 11:25-36,” in *Israelfrage*, ed. Lorenzo de Lorenzi (Rome: Abtei von St Paul vor den Mauern, 1977), 200.

Zion where he judges his people. He commands his people to offer thanksgivings, vows, and petitions to God. He rebukes those who recite God's law and covenant with their mouth but do evil in life. In light of the coming judgment of God, the psalmist urges his people to give thanks to God and to walk uprightly so that they may receive God's salvation (Ps 49:23).

The description of the coming of God in judgment and salvation in Psalm 49 (LXX) (50 MT) is very similar to the description of the manifestation of God in judgment against the Assyria in Isaiah 30: 19-33. God comes in great brightness. God shines forth from Zion (Ps 49:2). The moon will be as bright as the sun, and the sun will shine sevenfolds in brightness (Isa 30:26).⁹⁶ The Lord comes in with burning anger, rising smoke, and devouring fire (Isa 30:27-28; Ps 49:3 [LXX]). The difference between the two passages is that in Psalm 49 (LXX) God comes to judge his people while in Isaiah 30:27-33 God comes to judge the Assyrians. Since the historic destruction of Assyria does not involve a theophany, it is also not necessary to see a theophany from Zion in Psalm 49. In most of the instances, Zion refers to Jerusalem. "The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter" (Ps 109:2 LXX; 110:2 MT). The most popular setting of this psalm is a royal coronation at the temple in Jerusalem.⁹⁷ The Davidic king rules from Zion meaning Jerusalem. The New Testament writers take Psalm 110 (MT) as a messianic psalm referring to the enthronement of Jesus (Matt 22:44; Acts 2:34; Heb

⁹⁶This probably should be understood metaphorically in the moral or spiritual sense, instead of in the literal sense. With the brightness of the sun increased seven times, the earth and its inhabitants will be scorched. See Webb, *The Message of Isaiah*, 130.

⁹⁷Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150*, WBC, vol. 21 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983), 83.

5:6).⁹⁸ The interpretation of Zion as the heavenly Jerusalem is predominantly a New Testament concept (Gal 4:26; Heb 12:22; Rev 3:12; 21:2, 10). In these Scriptures, the heavenly city is also the people of God (Rev 21:2, 9).⁹⁹

In Amos 1:2, “the Lord roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem.” The Lord rages like an angry lion because of the sins of the nations and of Judah and Israel. The Lord is coming in judgment. Douglas Stuart notes that the poem identifies Yahweh’s proper earthly dwelling place as Jerusalem, and not the cultic centers of the Northern Tribes, Dan and Bethel.¹⁰⁰ The Law shall come forth from Zion (Mica 4:2), and the Lord will reign in Zion (Mica 4:7). Zion here is still Jerusalem. Joel 3:9-17 describes an eschatological battle in which the Lord cries from Zion to punish the nations and to rescue his people, the true Israelites.¹⁰¹ Jerusalem will be holy, and the Lord will dwell in Zion (Joel 3:17, 21). Zion is Jerusalem and not heaven.¹⁰²

⁹⁸Some scholars regard this psalm as eschatological and messianic from the outset. See E. J. Kissane, “The Interpretation of Psalm 110,” *ITQ* 21 (1954): 103-14; M. Rehm, *Der königliche Messias im Licht der Immanuel-Weissagungen des Buches Jesaja*, Eichstätter Studien neue Folge Band I (Kevelaer: Butzon und Bercker, 1968), 329-31.

⁹⁹There is some mention of Paradise, a heavenly Jerusalem, the building of a city in 2 *Enoch* 55:2; 4 *Ezra* 8:52; 10:27; and 2 *Apoc. Bar.* 4:2-6, but these texts were written in the 1st and 2nd century AD. Furthermore, Zion is not mentioned in these texts. See James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments* (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 1:55, 544, 622.

¹⁰⁰Douglas Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, WBC, vol. 31 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 301.

¹⁰¹C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Minor Prophets*, vol. 10 of *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989), 229.

¹⁰²Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, 270. Keil and Delitzsch take Zion not as the earthly Jerusalem but as “the sanctified and glorified city of the living God, in which the Lord will be eternally united with His redeemed, sanctified, and glorified church.” They do not think Zion refers to the earthly Jerusalem, “not only by the circumstance that the

By changing the wording of Isaiah 59:20 and using the phrase ἐκ Σιων “out of Zion,” Paul proclaims a message of salvation coming forth from Zion. Jesus has come to Zion and has accomplished redemption for his people. His followers are now proclaiming this message of salvation to both Jews and Gentiles, from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the world (Acts 1:8).

Wagner argues that the use of the phrase ἐκ Σιων (“out of Zion”) reflects an interpretive shift, in which the events narrated in these verses are viewed from the standpoint of the Diaspora. Thus, he contends that Paul’s quotation depicts the Lord’s coming in person from a restored Zion to bring deliverance to his people who are scattered among the nations.¹⁰³

Wagner errs in a number of ways. As can be seen from the use of ἐκ Σιων in the Old Testament texts mentioned above, the use of the phrase ἐκ Σιων does not necessarily imply a description of the event from a Diaspora perspective. There is no mention of a Diaspora situation in Psalms 19: 2; 49:2; 109:2; 127:5; 133:3; Mic 2:4; and Joel 4:16. Moreover, in a number of instances where the phrase ἐκ Σιων is used, the perspective of the writer is obviously from Jerusalem and not from the Diaspora. For example, the Psalmist prays that the Lord will bless from Zion (ἐκ Σιων) his servants who serve at the temple (Ps 133:3). “Give praise, O servants of the Lord, you that stand

gathering of all the heathen nations takes place in the valley of Jehoshaphat, i.e. in a portion of the valley of the Kidron, which is a pure impossibility, but also by the description which follows of the glorification of Judah” (Keil and Delitzsch, *Minor Prophets*, 229). I do not completely disagree with Keil and Delitzsch in interpreting the eschatological battle in a less than literal sense. However, in the context of Joel, Zion refers to Jerusalem (Joel 3:16, 17).

¹⁰³Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 284.

in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God Blessed be the Lord from Zion, he who dwells in Jerusalem” (Ps 134:1, 21). In his oracle concerning Israel in the day of Uzziah, Amos prophesies, “The Lord roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem; the pastures of the shepherds mourn, and the top of Carmel withers” (Amos 1:2). More examples can be cited, but three is sufficient for now. Furthermore, the eschatological battle is fought in the land of Israel, when the Lord rescues his people from the attack of their enemies (Joel 3:9-17; Isa 31:4, 5).

Third, in Romans 11:27, Paul changes ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι αὐτοῦ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν “when I would forgive his sin” in the LXX text of Isaiah 27:9 to ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν (“when I would forgive their sins”).¹⁰⁴ In doing so, Paul stresses the plurality and individuality of the Jews whose sins will be forgiven when they turn to the Lord. He is not talking about the forgiveness of the sin of the nation or of the people of Israel as a whole.¹⁰⁵ Paul may also use the plural form ἁμαρτίας to produce a

¹⁰⁴Christopher D. Stanley argues that the use of the plural form of ἁμαρτία (“sin”) stems from a non-Pauline source because the plural form ἁμαρτίας is uncommon in Paul’s letters. See Stanley, “The Redeemer Will Come ἐκ Σιών,” 123. On the contrary, Wagner argues that the plural form ἁμαρτίας reflects a normal Pauline usage. Paul uses the singular form ἁμαρτία to represent a quasi-hypostatized cosmic power, while he uses the plural form ἁμαρτίας to refer to the multiple transgressions of Israel. See Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 283.

¹⁰⁵Eric C. Rust also argues that the new covenant prophesized by Jeremiah is also individual and internal in nature (Jer 31:31-34). He writes, “Thus the covenant will be with the house of Israel, but it will be individualized and internalized.” See Eric C. Rust, *Covenant and Hope: A Study in the Theology of the Prophets* (Waco, TX: Word, 1972), 117-18. See also John Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion: Studies in the Life of Jeremiah* (Cambridge: University Press, 1961), 329. For a detail discussion of the theology of the relationship between the individual and the community, see Joel S. Kaminsky, *Corporate Responsibility in the Hebrew Bible*, JSOTSup 196 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).

parallelism with ἀσεβείας (“ungodliness”).¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, the ὅταν with the subjunctive verb ἀφέλωμαι indicates an action in the potential future. When Jews come to faith in Christ, their sins will be taken away.¹⁰⁷

Hvalik points out these two words ἀσεβείας and ἁμαρτίας provide a direct link to the concept of justification by faith in Romans 4, where Paul says God justifies the ungodly (τὸν ἀσεβῆ) (Rom 4:5). In Romans 4:7, Paul quotes Psalm 31:1, “Blessed are those whose sins (αἱ ἁμαρτίαι) are covered.”¹⁰⁸ Thus, Paul proclaims the same message of the gospel to the Jews as to the Gentiles. All are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Conclusion of Paul’s Use of Isaiah in Romans 11:26, 27

In this section, we have briefly discussed Paul’s use of the Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9 in Romans 11:26, 27. Indeed, we find Paul to be faithful to the meanings of the Isaiah passages. The way he combines Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9 brings out the overall message of Isaiah. This message of repentance and restoration in Isaiah is the theological basis for the gospel, which Paul proclaims. Jesus is the Messiah, who has come to save the Jews and Gentiles from sin and death.

We have discussed Paul’s use of the Old Testament and his quotation of the Isaiah texts in Romans 11:26-27. Paul quotes Isaiah 59:20, which is a text about the

¹⁰⁶Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 283.

¹⁰⁷N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 251.

¹⁰⁸Hvalvik, “A Sonderweg for Israel,” 96.

redemption of Jacob, to support his statement concerning the salvation of Israel in Romans 11:26a. We want to find out what are the meanings and relationship of these two names in the Old Testament and specifically in the book of Isaiah.

The Meanings and Relationship of “Israel” and “Jacob” in the Old Testament

In this section, we will briefly study the meaning and significance of the names “Jacob” and “Israel” in the Old Testament. We will emphasize the relationship between these two names. Special attention will be paid to the significance of the occurrence of the two names in the same verse or in adjacent verses, especially in the book of Isaiah.

“Jacob” in the Old Testament

The name Jacob is used 350 times in the Old Testament.¹⁰⁹ Fifty two percent of the occurrences of the name Jacob are found in the book of Genesis. The name refers to the third patriarch of the people of Israel. In poetic and prophetic texts, the name Jacob rarely refers to the historic person. It is most often used as a collective name for the nation of Israel.¹¹⁰ Jacob is the birth name of the patriarch, while Israel is the God given name. In later books, “Jacob” refers to the ethnic descendants of the patriarch, and “Israel” refers to the nation of the people. However, there are also many instances, especially in the poetic books where the two names are used interchangeably (Ps 53:6; 81:4; Isa 40:24; Jer 30:10; Mic 2:12).

¹⁰⁹Abraham Even-Shoshan, ed., *A New Concordance of the Bible* (Jerusalem: Sivan Press, 1985), 477-78.

¹¹⁰Daniel I. Block, “The Foundations of National Identity: A Study in Ancient Northwest Semitic Perceptions” (Ph.D. diss., University of Liverpool, 1982), 254-56.

V. P. Hamilton observes that the Jacob story is placed between the genealogies of the non-chosen: the sons of Ishmael (Gen 25:12-18) and the descendants of Esau (Gen 36:1-43). From this, he argues that the chosen are elected in order that other peoples may also know the blessings of God (Gen 12:3b; 18:18b; 22:18; 28:14b).¹¹¹ Hamilton notes that after Jacob is renamed “Israel” in Genesis 32:28, the new name is used in the Jacob story only in Genesis 35:21-22. In the Joseph story, both “Jacob” and “Israel” are used, sometimes in adjacent verses (Gen 46:1, 2), and sometimes in the same verse (Gen 46:5). Hamilton suggests that the name “Jacob” represents the suffering and frailty of the patriarch as a human, while “Israel” underscores his office and role as progenitor of the chosen nation.¹¹²

“Israel” in the Old Testament

The etymology of the name “Israel” is described in Genesis 32:22-32. At the ford of Jabbok Jacob wrestled with God, and he was renamed “Israel.” The name **ישראל** is probably derived from the verb **שָׁרָה** (“fight”). The reason for the renaming is: “Your name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven (**שָׁרִיתָ**) with God and with men, and have prevailed” (Gen 32:29). Rather than catching the ankle of Esau (Gen 25:25), now Jacob catches God for blessings.¹¹³

¹¹¹V. P. Hamilton, “Jacob/Israel (Person),” in *NDBT*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander, Brian S. Rosner, D. A. Carson, and Graeme Goldsworthy (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000), 587.

¹¹²*Ibid.*, 588.

¹¹³Gustaf A. Danell argues that the meaning of the name change is not to be understood by grammatical analysis of the name **ישראל**. Rather, the significance of the name change should be understood in the background of the narrative as a whole. He

The name Israel has variety of meanings in the Old Testament.¹¹⁴ Its meaning in a certain passage or certain verse is determined by the context. It can refer to the patriarchal ancestor Jacob.¹¹⁵ It also serves as a collective name for the twelve tribes. In the monarchy period, “Israel” refers to the nation as a whole.¹¹⁶ During the divided kingdom, “Israel” usually refers to the Northern Kingdom, as distinct from Judah, the Southern Kingdom.¹¹⁷ Due to the apostasy and later destruction of the Northern

contends that the purpose of Genesis 32:22-32 is to verify the right of Israelites to Canaan. Gustaf A. Danell, *Studies in the Name Israel in the Old Testament* (Uppsala, Sweden: Appelbergs, 1946), 17-18.

¹¹⁴For the general use of “Israel,” see H. –J. Zobel, “יִשְׂרָאֵל,” *TDOT* 6 (1990), 397-420.

¹¹⁵Critical scholars such as G. A. Danell argue that the application of the name Israel to the tribal ancestor Jacob is of later date. He suggests that Israel from the start is the name of a union of tribes. He follows Martin Noth’s amphictyony concept in the formation of Pentateuchal traditions. See Danell, *Studies in the Name Israel in the Old Testament*, 287; and Martin Noth, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1981), 54-58.

¹¹⁶H. G. M. Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 130.

¹¹⁷James R. Linville argues that the book of the Kings tells of the story of the two kingdoms (Israel and Judah). This indicates that the concept of a greater Israel is operative. He contends that the author of 1 and 2 Kings presents an essentially unified, pluralistic greater Israel as a single people of Yahweh. “The book affirms that behind their rivalry, Judah and Israel are unified through history. The story of the monarchy is presented in the light of a unified exodus and other allusions to the pre-monarchic period, as well as that of the glory, which was the United Monarchy. Symbols of theocratic leadership alternate between the south and north; the ‘throne of Israel’ carries with it more obligations than privileges while Israel and Judah share similar fates. Israel and Judah are more than siblings, they are different sides of the same coin.” See James Linville, *Israel in the Book of Kings: The Past as a Project of Social Identity*, JSOTSup 272 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 176, 301. There should be a distinction, even in the book the Kings, between Israel as an ethnic group and Israel as a people of God.

Kingdom, Judah is sometimes called “Israel” because it is seen to have incorporated the other ten tribes (1Kgs 12:17, Isa 1:3; 8:18; Ezek 2:3; 3:1, 4, 5, 7).¹¹⁸

In Ezekiel, the phrase “all the house of Israel” has different meanings.

Sometimes, it refers to the people in the exile (Ezek 3: 7, 11; 11: 15-16). In another time, it refers to those who are gathered from the nations (Ezek 20: 40), and they have become the restored community of Israel (Ezek 39: 25; 45: 6). After the exile of Judah in 586 BC, the prophets prophesized that God will restore Israel one day (Ezek 11:17-20; 34:24; 36: 25-27).¹¹⁹

In Ezra-Nehemiah, “Israel” is used only for Judah, Benjamin, and the descendants of Levi. The temple is built and dedicated to God by the returnees only (Ezra 4:1; 6:16, 19-20; 8:35). The returned community is called “all Israel” with exclusion to those who remained in the land (Ezra 2:70; Neh 7:73).¹²⁰ “All Israel” took the oath that they would put away their foreign wives (Ezra 10:5). Anyone who disobeyed the leaders would be excommunicated from the congregation of the exiles (Ezra 10:8). Thus, “all Israel” is identified with the congregation of the exiles.

¹¹⁸According to Danell, Judah was called Israel after the fall of the Northern Kingdom because Judah was considered as the remnant of Israel. He also argues that the Chronicler, following the line of Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, asserts Judah’s character as the real Israel, the remnant of the people of the twelve tribes and the heir to their election. Danell, *Studies in the Name Israel in the Old Testament*, 289-91. It is better to consider Judah as encompassing all Israel rather than as the remnant of Israel because the remnant concept is not dominant in the books of the Chronicles.

¹¹⁹See Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel Chapters 25-48*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 410-24.

¹²⁰Ehud Ben Zvi, “Inclusion in and Exclusion from Israel as Conveyed by the Use of the Term ‘Israel’ in Post-Monarchic Biblical Texts,” in *The Pitcher is Broken: Memorial Essays for Gösta W. Ahlström*, ed. Steven W. Holloway and Lowell K. Handy, JSOTSup 190 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 96-100.

The Chronicler, on the other hand, considers foreigners to be part of the congregation of Israel (2 Chr 30:25) and sees the people of God, “all Israel,” as inclusive.”¹²¹ Ezekiel also includes the foreigners’ share in Israel’s restoration (Ezek 47:21-23). The Qumran community, however, did not give the proselytes full Israelite status. Proselytes could not enter the Temple until the fourth generation (11Q19 xl.5-7). On the other hand, the rabbinic tradition accorded proselytes the same status as born Jews.¹²²

The name “Israel” is used frequently in Chronicles and in Ezra, while in certain part of Nehemiah, the name Judah is dominant. Even though Judah may be the name more current in everyday speech, the Chronicler chose the title Israel. In doing so, he may be trying to assert that Judah as the real Israel, the remnant of the people of the twelve tribes and the heir to their election.¹²³

In the Jewish sources of the Second Temple period, Israel was synonymous with the Jewish people, in particular, the non-priestly and non-Levitical members of the Jewish people.¹²⁴ This is especially true in the book of Esther, where Mordecai, a

¹²¹Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 130-31. See also Scott, “All Israel Will Be Saved,” 500.

¹²²The Qumran community taught that in the last days the non-Jewish nations would disappear. Pharisaic-rabbinic tradition, on the other hand believed that in the last days the nations would come to worship God and sacrifice at the Jerusalem Temple. See Lawrence H. Schiffman, “Israel,” in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 388-89.

¹²³Danell, *Studies in the Name Israel in the Old Testament*, 290-91.

¹²⁴In the Second Temple period, because of the absence of the old tribal system, the Jews are divided into four groups: priests, Levites, Israelites, and proselytes. See Schiffman, “Israel,” 388.

Benjaminite, is called a Jew (Esth 2:5). Furthermore, Judah has become the name of honor to replace the name Israel (Esth 3:6, 10; 4:3, 13, 14, 16; 8:3, 12, 17; 9: 20-25).¹²⁵

Ehud Ben Zvi has studied the use of the term “Israel” in post-monarchic biblical texts. The boundaries for the inclusion in and exclusion from the community of Israel were not clear. He concludes that in these texts “Israel” is defined by three criteria:

1. Israel is defined in terms of divine teachings which emphasize a special relationship between YHWH, Israel and Jerusalem/Zion; if so
2. Israel actually only centered around Jerusalem, and those who accept its point of view are Israel; and
3. Israel is to be unequivocally associated with the exiles and their descendants, the returnees.¹²⁶

It is clear that the Qumran Community would accept the first and third criteria, but they would reject the second criterion. Ben Zvi also observes that “the pervasiveness of texts communicating explicitly or implicitly to their audiences these boundaries through a prolonged period clearly suggests that the issue of inclusion in and exclusion from Israel was far from being settled in a satisfactory way.”¹²⁷

Seifrid also argues that in early Jewish writings, “Israel” is often divided into the pious and the wicked. The pious are those who adhere to the demand of the law. They will participate in the restoration that is to come. But the rest will suffer judgment with the enemies of God’s people.¹²⁸

¹²⁵Danell, *Studies in the Name Israel in the Old Testament*, 291.

¹²⁶Ben Zvi, “Inclusion in and Exclusion from Israel,” 138.

¹²⁷*Ibid.*, 138.

¹²⁸Mark A. Seifrid, “The ‘New Perspective on Paul’ and Its Problems.” *Themelios* 25 (2000): 9. See also Hannes O. Steck, *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten*, WMANT 23 (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967), 189-92.

Therefore, it is not out of place for Paul to redefine the true Israel as those who have faith in the Messiah. Furthermore, we argue that the phrase “all Israel” in Romans 11:26a refers to the elect Israel, those who have faith in Yahweh and the Messiah. This definition meets the first of the three criteria defining Israel as listed by Ben Zvi.¹²⁹

The calling of Israel. Before we try to understand the issue of the election and calling of the people of Israel, let us first explore how Israel and her ancestors were called into covenant with God. God called Abraham out of the land of Chaldeans and promised to give him land and descendants (Gen 12). Abraham would become the father of all nations, and all people would be blessed through him. Abraham was living among the Amorites, and his father Terah was an idol worshipper. Nevertheless, Abraham responded to God’s calling by faith and obedience. He went out of the land of Chaldeans and came to the land of Canaan. When he was in despair of not having a son, God promised him that his descendants would be like the stars of the sky. Abraham believed in God’s word, and he was counted righteous (Gen 15:6). God made a covenant with Abraham that he would bless him and multiply his descendants. The condition for the covenant blessing is that Abraham and his descendants must keep God’s covenant. Abraham obeyed and circumcised all the males of his household that day (Genesis 17). When God tested the faith of Abraham and asked him to sacrifice Isaac, Abraham

¹²⁹Graham Harvey rejects the idea of a “true Israel” and argues that Israel is not a perfect community. It contains people who are wrong-doers and wrong-thinkers. Israel names an audience which can respond positively or negatively without losing their identity. Harvey’s Israel is the physical Israel. He does not resolve the tension of the co-existence of a condemned Israel and a blessed Israel in Scripture. See Graham Harvey, *The True Israel: Uses of the Names Jew, Hebrew and Israel in Ancient Jewish and Early Christian Literature*, AGJU 35 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 266.

responded by faith and obedience (Genesis 22). When God commanded Abraham to offer Isaac as a burnt offering, Isaac was a young lad of seventeen years old, and Abraham was a man of one hundred and seventeen years old. Isaac responded by obedience, for he could have run away, and Abraham would not be able to catch him.¹³⁰

Even though Jacob inherited the godly tradition from his father and grandfather, his first encounter with God was at night in the hillside of Bethel (Gen 28:10-22). God revealed himself to him and promised that he would be with him. God will care for him and bless him with many descendants. Jacob responded with worship and made a vow to God. At the ford of Jabbok, Jacob wrestled with God, committing his life, his family and everything he had to God. God granted him a new name **יִשְׂרָאֵל** because he struggled with God and with men, and he prevailed. He prevailed over God in a sense that God would grant him his petition by blessing him. He prevailed over men as he would prevail over his brother Esau, of whom Jacob was afraid. God crippled Jacob so that he won over his brother not by his own might, but by God's grace.

The progenitors of Israel responded to God's calling by faith and obedience. They enjoyed God's covenant blessing by keeping themselves in the covenant. The descendants of Israel should also respond to God's call by faith and obedience. Those

¹³⁰In early Judaic literature, the obedience of Isaac and the faithfulness of Abraham are often considered as merits on account of which the sins of their descendants were forgiven. This is a popular view in Second Temple Judaism. This may also be the reason why Paul insists that salvation comes by faith, and not by the work of the law (Rom 4; Gal 3). See R. Le Déaut, "Abraham et le sacrifice d'Isaac," in *La Nuit Pascale* (Rome: Institut Biblique Pontifical, 1963), 176; G. Vermes, "Redemption and Genesis XXII," in *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 1961), 193-94; and Jacqueline C.R. de Roo, "God's Covenant with the Forefathers," in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Jacqueline C.R. de Roo (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 198-99.

who have broken God's covenant will certainly not be able to enjoy the covenant blessings; instead, they will suffer from the covenant curses (Deut 28, 29). When the Messiah comes, a new covenant is installed. A new relationship is established between God and people. Before people have fellowship with God through sacrifices; now, they come before God through Jesus Christ as the only way (John 14:6, Acts 4:12, Eph 2:18).

Israel as the chosen people. S. Motyer argues that the names "Jacob" and "Israel" reflect distinctive characteristics of the person Jacob and of the people of Israel as a whole.¹³¹ "Jacob" represents one who obtains blessings by trickery. He is a deceiver and idolater. Instead of submitting to God, Jacob tries to obtain power over God. He wants God to serve his agenda, deliverance from Esau (Gen 32). On the other hand, "Israel" represents one who seeks God's blessings in the right way, as gifts from God. At the midnight wrestling match, Jacob finally abandons his own resources and clings with desperation to his God (Gen 32:22-32). This is the moment at which Israel is born, one who recognizes Yahweh and reaches out to him in worship and love, although Israel as a people falls short of her initial calling, as history reveals.¹³²

Through most of her history, Israel did not respond to God in worship and love. The prophets called for such response after God's judgment against Israel's sin and

¹³¹S. Motyer, "Israel (Nation)," in *NDBT*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander, Brian S. Rosner, D. A. Carson, and Graeme Goldsworthy (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000), 582-83.

¹³²For more detailed analyses of the Old Testament usage of the terms "Israel," "Jacob," "house of Israel," and "sons of Israel," see Daniel I. Block, "'Israel'—'Sons of Israel': A Study in Hebrew Eponymic Usage," *Sciences Religieuses / Studies in Religion* 13 (1984), 301-26; idem, "Israel's House: Reflections on the Use of *BYT YŚR'L* in the Old Testament in the Light of Its Ancient Near Eastern Environment," *JETS* 28 (1985): 257-75.

rebellion (Deut 30:1-14; Joel 2:12-18; Isa 63:10-19; Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:22-32; etc.).

However, none of the prophets believed that they had seen such a response in their days.

Motyer argues that the Old Testament ends in a paradox: Israel is still the unregenerate Jacob, and Jacob remains Israel whom God has chosen. How can Yahweh save Israel in the midst of the nation's constant failure to respond to him?¹³³ Motyer's observation is insightful. This paradox is resolved in Jesus, who is the embodiment of the true Israel. The promises of God to Israel are fulfilled in Jesus. Through him, the nations are blessed.

“Israel” and “Jacob” Used Together

In the Isaiah text, 19 out of 22 occurrences of the name pair Israel-Jacob has Jacob first and Israel second.¹³⁴ The occurrences of the name pair in Isaiah are found in poetic texts. They usually stand in parallel constructions referring to the same person concerning the same thing. For example, “They will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and will stand in awe of the God of Israel” (Isa 29:23). “He who created you, O Jacob; he who formed you, O Israel” (Isa 43:1).

Furthermore, Israel and Jacob are described in the same way in different verses. “But you, Israel, my servant; Jacob, whom I have chosen” (Isa 41:8). “But now hear, O Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen!” (Isa 44:1). God is called the Holy One of Jacob (Isa 29:23) and the Holy One of Israel (Isa 41:14). The remnant of Israel is

¹³³Ibid., 584.

¹³⁴The Isaiah texts that have the name pair Israel-Jacob are: 10:20; 41:8. The Isaiah texts that have the name pair Jacob-Israel are: 9:8; 14:1; 27:6; 29:23; 40:27; 41:14; 42:24; 43:1, 22, 28; 44:1, 5, 21, 23; 45:4; 46:3; 48:1, 12; 49:5, 6.

also the remnant of Jacob (Isa 10:20, 21). In these instances, Jacob is used exactly the same sense as Israel.¹³⁵

The majority of the passages with the word pair in the book of Isaiah carry restoration messages for the redeemed Israel/Jacob. While there are only four such passages in chapters 1-39 (Isa 10:20; 14:1; 27:6; 29:23), there are fourteen in chapters 40-66. In Isaiah, there are altogether 22 such verses with “Israel” and “Jacob” in the same verse. Only three of these verses speak negatively of Israel/Jacob: They are proud and unrepentant (Isa 9:8ff.); God disposes them to shame (Isa 43:28), and they are not truthful and not righteous (Isa 48:1). The other nineteen verses mention Israel/Jacob as the chosen and redeemed people of God (Isa 10:20; 14:1; 27:6; 29:23; 40:27; 41:14; 42:24; 43:1, 22, 28; 44:1, 5, 21, 23; 45:4; 46:3; 48:12; 49:5, 6). For example, Israel is God’s servant (Isa 41:8; 45:4). The Lord has compassion on Jacob and will choose Israel again (Isa 14:1). God will renew the strength of those who wait upon him (Isa 40:27-31). The Lord has redeemed Jacob and will be glorified in Israel (Isa 44:23).

Conclusion Concerning “Jacob” and “Israel”

The name “Jacob” represents the patriarch or the descendants of the patriarch. “Israel” is a name God has given to the patriarch Jacob. Later on, the descendants of Jacob are also called Israel. “Israel” becomes a national nation, and a name that represents the descendants of Jacob as an ethnic people. While “Jacob” is a biological name, “Israel” is a God-given name, which identifies the descendants of Jacob as a people called to have a covenant relationship with God. However, the two names are

¹³⁵Danell, *Studies in the Name Israel in the Old Testament*, 262.

often used interchangeably.¹³⁶ In the majority of the occurrences of the name pair Israel-Jacob, the name “Jacob” comes first. This may be because historically Jacob existed before Israel. Therefore, it is legitimate for Paul to quote a verse about Jacob to support his statement about Israel. We probably cannot assign too much significance to the change in names in Romans 11:26-27.

The patriarch Jacob became Israel at the ford of Jabbok (Gen 32:22-32) when he entrusted himself totally to God, even though he already had the blessings of his father (Gen 27:27-29). The descendants of Jacob are called to be God’s people because of the covenant their forefathers had with God. Moses says that God’s covenant is made not only to the generation in the plain of Moab but also with those who are not there (Deut 29:14-15). For those who broke the covenant, they will suffer the curse, and will be excluded from the congregation of Israel (Deut 29:20-21). However, not all of the descendants of Jacob enter into a covenant relationship with God. The prophets entreat the rebellious Jacob to return to God and live as God’s covenant people. In Isaiah 44-45, the ethnicity of the people of God is not emphasized. Rather, Israelites and Gentiles are called by God to serve him and to obey him, in contrast to those who worship idols. People are named after Jacob and Israel (Isa 44:1-5). God is the only God and the God of all nations (Isa 45:23).

¹³⁶Dunn notes that Ἰακώβ is the un-Grecized form of the name of the patriarch, used quite often in the Old Testament as a variant for the more frequent name Ἰσραὴλ (*Romans 9-16*, 683).

CHAPTER 3

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND OF THE USE OF “ALL ISRAEL”

Introduction

In the last chapter, we studied the Isaiah texts which Paul quotes in Romans 11:26-27. We have looked into the meanings of Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9 in their own contexts, and we have discussed how Paul uses these two texts as the theological grounds for the salvation of all Israel. Isaiah speaks of a rebellious Israel who will be judged and a redeemed Israel who will be blessed. Isaiah prophesies that the Messiah will come to Zion to take away the sins of Jacob. He will make a covenant with the people of Israel. Based on this prophecy, Paul says that all Israel will be saved. What does Paul mean? Who are “all Israel”? How would the Christians of first century Rome understand the phrase “all Israel”? In order to answer these questions, we will study how the phrase “all Israel” is used in the Old Testament and in early Judaic literature.

“All Israel” in the Old Testament

The phrase “all Israel” is widely used in the Old Testament. There are altogether 153 occurrences of the phrase “all Israel” in Old Testament. It is more frequently used in the historical narratives than in the prophetic books. This may be because the phrase “all Israel” carries a covenantal connotation, and it is used in the historical texts in which the relationship between Yahweh and Israel is described.

“All Israel” in the Pentateuch

There are sixteen occurrences of כל-ישראל “all Israel” in fifteen verses in the Pentateuch (Exod 18:25; Num 16:34; Deut 1:1; 5:1; 11:6; 13:12; 18:6; 21:21; 27:9; 29:1; 31:1, 7; 31:11; 32:45; and 34:12). Eighty-eight percent of the occurrences are found in Deuteronomy. Much of its contents are theological and covenantal in nature. “All Israel” here refers to the covenantal people of God (Deut 27:9). Moses summoned the Israelites at the plain of Moab and reiterated to them the covenant that God had made with them (Deut 1:1; 29:1-15). They were to obey God’s statutes and ordinances (Deut 5:1). They are to stone even their relative who entices them to serve other gods so that all Israel will hear and fear and will never do such wickedness among them (Deut 13:12).¹ The same punishment is inflicted upon a rebellious son to purge away evil among the people, so that all Israel will hear and fear the Lord (Deut 21:21). Moses charged Joshua to lead God’s people to take possession of the land of Canaan (Deut 31:7). All Israel came together to worship the Lord (Deut 31:11). The phrase “all Israel” in the book of Deuteronomy is loaded with theological and covenantal meanings.

Karel Deurloo argues that Yahweh alone ties Israel together as one people in all its generations. Personal engagement and responsibility are emphasized. Those who love God and keep his commandments will be blessed while those who hate him will be

¹“All Israel” here can be taken in the diachronic sense because when Moses made the covenant to establish Israel as the people of God, he made it not only with the people there, but also with the people that are not there (Deut 29: 15). See James M. Scott, “And then all Israel will be saved,” in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, ed. James M. Scott (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 503. See also Karel A. Deurloo, “The One God and All Israel in Its Generations,” in *Studies in Deuteronomy in Honour of C. J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, ed. Florentino Garcia Martinez et al. (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 31-46.

destroyed (Deut 7:9, 10). The original inhabitants of Canaan and the Israelites who associate with the Canaanite religions are excluded from the confessional community of Israel, which is to pursue zealously the purity of its exclusive faith.²

When Moses spoke to “all Israel,” he spoke to this group of people as a whole. When God made a covenant with “all Israel,” he made it with this group of people, including men, women, children, and foreigners among them (Deut 31:11, 12). Although God calls Israel to be his people, not everyone in Israel responds positively. Kreloff holds that the majority of Israel had historically been in rebellion towards God.³

However, there are also instances where “all Israel” refers to a specific group of people. In Number 16:34, “And all Israel that were round about them fled at their cry; for they said, ‘Lest the earth swallow us up!’” In this case, “all Israel” refers to those who were around the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. This represents only a small number of people in the congregation of Israel. The emphasis here is that everyone around the tents fled. Hence, the phrase “all Israel” need not be taken literally in all cases as including everyone of the Israelite people.

“All Israel” in Pre-exilic Historical Books (Joshua to Kings)

There are altogether 81 occurrences of the phrase “all Israel” from Joshua to 2 Kings. They are rather evenly distributed among the books with the exception of Judges (2 times) and 2 Kings (3 times). The distribution of the phrase “all Israel” in the other

²Deurloo, “The One God and All Israel in Its Generations,” 33, 45.

³Steven A. Kreloff, *God’s Plan for Israel: A Study of Romans 9-11* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1995), 92.

books are as follows: 17 times in Joshua, 18 times in 1 Samuel, 18 times in 2 Samuel, and 23 times in 1 Kings.

Joshua. The phrase “all Israel” occurs 17 times in the book of Joshua.⁴ The emphasis of the use of this phrase in the book of Joshua is that all Israel stood behind Joshua as they had behind Moses. God exalted Joshua so that the people of Israel accepted his leadership as they had accepted the leadership of Moses. This emphasis is reflected in the first use of “all Israel” in the book of Joshua: “And the Lord said to Joshua, ‘This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you’ (Josh 3:7).

In eleven of the seventeen verses that have the phrase “all Israel,” Joshua and all Israel are described as acting in unity. For example, Joshua and all Israel took Achan and stoned him (Josh 7:24, 25). They fought as one man (Joshua 8:15, 21; 10:15, 29, 31, 34, 36, 38, 43). All Israel was like a person standing with or behind Joshua as they fought the battles together. All Israel stood before the Lord as a covenant people between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. Joshua challenged the Israelites to commit themselves to serve God (Josh 23:2, 24:18). “All Israel” in Joshua was a faithful Israel, who had a covenant with God, and they followed God’s appointed leader.

Judges. The phrase “all Israel” appears 2 times in the book of Judges (Judg 8:27; 20:34). Gideon made an Ephod from golden earrings of their spoil, and “all Israel” played the harlot after it (Judg 8:27). “All Israel” committed spiritual adultery to the

⁴The 17 occurrences of “all Israel” in the book of Joshua are: 3:7, 17; 4:14; 7:24, 25; 8:15, 21, 24, 33; 10:15, 29, 31, 34, 36, 38, 43; and 23:2.

Lord. In chapter 20, “all Israel” waged war against the Benjaminites because of the sins of the people of Gibeah (Judg 20:34). The people of Israel came up as one man against the Benjaminites (Judg 20:1, 8, 11). The people of Gibeah sought to have sexual relationship with a Levite and eventually raped his concubine to death. They behaved like the people of Sodom whom God destroyed (Gen 19). Endorsing the sins of the people of Gibeah, the Benjaminites have become like the Canaanites. Therefore, the other eleven tribes are now “all Israel,” with the exclusion of the Benjaminites.

The Israelites gathered as “an assembly of the people of God” (Judg 20:20). They fought the Benjaminites and destroyed them like they destroyed the Canaanites, burning the cities and killing everyone in them, not sparing even the live-stock (Judg 20:48). Thus, in this passage, “all Israel” represents those Israelites who have a covenantal relationship with God, with the exclusion of the Benjaminites who have gone astray.

1-2 Samuel. The phrase “all Israel” occurs 18 times in 1 Samuel and 18 times in 2 Samuel. It has several meanings depending on the context. “All Israel” refers to the covenantal people of God as a group, not emphasizing the individual aspect, nor the multiplicity of the group. Eli’s sons sinned before “all Israel” (1 Sam 2:22). “All Israel” knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the LORD (1 Sam 3:20). The word of Samuel came to “all Israel” (1 Sam 4:1).

“All Israel” was also identified with the army of Israel. When the ark of covenant arrived at the camp of Israel, “all Israel” gave a mighty shout (1 Sam 4:5). Saul gathered “all Israel” at Gilboa to fight the Philistines (1 Sam 28:4). David led “all Israel” to fight the Syrians (2 Sam 10:17).

When the Israelites returned to the Lord and cast away their idols, Samuel gathered “all Israel” at Mizpah and interceded for them. As a result, the Israelites defeated the Philistines (1 Sam 7:5). Later on, Samuel also gathered “all Israel” at Gilgal to install Saul as king over Israel (1 Sam 12:1). After Saul became king, he led “all Israel” to fight the Philistines (1 Sam 14:40; 17:11). Joab and “all Israel” fought the Ammonites (2 Sam 11:1). In these instances, “all Israel” applies to the army of Israel.

When David came on the scene, “all Israel” sometimes refers to the ten tribes: “But all Israel and Judah loved David” (1 Sam 18:16). However, in most of the cases, “all Israel” refers to the twelve tribes, or the people of God as a whole (1 Sam 25:1; 28:3).

In 2 Samuel, at the beginning of David’s reign, most of the occurrences of “all Israel” refer to the ten tribes (2 Sam 2:9; 3:12; 3:21; 3:37; 4:1; 5:5). When the kingdom of David is established, “all Israel” refers to the Israelite people as a whole, including the twelve tribes (2 Sam 8:15; 12:12; 14:25; 16:21, 22; 17:10, 11; 17:13.). It is quite clear that in many instances, the phrase “all Israel” does not refer literally to everyone in Israel. Rather, it is used in a general sense meaning the people as a whole (2 Sam 16:21, 22; 18:17). This also applies to those instances when “all Israel” refers to the army of Israel.

1, 2 Kings. The phrase “all Israel” occurs 26 times in the books of Kings, 23 times in 1 Kings and 3 times in 2 Kings. In 1 Kings, “all Israel” usually refers to the people of Israel as a whole, with the inclusion of the twelve tribes (1Kgs 1:20; 2:15; 3:28; 4:1; 4:7; 5:13; 11:42). There are instances when “all Israel” refers to a group of people that represents the whole people. For example, Solomon and “all Israel” with him offered sacrifices to the Lord (1 Kgs 8:62, 65), Elijah and “all Israel” when up to Mount Carmel (1 Kgs 18:19).

During the divided Kingdom, “all Israel” refers to the ten tribes or the Northern Kingdom (1Kgs 12:1, 16, 18, 20; 14:13, 18; 15:33; 2 Kgs 10:21). In some instances, the army of the Northern Kingdom is also called “all Israel” (1 Kgs 15:27; 16:16, 17; 22:17; 2 Kgs 3:6; 9:14).⁵

“All Israel” in the Chronicles

The phrase “all Israel” occurs 46 times in the books of the Chronicles. As in the books of Kings, the phrase “all Israel” refers to the ten tribes (1 Chr 11:1, 4, 10), the twelve tribes (1 Chr 13:5, 6, 8; 14:8; 18:14; 21:4, 5), or the whole people in a general sense (1 Chr 17:6; 28:4). There are also instances when a small group of people is referred to as “all Israel.” They are representatives of the people as a whole. For example, David, the elders of Israel, and the commanders of thousands went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord from the house of Obed-edom (1 Chr 15:25). This group of people was referred to as “all Israel” who brought up the ark of the Lord (1 Chr 15:28). The army of Israel is also referred to as “all Israel” (1 Chr 19:17).

David set the ark of covenant in the tent which he had pitched. He offered sacrifices and blessed the people in the name of the Lord. Then he distributed to “all Israel,” both men and women, each a loaf of bread, a portion of meat and a cake of raisins (1 Chr 16:1-3). The people shared the covenant meal. The phrase “all Israel” carries a meaning of the covenant people of God. Before David died, he assembled all the officials, leaders and commanders. He commanded them, “Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, observe and seek out

⁵See also James R. Linville, *Israel in the Book of Kings: The Past as a Project of Social Identity* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 180.

all the commandments of the LORD your God; that you may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you for ever” (1 Chr 28:8). Here, “all Israel” is defined as קָהָל־יְהוָה (“the assembly of Yahweh”). The Septuagint translates this phrase as $\text{πάσης ἐκκλησίας κυρίου}$ (“all the assembly of the Lord”). Then, David and the leaders sacrificed in abundance for “all Israel” (1 Chr 29:21). Later on, Solomon reigned over “all Israel”, and “all Israel” obeyed him (1 Chr 29:24, 25). Thus, “All Israel” has the connotation of the whole covenant people of God. Such use of the phrase “all Israel” continues through the book of 2 Chronicles (2 Chr 1:2; 7:6; 7:8).

During the reign of Solomon, “all Israel” frequently refers to the twelve tribes, or the people of Israel as a whole (2 Chr 7:8; 9:30; 11:13; 29:24; 30:5). In the reign of Rehoboam, the representatives of the ten tribes were referred to as “all Israel.” “Jeroboam and all Israel came and said to Rehoboam” (2 Chr 10:16). The phrase “all Israel” is also applied to the warriors of Judah and Benjamin, the Southern Kingdom (2 Chr 11:3). Sometimes, “all Israel” refers to the army of the Northern Kingdom (2 Chr 13:4, 15; 18:16; 30:1, 6). It can refer to the people of the Southern Kingdom (2 Chr 12:1; 24:5; 28:23), as well as the people of the Northern Kingdom (2 Chr 28:23). Josiah said to the priests and the Levites, “Go out to the cities of Judah, and gather from “all Israel” money to repair the house of your God” (2 Chr 24:5). “All Israel” is now incorporated into Judah.

It seems that the identity of “all Israel” is determined not by their location of the people but by their relationship with God. After the Northern Kingdom was deported by the Assyrians, Hezekiah sent couriers throughout all Israel to call the people of Israel to come to Jerusalem to observe the Passover. Hezekiah intended to incorporate “all

Israel” into Judah so that Judah became “all Israel” (2 Chr 30:1-31:1).⁶ The phrase “all Israel” is not mentioned in the narratives of the reigns of Manasseh and Amon. The last mention of “all Israel” in 2 Chronicles is when the good king Josiah kept a Passover to the Lord in Jerusalem: “And he said to the Levites who taught all Israel and who were holy to the Lord” (2 Chr 35:3). Thus, all Israel has the meaning of the covenant people of God—a people defined by her adherence to Yahweh.⁷

Wellhausen argued that the Chronicler intentionally makes the Davidic kingdom as the kingdom of all Israel from the outset. After Saul died, all Israel came to Hebron to make David king. The Chronicler has skipped all the material in 2 Samuel 1-4 concerning the succession of Saul by his son Ish-Bosheth, the conflict between Abner and Ish-Bosheth, the war between the houses of David and Saul, and the death of Ish-Bosheth. Wellhausen argued that the way the Chronicler “distorted” and “mutilated” the text of 1 Samuel is driven by his concern of making David the priest-king, since the post-exilic writer “had no longer feeling for anything but cultus and torah.”⁸

Wellhausen and those who followed him always linked the idea of “all Israel” to the reign of David and Solomon.⁹ Wellhausen’s view concerning the Chronicler’s use

⁶G. A. Danell argues that in such action, no enlistment in large numbers from the northern side is expected, but only the conversion of individuals. Thus, “all Israel” is in a sense Davidic. Danell, *Studies in the Name Israel in the Old Testament* (Uppsala, Sweden: Appelbergs, 1946), 290.

⁷Deurloo, “The One God and All Israel in Its Generations,” 45.

⁸Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1885), 172-82.

⁹Sara Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and its Place in Biblical Thought* (Wien: Lang, 1997), 268.

of the phrase “all Israel” is influenced by his presupposition concerning the books of the Chronicles. He sees the Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah as a single book, written after the downfall of the Persian empire and being influenced by the Priestly Code.¹⁰

In the study of the books of the Chronicles, von Rad considers true Israel as only made up of those of Judah and Benjamin who had returned from the exile in Babylon. None of the other Northern tribes, or those who had continued to live in the land of Israel during the exile, would be considered true Israelites.¹¹ Thus, von Rad writes: “*Israel ist jetzt Juda und Benjamin*” (Israel is now Judah and Benjamin).¹² He argues that the Chronicler applies ‘Israel’ to the Southern Kingdom only. Von Rad’s statement is only true at and after the reign of Hezekiah. Even in the description of the reign of Hezekiah, “all Israel” is used in reference to the ten tribes (2 Chr 30:1,6).

Danell argues that when Cyrus issued the decree to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, all Israelites abroad are invited to participate in the building project (2 Chr 36:22). The Chronicler intentionally uses the phrase “all Israel” to emphasize the inclusion of the members of the Northern Tribes in the feast at Jerusalem (2 Chr 30:5, 11, 18, 25). The common motive for gathering at Jerusalem is to worship Yahweh. The Chronicler presents an “all Israel” point of view that everyone among the Israelites who has a heart for Yahweh can come.¹³

¹⁰Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, 171.

¹¹H. G. M. Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 87.

¹²Gerhard von Rad, *Das Geschichtsbild Des Chronistischen Werkes* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1930), 24.

¹³Danell, *Studies in the Name Israel in the Old Testament*, 280-84.

Japhet shows that “all Israel” in Deuteronomy, Joshua, Samuel-Kings has a number of meanings: (a) the entire people (Deut 1:1; 5:1; 11:6); (b) the entire people, apart from one tribe or one group mentioned by name (Judg 20:34); (c) the Northern Kingdom (1 Kgs 14:13, 18; 15:33); (d) one entire segment of the people, for example: the men going into battle (1 Kgs 15: 27; 16:16); and (e) all those present at a particular place, constituting the assembly (1 Kgs 8:62, 65; 2 Sam 15:6).¹⁴

Japhet discerns three principal meanings of “all Israel” in the Chronicles: (a) the entire people, consisting of all the tribes (as in 2 Chr 29: 24; 30:5; 35:3; and 1Chr 9:1); (b) the Northern tribes, kingdom (2 Chr 11:13; 13:4, 15; 30:1, 6; and possibly 1 Chr 9:1). (c) The kingdom of Judah (2 Chr 12:1; 2Chr 24: 8; 28:23). She argues that the phrase “all Israel” in Chronicles is used quite flexibly, depending on the context. She points out that this broad range of meanings even occurs within one context, in 2 Chronicles 30:1, 5 and 6. The idea of “all Israel” representing the people of Israel in its greatest and most inclusive sense is fundamental to the books of Chronicles.¹⁵ The covenantal meaning of the phrase is neglected by the above scholars.

Scott comes to similar conclusions as Japhet. He notes that the phrases “Israel” and “all Israel” are polyvalent in meaning in the Old Testament. “All Israel” can denote all the twelve tribes, part of twelve tribes, or the idealized twelve tribes system through Judah after the exile. Nevertheless, “all Israel” is never used to refer specifically to all *individuals* within the nation (italics his). “With some possible exceptions, ‘all Israel’

¹⁴Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and its Place in Biblical Thought*, 271.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 267-78.

normally refers to the contemporary people of Israel, rather than to the collective manifestation of the people either in the past or in the future.”¹⁶

William L. Osborne argues that at the beginning of David’s reign, “all Israel” is composed of military leaders (1 Chr 11:10; 12:30, 39; 19:17).¹⁷ After David consolidated his power, he included the civil and religious leaders into this group (2 Chr 1:2; 7:4-8). During the divided kingdom and after the fall of the Northern Kingdom, the phrase “all Israel” refers to those who were loyal to the king of Judah and to the cult of Yahweh (2 Chr 10:3; 11:3, 13; 12:1; 24:5; 1 Kgs 12:3; 2 Chr 29:29; 31:1 and 35:3). The people from the Northern Kingdom are included if they meet this criterion. Osborne argues that the phrase “all Israel” is only used in connection with those kings who are considered loyal to Yahweh. It is a phrase with a theological meaning, referring to those people who attach themselves to the Davidic king and who worship Yahweh.¹⁸ While Osborne’s proposal is promising, his argument that in the Chronicles the phrase “all Israel” is only used with those kings who are considered loyal to Yahweh does not fit every case. For example, the idolatrous king Jeroboam and “all Israel” fought with Abijah and Judah (2 Chr 13:14, 15). The army of Israel in the days of king Ahab was called “all Israel.” King Ahaz sacrificed to the gods of Damascus. This became the ruin of him and of all Israel (2 Chr 28:23).

¹⁶Scott, “And then all Israel will be saved,” 507.

¹⁷William L. Osborne, “The Old Testament Background of Paul’s ‘All Israel’ in Romans 11:26a,” *Asian Journal of Theology* 2 (1988), 285.

¹⁸Ibid., 287. Osborne further applies this meaning of “all Israel” to Rom 11:26a and argues that “all Israel” is a phrase designating a majority of people loyal to the Messiah, the Davidic figure. “It is a collective phrase used for a whole people who may or may not have saving faith. It never has an individualistic connotation.”

“All Israel” in Other Exilic and Postexilic Books

It is interesting to note that the phrase “all Israel” is not used in any of the pre-exilic prophetic books. The post-exilic writers use the phrase “all Israel” to refer to the covenantal people of God. For example, Daniel confessed before God: “All Israel has transgressed thy law and turned aside, refusing to obey thy voice. So the curse and the oath written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out upon us because we have sinned against you” (Dan 9:7, 11).¹⁹ The returned community of Israelites living in their towns is considered as “all Israel” (Ezra 2:70; Neh 7:73).²⁰ In the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah, “all Israel” gave the daily portions to the priests and the Levites (Neh 12:47). At the dedication of the second temple, the returned community offered twelve he-goats according to the twelve tribes of Israel as sin offerings for “all Israel” (Ezra 6:17). They also offered twelve bulls for “all Israel” as burnt offerings to the Lord (Ezra 8:35). “All Israel” took an oath that they would take away their foreign wives (Ezra 10:5). Anyone who disobeys the leaders will be excommunicated from the congregation of the exiles (Ezra 10:8). Thus, “all Israel” is identified with the congregation of the exiles. Malachi refers “all Israel” to the covenant

¹⁹Odil Hannes Steck argues that the use of the first-person plural pronouns in the last two clauses shows that the writer of the book of Daniel envisaged all Israel as the whole historical people of Israel up to and including the contemporary period. See Odil Hannes Steck, *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchner Verlag, 1967), 125-27.

²⁰Ehud Ben Zvi argues that in the exilic and postexilic communities, only the exiled and the returnees are considered as all Israel. Those who remained in the land are excluded (Ezra 10:5-8; Neh 7:72; 9:1-2; 12:47; Ezek 37:1-14; Jer 24:1-10). Idem, “Inclusion in and Exclusion from Israel as Conveyed by the Use of the Term ‘Israel’ in Post-Monarchic Biblical Texts,” in *The Pitcher Is Broken: Memorial Essays for Gösta W.*

people who received the law from Moses at Horeb (Mal 4:4). This shows that the returned community was considered as the re-gathered twelve tribes of Israel.²¹

When Scripture refers to the law of God as given to “all Israel,” the phrase should be understood in a diachronic sense. Two instances may be quoted to illustrate this. God gave his laws to Moses at Mount Horeb for “all Israel” (Mal 4:4). “All Israel” here means Israel through all generations. Furthermore, Moses pronounced a law to the Israelites that if anyone entices an Israelite to worship other gods, that person should be stoned to death. “Then all Israel will hear and be afraid, and no one among you will do such an evil thing again” (Deut 13:11). Such a law is supposed to apply to Israelites throughout all generations. Moses made the covenant not only with the people who were there, but also with those who were not there (Deut 29:14-15).²² Hence, “all Israel” in these instances should be understood in a diachronic sense.

Conclusion of the Meaning of “All Israel” in the Old Testament

The phrase “all Israel” in the Old Testament refers in general to the covenant people of God (Deut 1:1; 27:9; 29:1-15; Josh 23:2, 24:18; 1 Chr 16:1-3; 28:8; 2 Chr 7:6;

Ahlström, ed. Steven W. Holloway and Lowell K. Handy, JSOTSup 190 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 96-100.

²¹On the identification of the community of returnees as Israel in Ezra-Nehemiah, see also J. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988), 83-84; T. C. Eskenazi, *In an Age of Prose: A Literary Approach to Ezra-Nehemiah*, SBLMS 36 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 91; H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, WBC, vol. 16 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985), 32; S. Japhet, “People and Land in the Restoration Period,” in *Das Land Israel in biblischer Zeit: Jerusalem-Symposium 1981*, ed. G. Strecker, GTA 25 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 103-25.

²²Scott, “And then all Israel will be saved,” 503.

7:8; Dan 9:7, 11; Ezra 6:17; 8:35; Neh 12:47; Mal 4:4). It represents the ten tribes, the twelve tribes, or the people of Israel as a whole. Before the Davidic reign and after the divided kingdom, the phrase “all Israel” often points to the ten tribes or to the Northern Kingdom (2 Sam 2:9; 3:12; 3:21; 3:37; 4:1; 5:5; 1 Kgs 12:1, 16, 18, 20; 14:13, 18; 15:33; 2 Kgs 10:21; 1 Chr 11:1, 4, 10). During the reign of David, “all Israel” has the connotation of the inclusion of the twelve tribes (2 Sam 8:15; 12:12; 14:25; 16:21, 22; 17:10, 11; 17:13; 1 Kgs 1:20; 2:15; 3:28; 4:1; 4:7; 5:13; 11:42; 1 Chr 13:5, 6, 8; 14:8; 18:14; 21:4, 5; 2 Chr 7:8; 9:30; 11:13; 29:24; 30:5).

After the exile of the Northern Kingdom, Hezekiah and Josiah sought to incorporate Israelites of the ten tribes into the Southern Kingdom to make the latter “all Israel.” The post-exilic community is often called “all Israel,” especially when the context is religious or covenantal in nature (Neh 12:47; Ezra 6:17; 8:35; 10:5, 8; Mal 4:4). Hence, the phrase “all Israel” is not defined by the location of the people, or by the multitude of the people, but by their relationship with God. In most of the instances, Scripture describes “all Israel” as the people who worship the Lord (Deut 5:1; 31:11; 1 Chr 28:8) and obey the God-appointed leader (Josh 7:24, 25; 1 Chr 29:24, 25). However, there are instances of “all Israel” rebelling against God, for example in Judges 8:27.

Sometimes, “all Israel” is represented by a group of people such as the leaders (1 Kgs 8:62, 65; 18:19; 1 Chr 15:25; 2 Chr 10:16) and the army of Israel (1 Sam 4:5; 2 Sam 10:17; 1 Kgs 15:27; 16:16, 17; 22:17; 2 Kgs 3:6; 9:14; 1 Chr 19:17; 2 Chr 11:3; 13:4; 15; 18:16; 30:1, 6). When Scripture describes certain activities of “all Israel,” the phrase usually refers to the people of Israel at that particular time and space. On the other hand, when Scripture describes the covenantal relationship of all Israel with God and the

blessings God has for all Israel, the phrase is best understood in a diachronic sense. God is committed to bless all his covenant people throughout the ages. All who are committed to the Lord will serve and obey him. However, for those who sin and rebel against the Lord, they will be judged.

This study shows that the phrase “all Israel” in the Old Testament is most often used in a covenantal context. “All Israel” represents the covenant people of God, not necessarily including every Israelite in the flesh. The emphasis is not on Israel as a people, but on Israel as a people of God.

“All Israel” in Early Jewish Literature

There is certain development in the use of the phrase “all Israel” in early Jewish literature. The phrase continues to represent the twelve tribes or a group of Israelites who stands for the whole people. However, the phrase is not used to represent the Northern Tribes or Judah any more.²³ In the post-exilic period, the Israelites identified themselves as a people who observes the Torah and Sabbath of Yahweh. Tribal distinction became less important.

“All Israel” in the Apocrypha

The phrase “all Israel” occurs 14 times in the Apocrypha: six times in 1 Esdras, six times in 1 Maccabees, one time in Judith, and one time in Tobit. In 1 Esdras, the phrase “all Israel” is used in a wide variety of ways. It refers to the people of Israel at a particular place, the twelve tribes, and all the people of Israel as a whole, not necessarily including everyone.

²³Ibid., 507.

1 Esdras (first century BC). “All Israel” in 1 Esdras most frequently refers to a small group of people which represents the whole: the twelve tribes, the ten tribes, or the people of Israel as a whole.

1 Esdras 1:21: And all the kings of Israel held not such a Passover as Josiah, and the priests, and the Levites, and the Jews, held with *all Israel* that were found dwelling at Jerusalem.

“All Israel” here refers to the rest of Israel that were found in Jerusalem besides the priests, the Levites and the Jews. It is a small group that represents the whole.

1 Esdras 5:46: And so dwelt the priests and the Levites and the people in Jerusalem, and in the country, the singers also and the porters; and *all Israel* in their villages.

1 Esdras 5:61: And they sang with loud voices songs to the praise of the Lord, because his mercy and glory is forever in *all Israel*.

The emphasis here is that God’s mercy and glory is forever with Israel. “All Israel” can mean the totality of God’s people in all ages.

1 Esdras 8:7: For Esdras had very great skill, so that he omitted nothing of the law and commandments of the Lord, but taught *all Israel* the ordinances and judgments.

In this passage, all Israel refers to all the people of Israel at a particular time and a particular place. It does not include everyone in Israel.

1 Esdras 8:55: And then I weighed them the gold, and the silver, and the holy vessels of the house of our Lord, which the king and his councils, and the princes, and *all Israel* had given.

“All Israel” here refers to those Israelites who have given an offering. This limited group of Israelites represents the whole of Israel.

1 Esdras 8:63: Moreover they that were come out of the captivity offered sacrifice unto the Lord God of Israel, even twelve bullocks for *all Israel*, fourscore and sixteen rams, three score and twelve lambs, goats for a peace offering, twelve; all of them a sacrifice to the Lord.

With the exception of 1 Esdras 5:61, “all Israel” is most frequently used in a synchronic sense in 1 Esdras. The texts describe the activities of Israelites in specific locations. It either refers to all the twelve tribes, or it refers to a group of Israelites that represents the people of Israel as a whole.

Judith 15:14 (first century BC): Then Judith began to sing this thanksgiving in all Israel, and all the people sang after her this song of praise.

“All Israel” in this passage is used in a local sense. Judith went around the land of Israel and taught her song of thanksgivings to the people of Israel.

Tobit 1:6 (second century BC): But I alone went often to Jerusalem at the feasts, as it was ordained unto all the people of Israel by an everlasting decree, having the first-fruits and tenths of increase, with that which was first shorn.

The command for offering the first fruit and a tenth of the increase is given to all the people of Israel. The phrase “all the people of Israel” (παντὶ τῷ Ἰσραήλ) is used in a diachronic sense since this refers to Israelites of all generations.

1 Maccabees 2:70 (first century BC): And he died in the hundred forty and sixth year, and his sons buried him in the sepulchers of his fathers at Modin, and *all Israel* made great lamentation for him.

“All Israel” here refers to those who followed Mattathias in his revolt, or those who were sympathetic to him. It is a small group of people, but the author of 1 Maccabees views them as the true Israel.

1 Maccabees 5:45: Then Judas gathered together *all the Israelites* that were in the country of Galead, from the least unto the greatest, even their wives, and their children, and their stuff, a very great host, to the end they might come into the land of Judea.

1 Maccabees 5:63: However, the man Judas and his brothers were greatly renowned in the sight of *all Israel*, and of all the heathen, wheresoever their name was heard of.

1 Maccabees 9:20: And they bewailed him, and *all Israel* made great lamentation for him, and mourned many days, saying.

1 Maccabees 12:52: And they all came into the land of Judea peaceably, and there they bewailed Jonathan, and those that were with him, and they were very afraid, and *all Israel* made great lamentation.

1 Maccabees 13:26: And *all Israel* made great lamentation for him, and bewailed him many days.

In 1 Maccabees, “all Israel” most often refers to those who followed Mattathias and his sons in their revolt. It is a small group of people, which the author of 1 Maccabees regards as the true Israel. They saw themselves as the faithful ones who were loyal to the laws of Yahweh even to the point of death.

“All Israel” in Pseudepigrapha

James H. Charlesworth defines the Pseudepigrapha with five characteristics:

(1) They are Jewish or Christian writings; (2) they are often attributed to ideal figures in Israel’s past; (3) they usually claim to contain God’s word or message; (4) they frequently build upon ideas and narratives of the Old Testament; (5) they are written in the period 200 BC to 200 AD.²⁴

Testament of Joseph 20:5 (second century BC). “And all Israel and all the Egyptians mourned with great lamentation.” This refers to the people of Israel and the Egyptians mourning for the death of Joseph. “All Israel” here refers to the descendants of Jacob in Egypt at the time of the death of Joseph. It does not have any reference to the tribes of Israel as suggested by James Scott.²⁵

²⁴James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments* (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 1: xxv.

²⁵Scott, “And then all Israel will be saved,” 507.

Jubilees 50:9 (second century BC). “And a day of the holy kingdom for *all Israel* is this day among their days always.” The Sabbath is to be observed as a holy day by all Israel for all generations.

Testament of Reuben 6:8 (second century BC). “It is for this reason that I command you to give heed to Levi, because he will know the law of God and will give instructions concerning justice and concerning sacrifice for *all Israel* until the consummation of times.” Reuben commands his children to listen to Levi who will instruct all Israel concerning the laws of God. “All Israel” here is used in a diachronic sense, meaning Israel of all generations.

Testament of Benjamin 10:2-11 (second century BC). This passage has a lot of similarity to Christian theology.

After he (Benjamin) had spoken these things to them (his children) he said, “You know then, my children, that I am dying. Do the truth, each of you to his neighbor. Keep the Law of the Lord and his commandments, for I leave you these things instead of an inheritance . . . Keep God’s commandments until the Lord reveals his salvation to all the nations.” And then you will see Enoch and Seth and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob being raised up at the right hand in great joy. Then shall we also be raised, each of us over our tribe, and we shall prostrate ourselves before the heavenly king. Then all shall be changed, some destined for glory, others for dishonor, for the Lord first judges Israel for the wrong she has committed and then he shall do the same for all the nations. Then he shall judge Israel by the chosen gentiles as he tested Esau by Midianites who loved their brothers. You, therefore, my children, may your lot come to be with those who fear the Lord. Therefore, my children, if you live in holiness, in accord with the Lord’s commands, you shall again dwell with me in hope; *all Israel* will be gathered to the Lord.’²⁶

The theology in the above passage is very close to that of Paul. In it is the mention of God’s salvation to the nations (Rom 16:26), resurrection, judgment of Israel

²⁶Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1: 828.

by Gentiles (1 Cor 6:2-3; Matt 19:28), bodily transformation (1 Cor 15:50-54), glory for the righteous and dishonor for the wicked (Rom 2: 6-10), and eschatological salvation of Israel (Rom 11:26).²⁷ “All Israel” in this passage refers to a summation of Israel over the ages. It is worth noting that both Israel and the nations will be judged before the Lord. Some are destined for glory, while others are destined for dishonor. Those who fear the Lord and live according to the commandments of the Lord will be gathered to the Lord for eternal glory. They are the “all Israel.”

Pseudophilo (first century AD). “All Israel” refers to a group of people that represents the whole people of Israel. In *Pseudophilo* 23:1, the phrase carries a covenantal meaning.

Pseudophilo 22:1, “And after these events when Joshua and *all Israel* heard that the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh who dwelt around the Jordan had built an altar there and were offering sacrifices on it and had made priests for the sanctuary, all the people were very much disturbed and came to them to Shiloh.”

Pseudophilo 23:1, “And he (Joshua) sent and summoned *all Israel* in all their land, along with women and children, and he said to them, “Gather before the ark of the covenant of the LORD in Shiloh and I will establish a covenant with you before I die.”

Pseudophilo 24:6, “And then *all Israel* gathered together to bury him.”

Pseudophilo 27:13, “And when *all Israel* heard that deliverance had been accomplished by the hand of Kenaz, all the people went out together to meet him.”

²⁷Some argue that this passage in *T. Benjamin* was tampered by Christian scribes who copied and transmitted the text. On the other hand, concepts of judgment, resurrection, and eternal destinies are mentioned in the Old Testament (Dan 12:2-4; Jer 25:17, 29). It is difficult to be conclusive on whether a Christian scribe tampered the contents of the *Testament of Benjamin*, or whether Paul was influenced by it, or they both drew upon a common source, the Old Testament.

**“All Israel” in the Dead Sea
Scrolls (200 BC – AD 70)**

The bulk of the Dead Sea literature was written in the period 200 BC to AD 70. These writings are especially valuable in understanding Palestinian Judaism in the time of Christ and the early church. First and second century rabbis did not permit unorthodox religious writings to be transmitted to their posterity. In the transmission of early rabbinic writings, Christian scribes may tamper with the texts for Christian apologetic purposes. Since the Dead Sea Scrolls are exempted from both Christian and Rabbinic interferences, they are one of the most reliable sources for the study of Palestinian Judaism and early Christianity.²⁸

Cairo Damascus 3:8-16 (100 BC). In this passage, there are those Israelites who have broken God’s covenant. As a result, they suffer judgment from God. On the other hand, for those who have kept God’s precepts, God establishes his covenant with them.

And the wrath of God flared up (9) against their congregation. And their sons died. Through it their warriors (10) perished. And through it their land was laid waste. Through it, the very first to enter the covenant made themselves guilty and were delivered up (11) to the sword, for having deserted God’s covenant and having chosen their whims, and having followed the stubbornness (12) of their heart, each one doing (what was) his desire. *Blank* But with those who remained steadfast in God’s precepts, (13) with those who were left from among them, God established his covenant with Israel for ever, revealing to them (14) hidden matters in which *all Israel* had gone astray: *Blank* his holy sabbaths and his (15) glorious feasts, his just stipulations and his truthful paths, and the wishes of his will which (16) man must do in order to live by them.²⁹

²⁸G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), xiv-xv.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 81-86.

This passage retells the experience of the Israelites in the wilderness. They were judged by God because they rebelled against God and disobeyed their “Teacher.” Even though they were the first participants of the covenant with God, they perished in the wilderness because they had forsaken God’s covenant and had walked in the stubbornness of their hearts according to their own wills. However, there was a remnant that held fast to the commandments of God. The members of the Qumran Community saw themselves as the remnant of God. They were the “Israel” with whom God made a covenant forever even when “all Israel” had gone astray. “All Israel” here refers to the majority of the Israelites who have gone astray in the past generations. It is clear in the theology of the Qumran Community that only those who hold fast to God’s covenant and commandments will be saved.³⁰ In this case, the true “Israel” with whom God makes an everlasting covenant is defined not by quantity but by quality: Those who keep God’s covenant and commandments are the “all Israel.”

It is interesting that in verse 13 “Israel” is used two times, each with a different meaning. The first “Israel” refers to those with whom God will establish his covenant; the second Israel refers to those who have gone astray. Therefore, it may not be that extraordinary when Paul uses the term “Israel” in different senses in one verse, as he does in Romans 9:6 and 11:25, 26. While in the present Qumran passage “Israel” is obedient and “all Israel” is rebellious, in Romans 11:25, 26, “Israel” is hardened, and “all Israel” is

³⁰Aune and Stewart note that in the restoration motif in 2 *Baruch*, the regathering of the dispersed Israelites is based on the moral proviso that they obey the law of Moses. See David E. Aune with Eric Stewart. “From the Idealized Past to the Imaginary Future: Eschatological Restoration in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature,” in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, ed. James M. Scott (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 162.

saved. “All Israel” in *Cairo Damascus* 3:14 refers to the rebellious Israel in a diachronic sense.

CD 15: 5-16:1 (4Q270 6 i21). This passage instructs how the children of the members of the Qumran Community should be sworn into the Community at a proper age.

And when the children of all those who have entered the Covenant, granted to *all Israel* forever, reach the age of enrolment, they shall swear with the oath of the Covenant. And thus shall it be during all the age of wickedness for every man who repents of his corrupted way. On the day that he speaks to the Guardian of the congregation, they shall enroll him with the oath of the Covenant which Moses made with Israel, the Covenant to return to the Law of Moses with a whole heart and soul, to whatever is found should be done at that time For God made a Covenant with you and *all Israel*; therefore a man shall bind himself by oath to return to the Law of Moses, for in it all things are strictly defined.³¹

The covenant of God is given to “all Israel” who are abided by the law of Moses. The members of the Qumran Community see themselves as the true Israel. They are the people who have repented of their sins and have sworn to keep the covenant and commandments of Moses. They consider the law of Moses as the eternal law for the people of God. Those who are in the covenant must abide by the law of Moses. “All Israel” here refers to all those who are in the covenant with God through all the ages.

4Q164 (4QpIsa) 1:1: כול ישראל כפוך בעין ויסדתיך בספירים פשרו

“He (God) will make *all Israel* like eye-paint around the eye. And I will establish you in sapphires (Isa 54:11) The priests and the people who laid the foundations of the Council of the Community . . . the congregation of His elect (shall sparkle) like a

³¹Ibid., 92.

sapphire among stones.” (4Q164 [4QpIsa] 1:1-3). “All Israel” is precious before God. They are his covenant people. He protects “all Israel” as the apples of his eyes (Ps 17:8). The Qumran scribes interpret the precious and glorious stones of the New Jerusalem to be the people of God.³² The New Testament writers make similar interpretations. Peter refers to the Christians as the living stones of the spiritual temple of God (1 Pet 2:5). The New Jerusalem described in Revelation 21 has walls and foundations made of precious stones. The gates of the city have the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, and the foundation stones are named after the twelve apostles of Jesus (Rev 21: 11-14).

4Q 169 (4QpNah) (50-100 BC). (Frgs. 3-4 col. III:1-5)

פָּשְׁרוּ עַל דּוֹרְשֵׁי הַחֲלָקוֹת אֲשֶׁר בְּאַחֲרִית
הַקֶּץ יִגְלוּ מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם הָרָעִים לְכוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל
(Frgs. 3-4 col. III:3)

The nations with their uncleanness [and with] their detestable abominations. I will throw refuse on top of you, [af]front you and make you repulsive (Nah 3:6). And what will happen is that all those who see you will run away from you (Nah 3:7). Blank 3 Its interpretation concerns those looking for easy interpretations, whose evil deeds will be exposed to *all Israel* in the final time; many will fathom their sin, they will hate them and loathes them for their reprehensible arrogance. And when the glory of Judah is re[ve]aled, the simple people of Ephraim will flee from among their assembly and desert the ones who misdirected them and will join the [majori]ty [of I]srael.³³

³²Timothy H. Lim comments, “The Qumran community as the living Temple of men is seen to be the fulfillment of Second Isaiah’s admonition that Jerusalem recognizes the rebuilding programme of Darius in her midst. The concept has close affinities to the notion of the New Jerusalem and a return to Paradise in Ezekiel (cf. 28:15-30; 48:30-4).” See Timothy H. Lim, *Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 133.

³³Florentino G. Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Study Edition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 1:339.

This is the Qumran Community's interpretation of Nahum 3:6.7. While Martínez and Tigchelaar translate דורשי החלקות as "those looking for easy interpretation," Vermes translates the phrase as "those who seek smooth things."³⁴ The phrase refers to those in Ephraim who walk in lies and falsehood.³⁵ They are being deceived by false teachings and lying lips. Many will be slain in their days (בימיהם). Their wicked deeds will be exposed to all Israel in the last days (באחרית הקץ). The leaders of Jerusalem (the priests, the sons of Zadok and the men of their council) are referred to as "the sprout of Lebanon" in Nahum 1:4b; and they will perish in front of the assembly of the chosen.³⁶ "The Glory of Judah" may refer to the Messiah. When the Messiah appears, "the wicked of Judah" and "the wicked of Ephraim" will perish, only the simple (innocent) ones of Ephraim will be saved, and they will join Israel.³⁷ According to the Qumran community, many of the Jews and the members of the northern tribes will perish; only some will be saved, and they will be incorporated into the eschatological people of God in the last days. The "all Israel" in this passage has a diachronic sense, referring to the eschatological totality of God's people in all ages.

³⁴Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 281.

³⁵The Essenes referred "the seekers of smooth things" to the Pharisees, who are also called "Ephraim" in some Qumran texts. The Essenes considered themselves as Judah while the other Jewish sects as Ephraim with their "false teaching" (4QpNah3-4 ii 8). See Scott, *Restoration*, 513. See also Stephen Goranson, "Others and Intra-Jewish Polemic as Reflected in Qumran Texts," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment*, ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 2: 534-51.

³⁶Ibid., 280.

³⁷Ibid., 282.

There are five other uses of the phrase “all Israel” in the Qumran literature, one of which is a quotation of Deuteronomy 18:6. In this text “all Israel” refers to the twelve tribes of Israel. The other four usages of “all Israel” refer to the people of God in the eschatological time.

11Q19 (11Qtemple) 60:12-14 (Deut 18:6): “And if the Levite from one of your gates from *all Israel* where (13) he lives at his own wish, shall come to the place which I shall choose to make dwell my name.

4Q285 6.2: “. . . the Prince of the congregation and *all Israel*”

4Q408 1. 3-4: “the God of Israel, he is [the] creator for the community . . . (4) the God of *all Israel*, when they see . . . the adornments of his glory Blessed are you, Lord . . . when they see that the light is good . . . to bless your holy name when they see that the stars”

4Q491 16.2-4: “. . . and among the whole congregation . . . his holy people, a kingdom of priests . . . *all Israel* will gather in Jerusalem . . . they shall exalt the great works of”

4Q521 (4Qmessianic Apocalypse) 2iii 1-5: “and the law of your favor. And I will free them with [. . .] (2) It is su[re:] ‘The fathers will return to the sons’ (Mal 3:24) [. . .] (3) which the blessing of the Lord in his good will (4) May the [ea]rth rejoice in all the places (5) for *all Israel* in the rejoicing.³⁸

In summary, “all Israel” in Qumran texts refers to the covenantal people whom God loves and protects (4Q408 1.4; 4Q164 [4QpIsa] 1:1). God has made his covenant with all Israel forever (CD 15:5). God is called the God of all Israel (4Q408 1. 3-4). Moreover, “all Israel” is God’s people at the eschatological time, and it often carries a diachronic sense (4Q521 [4Qmessianic Apocalypse] 2iii:5; 4Q491 16.2-4; 4Q 169 [4QpNah] Frags. 3-4 col. III:3; 4Q408 1. 3-4).³⁹

³⁸Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 2: 641, 839, 979, 1045.

³⁹The Qumran community believed that the history of Israel in biblical times was essentially a period of religious and moral decline leading to the destruction of the First Temple. God’s covenant with Israel was now transferred to the righteous remnant—

“All Israel” in Philo and Josephus

Scott notes that “all Israel” does not occur at all in Philo and Josephus even though both authors comment extensively on biblical texts. Josephus uses Ἰσραηλίτης (“Israelite”) instead of Ἰσραήλ (“Israel”) to denote the whole people. The closest he comes to the use of the phrase “all Israel” is in the phrase ὁ πᾶς λαὸς τῶν Ἰσραηλιτῶν (“all the people of the Israelites”) (Ant. 11.133).⁴⁰ This may be because Israel was no more a political entity at the time of the writing of Josephus. The nation Israel was destroyed at 70 AD, but there were still Israelites. Therefore instead of referring to Israel as a nation, Josephus only referred to Israelites.

“All Israel” in Rabbinic Literature

The phrase “all Israel” is less common in rabbinic literature. The most commonly discussed passage is *Mishnah Sanhedrin* 10:1-3. However, scholars frequently refer to these texts in their discussion of salvation of Israel.

Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1-3 (second century AD). This passage is often quoted in the discussion of the salvation of Israel:⁴¹

All Israel has a share in the world to come, as it is said, “And your people shall all be righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever; the branch of my planting, the work of my hands that I may be glorified” (Isa 60:21). And these are they who have no share in the world to come: he who says there is no resurrection of the dead prescribed in the Law, and [he who says] that the Law is not from

the member of the Qumran sect and those who would join them in the end time. The Qumran community saw themselves as the true Israel, the people of God. See CD i-viii. Lawrence H. Schiffman, “Israel,” in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 389.

⁴⁰Scott, “And Then All Israel Will Be Saved,” 514.

⁴¹Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 397-98.

heaven, and an Epicurean⁴² (2) Three kings and four commoners have no share in the world to come. The three kings are Jeroboam and Ahab and Manasseh The four commoners are Balaam, Doeg, Ahithophel, and Gehazi. (3) The generation of the Flood has no share in the world to come The generation of the Dispersion have no share in the world to come⁴³ The men of Sodom have no share in the world to come The spies have no share in the world to come The generation of the wilderness have no share in the world to come The ten tribes shall not return again.

“All Israel” will enjoy the eschatological salvation of God. However, who are the “all Israel?” Although this passage does not define “all Israel,” it eliminates certain groups of people who are not included in “all Israel.”⁴⁴ The rebellious people are discarded. This includes those who rebelled against God before Abraham: the people of the Flood, those who built the Tower of Babel. The rejection of the ungodly people implies the acceptance of the godly ones. This means that “all Israel” is not limited to the descendants of Jacob, but includes the godly people even before Abraham. Furthermore, Gentiles are also incorporated to the community of Israel through proselytizing, although in some cases they may not attain the full status of an Israelite.

Moreover, the people of the wilderness, the spies, and the three kings who promoted idolatry are rejected. The people of the Northern Kingdom who were

⁴²This is a name given by the Jews to those (Jews and Gentiles) who opposed the rabbinic teachings. It probably was not referring to followers of the Greek philosopher Epicurus.

⁴³The generation of the Dispersion refers to those who built the Tower of Babel and were subsequently dispersed by the Lord.

⁴⁴Harvey argues that to have a share of the world to come is not among the taxic indicators of Israel which are circumcision, Torah, and Sabbath. People remain Israel or not Israel whether they have a share of the world to come or not. Harvey refuses to be convinced by the text which defines those who have a share of the world to come as “all Israel.” See Graham Harvey, *The True Israel: Uses of the Names Jew, Hebrew and Israel in Ancient Jewish and Early Christian Literature*, AGJU 35 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 265.

considered to have apostatized were not included.⁴⁵ This shows that “all Israel” does not include all the Israelites in the flesh, but only those who abide in God’s commandments.⁴⁶ The Sadducees are not included in “all Israel” because they do not believe in the resurrection. Four commoners (Gentiles) are excluded: Balaam (a non-Israelite prophet), Doeg (an Edomite), Ahithophel, and Gehazi. The formula of “three kings and four commoners” is an adoption of the rhetorical device of Proverb 30:15-31. The names listed are representatives of all those who fall in their categories. The three kings and the four Gentiles are excluded because of their idolatry and hostility towards Israel. Since only Gentiles who are hostile to Israel are excluded, this implies that Gentiles who have been incorporated into the people of Israel are included in the “all Israel.” The overriding principle for inclusion into “all Israel” is not ethnicity per se but obedience to the law. Furthermore, those who reject the divine inspiration of the law and the authority of the rabbinic teachings are excluded from the eschatological salvation. In this passage, “all Israel” includes those who adhere to Judaism, as well as the godly people of the ancient past. All the rebellious ones, Jews or Gentiles, are excluded from the eschatological community.⁴⁷

⁴⁵Rabbis debate whether the ten tribes will return or not. Rabbi Akiba argues that the ten tribes will not return because God has cast them into another land. On the other hand, rabbi Eliezer says: “Like as the day grows dark and then grows light, so also after darkness is fallen upon the ten tribes shall light hereafter shine upon them” (Danby, *The Mishnah*, 398).

⁴⁶John J. Collins comments, “Even the eschatological Israel can be reasonably described as a remnant, since the violators of the covenant, at least, will have been weeded out.” John J. Collins, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London/New York: Routledge, 1997), 108.

⁴⁷E. P. Sanders argues that all the Israelites have a share in the world to come because they are in God’s covenant. Only the very few listed in *m. Sanh.* 10:1-10 are

If the above rabbinic concept of the eschatological salvation of Israel was present in Paul's time, Paul would agree that ungodly people will be excluded from "all Israel" while godly Jews and Gentiles will be incorporated into the eschatological community (Rom 2:7). However, Paul would not agree that adhering to Judaism is sufficient for salvation because no one can be saved by the working of the law (Rom 3:20; Gal 2:16).⁴⁸

Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1 quotes Isaiah 60:21 as the Scriptural basis for the salvation of "all Israel." This Isaiah passage describes the eschatological state of the redeemed Israel: God will be her light and she will be righteous. Paul, on the other hand, quotes Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9, which emphasize the way by which "all Israel" will be saved (Rom 11:27). In stating the means of salvation, Paul defines anew those who are "all Israel," those who are redeemed by Christ Jesus.

Conclusion on the Usage of "All Israel" in Early Jewish Literature

In early Jewish literature, the phrase "all Israel" often refers to the covenantal community which considers itself to be the true Israel even though it only represents a portion of the total population of Israel (1 Macc 12:52), for example, the followers of the

excluded. E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 182. If the list of people who are excluded serves as categories of people who will be excluded, then the number of Israelites who will be excluded will not be a small number. For example, all the Israelites who worship idols will be excluded, and there were many Israelites who worshipped idols before they were exiled by the Assyrians and the Babylonians. Dunn argues that the corporate identity and wholeness of Israel would not be lost even if "there were some (or indeed many) individual exceptions." See James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, WBC, vol. 38 (Dallas: Word Books, 1986), 681.

⁴⁸For a discussion of the concept of salvation and covenant in Second Temple Judaism see Jacqueline C. R. De Roo, "God's Covenant with the Forefathers," in *The*

Maccabean leaders and the Qumran community.⁴⁹ They observed the Passover (1 Esdr 1:21). They were instructed by God's law (1 Esdr 8:7). They brought offerings to God (1 Esdr 8:55). The phrase "all Israel" does not necessarily include every individual of the people of Israel. In some cases, it is only a minority of the total population, for example, the Maccabean leaders and their followers. Therefore, "all Israel" is not defined by quantity but by quality. Furthermore, there is no mention of the inclusion of Gentiles in the use of the phrase "all Israel" in early Jewish literature.⁵⁰

When the context describes activities of the people of Israel, "all Israel" refers to a group of Israelites at a particular time and place. For example, "all Israel" mourned for the death of Maccabean leaders (1 Macc 2:70; 9:20; 12:52; 12:52; *T. Jose.* 20:5). Joshua summoned all Israel in their land to make a covenant with the Lord (Ps.-Philo 23:1). All Israel went out to meet Kenaz (Ps.-Philo 27:13).

When the context describes events in the *eschaton*, "all Israel" is always used in a diachronic sense referring to a totality of God's people in all generations. For example, all Israel will be gathered to the Lord (*T. Benj.* 10:11). All Israel has a share in the world to come (*m. Sanh.* 10:1). The evil deeds of those who look for easy ways will be exposed to all Israel in the final time (*m. Sanh.* 10:1ff.; 4Q 169 iii:3). The sons of

Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Jacqueline C.R. De Roo (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 191-202.

⁴⁹James Scott notes that "all Israel" in early Jewish literature rarely refers to the historic Israel as it does more often in the Old Testament, unless the emphasis is on the continuity of Israel through the ages to the present and beyond. More often, the term is referred to the present idealized Israel or the future hope. Scott, "And Then All Israel Will Be Saved," 515.

⁵⁰Harvey argues that in rabbinic literature "all Israel" is not Gentile. See Harvey, *The True Israel*, 258.

Levi, who know the law of God will instruct all Israel concerning justice and sacrifice until the consummation of times (*T. Reub.* 6:8).⁵¹

The diachronic sense of the phrase is also evident when the context describes a covenantal relationship between God and Israel. For example, God is called the God of all Israel (4Q408 1. 3-4). The Sabbath is to be a holy day for all Israel throughout all generations (*Jub.* 50:9). The mercy and glory of God is forever in all Israel (1 Esdr 5:61). The offering of first fruits is an everlasting decree for all Israel (Tob 1:6). The covenant is granted to all Israel forever (CD 15: 5-16:1).

“All Israel” in the New Testament

In the New Testament, the phrase “all Israel” occurs only once, in Romans 11:26. There are six other instances in which “all” and “Israel” occur in close proximity (Acts 2:36; 4:10; 5:21; 13:24; Rom 9:6 and Rev 7:4). Peter preached to the crowd at Pentecost and came to the climactic statement, “Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36). The message of the cross is for the whole house of Israel. Again, Peter testified to the leaders of Jerusalem, “Let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by him this man is standing before you well (Acts 4:10).

“All the senate of the sons of Israel” assembled to judge the apostles (Acts 5:21). Before the coming of Jesus, John preached repentance and baptism to “all the people of Israel” (Acts 13:24). It is evident that not everyone in Israel came to John, but

⁵¹Scott also argues for a diachronic usage of “all Israel” based on *Jub.* 20:9; *T. Reub.* 6:8; *T. Benj.* 10:11; CD 3:8-16; *M. Sanh.* 10:1-3; and Tob 1:3-6. *Ibid.*, 508-11.

his message is for everyone in Israel who would come. Paul defends the faithfulness of God by redefining Israel in Romans 9:6: “For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel.” In the same way, Paul explains that a Jew is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal (Rom 2:29).⁵²

Conclusion

In the Old Testament, the phrase “all Israel” carries a variety of meanings depending on the context. It can have the meaning of the ten tribes, the twelve tribes, the people as a whole, or it refers to only a group of people (usually leaders) who represent the people of Israel. The phrase “all Israel” often carries the meaning of the covenant people of God, although, there are instances, in which the phrase refers to the people who have sinned against God (Judg 8:27; CD 3:14).

In the books of the Maccabees, the phrase “all Israel” often refers to those who followed the Maccabean leaders. In the Qumran texts and the rabbinic literature, a majority of the uses of the phrase “all Israel” refer to the eschatological Israel. In these instances, the phrase “all Israel” often carries a diachronic sense, referring to the total sum of the covenant people of God throughout the ages. In the mind of the Jewish writers, these covenant people of God are the elected Israelites who are faithful to God and his commandments. In the use of the phrase “all Israel,” Gentiles are not in view. It is with this concept of the elect Israel as the people of God that Paul says, “and thus, all Israel will be saved” (Rom 11:26).

⁵²Here, Paul is certainly informed by the Old Testament’s teaching of the circumcision of the heart (Deut 10:16; 30:6). Jeremiah even speaks of the Israelites as having uncircumcised ears because they cannot understand God’s word.

CHAPTER 4

SALVATION OF ISRAEL IN ROMANS

Introduction

This chapter consists of two parts. In the first part, we trace the thought and message of Paul in the book of Romans, paying special attention to his teachings on the salvation of Israel. This provides us with an overview of Paul's thinking concerning Israel's salvation in the book of Romans. The second part is an exegetical analysis of Romans 11:25-32. With an understanding of the salvation of Israel from the Isaiah texts and their usage in the Romans context, an exegetical analysis of Romans 11:25-32 helps us to deduce the meaning of Paul's statement, "and thus all Israel will be saved" in Romans 11:26.

Biblical and Theological Context of Romans

We seek to understand the overall message and content of the epistle of Romans, especially concerning the salvation of Israel. This provides us with good background knowledge to comprehend Paul's arguments in Romans 11: 25-32. In the epistle of Romans, Paul defends the gospel of Christ. Paul's message is that both Jews and Gentiles are saved by the redemption of Christ. The Old Testament prophecies concerning Gentiles joining Israel in giving glory to God is fulfilled in this messianic age (Rom 15:9-12). The epistle of Romans functions as a forerunner of Paul's visit to the

church in Rome. He wants to preach the gospel in the Rome and establishes the Christians in the faith (Rom 1:11, 15). The edificatory purpose of his letter is evident in Romans 16:25, in which Paul says that the Roman Christians will be strengthened by his preaching of the gospel.¹ The purpose of his writing is to provide a theological basis for unity among Jewish and Gentile Christians, showing how Jews and Gentiles have become one people of God through Christ.² Paul teaches how Scripture confirms the gospel, how the gospel relates to circumcision and the law, and how the promises of God to the fathers are fulfilled in Christ.³

A Gospel for All Who Believe (Rom 1:1-17)

In the prologue of chapter one, Paul lays down the main theme of the epistle. He is the apostle set apart for the gospel of Christ. This gospel is not completely new. It is promised by God beforehand in the Holy Scriptures (Rom 1:1, 2). He calls the church in Romans, which has both Jewish and Gentile Christians, as the beloved of God and the chosen saints (Rom 11:7). The gospel is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe (Rom 1:16). For Paul, the gospel is not just for the Gentiles, but also for the Jews. In fact, the gospel is for the Jews first, as both Jesus and his disciples preached the gospel

¹Paul Bowers, "Fulfilling the Gospel: The Scope of the Pauline Mission," *JETS* 30 (1987), 195.

²James C. Miller, *The Obedience of Faith, the Eschatological People of God, and the Purpose of Romans*, SBL Dissertation Series 177 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 178.

³R. David Kaylor, *Paul's Covenant Community: Jew and Gentile in Romans* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988), 16-19.

to the Jews first (Matt 10:5-6). During his missionary journey, Paul always started his preaching in a synagogue (Acts 13:14; 14:1; 17:1-2, 10; 18:4; 19:8).

All Have Sinned (Rom 1:18-2:24)

In Romans 1:18-32, Paul spells out the sins of the Gentiles in their idol worship and immorality. The consequence of sin is death (Rom 1:32). In Romans 2, Paul focuses on his Jewish audience. He exposes the sins of the Jews who know the law but do not do it. They judge others for things they also do (Rom 2:1-3). They steal, commit adultery and rob the temples. They dishonor God as they break the law (Rom 2:21-24). Paul argues that God is righteous and shows no partiality. He will judge all who sin, both the Jews and the Gentiles (Rom 2:1-11). Paul did not demand a perfect adherence to the law. He admits that there is God's grace and kindness in the law, but he points out that the Jews need to have a repentant heart (Rom 2:4-5).

Paul writes that God will render every man according to his works. For those who by patience in doing good, seek glory, honor, and immortality, God will grant them eternal life (Rom 2:6-11). For those who do evil, they will have tribulation and distress. Both the Jews and the Greeks will be judged in the same way. Does Paul advocate a way of salvation by works here? Is he saying something contrary to the gospel he preaches? Is Paul preaching another way of salvation for the Jews besides faith in Jesus Christ? Will Jews be saved by maintaining Judaism?

It is consistent with Paul's theology and the teaching of the New Testament that God judges each person by his works (Rom 2:6; 14:10-12; 1 Cor 11:32; 2 Cor 5:10; Matt 16:27; Rev 2:23; 20:12). What does Paul mean in Romans 2:6-11? For the Christians, judgment before the throne of Christ is not a determination of our salvation

but an evaluation of our services for God (1 Cor 11:32). Although God judges our works and conducts, salvation is not based on works. If salvation is based on works, no one will be saved, since everyone falls short of God's righteous standards. In Romans 2: 6-7, Paul says that for those who seek glory, honor and incorruption by remaining in good work, God will grant them eternal life. The good work here is best understood not as a way to merit God's favor but as the expression of faith.⁴ Therefore, Paul says that salvation in Christ is apart from the law (Rom 3:21-24). Salvation is not received by the working of the law. We are condemned because of the weakness of our flesh, and we cannot fulfill the requirements of the law (Rom 8:3).

The Law and Circumcision Cannot Save (Rom 2:12-29)

Having the law does not make a difference; only doing it does. The judgment of God falls upon those who sin, but the grace of God is for those who repent (Rom 2:4). Those who disobey will be judged (Rom 2:6). Jesus will judge according to the gospel (Rom 2:16). Paul writes the gospel with the messages of the prophets in his mind (Rom 2:24).

Circumcision is of no use unless one keeps the law (Rom 2:25-27). Circumcision is a sign of the covenant God has with Abraham, who was granted righteousness because of his faith in God when he was uncircumcised (Rom 4:11). A real Jew is one who is inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal (Rom 2:28-29). Therefore, a real Jew is one who has an obedient heart to God.

⁴C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 1: 147.

Paul speaks of a real Jew in a spiritual sense, meaning a child of God, and that is not determined by his ethnicity or by an outward observation of ceremonial laws.⁵

Jews Are Not Better Off (Rom 3:1-31)

Then Paul poses the question whether Jews have any advantage before God. He answers affirmatively because the oracles of God are entrusted to them (Rom 3:2). That is, they have the law of God. However, having the law is not a guarantee of salvation because it is not the hearers of the law who are right before God, but the doers of the law who are justified (Rom 2:13). Seifrid argues that the advantage of the Jews lies not in the possession of the law, but in the ‘oracles’ of God, which make known the human condition (Rom 3:1-2).⁶

Paul further asks, “Are Jews any better off?” His answer is “no” because all men are under the power of sin. Jews cannot fulfill the righteousness of the law by observing the law because they are also under the power of sin. For the Scripture proclaims that no one is righteous, and that refers to both Jews and Gentiles (Rom 3:9-20). Paul illustrates this point by sharing his own struggle with sin in Romans 7.

Salvation by Faith in Christ for All (Rom 3:21-4:25)

A righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, but it is witnessed by the law and the prophets. “Apart from the law” means that this

⁵Bruce, W. Longenecker, *Eschatology and the Covenant: A Comparison of 4 Ezra and Romans 1-11*, JSNT Supplement 57 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 253.

⁶Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness: Paul’s Theology of Justification*, NSBT 9, ed. D. A. Carson (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000), 56.

righteousness is not received by the working of the law (Rom 3:28). For Paul, the working of the law means considering the observance of the law as a form of work, which deserves a reward (Rom 4:2-4). This is different from the doing of the law, when one observes the law from an obedient heart. Thus, Paul argues in Galatians 3:6-18 that Abraham was reckoned righteous because of his faith in God. His obedience was a response to his covenantal relationship with God. The law was given four hundred and thirty years after Abraham. It was given not as a means to obtain salvation. Rather, the law was given to teach the Israelites how they should live as a covenant people of God. Now, the righteousness of God revealed in Jesus Christ is not granted on the basis of the working of the law, but as a free gift to those who have faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 3:21-22).⁷ There is no distinction—both Jews and Gentiles are justified by faith (Rom 3:27-31).

Faith Does Not Nullify Law (Rom 4:1-25)

Abraham was justified, not because of his working of the law but because of his faith in God (Rom 4:1-3). David pronounced a righteousness that is apart from the working of the law. The story of Abraham is written in the law of Moses, and David is considered a prophet. Therefore, both the law and the prophets uphold a righteousness of God received by faith. Even the promise to Abraham that he and his descendants should inherit the world comes through faith, not through the law (Rom 4: 13-14). According to Paul, the promise of God is not given exclusively to the Jews but to everyone who has faith in God. “If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the

⁷For the debate concerning whether πίστewς should be taken as an objective

promise is void” (Rom 4:14). Therefore, the heir of God is not determined by ethnicity but by faith.⁸ In this way, the promise to Abraham is given to all his descendants, those who have faith, whether they are Jews or Gentiles (Rom 4:16). Hence, faith does not nullify the law; on the contrary, the law confirms a righteousness that is by faith.

Abraham expressed his faith by believing in God’s promise that he will have many descendants. For us, our faith in God is expressed by believing in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ because this is what God has done (Rom 4:24-25).

Grace Abounds (Rom 5-8)

In Romans 5, Paul explains how grace abounds even more than sin. In chapter six, Paul urges Christians to live for God (Rom 6:11). Paul further expounds that those who are in Christ are no longer under the power of sin and law. We have been discharged from the law so that we serve God not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit (Rom 7:6). Even though we are still influenced by sin because of the weakness of our flesh, by the redemption of Christ and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, we can overcome the power of sin in our mortal bodies (Rom 7, 8). Now, the children of God are identified not by ethnicity or the outward sign of circumcision but by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9-17). With the Spirit and the love of Christ, we can overcome all things.

Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ (Rom 8:39). Does the “us” include Israel? Has Israel been separated from the love of God? Paul seeks to answer these questions in Romans 9-11. He arrives at his climactic conclusion in Romans 11:26,

genitive or subjective genitive, see Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness*, 39-146.

⁸Ibid., 64.

“And so all Israel will be saved.” But, what does he mean? Who is this Israel? How are God’s promises fulfilled?

Romans 9-11

Scholars have expressed disagreement over the place of Romans 9-11 in the overall structure of the letter. Traditionally, Protestant interpreters see justification by faith as the key message Paul argues in Romans 1-8. Chapters 9-11 serve only as additional comments concerning the fate of Israel.⁹ In recent years, more scholars assign greater weight to these chapters in interpreting Romans and other Pauline epistles.¹⁰ Krister Stendahl argues that Romans 9-11 constitutes the “climax” of Romans, and that chapters one to eight are a “preface.”¹¹ Stendahl may have made an overstatement since the emphasis of Romans 12-16 is not about Israel either. Even in the other Pauline epistles, the emphasis is on Christian doctrines and Christian living, and not Israel.

Hays sees the structure of Romans 9-11 as analogous to that of a lament psalm:¹²

9:1-5: Lament over Israel.

9:6-29: Has God’s word failed? Defense of God’s elective purpose.

9:30-10:21 Paradox: Israel failed to grasp the word of faith attested by God in Scripture.

11:1-32: Has God abandoned his people? No, all Israel will be saved.

⁹Kaylor, *Paul’s Covenant Community*, 160.

¹⁰Johannes Munck, *Christ and Israel: In Interpretation of Romans 9-11*, trans. by Ingeborg Nexon (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967); idem, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1959).

¹¹Krister Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 4, 29, 85.

¹²Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 64.

11:33-36 Doxological conclusion.

Even though Hays can fit the contents of Romans 9-11 into the structure of a lament psalm, it appears too artificial. The contents of Romans 9-11 resemble a series of logical arguments more than a lament psalm. Scholars have agreed that Paul's real concern in Romans 9-11 is the trustworthiness of God with regard to his promises to Israel.¹³

Räisänen approaches Romans 9-11 with the following questions in mind:

"What do the chapters tell of Paul's attitude toward Israel? Is Paul consistent? How do his statements relate to his statements in other letters? What do the chapters reveal of Paul's personal and social situation? What is their concrete significance for him and his cause?"¹⁴ Our analysis of the text will provide answers to some of these questions.

If one does not follow the logic of Paul and does not understand that Paul's encounter with the risen Christ and the revelation of the Old Testament play a fundamental role in the formulation of his theology, one will arrive at a conclusion like that of Jennifer Glancy. Glancy argues that Paul moves from the self-contradictory statement of Romans 9:6 to the declaration of salvation in Romans 11:26, "all Israel will be saved," giving no qualifications to this statement. She asserts that there is a break down in the logic of Paul's syntax because he faces a problem that overwhelms the structures of the language and the world he knows. According to Glancy, the solution to

¹³Heikki Räisänen, "Paul, God and Israel: Romans 9-11 in Recent Research," in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism: Essays in Tribute to Howard Clark Kee*, ed. Jacob Neusner, Earnest S., Peder Borgen, and Richard Horsley (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 178.

¹⁴Ibid., 179.

the alleged contradiction is not to be reached by human reasoning.¹⁵ The following analysis shows that Paul is consistent in his theology of salvation of Israel and that he bases his arguments heavily upon the revelation of the Hebrew Scripture.

The Fallen Israel (Rom 9)

Paul has great sorrow for the Israelites who have fallen away from God (Rom 9:1-3). Paul's sorrow for them indicates that they are not saved. If the rebellious Israelites will eventually be saved, there is no need for Paul to be sorrowful. Paul insists that the word of God has not failed because not all who descended from Israel belong to Israel and not all of Abraham's offspring are his children (Rom 9:6-7). Paul argues that God has always been one to choose a part from within the whole to be the beneficiaries of his grace. Therefore, he cannot be said to be unjust if the same is currently happening. Paul demonstrates this by the history of Israel, as told in the Scripture: God has chosen Isaac not Ishmael, Jacob not Esau (9:7-13).¹⁶ The children of the flesh are not the children of God. Only the children of the promise are reckoned as descendants of Abraham (Rom 9:8). Whom God foreknew, he predestined to follow Christ. These he justified and glorified (Rom 8:28-30).

God has absolute sovereignty over whom he will save and whom he will reject. It does not depend on human will or exertion (Rom 9:14-24). The human is not in any position to argue with God (Rom 9:18-19). God works out his plan of salvation for his people according to his own wisdom. We are not to judge but only to praise God for his

¹⁵Jennifer Glancy, "Israel vs. Israel in Romans 11:25-32," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 45 (1991): 191.

¹⁶Longenecker, *Eschatology and the Covenant*, 252-53.

mercy and kindness (Rom 11:33-36). The rebellious Israelites are compared to Pharaoh. They are vessels of wrath prepared for destruction (Rom 9:14-22).

The Elect Israel

God has prepared vessels of mercy for his glory. They are those whom he has called from the Jews and the Gentiles (Rom 9:23-24). Even though the numbers of the sons of Israel are as many as the sands of the sea, only a remnant will be saved (Rom 9:27; Isa 10:22). Those who are called from the Jews are the remnant of Israel. They are the ones who will be saved among the Israelites (Rom 9:27, 28). God has not forsaken Israel because there is still a remnant elected by grace (Rom 11:5). Paul considers himself as one of the remnants of Israel. He argues that even in the day of king Ahab, when apostasy in Israel was rampant, there was still a remnant of seven thousand people, who had not bowed to Baal (1 Kgs 19:18). We do not need to understand the number seven thousand literally. It is probably a symbolic number representing a complete number of people who were faithful to God at that age. God has preserved his people. This is true of every age, even in the *eschaton*.

Righteousness by Faith

Israel stumbles because they seek righteousness not by faith but by works (Rom 9:32). Paul prays for their salvation (Rom 10:1). This shows that they are not yet saved. The Jews do not understand that the righteousness of God is the righteousness by faith. They want to establish their own righteousness by the working of the law. They boast about their observance of the law. They do not submit to the righteousness of God, which is granted by faith through Christ (Rom 10:2-3).

Thus, Paul writes, “For Christ is the end (τέλος) of the law that every one who has faith may be justified” (Rom 10:4). The word τέλος can be understood as either in a positive sense of goal and purpose or in a negative sense of disruption and termination. It is more consistent with Paul’s thought to understand τέλος in the positive sense.¹⁷ Those who observe the law in the Old Testament times know that they cannot fulfill the law perfectly. They need the Lord’s grace and mercy for the forgiveness of their sins. The author of the book of Hebrews notes that sacrifices are to remind people of their sins (Heb 10:3). Paul explains the meaning of the verbless clause τέλος γὰρ νόμου Χριστὸς (“Christ is the end of the law”) by quoting Deuteronomy 30. Moses does not teach a righteousness received by the working of the law. Both the Israelites and Moses know that nobody can achieve righteousness by fulfilling the requirements of the law. We can paraphrase what Moses writes in Deuteronomy 30:12-13 as this: “Don’t say the law is beyond your reach, that it is too difficult for you. The law is near you; it is on your lips and in your heart.” God’s law is not beyond human comprehension. It is available to Israel, and she is to live by it.¹⁸ Christopher Wright comments that Paul’s use of Deuteronomy 30:11-14 in Romans 10 is intended not to negate the law but to affirm that the law was always intended to be lived out by faith in the God who gave it.¹⁹ God does not expect the Israelites to observe the law perfectly. Rather, they are to confess to God

¹⁷Mary A. Getty, “Paul on the Covenants and the Future of Israel,” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 17 (1987): 97.

¹⁸A. D. H. Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, The New Century Bible (London: Butler & Tanner, 1979), 370.

¹⁹Christopher Wright, *Deuteronomy*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 290-93.

with their mouths and obey him in their hearts.²⁰ In this way, Moses teaches a righteousness that is by faith. Paul applies this principle to confession in Christ because the will and the work of God has been manifested in the life and resurrection of Christ. Obeying Christ is obeying God. What Paul means in Romans 10:6-9 is something like this: Don't say who will bring Christ down from heaven and up from the Hades. God has already done that. All you need to do is to believe in your heart and confess in your mouth. This is God's righteousness by faith.

The law and the prophets testify to a righteousness by faith. Thus, Paul compares Abraham's faith in God to our faith in Christ (Rom 4:24-25). The "word" in Deuteronomy 30:13 represents the law. Paul proclaims that Christ is the goal of the law (Rom 10:4).²¹ Since Christ encompasses the law, Paul can substitute Christ for the "word" in Deuteronomy 30:14. Furthermore, Christ is the fulfillment of the law. That is what Paul means when he says that Christ is the τέλος of the law.²² In his divine forbearance, God overlooked all the previous sins of his people and dealt with them by the redemption of Christ. Therefore, applying the righteousness by faith in Deuteronomy 30:14 to Christ who fulfills the law, Paul writes that all who confess the lordship of Christ and believe in his resurrection will be saved (Rom 10:9). In this verse, Paul clearly defines the way of salvation. Certainly, confession of Christ as the way of salvation does

²⁰See also Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 364-65.

²¹The word

²²Schreiner writes, "He [Paul] believed that genuine loyalty to Torah would lead to faith in Jesus as the Messiah because he fulfills what the Torah promised." See Thomas Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God's Glory in Christ, a Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001), 472.

not apply for Gentiles only, but also for Jews. Otherwise, Paul does not need to base his argument upon the Hebrew Scriptures, Deuteronomy 30:12-13 and Leviticus 18:5.

Paul further quotes two passages from the prophets to support his argument (Rom 10:11-13). The Lord will set a test stone, a precious corner stone in Zion. “No one who believes in him will be put to shame” (Isa 28:16). Christ is the test stone. Paul also quotes Joel 2:32, “Every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” The prophecy is from a restoration oracle in which Joel prophesies about the coming of the day of the Lord, the pouring out of the Spirit, the salvation of those who call upon the name of the Lord, and the preservation of a remnant whom the Lord calls among the survivors in Zion (Joel 2:28-32). Joel repeatedly calls Israel to turn to God with all their hearts (Joel 2:12-13). Quoting from Isaiah and Joel, Paul argues that there is the righteousness by faith which the law and the prophets uphold. Therefore, the problem is not that God has not spoken, but that Israel has not listened.

Israel Has Been Disobedient

In chapter 9, Paul emphasizes the sovereignty of God in his election. God has called Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants. He has prepared vessels for destruction and vessels for glory. As vessels of glory, there are both Jews and Gentiles. In chapter 10, he puts the burden upon Israel, who has not responded to God’s message. Paul uses Isaiah 52:7; 53:1; 62:5; Psalm 19:4; and Deuteronomy 32:21 to argue that the message of salvation has been preached to Israel, but Israel is rebellious and has not taken heed to God’s word (Rom 10:14-22). Both Moses and Isaiah prophesy that the Gentiles will be saved in order to make Israel jealous (Deut 32:21; Isa 62:5). By quoting these passages, Paul argues that these prophecies are being fulfilled in his days.

Israel Has Stumbled But Will Be Restored

God has not rejected the people whom he foreknew (Rom 11:2). There are Israelites like Paul who are chosen. A remnant is saved, but the rest of Israel is hardened (Rom 11:4-9). Paul asks, “Did they stumble so as to fall?” Israel has stumbled, but she will not fall completely. Israel has stumbled over Jesus. They expect a messiah coming in glory and in power. They do not expect a messiah who came as a humble carpenter. They expect the restoration of Israel nationally and not the kingdom of God ushering in quietly.

Even though Israel has failed to receive the Messiah, God’s plan of salvation has not failed. Because of the hardening of Israel, salvation comes to the Gentiles. Moreover, God has not rejected Israel for the opportunity of salvation. Through the blessings given to the Gentiles, Israel will be provoked to come to faith in Christ (Rom 11:11). It is God’s blessings rather than judgment upon the Gentiles that provoke Israel to come to faith in Jesus.²³

Furthermore, when Paul says Israel will be provoked to come to faith in God, he has individual Israelites in mind. Paul desires to magnify his ministry in order to make his fellow Jews jealous and thus save some of them (Rom 11:14). Blessing the Gentiles is an ongoing process by which God calls hardened Israelites to return to him (Rom 11:11). Paul expects more and more Israelites coming to faith in Christ as they see God bestowing his blessings upon the Gentiles.

²³See Thomas Schreiner, *Romans*, in *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. Moisés Silva (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 619; and Christopher D. Stanley, “‘The Redeemer Will Come ἐκ Σιών’: Romans 11:26-27 Revisited,” in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 137-35.

Israel and the World

Paul explains the consequences of the rejection and acceptance of Israel to herself and to the world in Romans 11:11-15. These concepts are important for our understanding of the restoration of Israel. Let us study these Scriptures in more detail.

Romans 11:11-12, 15: So I ask, have they stumbled so as to fall? By no means! But through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?

If Israel's transgression means riches to the world, how much will their full inclusion mean (Rom 11:12)? The same concept is repeated in Romans 11:11 and 15. Paul makes it clear that the Israelites' rejection of Christ is sin on their part. One cannot rid the Jews of the responsibility for rejecting Christ by putting the blame on God, as some scholars argue when they say that God is the one who hardens their hearts.²⁴ Divine hardening and human responsibility are not antithetical. Both are biblical truth to be embraced together. Because of their trespasses, riches (πλοῦτος) have come to the world or to the Gentiles (Rom 11:12). Here, πλοῦτος refer to all the blessings that come after salvation, both spiritual and physical blessings (Eph 1:3-15; Phil 4:19).

The "fullness" (πλήρωμα) of Israel in verse 12 is used as an antithesis to "their transgression" (τῷ αὐτῶν παραπτώματι) and their failure (τὸ ἥττημα αὐτῶ) in the

²⁴Stuhlmacher says that the Jews who have opposed Jesus and the gospel are under "an unknowing delusion." See Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), 172. John G. Lodge argues that nothing is said about the hardening being punitive or due to the fault of Israel. In his view, the hardening is part of God's plan to save the Gentiles and eventually all Israel. See John G. Lodge, *Romans 9-11: A Reader-Response Analysis* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 196.

same verse, and to their rejection (ἡ ἀποβολὴ αὐτῶν) in verse 15. Furthermore, Paul refers to the “fullness” (πλήρωμα) of Israel as their acceptance by God (Rom 11:15). In verse 14, Paul says that he magnifies his ministry of evangelism to the Gentiles in order to provoke the Jews to jealousy for some of them can be saved. Paul’s strategy is to evangelize the Gentiles in order to facilitate the restoration of the Jews.²⁵ In Paul’s mind, evangelizing the Gentiles and evangelizing the Jews are to be done in parallel and in coordination with one another. The idea of evangelizing the Gentiles, leaving the Jews behind, believing that they will somehow be saved at the end is foreign to Paul’s thought and practice.

In verse 15, Paul writes that the rejection of the Jews leads to the reconciliation of the world with God. When the Jews (not all of them) rejected the gospel, the apostles, being led by the Holy Spirit and the revelation of the Hebrew Scripture, turned to the Gentiles. The door of salvation is then opened to the Gentiles, and God’s blessings are poured upon those who believe in Christ. Evidently, the whole world is not reconciled to God in a short time. But as the gospel is preached, Gentiles and Jews come gradually into the kingdom of God. Paul directly links evangelism as a way to reach the fullness of Israel in Romans 11:14,15.

The phrase ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν (“life from the death” occurs only in Romans 11:15. It does not occur in any other place in the New Testament. The LXX does not have such a phrase either. Some scholars argue that the phrase refers to the final

²⁵See also Longenecker, *Eschatology and the Covenant*, 254.

resurrection.²⁶ But there is nothing in the context which indicates that the phrase refers to the final resurrection of the dead. How does the acceptance of Israel mean resurrection from the dead, and what does that mean for Israel? If Paul intends the phrase ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν to mean resurrection from the dead, he certainly needs to add a few more sentences to make his thought clear to his readers. Some scholars argue that Israel will be accepted at the time of the resurrection of the dead at the second coming of Christ. Such an argument builds too much theology upon this single phrase.

In Romans 8:10, Paul says that when we are in Christ, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is alive because of righteousness (εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν, τὸ μὲν σῶμα νεκρὸν διὰ ἁμαρτίαν τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωὴ διὰ δικαιοσύνην). It seems that the phrase ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν refers to the spiritual regeneration rather than to bodily resurrection. In the gospel tradition, when the prodigal son returns to his father, he is described as one who was dead and is alive (Luke 15:32). Paul may also be influenced by the dry bone vision of Ezekiel 37. When the spirit breathes into the corpses, they become alive (καὶ ἐμφύσησον εἰς τοὺς νεκροὺς τούτους καὶ ζήσάτωσαν). The dry bones coming to life signify the restoration of Israel (Ezek 37:11-14). It is most likely that Paul uses the phrase ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν in a figurative sense. If the rejection of Israel leads to reconciliation of the world, how much more blessing will there be at their acceptance? It will be nothing less than life from the dead!

²⁶Otfried Hofius, "All Israel Will Be Saved: Divine Salvation and Israel's Deliverance in Romans 9-11," *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* supplement no.1 (1990): 35-36; D. H. Hofmann, *Der Brief Pauli an die Römer* (Leipzig: Bohme, 1904), 482-84; W. S. Campbell, "Israel," in *NDBT*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander, Brian S. Rosner, D. A. Carson, and Graeme Goldsworthy (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000), 444.

The Lump and the Olive Tree (Rom 11:16-24)

If the first fruit is holy, the whole lump must also be holy (Rom 11:16a). The first fruit represents the whole lump. At the same time, the whole lump must also have the quality of the first fruit in order to be accepted. The imagery of the olive tree expresses the same point. "If the root is holy, so are the branches" (Rom 11:16b). The root and the branches are parts of the same tree. They are derived from the same seed. Faith is the quality by which the patriarchs were accepted by God. In the same way, their descendants will also come before God through faith. Those descendants who are without faith are cut off while Gentiles who have faith are grafted in (Rom 11:20). When the Jews believe in Jesus, they will be grafted in again (Rom 11:23). This olive tree represents God's people who are chosen by him and come to him through faith.

The determining factor to be the children of God is to have faith in God. This faith in God is now manifested as the faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 4:20-25). Abraham believed that God was able to do what he had promised (Rom 4:20, 21). He was granted righteousness for his faith. Paul considers that those who believe in Jesus have the same kind of faith as Abraham, for we believe in Christ in whom all the promises of God are fulfilled (Rom 4:24, 25; 2 Cor 1:20). Faith in Christ is now the determining factor for acceptance to the kingdom of God. Christ is the new Moses who leads the children of God for a greater Exodus, that is, out of the kingdom of darkness to the glorious kingdom of God (Col 1:13).

Up to this point (Rom 1:1-11:24), the argument of Paul has been consistent. Salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ, both for the Jews and for the Gentiles. "Since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as

a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom 3:23). We will see whether Paul is consistent with his argument in Romans 11:25-32 in the next section.

Salvation of Israel (Rom 11:25-32)

In this passage, Paul argues that God has not forsaken Israel despite the fact that a portion of Israel is hardened for the gospel at present. Their election is still valid. Paul gives some details of how and when Israel will be saved. We will examine this passage in greater detail in the next section.

Christ as the Minister of Truth for the Circumcised

In Romans 15:5-7, Paul admonishes the Jewish and Gentile Christians to accept one another as Christ has accepted them. Christ has become the minister for the circumcised concerning the truth of God (Rom 15:8a). This shows that the primary ministry of Christ is to teach the Jews about God’s truth, so that the promises of God to their fathers will be confirmed.

The other mission of Christ is for the Gentiles that they may receive mercy and glorify God. Paul quotes Psalms 18:49; 117:1 and Deuteronomy 32:43 to testify that Gentiles will come to praise God with the Jews, and Christ will rule over both Jews and Gentiles in the messianic age (Rom 15:7-13). Paul quotes from all three components of the Hebrew Bible, implying that the whole Scripture testifies to the gospel, just as he confidently proclaims that the gospel is promised from the beginning through the prophets in the Holy Scriptures (Rom 1:2).²⁷

²⁷Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 71.

Paul urges Christians in Rome not to judge each other but to accept one another and be of one mind (Rom 14:1, 13; 15:1, 5). He especially mentions the issues of eating meat and observing Sabbath (Rom 14). These two issues have caused dissension among Jewish and Gentile Christians. Paul addresses these issues in his other letters (1 Cor 8-10; Gal 2:12; Col 2:16-17).

In the letter to the Romans, Paul writes about the salvation of Israel (Rom 9-11), the relationship between Jews and Gentiles (Rom 11:16-18; 15:27), mutual acceptance and being one minded (Rom 14-15). This reflects that there were significant numbers of Jewish and Gentile Christians in the Roman church. One purpose of Paul's epistle to the Romans is to harmonize the tension between these two groups and to show from a theological point of view how Jews and Gentiles have become one people of God through the redemption of Jesus Christ.

Christ is the minister for the Jews to confirm the promises of God to their fathers. Through Christ, the Gentiles receive mercy for the glory of God (Rom 15:8-9). There is much scholarly discussion concerning the structure and interpretation of Romans 15:8-9a. Moo lists the two most commonly held views:²⁸

Verses 8 and 9a are parallel substantive clauses describing the contents of what Paul says:

that Christ has become a servant of the circumcision for the sake of the truth of God in order to confirm the promises to the fathers (8);
and that the Gentiles are glorifying God for the sake of his mercy (9a).

Verses 8b and 9a are parallel purpose expressions dependent on verse 8a:

I say that Christ has become a servant of the circumcision for the sake of the truth of God (8),

- a. in order to confirm the promises made to the fathers (8);
- b. and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for the sake of his mercy (9a).

²⁸Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 876.

J. Rose Wagner also sees verses 8 and 9a as parallel constructions subordinate to “I say” at the beginning of verse 8. He expresses the parallelism in greater details:

For I say that
the Christ has become a servant
of the circumcision
on behalf of the truthfulness of God,
in order to confirm
the promises made to the patriarchs,

and [a servant]
with respect to the Gentiles
on behalf of the mercy [of God]
in order to glorify
God.²⁹

It is clear from the teaching of Jesus and Paul that the message of salvation comes to the Jews first and then to the Gentiles (Matt 10:5-6 ; Rom 1:16; 2:9). According to the Hebrew Scripture, the Messiah comes for the restoration of Israel, and then the good news is preached to the nations (Isa 49:5-6). No matter how one may assign dependence of the clauses in Romans 15:8-9, the central idea is that Christ confirms the promises to the patriarchs; and through Christ, the Gentiles receive mercy for God’s glory. Christ has made both the Jews and Gentiles coming before God as one redeemed people of God (Eph 2:13-18). When Jewish and Gentile Christians receive one another in love, God is glorified (Rom 15:7-9).³⁰

²⁹J. Ross Wagner, “The Christ, Servant of Jew and Gentile: A Fresh Approach to Romans 15:8-9,” *JBL* 116 (1997): 474.

³⁰For further discussion on the structure and interpretation of Rom 15:7-9, see Miller, *The Obedience of Faith*, 61-74; Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer (Römer 12-16)*, 2nd. aufl., EKKNT, bd. 6.3 (Neukirchener: Neukirchener-Vluyt, 1989), 106; Moo, *Romans*, 875-77; Wagner, “The Christ,” 476-85; and Leander E. Keck, “Christology, Soteriology, and the Praise of God (Rom 15:7-13),” in *The Conversation Continues: Studies in Paul and John in Honor of J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Robert T. Fortna and Beverly R. Gaventa (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 89-91.

Paul divides the people in Jerusalem into two groups: the unbelievers who will persecute him, and the saints (Rom 15:31). The unbelievers are the Jews who persecute Christians while the saints are the Christians in Jerusalem, probably the majority of whom are Jews. Therefore, Paul qualifies the people of God not by their ethnicity but by their allegiance to Jesus Christ.

The Gospel as the Mystery Revealed (Rom 16:25-27)

As a final doxology, Paul summarizes in a nutshell that it is the gospel and the preaching of Jesus which will strengthen the Christians in Rome. He explains that the gospel is not something completely new. It is a mystery that has been hidden in time past but is now revealed through the prophetic writings and made known by the command of God.³¹ The message of the gospel is hidden in the prophetic writings but is now revealed by the preaching of the apostles. God revealed the mystery to the apostles, and they preached to the world for the obedience of faith. This is all under the direction of the only wise, powerful, and eternal God. Paul makes the same exclamation when he states that God consigns both Jews and Gentiles to disobedience so that he may have mercy upon all (Rom 11:32-36).

Salvation of the nations does not come automatically. Salvation comes through the preaching of the gospel, and the gospel demands a response of obedience from the

³¹Concerning the textual problem in Rom 16:25-27, Bruce Metzger writes, "The multiplicity of locations at which the doxology appears in several witnesses, as well as the occurrence in it of several expressions that have been regarded as non-Pauline, raises the suspicions that the doxology may be non-Pauline. At the same time, however, on the basis of good and diversified evidence, the doxology is placed at its traditional place at the close of the epistle, but enclosed with a square brackets to indicate a degree

hearer. The genitive πίστewς in the phrase ὑπακοὴν πίστewς in Romans 16:26 should be understood as a genitive of apposition. It means faith which consists in obedience. For Paul, faith and obedience are inseparable. Cranfield argues that faith in God and obedience to God are synonymous concepts in the epistles of Romans.³² “Obedience” is used in the same sense as believing in the gospel or believing in Jesus (Rom 11:20-23, 30-32).³³

When Paul explains the gospel, he quotes the prophets. He does so not to get a proof-text, but because the gospel is what God has promised through the prophets in the holy Scriptures (Rom 1:2; 16:25-26). The message of the gospel is in accordance with the revelation in the prophetic writings. Therefore, for us to understand Paul, we need to understand the prophets. Thus, scholars who disregard the messages of the prophets in their interpretation of Paul have missed the great sources of revelation from which Paul draws.³⁴

In summary, throughout the letter to the Romans, Paul is consistent in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and defending it with the Hebrew Scripture. He

of uncertainty.” See Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (New York: German Bible Society, 1998), 472-73.

³²Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 1: 66.

³³For more discussion on various options of understanding ὑπακοὴν πίστewς, see Miller, *The Obedience of Faith*, 23-60; Glenn N. Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans: A Study in Romans 1-4*, JSNTSup 39 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 30.

³⁴Shiu-Lun Shum, *Paul’s Use of Isaiah in Romans: A Comparative Study of Paul’s Letter to the Romans and the Sibylline and Qumran Sectarian Texts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 243. See also E.P. Sanders, “Paul’s Attitude Toward the Jewish People,” *USQR* 33 (1978): 175-87; H. Hübner, *Gottes Ich und Israel: Zum Schriftgebrauch des Paulus in Römer 9-11* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984),

argues that Christ has come as a fulfillment of God's promises to the patriarchs. The message of the gospel is hidden in the prophetic writings and proclaimed by the apostles under the command of God (Rom 15:8). This gospel is for the salvation of all who believe, both for the Jews and for the Gentiles. In the next section, we exegete Romans 11:25-32 and find out when and how Israel will be saved in Paul's theology.

Exegesis of Romans 11:25-32

Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ (Rom 8:39). Does this include Israel? Has Israel been separated from the love of God? Paul's answer to these questions in Romans 9-11 can be summarized as follows:

1. God has not forsaken Israel because not all Israel in the flesh are the children of God. Only the children of promise are the seed of Abraham (Rom 9:6,7).
2. God has complete sovereignty over whom he will call to receive his mercy. We are not in any position to argue with God (Rom 9:10-29).
3. Israel failed to receive righteousness because they did not seek it by faith (Rom 9:30-10:15).
4. God has given Israel opportunity to hear the gospel, but they are rebellious (Rom 10:16-21).
5. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. There is an elect remnant of Israel who is saved (Rom 11:1-10).
6. Furthermore, all Israel will be saved when the fullness of the Gentiles comes (Rom 11:26).

In this section, we study the salvation of all Israel by a detailed exegesis of Romans 11:25-32. Paul makes it very clear that God has not forsaken Israel. He is still working with Israel. His very act to have mercy upon the Gentiles is to provoke Israel to

118; Reidar Hvalik, "A 'Sonderweg' for Israel: A Critical Examination of a Current Interpretation of Romans 11:25-27," *JSNT* 38 (1990): 95.

come to faith (Rom 11:11). Any time when they believe, they will be re-grafted into the olive tree, which symbolizes the community of God's people (Rom 11:23). In Romans 11:25-26, Paul further asserts that there will be a time in the future when not only a remnant of Israel but all Israel will be saved. However, who is this "all Israel," and how will they be saved? To answer these questions, we need to study the passage in greater detail.

Romans 11:25

Οὐ γὰρ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο, ἵνα μὴ ᾗτε [παρ'] ἑαυτοῖς φρόνιμοι, ὅτι πώρωσις ἀπὸ μέρους τῷ Ἰσραὴλ γέγονεν ἄχρι οὗ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ

Brothers, I do not wish you to be ignorant about this mystery, lest you become wise in your own eyes, that hardening has come upon a portion of Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in.

Paul cautions the Gentile Christians who hear his message, "lest they be wise in their own conceits." He gives them similar warnings in Romans 11:20 that they should not think that they have replaced Israel and that Israel has been discarded. Paul emphasizes that God has not rejected Israel completely. There is a remnant of Israel at present, and in the future, all Israel will be saved in the future. Hence, the Gentile believers should not be proud to think that they are the exclusive heirs of the promises of Israel.³⁵ Paul then explains how all Israel will be saved.

The mystery. Paul wants his Gentile readers to know the mystery he is about to reveal so that they will not be proud against the Jews. What is this mystery? Robertson argues that the revelation is called a mystery because exactly how it is going to work out

³⁵Glancy, "Israel vs. Israel in Romans 11:25-32," 193.

is still unclear to Paul.³⁶ Some scholars argue that in using the word μυστήριον, Paul is introducing something completely new.³⁷ However, Richard Bell contends that it is not necessary to understand μυστήριον as an “apokalyptische Offenbarung.”³⁸ He argues that Paul came to a knowledge of this μυστήριον through the study of Scripture more than through a special revelation.³⁹ Seyoon Kim proposes that the mystery was part of Paul’s Damascus experience.⁴⁰

Cranfield argues that mystery is something which could not be known by men except by divine revelation. Paul does not state clearly which part of the message is the mystery that God has revealed to him. One can maintain that the mystery is the message of the gospel hidden in the Old Testament.⁴¹ John Stott contends that the mystery is Christ himself and the good news that in Christ Gentiles are co-beneficiaries with the

³⁶O. Palmer Robertson, *The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2000), 176-82.

³⁷Gerd Lüdemann, *Paulus und das Judentum* (München : Kaiser, 1983), 34. Ulrich Wilckens writes, “Es ist völlig deutlich, daß das in Röm 11, 25 mitgeteilte ‘Mysterium’ in diesem apokalyptischen Horizont zu verstehen ist.” See Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, 2:253; see also Richard H. Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1994), 126.

³⁸Otto Michel argues that μυστήριον implies something apocalyptic in nature. See Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer*, KEK 4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978), 354.

³⁹Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 126-27. He argues that one of the passages through which Paul came to see that all Israel will be saved is Deut 32.

⁴⁰Seyoon Kim, *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel*, WUNT 2.5 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1981), 95.

⁴¹C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 2: 574.

Jews of the promises of God and equal members of his family.⁴² Schreiner suggests that the mystery is at least three-fold: (1) a part of Israel is hardened for a limited period of time; (2) the salvation of the Gentiles will precede the salvation of Israel; and (3) all Israel will eventually be saved.⁴³

Barth argues that the “mystery” does not refer to the future conversion of Jews; rather, it refers to the present disobedience of the Jews. Paul and the church were grappling with the riddle of the extreme disobedience of the Jews towards the gospel.⁴⁴ But how will knowing the disobedience of the Jews prevent the Gentiles from being proud? Furthermore, the Jews killed Jesus and persecuted the early Christians. Their disobedience was already a fact. How can that constitute a mystery? For Paul, mystery is something that was once hidden and is now revealed (Eph 3:9; Rom 16:25). Therefore, it is not likely that the mystery refers to the hardening of the Jews.

Wagner emphasizes that what is new in the “mystery” is not the belief that “all Israel” will be saved but that the full redemption of Israel awaits the completion of the Gentile mission. He notes that in Second Temple Jewish texts, the redemption of the Gentiles comes only after the restoration of Israel.⁴⁵ Similarly for Kim, the mystery is that God reverses the *Heilsgeschichte* and allows the Gentiles to believe in the gospel first

⁴²John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Romans*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1994), 302.

⁴³Schreiner, *Romans*, 614.

⁴⁴Karl Barth, *A Shorter Commentary on Romans* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1959), 144.

⁴⁵Ross J. Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letters of the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 277.

until their full number comes in by a partial hardening Israel.⁴⁶ If by “mystery” Paul refers to the reversion of the order of salvation, he contradicts himself in Romans 1:16 and 2:10, in which he says that salvation comes to all who believes, first the Jew and also to the Greek. Furthermore, no other text in the New Testament refers to such a reversed salvation order. The Messiah comes to Israel first, and then to the Gentiles (Matt 10:6; 15:24-26; Isa 49:5-7).

Mark Nanos correctly argues that the restoration of Israel has begun in the believing remnants of Israel. As more Jews come to faith in Jesus through the proclamation of the gospel, they are grafted in again, joining the remnant in constituting the restoration of “all Israel.”⁴⁷ For Paul, mystery is not something completely new or contrary to previous revelation but that which was hidden in the Hebrew Scripture and is now revealed by the command of God (Rom 16:25-26).

The word μυστήριον (“mystery”) occurs in the Pauline epistles twenty times: Romans 11:25; 16:25; 1 Corinthians 2: 7; 4:1; 13:2; 14:2; 15:51; Ephesians 1:9; 3:3, 4, 9; 5:32; 6:19; Col 1:26, 27; 2:2; 4:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:7; 1 Timothy 3:9, 16).⁴⁸ In fifteen of these references, μυστήριον refers to the gospel of Jesus Christ or the mystery of Jesus Christ: Romans 11:25; 16:25; 1Cor 2: 7; 4:1; Ephesians 1:9; 3:3, 4, 9; 5:32; 6:19; Colosians 1:26, 27; 2:2; 4:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:7. Paul specifically refers μυστήριον as

⁴⁶Johann D. Kim, *God, Israel, and the Gentiles: Rhetoric and Situation in Romans 9-11*, SBL Dissertation Series 176 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 137.

⁴⁷Mark D. Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 260.

⁴⁸Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2:572.

the bodily transformation of Christians at the second coming of Christ (1 Cor 15:51). It is also a mystery that the Gentiles become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel (Eph 3:3, 4). In Colossians 1:26, 27, the mystery is Christ in the Gentiles. In 1 Timothy 3:9, deacons are to hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. The mystery of faith probably refers to the knowledge of the gospel. Finally, the mystery of godliness is the message of the incarnation and exaltation of Christ (1 Tim 3:16).

The word **μυστήριον** is used in the epistle of Romans twice (Rom 11:25; 16:25). In Romans 16:25, the word **μυστήριον** refers to the gospel of Jesus Christ that was once hidden in the Old Testament and is now proclaimed by the apostles by the command of God. Although the authenticity of this verse is uncertain, its message is supported by Romans 1:2. Such a meaning of **μυστήριον** fits the context of Romans 11:25. In Romans as well as in the rest of the Pauline corpus, Paul most often uses the word **μυστήριον** in reference to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus, the special revelation Paul proclaims in Romans 11:25 is that even in the midst of the present hardening of the Jews, “all Israel” will eventually be saved by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Knowing this, the Gentile Christians should not be proud to think that they have been elected in place of the Jews; rather they should grow in the faith and be bold in the witnessing of the gospel even to the Jews.

Hardness from a portion of Israel. The word **πώρωσις** (“hardness”) refers to hardness of hearts (Mark 3:5; Eph 4:18). Stott describes the hardening as spiritual insensitivity, just as Paul says that the unbelieving Israelites still have a ‘veil’ covering

their hearts and minds when they read the Old Testament (2 Cor 3:14ff.).⁴⁹ Does the phrase ἀπὸ μέρους “from a portion” modify the “hardening,” or “Israel,” or the verb to be γέγονεν (“has become”)? In other words, should the clause be translated as “partial hardening has come upon Israel” or “hardening has come upon a part of Israel?”

Dunn and others takes ἀπὸ μέρους adverbially, describing πῶρωςις (“hardening”) rather than Ἰσραὴλ (“Israel”). He argues that Paul retains a concept of Israel as a unified whole.⁵⁰ Cranfield argues that ἀπὸ μέρους describes γέγονεν.⁵¹ Stott, on the other hand, takes ἀπὸ μέρους as describing Ἰσραὴλ.⁵² The conclusions of these different views are not much different. They all agree that not all Israelites are hardened. There is still the believing remnant.

Of the four other uses of the phrase ἀπὸ μέρους in the Pauline epistles (Rom 15:15, 24; 2 Cor 1:14; 2:5), all are used in an adverbial sense. Therefore, ἀπὸ μέρους in Romans 11:25 should probably be understood in an adverbial sense, meaning that some measure of hardness has come upon Israel. The hardness is partial because there is still a

⁴⁹Stott, *The Message of Romans*, 302.

⁵⁰James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, WBC, vol. 38 (Dallas: Word Books, 1986), 679. See also Kim, *God, Israel, and the Gentiles*, 137; and Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 713; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2nd ed. Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: A. & C. Black, 1991), 223; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, ed. and trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 303; Otfried Hofius, “Das Evangelium und Israel: Erwägungen zu Römer 9-11,” *ZThK* 83 (1986): 312.

⁵¹Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2:575; See also Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer*, 280.

⁵²Stott, *The Message of Romans*, 303.

believing remnant.⁵³ Dunn notes that the perfect tense of the verb γέγονεν denotes the continuing state which has afflicted Israel since the new age was brought in by Christ.⁵⁴ It shows that the hardening of Israel has begun but is not finished.

The phrase ἄχρι οὗ (“until the time when”) is usually taken in the temporal sense.⁵⁵ Dunn explains that the phrase ἄχρι οὗ suggests a temporal sequence, which implies that once the full number of the Gentiles comes in, Israel’s blindness will be lifted.⁵⁶ Bell points out that ἄχρι οὗ with an aorist subjunctive can refer either to an event at a fixed point in the future or to the future conclusion of a process that occurs over a period of time.⁵⁷ An example of the former is in 1 Corinthians 11:26: “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes (ὁσάκις γὰρ ἐὰν ἐσθίητε τὸν ἄρτον τοῦτον καὶ τὸ ποτήριον πίνετε, τὸν θάνατον τοῦ κυρίου καταγγέλλετε ἄχρι οὗ ἔλθῃ). An example of the latter is in 1 Corinthians 15:25: “For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet (δεῖ γὰρ αὐτὸν βασιλεύειν ἄχρι οὗ θῇ πάντας τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ).⁵⁸

⁵³Robert H. Mounce, *Romans*, The New American Commentary, vol. 27 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 224.

⁵⁴Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 679.

⁵⁵Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2:575; Schreiner, *Romans*, 617-18.

⁵⁶Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 680.

⁵⁷Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 129.

⁵⁸Hofius, “Das Evangelium und Israel,” 312.

Is the fullness of the Gentiles mentioned in Romans 11:25 an event at a fixed point in the future, or is it an ongoing process that terminates at some point in the future? To answer this question, a study of the meaning of the fullness of the Gentiles is necessary. If the fullness of the Gentiles refers to the final complete number of Gentiles entering the kingdom of God, then it will be an event at a fixed point in the future.⁵⁹ If the fullness of the Gentiles refers to the time of blessings to the Gentiles, then it will be an on-going process since the first coming of Christ until some time in the future, possibly at the second coming of Christ.⁶⁰ A study of the word πλήρωμα in the Pauline corpus is necessary to determine its meaning in Romans 11:25.

The word πλήρωμα (“fullness”) is used twelve times in Pauline epistles (Rom 11:12, 25; 13:10; 15:29; 1 Cor 10:26; Gal 4:4; Eph 1:10, 23; 3:19; 4:13; Col 1:19; 2:9). In none of these instances is πλήρωμα used in a quantitative sense. Rather it describes a qualitative state. For example, the fullness of Israel refers to her restoration or acceptance by God (Rom 11: 12).⁶¹ Love is a fulfillment of the law (Rom 13:10). The fullness of the earth refers to all its bounty (1 Cor 10:26). In the fullness of time, God sent forth his son, born of woman (Gal 4:4). The church is the fullness of the one who fills all in all (Eph 1:23). In Christ, the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily (Col 2:9). The fact that the

⁵⁹Most commentators understand the fullness of Gentiles as the full number of Gentiles coming into the kingdom of God. See Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 680; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:575; Stulmann, *Das eschatologische Mass im Neuen Testament*, FRLANT, 132 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 173-78.

⁶⁰Charles Hodge, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), 588; John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 93-94; Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 133-34.

⁶¹See page 140 of this chapter under the section “Israel and the World.”

word πλήρωμα is not used in a quantitative sense in the rest of the New Testament should caution us against understanding the phrase “the fullness of the Gentiles” in Romans 11:25 in a quantitative sense, as referring to the full numbers of Gentiles.⁶²

Concerning the signs of his second coming, Jesus said, “Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” (Ἰερουσαλήμ ἔσται πατουμένη ὑπὸ ἐθνῶν, ἄχρι οὗ πληρωθῶσιν καιροὶ ἐθνῶν) (Luke 21:24).

The phrase “the time of the Gentiles” (καιροὶ ἐθνῶν) may refer to a time of Gentile domination of Jerusalem or a time of Gentile mission. With Luke’s omission of Mark 13:10, which in a similar context prophesies about the gospel being preached to the nations, it is more likely that καιροὶ ἐθνῶν in Luke 21:24 refers to the Gentile mission.⁶³ Therefore, the meaning of the phrase “fullness of the Gentiles” in Romans 11:25 can be understood as the “times of the Gentiles” in Luke 21:24. If that is the case, the fullness of the Gentiles is the time when Christ has opened the way for Gentiles to come into the kingdom of God. Mark Nanos argues that the “fullness of the Gentiles” is the beginning of the Gentile mission.⁶⁴ This is also a time for the Jews to come into the kingdom of God through the preaching of the gospel. God’s blessings upon the Gentiles

⁶²H. Wayne House admits that the term fullness (πλήρωμα) normally has the qualitative sense of the fullness of blessing for the Gentiles, but he assigns πλήρωμα in Rom 11:12, 25 a meaning in a quantitative sense without giving any exegetical reason. See Wayne House, *Israel The Land and the People: An Evangelical Affirmation of God's Promises* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998), 154.

⁶³I. Howard Marshall, *Commentary on Luke*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 773-74. See also Walter W. Liefeld, *Luke*, in vol. 8 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin and J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Regency Reference Library, 1984), 1022.

⁶⁴Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans*, 272-74.

provoke more Jews to come to faith in Christ. At the eschatological time, when all of God's people have come into the kingdom of God, then Christ returns.

Dunn argues that Paul's use of the same word πλήρωμα in Romans 11:12 indicates that the incoming of the Gentiles is equivalent to the incoming of Israel.⁶⁵ Hence, the fullness of the Gentiles is also the fullness of Israel at the eschatological time. Robertson comments rightly that ἀχρι οὗ is used in the sense of eschatological termination, that is, the phrase implies not a new beginning after a termination but the continuation of a circumstance until the end of time. Hardening will continue among part of Israel until the return of Christ.⁶⁶ At the same time, the fullness of the Gentiles and of Israel has begun at Christ resurrection and will be completed before Christ returns. With this in mind, we will move on to the exegesis of Romans 11:26a.

Romans 11:26a

καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται (“And so all Israel will be saved”).

Moo identifies three issues of interpretation that must be settled: the meaning and reference of the phrase καὶ οὕτως; the reference of πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ; and the time and manner of the salvation of all Israel.⁶⁷

Interpretation of the phrase καὶ οὕτως. There has been much debate concerning the meaning of the phrase καὶ οὕτως. Four options have been proposed:

⁶⁵Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 680.

⁶⁶Robertson, *The Israel of God*, 180.

⁶⁷Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 719.

First, the phrase is often understood in the temporal sense. Romans 11:25-26a is read as “until the fullness of the Gentiles come, *and then* all Israel will be saved.” The hardening of Israel will continue until the fullness of the Gentiles has arrived, *and then* the hardening of Israel will be lifted, and all Israel will be saved.⁶⁸ The fullness of Israel will come after the fullness of the Gentiles. This rendering provides a theological basis for the belief that there will be a future for an ethnic national Israel in the salvation plan of God.⁶⁹

However, the temporal meaning of οὕτως is not found in Greek, nor do LSJ and BAGD give a temporal meaning for the word.⁷⁰ Robertson notes that of the approximately 205 times in which the word οὕτως occurs in the New Testament, not once does it have a temporal significance.⁷¹ Those who argue for a temporal sense for οὕτως in Romans 11:26 provide no substantial exegetical reason. Furthermore, a non-temporal sense of the word gives a better rendering.⁷² James Scott searches for the usage of καὶ οὕτως in Greek Patristic literature in the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae CD-Rom, and he argues that καὶ οὕτως was most commonly (73% of 60 citations) understood in

⁶⁸Schreiner understands the verse as such, but he does not take καὶ οὕτως in the temporal sense. He argues that the temporal element of the text is present regardless of the meaning of καὶ οὕτως. See Schreiner, *Romans*, 618.

⁶⁹Robertson, *The Israel of God*, 181.

⁷⁰Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 716.

⁷¹Robertson, *The Israel of God*, 181.

⁷²F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 222; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, WBC, vol. 38B (Dallas: Word, 1988), 681.

the temporal sense.⁷³ Scott neglects the fact that the interpretation of καὶ οὕτως in Romans 11:26 by the church fathers were influenced by their premillennial eschatology.⁷⁴ Käsemann assigns a temporal sense to οὕτως in Acts 17:33, which can be understood better when οὕτως is taken in a logical sense. Hofius comments rightly in the understanding of this verse: “So- nämlich: von den einen mit Spott und von den andern mit höflichen Worten der Ablehnung bedacht (v. 32)- ging Paulus aus ihrer Mitte (“Then: of the one with mockery and of the others with polite words of careful refusal (v. 32), Paul went out of its center.”)⁷⁵

Second, καὶ οὕτως is taken in the modal sense (“in this way”), referring to what follows. Verse 26 is translated as “And in the following way all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion....’” (καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται, καθὼς γέγραπται ἥξει ἐκ Σιών ὁ ρυόμενος....” The terms οὕτως and καθὼς are understood correlatively. This interpretation is rightly rejected since Paul never elsewhere uses οὕτως correlatively to καθὼς γέγραπται (“as it is written”).⁷⁶

⁷³James M. Scott, “And then All Israel Will Be Saved,” in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, ed. by James M. Scott (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 491, 527.

⁷⁴Premillennialism was the dominant eschatological interpretation during the first three centuries of the Christian era. See Robert G. Clouse, ed., *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1977), 9-11.

⁷⁵Hofius, “Das Evangelium und Israel,” 314. See also Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 134.

⁷⁶Joachim Jeremias, “Einige vorwiegend sprachliche Beobachtungen zu Röm 11: 25-36,” in *Die Israelfrage nach Röm 9-11*, ed. Lorenzo de Lorenzi (Rome: Abtei von St Paul vor den Mauern, 1977), 198; Bernard Mayer, *Unter Gottes Heilsratschluß*:

Third, καὶ οὕτως is taken in the modal sense (“in this manner”), referring to what precedes. Romans 11:26a is translated as “and so, in this manner all Israel will be saved.” This view is widespread and is a possible interpretation from a semantic point of view.⁷⁷ Seifrid adds emphatically, “In this strange way (*houtōs*), by its present hardening, *all* Israel shall be saved (11:25).”⁷⁸ However, Hvalvik points out rightly that it is not easy to see how this interpretation explains the manner of Israel’s salvation. “The hardening upon a part of Israel is not a way of salvation for the Jews!”⁷⁹

Fourth, καὶ οὕτως is taken in a logical sense, referring to what precedes. “All Israel will be saved” is a logical conclusion of what Paul explains in Romans 11:1-25 or even in Romans 9-11 as a wider context.⁸⁰ The phrase καὶ οὕτως may be translated as “thus, in this manner”; “thus, in this way”; “thus, by such process”; or simply “and so”.

If καὶ οὕτως is understood as “and in the same way” in a logical sense, how then shall Israel be saved? Israel will be saved in the same way as the Gentiles, that is, by faith through Jesus Christ. When God pours his blessings upon the Gentiles who believe,

Prädestination bei Paulus (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1974), 284; Hvalvik, “A ‘Sonderweg’ for Israel,” 97; Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 135.

⁷⁷Stuhlmann, *Das eschatologische Mass im Neuen Testament*, 164.

⁷⁸Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness*, 166.

⁷⁹Hvalvik, “A ‘Sonderweg’ for Israel,” 97.

⁸⁰Karl Olav Sandnes argues that the mystery in Rom 11:25-26a represents a continuation and conclusion of the parable of the olive tree (Rom 11:17-24). Karl Olav Sandnes, *Paul—One of the Prophets? Contribution to the Apostle’s Self-understanding* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1991), 177. Hvalvik points out that the presence of γὰρ at the beginning of Rom 11:25 connects the following section with the preceding section (Hvalvik, “A ‘Sonderweg’ for Israel,” 106 n.81). Dieter Sänger also contests rightly that Paul has the entire message of Rom 9-11 captured under the catchword μυστήριον. Dieter Sänger, “Rettung der Heiden und Erwählung Israels,” *KuD* 32 (1986): 115.

the Jews are provoked to jealousy, so that they too come to faith in Jesus Christ.⁸¹ The partial hardening of Israel will continue “up to” the point where the fullness of the Gentiles is brought in, and so all Israel will be saved.⁸² The fullness of Israel comes right after the fullness of the Gentiles, or they may happen at the same time. Although καὶ οὕτως is understood with a logical meaning, it carries a temporal reference because the manner in which all Israel is saved involves a process that unfolds in definite stages.⁸³ This understanding of καὶ οὕτως best fits the contexts of Romans 11 and its usage in the Pauline Corpus.⁸⁴ A few passages are discussed to illustrate this.

“Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so (καὶ οὕτως) death spreads to all men because all men sinned” (Rom 5:12). The phrase καὶ οὕτως expresses a logical conclusion of the consequence of sin. “Then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so (καὶ οὕτως) we shall always be with the Lord” (1 Thess 4:17). Again, καὶ οὕτως expresses the consequence of the previous event. “Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so (καὶ οὕτως) you believed” (1 Cor 15:11). We preach by the grace of God, and so you believe by the grace of God.

⁸¹Dunn argues that the basic sense of καὶ οὕτως is “thus, in this manner,” referring to Paul’s conviction that conversion of the Gentiles will be the means of provoking Israel to jealousy and converting them. See Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 681.

⁸²Robertson, *The Israel of God*, 182.

⁸³See Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 136; Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 720; and Hofius, “Das Evangelium und Israel,” 315; Hvalvik, “A ‘Sonderweg’ for Israel,” 97.

⁸⁴The phrase καὶ οὕτως is used nine times in the Pauline corpus: Rom 5:12; 11:26; 1 Cor 7:17, 36; 11:28; 14:25; 15:11; Gal 6:2; 1 Thess 4:17. In most of these passages, the phrase is best understood in the logical sense.

Cranfield notes that οὕτως is emphatic: it will be in this way, and only in this way that Israel will be saved. Thus, he argues that by using οὕτως, Paul emphasizes that the order of salvation is now reversed from what is stated in Romans 1:16.⁸⁵ However, other than the disputable passage in Romans 11:26, there is no other place in Scripture that suggests the reversal of the salvation order. Barth argues that καὶ οὕτως emphasizes the only way that Israel will be saved, so that Israel's salvation will depend solely on divine mercy and not on the satisfaction of human claims.⁸⁶ Paul's arguments in Romans 11:1-24, 28-33 provide no hint that the salvation of Jews is *only* a future event. Rather, they can be saved anytime when they turn to the Lord.⁸⁷

The meaning of “all Israel.” In verse 25 “Israel” refers to Israel as an ethnic people. It cannot be inferred from verse 25 that the “Israel” in verse 26 also refers to Israel as an ethnic group because “Israel” in verse 26 is defined by the adjective “all”. Furthermore, Paul uses the phrase “Israel” with different meanings, depending on the context (Rom 9:6). The phrase “all Israel” is usually understood in three ways: (1) It represents the people of Israel as an ethnic group; (2) it represents the elect within Israel; (3) it represents the whole people of God, including both Jews and Gentiles.

⁸⁵Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2:576.

⁸⁶For Barth, “all Israel” is the elect among Jews and Gentiles. See Barth, *A Shorter Commentary on Romans*, 144-45.

⁸⁷Schnabel points out that the way one interprets the phrase καὶ οὕτως “and so” is not decisive in determining the meaning of Rom 11:26a. Whether one sees a temporal, a modal or a logical meaning of the phrase καὶ οὕτως, one's interpretation of Rom 11: 26a depends on how one understands the relationship between vv. 25 and 26b. See Schnabel, “Israel, The People of God, and the Nations,” *JETS* 45 (2002): 56.

In chapter 3 of this dissertation, we have conducted a thorough study of the usage and meanings of the phrase “all Israel” in the Old Testament and early Jewish literature. In this section, we apply the result of our study to the interpretation of Romans 11:26 concerning the salvation of all Israel. We will interact with scholarly views on exegetical issues in Romans 11:26-32. There will be more discussion on theological arguments concerning the salvation of all Israel and the interpretation of the phrase “all Israel” in the next chapter.

Christoph Plag rightly argues that “all Israel” is an idiom, which occurs almost exclusively in historical and apocalyptic texts. To the latter, he assigns the *Testament of Benjamin* 10:11 and *Mishnah Sanhedrin* 10:1.⁸⁸ In the Old Testament, the phrase “all Israel” refers to Israel as a covenant people of God (Deut 1:1; 27:9; 29:1-15; Josh 23:2, 24:18; 1 Chr 16:1-3; 28:8; 2 Chr 7:6; 7:8; Dan 9:7, 11; Ezra 6:17; 8:35; Neh 12:47; Mal 4:4). In some instances, it refers to the people as a whole; in another instances, it refers to a group of people who are the representatives of the whole (1 Kgs 8:62, 65; 18:19; 1 Chr 15:25; 2 Chr 10:16). After the exile, the returned community is often called “all Israel.” This is especially so when the context is religious or covenantal in nature (Neh 12:47; Ezra 6:17; 8:35; 10:5, 8; Mal 4:4).

In early Jewish literature, the phrase “all Israel” continues to carry a covenantal meaning. It refers to all the faithful Israelites. When the context describes events in the *eschaton*, the phrase “all Israel” is always used in a diachronic sense, referring to a totality of the elect Israel in all generations (*T. Benj.* 10:11; *m. Sanh.* 10:1; 4Q 169 iii:3;

⁸⁸Christoph Plag, *Israels Wege zum Heil: Eine Untersuchung zu Römer 9 bis 11* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1969), 45-48.

T.Reub. 6:8). Those who are wicked and who rebel against God are not included in the community of all Israel (*m. Sanh.* 10:1ff.; 4Q 169 iii:3).

Therefore, “all Israel” is an idiom understood in the first century as referring to all the Israelites who have a covenant relationship with God. According to the Hebrew Scripture, God promised to rescue Israel from their enemies and give them eternal peace. The Messiah will be their shepherd. He will forgive their sins and set up a new covenant with them. Paul proclaims Jesus as the Messiah of the Jews and the Gentiles. Those who are in Jesus become the covenant people of God. Therefore, Paul can say confidently that all Israel, referring to the elect Israel, will be saved (Rom 11:26a).

In Romans 11, Paul warns the Gentile Christians not to be arrogant over the Jews, thinking that the Gentiles might have replaced the Jews in God’s election. The mystery Paul proclaims in Romans 11:26a is that even in the midst of the partial hardening of Israel, the promises of God to Israel will not fail. In the end, all the elect Israelites throughout the ages will be saved. Paul uses the phrase “all Israel” which was understood by first-century Jews as the faithful Israelites who trust in God even in the midst of suffering and persecution.⁸⁹ First-century Jews have the hope that all Israel will be saved in the end time. God will vindicate faithful Israel. The phrase “all Israel” is frequently used in a diachronic sense in apocalyptic Jewish literature.⁹⁰ In Romans 11:26a, Paul confirms this hope, but he applies “all Israel” to those who trust in God and his Messiah because only by the redemption of Jesus Christ can anyone be saved (Rom

⁸⁹This is the conclusion of the study of the use of meanings of the phrase “all Israel in the Old Testament and in early Jewish literature in chapter three of this dissertation.

⁹⁰Specific references can be found in chapter 3 of this dissertation.

3:22-26). The contradistinction of Israel and Gentiles in Romans 9-11 supports the interpretation of the phrase “all Israel” as the total elect of Israel throughout the ages rather than the total people of God, including Jews and Gentiles.⁹¹

In Romans, Paul argues that salvation comes by faith through Jesus Christ for both Jews and Gentiles (Rom 1:16; 3:21-22). In Paul’s theology, the redemption of the people in the previous covenant is also based upon the atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross (Rom 3:24-26). The promises to Abraham and David are fulfilled in Jesus (Rom 15:8; Gal 3:29). One also finds the fulfillment of the law in him (Rom 10:3). The author of the epistle of Hebrews declares that in the previous days, God has spoken to the fathers through the prophets; but in these last days, God has spoken through his Son (Heb 1:1-2). For Paul, believing in Jesus is believing in God. Rejecting the Son is rejecting the Father.

Dunn argues that the idiom “all Israel” refers to Israel as a whole. He quotes 1 Samuel 25:1; 1 Kings 12:1; 2 Chronicles 12:1; Daniel 9:11; *Jubilees* 50:9; *Testament of Levi* 17:5; *Testament of Joseph* 20:5; *Testament of Benjamin* 10:11; *Pseudo Philo* 22:1; 23:1; *Mishnah Sanhedrin* 10:1.⁹² Dunn has oversimplified the issue. He disregards those instances in Scripture in which “all Israel” refers to only a group of people (1 Kgs 8:62, 65; 18:19; 1 Chr 15:25; 2 Chr 10:16; 1 Macc 2:70; 9:20; 12:52; 12:52; *T. Jose.* 20:5). He also does not differentiate between the diachronic and synchronic meanings of the idiom.

Scott argues that in early Jewish literature, the phrase “all Israel” is used to stress either the (often idealized) present reality or the future hope. He contends that “as

⁹¹Schreiner, *Romans*, 615.

⁹² Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 681. He considers the meaning of the idiom “all Israel” well known enough and should not cause any confusion.

in the Old Testament, ‘all Israel’ does not denote each and every individual, but rather a collective whole or some subset of the whole.”⁹³ For Scott, the phrase “all Israel” recalls the twelve-tribe system of ancient Israel, and it does not include Gentiles. Thus, he insists that “all Israel” in Romans 11:26 must refer to ethnic Israelites because Paul says they are “enemies for the sake of the nations” and “beloved because of the fathers according to election” (Rom 11:28).⁹⁴

Scott’s arguments are faulty. First, even if the phrase “all Israel” refers to a twelve-tribe system, it does not mean that Gentiles are excluded. In the history of Israel, Gentiles are incorporated into the twelve tribes of Israel, for example, Rahab and her family (Joshua 2) and Ruth (Ruth). Even in the restored Israel in Ezekiel, the foreigners have a share in the inheritance (Ezek 47:21-23). Second, when Paul says, “If some how I will provoke my kinsmen to jealousy and save some of them” (Rom 11:14), he is certainly talking about salvation of individual Israelites. This should serve as a paradigm for salvation of all Israel in Romans 11:26. Third, the Israelites who are “enemies for the sake of the nations” in Romans 11:28 are not the “all Israel” of verse 26, but the hardened Israel of verse 25.

Scott is right when he states that “all Israel” does not necessary mean “all Israelites” (that is, each and every person in Israel), since in *mishnah Sanhedrin* 10:3, certain individuals are excluded from “all Israel.” Thus, he concludes that “all Israel” in Romans 11:26 should be understood as a collective whole or some subgroup of the

⁹³James M. Scott, “And Then All Israel Will Be Saved,” 515.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 514-19.

corporate entity.⁹⁵ “In sum, the presently hardened majority of the nation will be saved along with “all Israel” at the Parousia, which almost certainly includes the northern tribes, along with the rest of the worldwide Diaspora of Israel.”⁹⁶

Wagner also argues that “all Israel” in Romans 11: 26 includes both groups—“the elect,” which have already obtained what “Israel” sought, and the “rest,” that have been temporarily rendered insensible but whose future “fullness” and “acceptance” Paul anticipates.⁹⁷ However, in the Old Testament and in early Jewish literature, the phrase “all Israel” never applied to a total sum of obedient and disobedient people.⁹⁸

We should note that the term “Israel” is used very loosely in the Old Testament: Sometimes it refers to the people as a whole; other times it refers to a representative group of people. The prophets preached messages of judgment and salvation to the people of Israel. The faithful and obedient ones will be blessed. Those who repent and return to the Lord will be forgiven, but the unrepentant and rebellious ones will perish. There is no passage which indicates that “all Israel” or “Israel” is a summation of the obedient and rebellious ones and that they will all be blessed in the end. The emphasis of the phrase “all Israel” is not quantitative but qualitative. In most cases, it represents the covenant people of God; although there are instances when “all Israel” is

⁹⁵See Mark A. Elliott, *The Survivor of Israel: A Reconstruction of the Theology of Pre-Christian Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 526.

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, 514-19.

⁹⁷Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 278.

⁹⁸Detailed treatment of this topic can be found in the section on Context of Isaiah in chapter 2 and the study of the phrase “all Israel” in chapter 3 of this dissertation.

said to have rebelled against the Lord (Judg 8:27). They disobey God even though they have a covenant with him.

Furthermore, the phrase “all Israel” should mean all the elect of Israel in all generations rather than all the Israelites at the eschatological time.⁹⁹ This is supported by our study of the use of the phrase “all Israel” in the Old Testament and in the early Jewish literature. It is likely that the phrase “all Israel” is understood as all the elect Israel throughout the ages in Paul’s time.

Moreover, the fullness of the Gentiles does not include all the Gentiles at the eschatological time, but it refers either to the total number of Gentile believers throughout the ages, or it refers to the whole period when God’s blessings are bestowed upon the Gentiles. Therefore, the fullness of Israel does not necessarily mean every Israelite will be saved. Richard Bell understands “all Israel” in Romans 11:26a in a diachronic sense. He builds his argument on *Mishnah Sanhedrin* 10:1 and *Testament of Benjamin* 10:11, where “all Israel” is used diachronically.¹⁰⁰

William Osborne argues that only a remnant of Israel is saved now. The majority of Israel is hardened. When the fullness of the Gentile comes, there will be a mass turning of Jews to Jesus, and then the remnant of Israel will become the majority. Thus, the new representatives of Israel are “all Israel” in the same sense as “all Israel” in

⁹⁹Moo seems to be indecisive at this point. He writes, “We conclude that Paul is *probably* (italics mine) using the phrase ‘all Israel’ to denote the corporate entity of the nation of Israel as it exists at a particular point in time. We must note, however, that the interpretation that takes the phrase to refer to the elect among Israel throughout time deserves consideration as a serious alternative.” See Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 723.

¹⁰⁰Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 141.

the books of Chronicles. “When Israel re-identifies herself with the Davidic figure and accepts his offer of salvation, she becomes ‘all Israel.’”¹⁰¹

Romans 11:26b-27

καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται, καθὼς γέγραπται· ἥξει ἐκ Σιών ὁ
 ῥυόμενος, ἀποστρέψει ἀσεβείας ἀπὸ Ἰακώβ. καὶ αὕτη αὐτοῖς ἡ παρ’ ἐμοῦ
 διαθήκη, ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν.

And so all Israel will be saved; as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob; and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.’

Paul quotes Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9 as the Scriptural basis for the mystery he proclaims in Romans 11:25-26a. We have already made a detailed analysis of this passage in chapter 2 of this dissertation. Here, we will summarize our findings and interact with scholars on exegetical issues.

The promise of the Scriptures. Paul uses Isaiah 59:20, 21 and 27:9 to be the Scriptural basis for the salvation of Israel. By quoting these two texts, Paul emphasizes that the salvation of Israel is according to the promise of the Scripture. The deliverer Jesus Christ has already come to Zion to save those who repent of their sins. Jesus has made a new covenant with his people and has forgiven their sins. The message of salvation is now being preached from Jerusalem to the end of the world.

The forgiveness of sins. Paul uses Scriptures to support his claim that all Israel will be saved. These Scriptures prophesy not the second coming of Jesus, but his first coming, his redemptive work for the forgiveness of sin (Isa 27:9), the establishment of a new covenant, and the giving of the Spirit (Isa 59:21). Isaiah 27-28 also prophesize

¹⁰¹ William L. Osborne, “The Old Testament Background of Paul’s ‘All Israel’

about the hardening of Israel, and the incoming of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God.¹⁰²

Furthermore, the mention of banishing of ungodliness from Jacob and the forgiving of their sins in Romans 11:26, 27 is a clear continuation of the gospel message of justification by faith in Romans 4, where Paul explains that God justifies the ungodly (τὸν ἄσεβῃ), and covers the sins (αἱ ἁμαρτίαι) of those who have faith (Rom 4:5, 7).¹⁰³

Glancy notes that the word *sin* does not appear in chapters 9-11 in singular form thus suggesting that “sin” as a malignant power has no ultimate dominion in Israel. She argues that “in earlier chapters, the malignant power of sin cripples the human will; in chapters 9-11, God does.”¹⁰⁴ It is nothing surprising that the word “sin” does not appear in chapters 9-11 because Paul has dealt with the issue of sin in chapters 5-7. Sin is overcome by the substitutional atonement of Christ and the empowering of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8). Furthermore, Scripture never says God cripples human will. God always gives humans the freedom of choosing to obey or disobey (Gen 2:16).

The salvation from Zion. There is much debate over whether ὁ ρυόμενος (“the deliverer”) refers to God or to Christ.¹⁰⁵ In Isaiah, Yahweh is the deliverer (Isa 47:4;

in Romans 11:26a,” *Asian Journal of Theology* 2 (1988): 287.

¹⁰²Stott, *The Message of the Romans*, 304.

¹⁰³See also Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness*, 166, footnote 49.

¹⁰⁴Glancy, “Israel vs. Israel in Romans 11:25-32,” 198.

¹⁰⁵Some refer the redeemer to Christ in his second coming: Hofius, “Das Evangelium und Israel,” 318; Cranfield, *Epistle to the Romans*, 2: 578. Some refer to Christ in his first advent: Stott, *The Message of Romans*, 304; N. T. Wright, *Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993),

59:20). Paul probably refers to Jesus as the deliverer since he points to Jesus as one who delivers “τὸν ῥυόμενον” us from the wrath to come (1 Thess 1:10).¹⁰⁶ Moreover, in the whole context of Romans and in other Pauline epistles, Paul repeatedly teaches that Christ is the one who delivers us from sin and death (Rom 3:23-24; 5:18, 6:23; 7:24; 8:1-2; 1Cor 15:55-57). At any rate, it would be of little difference for Paul whether God or Christ is the deliverer since Christ is the sole representative and agent to accomplish God’s plan of salvation for humankind.¹⁰⁷ E. P. Sanders rightly comments, “it is incredible that Paul would think of God apart from Christ or vice versa.”¹⁰⁸

A multitude of scholars argue that the clause ἥξει ἐκ Σιὼν ὁ ῥυόμενος “out of Zion will come the deliverer” refers to Christ appearing in Jerusalem in his Parousia. Israel will come to faith through personal encounter with the exalted Christ.¹⁰⁹ Similarly, Davies writes, “Paul was not thinking in terms of what we normally call conversion from one religion to another but of the recognition by the Jews of the final or true form of their own religion.”¹¹⁰ I have rejected this view in chapter 2 of this dissertation by arguing that

250-51. Still others argue for Yahweh as the redeemer. See Stanley, “‘the Redeemer will come ἐκ Σιὼν,’” 137-38; Hübner, *Gottes Ich und Israel*, 118.

¹⁰⁶See also Dunn, *Romans 9-6*, 683; Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 728.

¹⁰⁷Shum, *Paul’s Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 244.

¹⁰⁸E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law and, the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 194.

¹⁰⁹Seifrid, *Christ, our Righteousness*, 166-67. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 682. See also Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 167; Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, 314; Jeremias, “Einige vorwiegend sprachliche Beobachtungen zu Römer 11:25-36,” 200; and Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2: 578.

¹¹⁰W. D. Davies, “Paul and the People of Israel,” *NTS* 16 (1969): 142.

Zion in the Old Testament always refers to the earthly Jerusalem (Pss 13:7; 19:3; 49:2; 52:7; 109:2; 127:5; 133:3; 134:21; Amos 1:2; Mica 4:2; Joel 4:16 [LXX]). Zion representing the heavenly Jerusalem is basically a New Testament concept (Gal 4:26; Heb 12:22; Rev 3:12; 21:2, 10).¹¹¹

Peter Stuhlmacher argues that there is a conscious exegetical allusion to Psalm 50:2 MT (49:2 LXX) in Romans 11:26. In this Psalm, however, God comes to judge his people and the wicked. Those who know God's law but do not do it will be judged (Ps 20:16-21). It is not likely that Psalm 50 can serve as a background for Romans 11:26, which is about the salvation of Israel, not the judgment of Israel. Stuhlmacher further argues that Paul has a number of texts in mind as he writes Romans 11:26-27. According to Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-2, Zion will be exalted in the end times. The Davidic Messiah will come to restore Israel. He will gather all Israel from all the regions of the world (4Qflor. 1:12f; 4Ezra 13:35, 39-49; and Isa 43:5ff).¹¹²

In Isaiah 2:2-4, Zion is exalted, and Gentiles come to learn the law of the Lord. "For out of Zion (ἐκ γὰρ Σιών) shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Isa 2:3). But this Zion is clearly identified as the earthly Jerusalem, where the temple is located, and the Gentiles say, "Come, let us go up (ἀναβῶμεν) to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob" to learn about the law of God (Isa 2:2-3). Furthermore, in Isaiah 2:5-11, God calls the house of Jacob to walk in the light of the Lord. God has rejected them because of their idolatrous behavior, and the

¹¹¹See pp. 73-75 in chapter 2 of this dissertation.

¹¹²Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans A Commentary*, 171.

judgment of God is coming. This passage can be used to call Jacob to repentance, but it cannot be used as a scriptural proof for the salvation of all Israel.

Barth comments that “They (the Jews) did not come to Zion, but the Savior from Zion came to them” (Rom 11:26).¹¹³ When the Jews believe in Jesus, they enter into the true “rest” of God. This is prefigured by the Israelites entering Canaan, the promised land (Heb 4:8-11). They are then returned from exile, and they will experience restoration.¹¹⁴ Nanos argues that when Paul writes ἤξει ἐκ Σιῶν ὁ ῥυόμενος, he implies that he is going to bring the good news of salvation from Jerusalem to the people in Rome.¹¹⁵

Jennifer Glancy contends that the reference to the second coming of the Messiah in Romans 11:26 is supported by 1 Thessalonians 1:10, where Paul says that Christians are waiting expectantly for God’s Son to come from the heaven.¹¹⁶ If this is what Paul means, why does he not write explicitly of the second coming of Jesus from the heavens as he does in 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:1, 8; and Philippians 3:20-21? Why does he have to quote the Isaiah texts to support his claims? Furthermore, in 1 Thessalonians 1:10, Paul says that Jesus is coming to deliver the Christians from the coming wrath. Paul makes not mention of Jesus coming to rescue the unbelieving Jews.

¹¹³Barth, *A Shorter Commentary on Romans*, 146.

¹¹⁴N. T. Wright sees Jesus as the renewed Israel. When Jews trust in Jesus, they are returned from exile, and they experience the forgiveness of sins and the full blessings of God. See N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 388.

¹¹⁵Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans*, 281.

¹¹⁶Glancy, “Israel vs. Israel in Romans 11:25-32,” 198.

The salvation of the Jews. How shall all Israel be saved? In Romans 11:25-27, Paul provides the way by which all Israel will be saved, that is, by the redeemer who will forgive their sins and make a covenant with them. This is accomplished by the redemptive work of Jesus Christ in his first coming. Jews and Gentiles will be saved in the same way, by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. John Murray observes rightly:

The elements of these quotations (Rom 11:26-27) specify for us what is involved in the salvation of Israel. These are redemption, the turning away from ungodliness, the sealing of covenant grace, and the taking away of sins, the kernel blessings of the gospel, and they are an index to what the salvation of Israel means. There is no suggestion of any privilege or status but that which is common to Jew and Gentile in the faith of Christ.¹¹⁷

Had Paul intended to convey the idea that the Jews will be saved at the second coming of Jesus, he would have stated it clearly as he does in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17, “For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God;” or in 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12: “He will slay the lawless one with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and his coming;” or in Philippians 3:20, 21, “But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself.”

At his second coming, Jesus gathers those who have already believed in him, not those who have not believed in him (1 Thess 4:16, 17). Furthermore, he will slay the lawless one with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing. Those who have believed in the lawless one will perish because they have refused to love the truth,

¹¹⁷John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), 99.

which could have saved them. Those who do not believe the truth but have pleasure in unrighteousness will be condemned (2 Thess 2:8-12). In all the above passages, in which Paul describes the events of the second coming of Christ, he makes no mention of the salvation of the Jews.

Paul sees the prophecy of Isaiah fulfilled in Jesus: the deliverer has come and accomplished redemption for the forgiveness of sin. Jews will also be saved by Christ who has already established a new covenant in his blood for the salvation of all people who come to him by faith (Heb 10:14). There is no need for another covenant.¹¹⁸ Moreover, the author of Hebrews makes it clear to the Jewish church that Christ's second coming is not to deal with sin but to save those (the redeemed) who are eagerly waiting for him (Heb 9:28). He also warns that those who ignore this gospel of salvation are not able to escape judgment because the gospel was declared by the Lord and witnessed by the Father through signs, wonders, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit (Heb 2:1-4).

James Scott argues that the five-time usage of σῶζω in Romans 9-11 (Rom 9:27-28; 10:9, 13; 11:14, 26) refers to the restoration of Israel, which is fulfilled in two phases: First, the gospel of Christ went out "from Jerusalem," and second, the deliverer appears "from Zion" at the Parousia. Then, Israel will be confronted with the gospel in a direct and compelling way by the resurrected Christ just as Paul had been on the road to Damascus.¹¹⁹ Scott writes, "When the deliverer comes from Zion, the hardened majority of Israel will hear the voice of the Lord directly and irresistibly, which will effect

¹¹⁸Cranfield argues that based on Rom 11:27 Christ will establish a covenant of grace with the Jews at the Parousia. See Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 579 n.1.

¹¹⁹See also Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness*, 166.

repentance and salvation.”¹²⁰ He argues that since the Gentile nations participate in Israel’s restoration, therefore, it is not a *Sonderweg* (a special way of salvation) for Israel. “Salvation is of and primarily for Israel.”¹²¹ Scott has neglected the universal scope in God’s plan of salvation. Abraham and Israel are being blessed so that they will also be channels of blessings to the nations.¹²² Furthermore, there is no indication in Scripture that the Jews will be saved by seeing the resurrected Christ. For Paul and the other apostles, seeing the resurrected Christ is a criterion for apostleship more than a mean of salvation (Acts 1:22; 1 Cor 15:5-9).

The five references of σωζω confirm our view that the Jews will be saved through the preaching of the gospel: A remnant of Israel will be saved (Rom 9:28); those who call upon Jesus will be saved (Rom 10:9, 11); Paul preached the gospel to the Gentiles to provoke the Jews in order to save some of them (Rom 11: 14); and in this way, all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26). “All Israel” refers to the elected Israelites who are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Paul writes, “God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew (προέγνω)” (Rom 11:20); and for those whom he foreknew (προέγνω), he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son; and for those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified” (Rom 8:29-30).

¹²⁰Scott, “And Then All Israel Will Be Saved,” 519-23. For similar arguments, see also Hofius, “All Israel Will Be Saved,” 37; and Glancy, “Israel vs. Israel in Romans 11:25-32,” 198.

¹²¹Ibid., 524.

¹²²Christopher J. H. Wright, *Knowing Jesus through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1992), 36-39.

This dissertation rejects the interpretation that the clause ἦξει ἐκ Σιών ὁ ῥυόμενος refers to Christ coming from heaven at Parousia. This writer argues that the phrase ἐκ Σιών in the Old Testament always refers Zion to the earthly Jerusalem. In the Psalms, Zion is sometimes described as glorious and beautiful. In these instances, the psalmists describe a glorious Jerusalem in the eschatological time. Zion is not referred to as heaven. For example, the psalmist describes God as coming in a consuming fire and swirling tempest to judge his people (Ps 50:2). The Lord calls upon the heavens *above* and the earth as witnesses to testify against his people (Ps 50:4, 6). God speaks not from heaven but from the earthly Zion where he judges his people. In Psalm 46, the psalmist speaks of God dwelling in his city, giving it gladness and security. This psalm does not mention Zion. In Psalm 48:1-2, Zion is described as God's holy mountain, beautiful in elevation, but the context clearly indicates that Zion is the glorified earthly Jerusalem and not heaven (Ps 48:2, 4, 9, 11-13).

In Galatians 4:21-31, Paul refers to the Jerusalem above as the free woman who is the mother of the saints (Gal 4: 26).¹²³ Later on, he refers to Sarah as the free woman whose son is to receive the inheritance (Gal 4:30). On the contrary, the earthly Jerusalem is the mother whose children are the slaves of the law (Gal 4:23-25). In this passage, Paul makes no mention of Zion, and the “Jerusalem above” (ἄνω Ἱερουσαλήμ) represents not heaven but the people of God. Hebrews 12:22-23 relates Mount Zion as the heavenly Jerusalem (Ἱερουσαλήμ ἐπουρανίῳ). However, it is commonly

¹²³In Isaiah, Zion is sometimes referred to as the people of God (Isa 33:14; 34:8; 49:14). It is also depicted as the mother of God's people (Isa 49:21).

recognized that the epistle to the Hebrews was written much later than the epistle to the Galatians.

Will all the Jews be saved by seeing the glorious Lord at his return in the same way as Paul who believed in Jesus when he saw the resurrected Christ?¹²⁴ If that is what Paul means in Romans 11:26, why he does not express in a straightforward manner? Can this way of salvation of the Jews be classified as a “mystery” in Paul’s terms?¹²⁵ If all the Jews are going to be saved in the end, then Paul’s sorrow for his kinsmen (Rom 9:2), his effort to provoke them to jealousy, and his zeal in saving some of them (Rom 11:11, 14) will appear meaningless.¹²⁶ The interpretation that all the Jews will be saved at the end will not promote mission to the Jews. Rather, it will end up with what some think today that evangelism to the Jews should be prohibited.¹²⁷ According to this interpretation, the Jews will not enjoy God’s blessings until the very end. How will such an interpretation help the Gentile Christians not to become arrogant over the Jews? Mark Nanos comments, “As wonderful as this reading is (in its usual intentions), it simply fails to account for the purpose of this revelation.”¹²⁸

¹²⁴Seifrid argues that not all the Jews from all times will be saved. Only the remnant and the eschatological Israel will be saved, the former by hearing and accepting the gospel, the latter by seeing and believing the crucified and risen Christ. See Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness*, 166.

¹²⁵Paul always uses “mystery” as revelation that is hidden in the past but now is revealed by the command of God (Rom 16:25-26; Eph 3:5-6).

¹²⁶Räsänen, “Paul, God and Israel,” 188.

¹²⁷J. G. Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes Toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 239, 241.

¹²⁸Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans*, 257. See also Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, 249-51.

The Damascus experience is unique to Paul, who is called to be an apostle to the Gentiles. The majority of the Jews who came to faith in Jesus in Paul's time did not believe by seeing the risen Lord but believed by hearing the gospel. It is presumptuous to argue that the Jews will be saved because they will share in the experience of the Apostle Paul. Eckhard Schnabel sums up rightly:

Whatever our interpretation of Rom 11:26, whatever our understanding of OT promises for Israel, whatever our expectations for ethnic Israel for the eschaton may be, it seems hardly possible that Paul would entertain the possibility that the gospel he preaches—the ministry of reconciliation given to him by God (2 Cor 5:18) whose power is the message of the cross of Christ (1 Cor 1:18)—is valid only until the Parousia when suddenly ethnic affiliation becomes effective again, saving Jews (of all times, or only of that particular time) simply because they are Jews and are thus heirs of God's promise, notwithstanding their rejection of the Messiah and his saving death on the cross. Paul is utterly convinced that it is only faith in Jesus Christ that saves both Jews and Gentiles.¹²⁹

Rom 11:28

κατὰ μὲν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἐχθροὶ δι' ὑμᾶς, κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἐκλογὴν ἀγαπητοὶ διὰ τοὺς πατέρας·

As regards the gospel, they are enemies of God for your sake; but as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers.

The word ἐχθροί “enemies” should be taken passively to indicate that the Jews were the object of divine hostility.¹³⁰ They were the enemies of the gospel not only because they rejected the gospel themselves, but they also hindered the preaching of the message of salvation.¹³¹ Paul specifically requested prayer from the Roman Christians so

¹²⁹Schnabel, “Israel, the People of God, and the Nations,” 56.

¹³⁰Mounce, *Romans*, 225.

¹³¹Cranfield argues that the τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in Rom 11:28 refers not to the content or message of the gospel but to the progress of the gospel in the world. See Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 579.

that he might be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea (Rom 15:31). He mentioned to the Corinthians concerning his persecution by the Jews (2 Cor 11:24). The book of Acts records numerous instances of Jewish opposition to Paul's mission: Acts 9:23; 13:45, 50; 14:2, 19; 17:5; 18:12; 20:3; 23:12, 27; and 26:21). When the Jews rejected the gospel, the apostles turned to the Gentiles. This was also predestined by God (Acts 13:46-49). Furthermore, Paul says that we were enemies of God before we were reconciled to God through Christ (Rom 5:10; Col 1:21). From this, it can be inferred that all who are not in Christ are enemies of God.

The phrase δι' ὑμᾶς in Romans 11:28a should be understood as "for your sake," while the phrase διὰ τοὺς πατέρας should be translated as "for the reason of the fathers." Cranfield argues that "for the sake of" means "to the advantage of."¹³² How can the Jews be the enemies of God for the sake of the Gentiles? Paul expresses a similar logic in Romans 9: 22-23:

εἰ δὲ θέλων ὁ θεὸς ἐνδείξασθαι τὴν ὀργὴν καὶ γνωρίσαι τὸ δυνατόν αὐτοῦ ἤνεγκεν ἐν πολλῇ μακροθυμίᾳ σκεύη ὀργῆς κατηρτισμένα εἰς ἀπώλειαν, καὶ ἵνα γνωρίσῃ τὸν πλοῦτον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ σκεύη ἐλέους ἃ προητοίμασεν εἰς δόξαν; Οὓς καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς οὐ μόνον ἐξ Ἰουδαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ἐθνῶν.

What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the vessels of wrath made for destruction, *in order to* make known the riches of his glory for the vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory, even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?

God shows his wrath and power upon the vessels of destruction in order to make known the riches of his glory to the vessels of mercy. God does not take pleasure in the destruction of humankind. The purpose of his judgment upon the rebellious is for the

¹³²Ibid., 580.

salvation of those who believe. In the same logic, Paul writes, “Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you too will be cut off” (Rom 11:22). Therefore, God shows his anger upon the rebellious people (Jews in this case) in order that others (Gentiles in this case) may become obedient to receive God’s blessings.

But the Jews are still the beloved of God because of their forefathers. God brought the Israelites out of Egypt and gave them the land of Canaan because of his love for their fathers (Deut 4:37-38; 7:6-9). Moses beseeched the Israelites to obey God’s commandments so that they might go well and have long life. The enjoyment of the blessings is contingent upon their obedience to the covenant. They are still called the beloved of God because of their fathers, and God continues to keep them as a people and extend his calling to them, like a father hoping his prodigal son to return (Luke 15:11-32).

Romans 11:29

ἀμεταμέλητα γὰρ τὰ χαρίσματα καὶ ἡ κλήσις τοῦ θεοῦ.
For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable.

The gifts (τὰ χαρίσματα) refer to the privileges the Jews have as a people of God: sonship, glory, covenants, law, worship, promises, patriarchs, and Christ (Rom 9:4-5).¹³³ Dunn notes correctly that the use of the word κλήσις “call” recalls the main thrust of the argument in Romans 9:6-29.¹³⁴ In this passage, Paul says that the word of God had

¹³³Dunn, 694.

¹³⁴Ibid., 694. Dunn states that God’s calling is defined in terms of promise and election. It is not determined by work or by the ethnic and cultic boundaries of the people.

not failed because not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel and not all the children of flesh are children of God. Jacob was chosen over Esau even before they were born in order to show that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of his call (Rom 9:10-11). Thus, God's call is not according to work or flesh but according to his sovereign will so that no one can boast. God continually extends his calling to both Jews and Gentiles (Rom 9:22-24).

This calling of God for the Jewish people begins in the calling of their forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (Gen 12, 17, 26, 32, 35). Israel's calling and election are sealed by the covenant at Sinai (Exod 20; Deut 29). They are called to be God's people and to become a kingdom of priests for the nations (Exod 19:5-6). Therefore, they have the oracles of God, and even Christ comes through them (Rom 3:2; 9:5). They have the privilege of hearing the messages of the prophets and finally encountering Christ. However, God's calling to them is not for them to indulge in pride or selfish gratification but for them to be an instrument of blessings for the nations and for glory of God.

The word ἀμεταμέλητα means "with no regret." It occurs only one other time in the New Testament. Paul says that a sorrowful repentance leads to salvation that brings no regret (2 Cor 7:10). Even though Israel has been rebellious towards God and falls short of his calling, God does not regret his calling of Israel, and he continually extends his calling to them. This calling is administered by the preaching of the gospel (Rom 10:8-16). Even though Israel has not responded to the call, God continues to hold out his hands to this rebellious people (Rom 10:21). This is how God shows his love and kindness to Israel for the sake of their forefathers.

God's promises to Israel are fulfilled in Christ (Rom 15:8). When Israel comes to faith in Christ, they will enjoy all the blessings God has promised them: calling, sonship, glory, redemption, forgiveness of sin, God's will, his truth, the gospel of salvation, the Holy Spirit, and eternal inheritance (Eph 1:3-14).

Romans 11: 30-31

ὥσπερ γὰρ ὑμεῖς ποτε ἠπειθήσατε τῷ θεῷ, νῦν δὲ ἡλεήθητε τῇ τούτων ἀπειθείᾳ, οὕτως καὶ οὗτοι νῦν ἠπειθήσαν τῷ ὑμετέρῳ ἐλέει, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ [νῦν] ἐλεηθῶσιν συνέκλεισεν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τοὺς πάντας εἰς ἀπειθειαν, ἵνα τοὺς πάντας ἐλεήσῃ.

Just as you were once disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, so they have now been disobedient in order that because of the mercy shown to you they also may receive mercy. For God has consigned all men to disobedience, that he may have mercy upon all.

In these two verses, Paul argues with a simple logic: disobedience leads to mercy:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 30: Then, you (Gentiles) disobeyed God. | But now, you have received mercy because of their disobedience. |
| 31: Now, they (Jews) have disobeyed God. | (Now), they also may receive mercy because of the mercy shown to you. |

The Gentiles were disobedient before, but they now receive mercy. How much more is this true for the Jews who are the beloved of God? Even though they are disobedient now, they will receive mercy. How will they receive mercy? They will receive mercy in the same way as the Gentiles do, by believing in the gospel. Paul has not provided another way of salvation for the Jews.

There is a textual variant in verse 31b. The word νῦν ("now") is present in some manuscripts, such as \aleph , B, D^{gr*}, but absent in others, such as p⁴⁶, A, D^{b,c}, G. Since, νῦν is absent in a preponderance of early and diverse witnesses, the shorter reading is

preferred.¹³⁵ In the logical argument of Paul we outlined above, there is an awkwardness in the sense of chronology in the second line. A more chronologically smooth argument will be as follows:

<i>Then</i> , you (Gentiles) disobeyed God.	<i>Now</i> , you receive mercy because of their disobedience.
<i>Now</i> , Jews disobey God.	<i>(Future)</i> They <i>will also receive</i> mercy because of the mercy shown to you.

However, Paul shows no indication in Romans 11 that the Jews will only receive mercy in the future. Rather, Paul emphasizes that if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted into the olive tree again (Rom 11:23). Paul labored as an apostle in order that he might save some Jews (Rom 11:13-14). He also says in 2 Corinthians 3:16 that whenever a man turns to the Lord the veil is removed.¹³⁶ Furthermore, Paul uses a subjunctive verb ἐλεηθῶσιν (“they may receive mercy”) instead of a future tense verb ἐλεηθήσονται (“they will receive mercy”) (Matt 5:7). This shows that the Jews can receive mercy any time they turn to the Lord. The scribe who amended the text understood that Jews could receive mercy now, not sometime in the distant future. Therefore, he added the word νῦν to make sure that Paul would not be misread.

Barth rightly urges that “Christians must not postpone to the last day this attitude to the Jewish questions, but that now, today, they are responsible for the Jews’

¹³⁵Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 465. Seifrid, on the other hand, argues that νῦν should be retained as the *lectio difficilior*, expressing both the finality of the present hour and the simultaneity of sin and grace. See Seifrid, *Christ, our Righteousness*, 167.

¹³⁶Räisänen, “Paul, God, and Israel,” 188.

obtaining mercy through the mercy bestowed on them.”¹³⁷ The two phrases τῇ τούτων ἀπειθείᾳ and τῷ ὑμετέρῳ ἐλέει are parallel to each other, and function causally.¹³⁸ Salvation comes to the Gentiles because of the disobedience of the Jews, who in turn receive mercy because of the mercy shown to the Gentiles.

Romans 11:32

συνέκλεισεν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τοὺς πάντας εἰς ἀπείθειαν, ἵνα τοὺς πάντας ἐλεήσει.

For God has consigned all men to disobedience, that he may have mercy upon all.

Again, a subjunctive verb ἐλεήσει (“he may have mercy”) rather than a future tense verb is used. In this verse, Paul expresses the idea that all human beings are disobedient but God is ready to show mercy whenever one repents. When a person turns to Christ, God has mercy on him immediately. God does not wait until some time in the future to show mercy to him. In view of the context of Romans 9-11, in which Paul deals with the issue of the salvation of Jews and Gentiles, it is best to understand the phrase τοὺς πάντας as referring to all human groups, Jews and Gentiles, and not to every individual.¹³⁹ The ἵνα clause expresses a purpose. God condemns the disobedience of all humankind in order that he may show mercy to them all. However, this does not imply a doctrine of universal salvation.¹⁴⁰ In Romans 11:32, Paul sums up the arguments of Romans 9-11 as well as his whole message of the salvation in the epistle of Romans.

¹³⁷Barth, *A Short Commentary on Romans*, 147.

¹³⁸Schreiner, *Romans*, 627.

¹³⁹Bruce, *The Letter of Paul to the Romans*, 211.

¹⁴⁰Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 103.

Conclusion: Salvation of Israel in Romans

Paul writes, “and so all Israel will be saved” (Rom 11:26a). In this chapter, I have argued that Paul’s view of the salvation of Israel expressed in Romans 11:26a is consistent with his message of the gospel in the whole epistle of Romans. The Jews are saved in the same way as the Gentiles, by having faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 1:16). Although there is a partial hardening of Israel, there is always a chosen remnant of Israelites who believe in the Messiah Jesus. The phrase “all Israel” in Romans 11:26a refers to all the elect Israelites throughout the ages. This does not eliminate the possibility of a massive turning of Jews to Jesus before the end time. Jews and Gentiles are coming into the kingdom of God in the same way and at the same time.¹⁴¹ At the appointed time, when the fullness of the Gentiles comes, so also will the fullness of Israel.

By redefining Israel, Paul argues that God has not forsaken Israel. True Israel is the one who has faith in God. Faith in Christ is equivalent to faith in God because the Father has testified for the Son through the words, the deeds and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul redefines Israel as the elect Israel in Romans 11:26a, as he does in Romans 9:6. In a similar way, Jesus called Nathaniel the true Israelite (John 1:46).

The mystery Paul proclaims in Romans 11:25 is that God has not forsaken Israel. Even in midst of the partial hardening of Israel, all the chosen Israelites will be saved. The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable (Rom 11:29). Those whom he foreknew he predestined; those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified (Rom 8:29-30). The

¹⁴¹Wright comments correctly that “it would be intolerable to imagine a church at any period which was simply a gentile phenomenon, just as it would ultimately impugn

way to facilitate the fullness of Israel is to proclaim the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. God's blessings upon the Gentiles will provoke more Jews coming to faith in Jesus Christ.

This interpretation gives a coherent understanding of Paul's message in the epistle of Romans. This understanding is consistent with the message of the gospel in the Pauline corpus and in the rest of the New Testament. This interpretation does not require another way of salvation for the Jews that the New Testament has not promised. Jews do not need to wait until the end time to be saved. They can be saved any time they turn to Jesus. This interpretation does not require the promises of God to Israel to be fulfilled only by the miraculous returning of Christ. Paul affirms that all the promises of God have been confirmed in Christ, not to be fulfilled in the future (Rom 15:8; 2 Cor 1:20). Lastly, this interpretation does not demand the presence of an Israel state as a representation of the kingdom of God on earth. God can do miraculous things at his will but our exegesis does not demand God's promises to be fulfilled only by miracles.

the covenant justice of God if his family consisted only of Jews" (*The Climax of the Covenant*, 249).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, APPLICATION, AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we studied the biblical and theological context of the epistle of Romans. With a careful exegesis of Romans 11:25-32, we have drawn our conclusion on the meaning of Paul's climactic statement, "and so all Israel will be saved." We argue that "all Israel" here refers to the elect of Israel throughout the ages.

In this chapter, we will evaluate the various views of the salvation of Israel and different interpretations of the phrase "all Israel" that we brought up in chapter 1 but were not able to interact fully in chapter 4. Then, we will apply the result of our research to the topic of mission to the Jews. Finally, a conclusion will sum up the whole dissertation.

Different Views of Salvation of Israel

In this section, we want to evaluate the various views of salvation of Israel we mentioned in chapter one. In general, the various interpretations of the meaning of the phrase "all Israel" in Romans 11:26 can be grouped under three categories: (1) "All Israel" means all the physical descendants of Jacob; (2) "all Israel" means all the elected Israelites; and (3) "all Israel" means both Jewish and Gentile believers. We have argued for the second view. In the following sections, we will critique the first and third views and defend the second view.

“All Israel” as All the Physical Descendants of Israel

There are two groups of scholars advocating salvation of ethnic Israel.

1. Those who promote the two-covenant theology. All Jews will be saved based on the covenant God has with Israel in the Old Testament. They are saved apart from Jesus.
2. Those who argue for the salvation of all Jews at the second coming of Christ. Jews will accept Christ as the Messiah at his glorious second coming. They are saved in a similar manner as the apostle Paul.¹

Both of these views argue for the validity, permanence, and literal interpretation of the old covenants: the Abrahamic covenant, the Sinai covenant, and the Davidic covenant.² Some clarification should be made to the nomenclature of the covenant people of God. To say the salvation of the Jews is not comprehensive enough since the name “Jews” refers to the people of Israel from the time of the exilic period. Those who returned to the land of Palestine were predominantly from the tribe of Judah, but members from other tribes were also incorporated into the community of the returnees. The identities of the other tribes, however, were not completely lost in New Testament times since Paul identified himself to be from the tribe of Benjamin (Rom 11:1; Phil 3:5), and Anna, the prophetess, was from the tribe of Asher (Luke 2:36).

When one talks about the people of Israel, one usually refers to the physical descendants of the patriarch Jacob. Yet, this definition is not absolute. If one refers to the

¹Waters also argues that in the post-Parousia judgment, apostate Jews and faithful Jews can call on the name of the Lord and be saved. See Kenneth Lee Waters, Sr., “The Salvation of Israel in Paul’s Thought and Experience: a Post-Radical Literary Investigation of Romans 9-11 and Its Context” (Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1999), 118.

²Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The Church and the Last Things*, vol. 3 of *Great Doctrines of the Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 108.

people of Israel as a covenant people of God, one would normally understand that this people of God includes the patriarch himself and his forefathers Isaac and Abraham. But, most Jewish people would not include all the descendants of Abraham, such as the Ishmaelites, the Midianites, and the Edomites as the people of God.³ Furthermore, in the history of Israel, Gentiles were incorporated into the people of Israel even though they were not physical descendants of Jacob.⁴ The identification of the people of God by the criterion of physical descendants is hardly a consistent one.

We will evaluate the two-covenant theology later on in this chapter. Scholars who argue for the second view usually contend that when the full number of Gentiles has entered God's kingdom, the partial hardening of Israel will be taken away. Israel in its entirety will be redeemed from sin by Christ who appears from Zion.⁵ In this interpretation the phrase καὶ οὕτως in Romans 11:26a is usually taken in the temporal sense, meaning "and then." These scholars also understand the clause ἥξει ἐκ Σιὼν ὁ ρυόμενος ("The deliverer will come out of Zion") as Jesus coming from heaven in his second advent.

We have argued in chapter 4 that the word οὕτως is not used in a temporal sense in the Pauline corpus. The phrase καὶ οὕτως is better understood in a logical sense.

³W. S. Campbell, "Israel," in *NDBT*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander, Brian S. Rosner, D. A. Carson, and Graeme Goldsworthy (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000), 442.

⁴Peter Theodore Nash, "Ruth: An Exercise in Israelite Political Correctness or a Call to Proper Conversion?" in *The Pitcher Is Broken: Memorial Essays for Gösta W. Ahlström*, ed. Steven W. Holloway and Lowell K. Handy, JSOT Supplement Series 190 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 353.

⁵Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans a Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), 172-73.

Furthermore, the phrase ἐκ Σιών in LXX refers to the earthly Jerusalem rather than heaven. It seems that Zion referring to the heavenly Jerusalem is only a New Testament concept (Heb 12:22).⁶ The driving force of the advocacy of the salvation of all ethnic Israel is a premillennial eschatology, which argues that the promises to Israel in the Old Testament are still waiting to be fulfilled literally in the future. Such promises may include the restoration of the Davidic kingdom (Jer 33:14-26), the building of the Ezekiel temple, the reinstallation of temple sacrifices (Ezekiel 40-48), and the returning of the Jews to Palestine, or the transformation of the world to the perfect harmonious state of the Garden of Eden (Isa 11:6-9).⁷

The weakness of the view that all physical Israel will be saved at Christ's return is that it is not driven by a grammatical exegesis of the Romans 11:25-32 with an interpretation that is coherent with Paul's view of salvation of Israel in the epistle of Romans and in the other Pauline epistles. Rather, this interpretation attempts to fit the teaching of Romans 11:25-32, into an eschatology based on a literal interpretation of the promises in the Old Testament.⁸

⁶4 Ezra describes a Zion that will be revealed in the last days. It is a heavenly city built not by human hand (4 Ezra 13:36). See also David E. Aune with Eric Stewart, "From the Idealized Past to the Imaginary Future: Eschatological Restoration in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature," in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, ed. James M. Scott (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 163-64.

⁷James O. Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), 2:463, 487-88.

⁸Robert G. Clouse writes, "Dispensationalism forms its eschatology by a literal interpretation of the Old Testament and then fits the New Testament into it. A nondispensational eschatology forms its theology from the explicit teaching of the New Testament." See Robert Clouse, ed., *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1977), 27.

Moreover, those who argue that the New Testament teaches the salvation of a literal Israel usually anchor their arguments upon their interpretation of Romans 11:16 and 26, which are very controversial.⁹ The New Testament does not state elsewhere that Israel as a nation will turn to Christ at his return. If one sees that the promise of an eternal kingdom to David has been fulfilled in Christ, the Son of David (2 Sam 7:16; Luke 1:30-33), then one does not need to wait for a nation of ethnic Israel as a representation of the kingdom of God on earth.

The interpretation that all ethnic Israel will be saved is often based on the theological presupposition that Israelites will enjoy all of God's promised blessings because they are God's chosen people.¹⁰ This can be seen in the following arguments of Reidar Hvalvik concerning the meaning of the "fullness of Israel" (Rom 11:12).

When the 'fullness of the Gentiles' (τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν) means the full number of the elect among the nations, 'all Israel' refers to the people as a whole . . . Here we find what we could call the prerogative of the Jews (cf. 1.16): Israel is – as a people – elected by God, and have as such a promise of salvation for the people as a whole.¹¹

The above argument is not based on an exegesis of the text but on one's theological presupposition. Scripture does not endorse a salvation without a requirement of faith and repentance during life on earth. The prerogative of the Jews is that God has

⁹Ibid., 27-29.

¹⁰E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 196. See also Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, ed. and trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 313; Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer*, Meyers Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955), 355.

¹¹Reidar Hvalvik, "A Sonderweg for Israel: a Critical Examination of a Current Interpretation of Romans 11: 25-27," *JSNT* 38 (1990): 87-107.

promised to bless Abraham and his descendants because Abraham trusted in God.

However, Abraham's descendants must also exercise the faith of Abraham in order to be blessed. Abraham and Israel are elected by faith (Gen 12:1-3; 15:6-7; 32:22-32), so will be their descendants.

Finally, the argument for the salvation of every Israelite ignores Paul's teaching of the future of the Jews elsewhere. Paul declares that those who do not repent will store up for themselves the wrath of God in the judgment day (Rom 2:4-11). Not all the children of Israel are children of God (Rom 9:6-8). Paul calls those Jews who demand the observation of the Torah and circumcision as requirements for salvation as "evil workers" (Phil 3:2) and as false brothers (Gal 2:4). Paul has harsh words for the Jews who killed Jesus and persecuted the church that they have filled up the full measures of their sins and that the wrath of God has come on them to the end (1 Thess 2:14-16). Schreiner argues that in saying "wrath has come upon them to the end," Paul was not anticipating the destruction of Jerusalem at AD 70, but "the language fits with a threat of eternal destruction, a judgment that never ends."¹²

If all the Jews will be saved at the end, there is no need to preach the gospel to the Jews. Yet, throughout the New Testament, beginning with the preaching of Jesus, the gospel was proclaimed first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles (Matt 10:6; 15:24; Acts 1:8; 13:46-49; Gal 2:7-8). If Paul thinks that all Jews will be saved in the end, why should he have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in his heart and even wish to be accursed and cut off from Christ for the salvation of his kinsmen (Rom 9:1-3)? Furthermore, if Paul

¹²Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God's Glory in Christ, a Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001), 472-74.

conveys to the Jews that they will be saved at the end, the Jews will not be provoked to jealousy by the salvation of the Gentiles (Rom 11:11); instead, a sense of superiority may germinate among them. Therefore, when Paul says, “and so all Israel will be saved” in Romans 11:26a, it is not likely that he means all the physical descendants of Israel will be saved at the end.

“All Israel” as All the People of God

Scholars holding this view argue that the phrase “all Israel” represents all the Jewish and Gentile believers throughout the ages. Calvin promotes this view. He builds his argument upon Galatians 6:15-16.¹³

οὔτε γὰρ περιτομή τί ἐστίν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις. καὶ ὅσοι τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν, εἰρήνη ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς καὶ ἔλεος καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ.

For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And as many as those who walk by this new rule, peace and mercy be upon them, even upon the Israel of God.

The last two phrases of verse 16 are in parallel to each other. Thus, “Israel” is identified with “them” (αὐτοὺς). They are those who walk in the newness of life. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, “If any one is in Christ, he is a new creation (καινὴ κτίσις).” Thus, Calvin argues that Paul identifies the church as the Israel of God. The church of Christ has become the new Israel. Hence, Calvin interprets “all Israel” in Romans 11:26a as the church, which includes all the Jewish and Gentile believers.¹⁴

¹³John Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*, trans. Ross Mackenzie, ed. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 255.

¹⁴Moo also support this reading of Gal 6:16. See Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 721.

In the context of Galatians, it is not likely that τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ (“the Israel of God”) refers to the ethnic Israel (Gal 6:16). First, the church at Galatia is a Gentile church. Second, Israel is not mentioned in the whole epistle of Galatians except in Galatians 6:16. Third, in this epistle, Paul argues against those who want to impose the Jewish law upon the Gentile Christians. Fourth, Paul uses very strong words against those false teachers who were probably Israelites: “let him be accursed” (Gal 1:8-9); “I wish those who unsettle you would mutilate themselves!” (Gal 5:12). Therefore, it is not likely that at the end of this letter Paul gives a blessing to the ethnic Israel. Calvin’s argument that τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ (“the Israel of God”) in Galatians 6:16 refers to the church is a viable interpretation.¹⁵

Karl Barth also argues that “all Israel” in Romans 11:26a is the church with the incorporation of the full number of Gentile and Jewish believers.¹⁶ Other modern interpreters who support this view include William Hendriksen, N. T. Wright, Jeremias Jeremias, P. E. Hughes, Eckhard J. Schnabel, and O. Palmer Robertson.¹⁷

¹⁵J. Christiaan Beker says affirmatively “that in the context of Galatians the meaning of the phrase ‘the Israel of God’ (6:16) can only refer to the church as the true Israel.” See J. Christiaan Beker, “Romans 9-11 in Context of the Early Church,” *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, Supplement 1 (1990): 51. See also Heikki Räisänen, “Paul, God, and Israel: Romans 9-11 in Recent Research,” in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism: Essays in Tribute to Howard Clark Kee*, ed. Jacob Neusner, Earnest S., Peder Borgen, and Richard Horsley (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 204, footnote 100. For more discussion on the interpretation of “the Israel of God” in Gal 6:16, see F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on Galatians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 273-74.

¹⁶Karl Barth, *A Shorter Commentary on Romans* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1959), 144-47.

¹⁷See P. E. Hughes, “Olive Tree of Romans XI,” *EvQ* 20(1948): 44-45; Joachim Jeremias, “Einige vorwiegend sprachliche Beobachtungen zu Römer 11:25-36,” in *Israelfrage*, ed. Lorenzo de Lorenzi (Rom: Abtei von St Paul vor den Mauern, 1977),

Scholars who oppose to this view charge that Paul cannot change the meaning of the term “Israel” in one verse.¹⁸ Since “Israel” refers to a hardened ethnic Israel in Romans 11:25, “all Israel” in Romans 11:26a cannot refer to the church. Wright defends that Paul consistently distinguishes between the two “Israels” as in Romans 2:25-29; 9:6; Philippians 3:2-11; and Galatians 6:16.¹⁹ Therefore, it is not unusual for Paul to change the meaning of “Israel” in one verse.

The strength of the view that “all Israel” refers to all the Jewish and Gentile believers through out the ages is that it is consistent with Paul’s emphasis in the epistle of Romans as well as in the whole Pauline corpus that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles in terms of salvation. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23). No one is righteous before God (Rom 3:10). A person can not be justified before God by the working of the law. All are saved by faith through Jesus Christ (Rom 1:16; Gal 3:27-28; Eph 2:13-18).

Another strength of this argument is Paul’s use of the olive tree imagery in Romans 11:16-24. In this case, “all Israel” is represented by the whole olive tree, which has its natural branches as well as the engrafted branches from the wild olive. The natural

199-200; William Hendriksen, *Exposition of Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 390-91; N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 249-50; Eckhard J. Schnabel, “Israel, The People of God, and the Nations,” *JETS* 45 (2002): 55-56; O. Palmer Robertson, *The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2000), 187.

¹⁸See Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 615; C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 1:577.

¹⁹Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, 250.

branches symbolize the Jewish believers, while the wild olive branches symbolize the Gentile believers. Thus, “all Israel” represented by the olive tree, constitutes all the people of God.²⁰

A weakness of this interpretation is that Romans 11 Paul argues for the salvation of Israel as an ethnic group in contradistinction to the Gentiles.²¹ It is not likely that at the climax of his arguments in which he proclaims the salvation of all Israel, he refers “all Israel” to the church rather than the people of Israel.²² Moo adds that in the context of Romans 11, Paul counters a tendency for Gentiles to claim for themselves exclusively the rights and titles of “God’s people.” For Paul to call the church “all Israel” in this context would be to fuel the fire of the Gentiles’ arrogance by giving them grounds to brag that they are the true Israel.²³

This difficulty, however, is not insurmountable. Paul does not argue for the salvation of all Israelites, but he contends that God has not rejected the people of Israel totally. Even at the present time, there is a remnant chosen by grace (Rom 11:5). Furthermore, there can be a great increase in the number of Jewish believers in the future. Thus, Paul warns the Gentiles that they should not think they are the exclusive heirs of God’s kingdom because God has not rejected Israel totally. In this reading, the elected

²⁰Bruce notes that Paul may be adapting a Jewish parable in which proselytes are pictured as branches from a wild olive grafted on the good olive tree of Israel. See Bruce, *Romans*, 206; R. A. Stewart, “Engrafting,” *EQ* 59 (1978): 8-22.

²¹David E. Holwerda, *Jesus & Israel: One Covenant or Two?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 169.

²²See Schreiner, *Romans*, 615.

²³Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 721.

Israelites are included in the “all Israel.” Nevertheless, a natural reading of Romans 11 favors the view that “all Israel” refers to the ethnic elect Israel rather than the total people of God.

Another weakness of interpreting “all Israel” as the total people of God is shown by our study of the use of the phrase “all Israel” in the Old Testament and early Jewish literature. The phrase “all Israel” represents the people who are faithful within a covenantal relationship with God. Both the term “Israel” and the phrase “all Israel” refer in general to the ethnic people of Israel although it is understood that Gentiles are incorporated into the people of Israel through proselytism. These Gentiles have become Israelites. It is worth noting that there is no mention or hint of the inclusion of Gentiles in the use of the phrase “all Israel” in early Jewish literature.²⁴ “All Israel” like “Israel” refers to the ethnic people of Israel although the phrase does not mean to include every Israelite.²⁵ This dissertation argues that “all Israel” refers to the elected Israelites, the total sum of those Israelites who have faith in God and Christ.

²⁴See also James M. Scott, “And then all Israel will be saved,” in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, ed. James M. Scott (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 516.

²⁵James Scott writes, “Although the term “all Israel” can be used to denote a representative selection from the full complement of the tribes, it is never used to refer specifically to all *individuals* (italics his) within the nation” (ibid., 507). See also Bruce, *Romans*, 209; John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 98; C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 2:577; Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1987), 2:255-56; Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, 300. Bell argues that on linguistic grounds, “παῖς Ἰσραὴλ means Israel as a whole but *not necessarily* (italics his) including every individual member,” but “on theological grounds, there are stronger reasons for believing *every* [italics his] Jew will be saved.” Bell seems to be unable to resolve the dichotomy between his exegesis and his theology. See Richard H. Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy: The Origin and Purpose of the Jealousy Motif in Romans*

Special Interpretations of Romans 11

Paul's gospel was offensive to many Jews because they saw it as a threat to the future and well being of Israel; however, Paul did not perceive it this way. For Paul, Christ is the confirmation of God's promises to Abraham (Rom 15:8). Through Christ, the covenantal blessings are now bestowed not only to the believing Jews but also to the believing Gentiles.²⁶ Paul does not regard Israel as rejected but only as temporarily hardened. Whenever they turn to Christ, they will be reaccepted (Rom 11:23).

Paul is inconsistent. J. Christiaan Beker argues that the faithfulness and righteousness of God and even the authentic validity of the gospel depend on the eschatological redemption of Israel, "for unless the protological election of Israel in the Old Testament is confirmed by the eschatological destiny of Israel at the time of the eschatological triumph of God, the gospel itself ceases to have authentic validity."²⁷ He considers Paul's argument in Romans 9-11 to be inconsistent. He argues that this is the only place in the Pauline letters where Paul is engaged in an ongoing experiment of thought rather than in the expression of a finalized thought. In his view, Paul contradicts himself when, on the one hand, Paul sees a complete hardening of Israel in Romans 9:22-23 and 11:7-10, and on the other hand, he states that all Israel will be saved in Romans 11:26. Beker has misread Paul in two ways. First, Paul does not see a complete hardening of Israel. Paul clearly states that Israel is partially hardened, not completely hardened

9-11, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament* 63 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1994), 138-39.

²⁶Campbell, "Israel," 444.

²⁷Beker, "Ro 9-11 in Context," 45.

(Rom 11:25). Second, the phrase “all Israel” does not necessary mean everyone in Israel. We have argued in the previous chapters that it is more convincing to understand the phrase “all Israel” as referring to the all elected Israelites than all the ethnic Israel. Paul is quite consistent in his message in Romans that some will be saved and some will not (Rom 2:6-11; 8:9-10). He clearly states that not all Israel in the flesh belongs to Israel, and not all descendants of Abraham in the flesh are children of God (Rom 9:6-8). Even in Romans 9:22-23, Paul does not state explicitly that the Jews are the vessel of wrath, but he makes it clear that the Jews are among those who are the vessels of mercy (Rom 9:24).

In Romans 11:7-10, Paul separates Israelites into two groups, the elect and the hardened; however, the hardened are not permanently hardened. Neither are they all hardened until the eschatological time. Paul expects that some will be saved any time when they believe Christ (Rom 11:14, 23, 31). If we understand Paul this way, there is no contradiction in Paul’s thought. For him, there is the elect Israel and the rebellious Israel, as the prophets proclaim (Isa 65:2, 9; Ezek 34:15-23). Furthermore, Paul always speaks with conviction and assurance (Gal 1:8-9; 2 Cor 1:19-20). There is no indication in his epistles that Paul ever engages in “ongoing experiment of thought.”

Deuteronomy 32 as background. Richard Bell argues that Deuteronomy 32 is the best Scriptural background to explain how Paul arrived at the *μυστήριον* of Romans 11:25-32. God uses the Gentiles to provoke Israel’s jealousy (Deut 32:21). Israel’s disobedience will lead to the salvation of the Gentiles. After Israel has been punished, God will show mercy to her again by destroying her enemies (Deut 32:43 LXX). Bell argues that, not a remnant, but Israel as a whole will be saved, because in Deuteronomy 32:36, “his people” is used in parallel with “his servants.” He also contends that Yahweh

cleansing the land of his people in Deuteronomy 32:43 is comparable to the Messiah removing the transgression from Jacob in Romans 11:27.²⁸

The weakness in Bell's arguments is that in Deuteronomy 32, the focus is the judgment of Israel in their disobedience while in Romans 11 the focus is the salvation of Israel when they have faith in Jesus (Rom 11:23). Moreover, in Deuteronomy 32, Moses rebukes the Israelites for their sin of idolatry (Deut 32:15-21) but this is not the charge Paul has against the Jews in the epistle of Romans (Rom 2:1-11, 17-24; 3:9-20; 10:1-3). Furthermore, if Deuteronomy 32 was the Scripture Paul had in mind when he wrote the "mystery" in Romans 11:25, why he did not quote Deuteronomy 32 instead of quoting the Isaiah passages as the Scriptural basis for the salvation of all Israel?

"All Israel" as the Elect Israel

By studying the context of Isaiah, Paul's quotations of the Old Testament, the use of the phrase "all Israel" in the Old Testament and in early Jewish literature, and a careful exegesis of Romans 11:25-32, we have argued that "all Israel" refers to the total elect of the Israelites throughout the ages. In Isaiah, there are the rebellious Israel and the elect Israel. Isaiah pronounces judgment to the rebellious Israelites and salvation to the elect Israel (Isa 65:2, 7, 9). In Romans, there is the hardened Israel and the remnant (Rom 11:7). As the gospel is proclaimed to Israel, there will be a large ingathering of Israelites turning to Jesus Christ in the end time. Eventually, all those who are elected in Israel will be saved. They will join with the believing Gentiles as one people of God, represented by the olive tree imagery of Romans 11.

²⁸Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 271-73.

This interpretation fits the context of Isaiah and the context of Romans, and it is coherent with Paul's view of the salvation of the Jews in his other epistles. Furthermore, it is also congruent with the message of salvation in the rest of the New Testament. "All Israel" is an idiom used in the Old Testament and in early Jewish literature representing the covenant people of God. It refers to the ethnic Israel who has a covenant relationship with God. In the Jewish apocalyptic literature, the phrase "all Israel" is often used in a diachronic sense. This is likely to be a common understanding of the phrase "all Israel" in Paul's time. It is the hope of the Jews that God will save them one day from their sins and sufferings. Paul argues in Romans that this hope is now fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He also envisages a massive coming in of Gentiles as well as Jews into the kingdom of God in the end time through the preaching of the gospel.

Objections to this view. Cranfield argues that if "all Israel" is simply the salvation of the elect remnants of Israel of all the generations, then the statement will be so obvious a truth that it will become an anticlimax.²⁹ In the beginning of Romans 11, Paul asks the question: "Has God rejected his people?" In Romans 11:26a, Paul proclaims, "And so all Israel will be saved." Regardless of how one understands the phrase "all Israel," Romans 11:26a is still the climax of Romans 9-11. Moreover, the interpretation of "all Israel" as the elect Israel affirms that God's calling will not be revoked (Rom 11:29). In Romans 9:6-7, Paul says that the word of God has not failed because not all Israel are Israel. In Romans 11, Paul poses the question, "Has God rejected his people? He answers, "God has not rejected his people whom he knew" (Rom

²⁹Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:576-77. Also Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 137.

11:1-2). Whom God foreknew, he will call. Whom he calls, he will justify. Whom he justifies, he will glorify (Rom 8:28, 29). Paul solves the dilemma of God's promise to Israel and Israel's disbelief by arguing that only the elect who believe will receive the promise. Furthermore, one cannot ignore the possibility that there will be a great multitude of Jews coming to faith in Jesus Christ in the future through the proclamation of the gospel. Then, the remnant of Israel will become the majority of Israel.³⁰

Another objection to interpreting "all Israel" as the elect Israel is that it is nothing of a mystery for the totality of the remnants of Israel to be saved. This objection assumes that "mystery" has to be something radically unusual or miraculous. For Paul, mystery is something that was hidden before and is now being revealed. The gospel is a mystery (Rom 16:25-26). The inclusion of Gentiles into the kingdom of God is a mystery (Eph 3:6). Therefore, the salvation of Israel in midst of their rebellion and the salvation of all those whom God has called belong also to the realm of mystery in Paul's definition. Besides, if there will be a large number of Jews turning to Christ in the future, this would constitute a mystery in light of their present hardening.

Some scholars emphasize that the salvation of Israel is the center or goal of salvation history.³¹ The calling of Abraham, however, is not only for the salvation of him and his descendants but also for the nations to be blessed through him (Gen 12:1-3). It is

³⁰William Osborne argues that when the fullness of the Gentiles comes in, then the remnant of Israel will become the majority. This new representatives of Israel are "all Israel" in the same sense as "all Israel" in the books of Chronicles, that is those who attach themselves to the Davidic house and to the worship of Yahweh. See William L. Osborne, "The Old Testament Background of Paul's 'All Israel' in Romans 11:26a," *Asian Journal of Theology* 2 (1988): 289-90.

³¹Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans, a Commentary*, 173.

wrong to look at God's covenant with Israel as the starting point of salvation history. We should see God's promises to Abraham and his covenant with Israel in light of God's will for the nations. Salvation by faith does not start with Abraham; it precedes him, as the author of the book of Hebrews commends the faith of the godly people in the ancient past (Heb 11:4-7). Paul also writes, "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'In you shall all the nations be blessed'" (Gal 3:7-8).

Christopher Wright rightly argues that it had been a 'mystery' all through the ages of Old Testament Israel as to how God could bring about for Abraham what he had promised him, namely, the blessings of all nations. God accomplishes this by narrowing down of his redemptive acts to the unique particularity of one single man, the Messiah Jesus, through whom God opens the way to salvation for all nations. "The great Old Testament hope that the nations would come to be part of Israel is then already being fulfilled through Jesus the Messiah."³²

While Paul acknowledges a special status of Israel in the salvation plan of God (Rom 3:3; 9:4-5), he is confronted with the dilemma that in his days the majority of the people of Israel rejected the gospel. Thus, he argues that not all Israel are Israel (Rom 9:6). He well understands that in the book of Isaiah, there are the chosen Israel (Isa 43: 1-13; 44: 21-22) and the Israel who bears God's judgment (Isa 30:1-17; 57:3-13; 59:1-15). Isaiah also prophesies that God will bring out his chosen people from Jacob and from Judah, but the rebellious people will be judged (Isa 65:8-12).

³²Christopher J. H. Wright, *Knowing Jesus Through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1992), 52-53.

W. S. Campbell argues that within the nation of Israel, God only selects some to carry out his purpose.³³ “Every Jew admitted this; Ishmael was a child of Abraham, but no Jew believed that the Arabs, his descendants, were within the covenant.”³⁴ According to the Old Testament, the children of faith come through the line of Isaac. He was born of Abraham by the promise of God, which Abraham received by faith. Hence, Paul can boldly say, “Not all those descended from Abraham are children of Abraham” (Rom 9:8).³⁵

The Two-Covenant Theology

Since the holocaust, Jews have demanded an end to Christian mission among them, and many Christians feel embarrassed to continue.³⁶ Some even argue that

³³Graham Harvey argues that the biblical literature does not display an existence of a tradition of a “true Israel,” which persisted through history as the pious minority of a rebellious people and who had the only valid claim to the name “Israel.” Rather, throughout the Hebrew Bible, “Israel” is used of the pious and the rebellious. Graham Harvey, *The True Israel: Uses of the Names Jew, Hebrew and Israel in Ancient Jewish and Early Christian Literature*, AGJU 35 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 187. See also James Richard Linville, *Israel in the Book of Kings: The Past as a Project of Social Identity*, JSOTSup 272 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 29; E. Ben Zvi, “Inclusion in and Exclusion from Israel as Conveyed by the Use of the Term ‘Israel’ in Post-Monarchic Biblical Texts,” in *The Pitcher Is Broken: Memorial Essays for Gösta W. Ahlström*, ed. E. W. Holloway and L. K. Handy, JSOTSup 190 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 95-149. It is true that in the biblical texts both the pious and the rebellious are addressed as Israel, but Harvey has not taken into account of the fact that throughout the Hebrew Bible the rebellious people are under the judgment of God. Blessings for Israel are always upon those who walk in God’s way, or those who return to God from their sinful ways.

³⁴Campbell, “Israel,” 442.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 442.

³⁶Krister Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967); *idem*, “Qumran and Supersessionism – and the Road Not Taken,” *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 19 (1998): 136.

evangelism to the Jews is an unacceptable form of anti-Semitism.³⁷ Consequently, some Christians develop a theology in an attempt to leave the Jews comfortably in their Judaism without the need to believe in Jesus to be saved.³⁸ This proposal is called the two-covenant theology. These scholars argue that God's covenant with Abraham was an "everlasting covenant" and is still in force. There are two ways of salvation: the Christian gospel is for the believing remnants and the Gentiles, while the historic Israel relies upon God's covenants with their fathers.³⁹ These scholars maintain that God gives the Torah to the Jews and Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.⁴⁰

Räsänen points out rightly that Paul's argument in Romans 11:11-12, 19, 28a, 31a makes no sense if the gospel about Jesus Christ was not meant to be proclaimed to the Jews. How could the "disobedience" of the Jews (Rom 11:31) become the chance for the salvation of the Gentiles? If the Jews were not supposed to believe in Jesus, why does Paul speak about their unbelief (Rom 11:20)? Many of Paul's argument in Romans would make little sense if the Jews were not suppose to believe in Jesus.⁴¹ The dilemma of the status of Israel is that with regard to the gospel, they are enemies to God; but with regard

³⁷John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Romans*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1994), 304.

³⁸Michael B. McGarry, *Christology after Auschwitz* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), 7-8.

³⁹E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 75.

⁴⁰Abraham J. Peck, ed., *Jews and Christians after the Holocaust* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982); and Peter von der Osten-Sacken, *Christian-Jewish Dialogue: Theological Foundations* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986).

⁴¹Räsänen, "Paul, God, and Israel," 189-90.

to election, they are beloved of God (Rom 11:28). Furthermore, “the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable” (Rom 11:29). Paul’s solution neither minimizes the problem by claiming that all Jews will be saved apart from Christ, nor by predicting that there will be another covenant to ensure their eventual salvation.⁴² Paul insists that Israel will be saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 1:16-17, 9:30-33; 10:9).

John Stott rightly rejects the promotion of two different ways of salvation for Jews and Gentiles because Paul insists upon one olive tree, to which Jewish and Gentile believers both belong (Romans 11). Paul emphasizes that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles in sin (Rom 3:9, 22) and in salvation (Rom 1:16, 17; 10:12).⁴³ Stott points out that the two-covenant theology has the disastrous effect of perpetuating the distinction between Jews and Gentiles, which Jesus Christ has abolished.⁴⁴

Furthermore, Scripture indicates that mere outward observance of the law is not sufficient to please God. The heart has to be right (Isa 57:3-5; Mic 6:6-8; Ps 69:30-31). People have to come before God with a humble and repentant heart, trusting in God and relying upon his grace (Isa 30:15; 57:15, 18). Scripture upholds both the calling of God and the obedience of people. The paradox is resolved in Jesus, who is both the Savior of Israel and the embodiment of Israel. Jesus has redeemed his people and fulfilled the covenant requirements.⁴⁵

⁴²Campbell, “Israel,” 444.

⁴³ Stott, *The Message of Romans*, 304-05.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 305.

⁴⁵S. Motyer, “Israel (Nation),” in *NDBT*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander, Brian S. Rosner, D. A. Carson, and Graeme Goldsworthy (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000), 584-86.

Even though Israel has inherited God's calling from their forefathers, it still takes faith and obedience to enter into a covenantal relationship with God. Thus, Paul says in Romans 1:16-17 that the gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, first for the Jew and then for the Gentile. The gospel was preached first to the Jews. Only when they rejected the gospel, then the apostles turned to the Gentiles (Acts 14:46). When the Jews reject the gospel, they reject eternal life, which is for those who believe (Acts 14:46-49). The idea that the gospel is for the Gentiles only and not for the Jews is foreign to the New Testament.

Evangelism to the Jews

Do Jews need the gospel? Some argue that they are already in covenant with God.⁴⁶ In 1987, the General Assembly of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approved a document concerning a new theological understanding of the relationship between Christians and the Jews. It states, "When speaking with Jews about matters of faith, we must acknowledge that Jews are already in a covenantal relationship with God."⁴⁷ Hann observes there is a tension between the document's affirmation that the Jews actually worship and serve God and its recognition of the Christian responsibility to bear witness

⁴⁶L. Gaston, "Paul and the Torah," in *Antisemitism and the Foundations of Christianity*, ed. A. T. Davies (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 66; J. G. Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes Toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 261-63.

⁴⁷PCUSA, *A Theological Understanding of the Relationship between Christians and Jews* (New York: Office of General Assembly, 1987), 10. See also Robert R. Hann, "Supersessionism, engraftment, and Jewish-Christian Dialogue: Reflections on the Presbyterian Statement of Jewish-Christian Relations," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 27 (1990): 329.

to all people, including the Jews. He also notices that universalism seems to be implied throughout the document.⁴⁸

Nowadays, there are those from the Jewish quarter as well as from the Christian quarter who oppose evangelism to the Jews. Their main argument is that Judaism is by itself a sufficient and valid religious system for the salvation of the Jews. Krister Stendahl states this bluntly: “The mystery is that the salvation of Israel is assured and hence none of their (Gentiles) business.”⁴⁹ If there is no evangelism to the Jews, how will the Jews be provoked to jealousy, which is supposed to lead them to faith and eventually to salvation (Rom 11:11-15)? Just blessings to Gentiles will not do it; only when the Jews know that the Gentiles are blessed because they trust in Jesus who is also the Messiah of Israel.

Salvation of Israel is to be brought about ultimately by the Messiah. This is like a gem hidden in the Hebrew Scripture and is revealed in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Block sees the messianic hope as a single line from Genesis to Isaiah.

But the messianic hope is a single line that begins in broadest terms with God’s promise of victory over the serpent through “the seed of the woman” (Gen. 3:15), then is narrowed successively to the seed of Abraham (Gen. 22:18), the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10), the stem of Jesse (Isa. 11:1), the house/dynasty of David (2 Sam. 7), and finally the suffering and slain servant of Yahweh (Isa. 53).⁵⁰

Furthermore, it was a prevalent hope in New Testament times that the restoration of Israel is to be brought about by the Messiah. This expectation was also

⁴⁸Hann, “Supersessionism, Engraftment, and Jewish-Christian Dialogue,” 329.

⁴⁹Stendahl, “Qumran and Supersessionism,” 141.

⁵⁰Daniel I. Block, “My Servant David: Ancient Israel’s Vision of the Messiah,” in *Israel’s Messiah in the Bible and The Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Richard S. Hess and M.

evident in the mind of Jesus' disciples (Acts 1:6; Matt 17:10-13). The New Testament makes clear that salvation brought about by Jesus is now available to both Jews and Gentiles (John 3:16; Acts 4:12; Rom 3:22). The privileges of Israel rest upon her being the receiver of the oracles of God (Rom 3:2). Even the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises belong to them (Rom 9:4), but Paul immediately adds that not all Israel are Israel (Rom 9:6). Only those who seek God's righteousness by faith will receive these promises (Rom 9:32). This righteousness of God is now manifested in Jesus Christ (Rom 3:21-22; 10:3).⁵¹

Furthermore, writing to a predominantly Jewish congregation, the author of the epistle to the Hebrews states explicitly, "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by the Son" (Heb 1:1-2). God has spoken to the Jewish people through Jesus Christ (Heb 1:1-2). Jesus has redeemed his people and fulfilled the law. As Paul argues, Christ is the Seed of Abraham (Gal 3:16), and through him all the promises and blessings of God are given to all who believe (Gal 3:29). After the first coming of Christ, Jews and Gentiles are on the same footing. Righteousness is received by faith through Jesus Christ. Since Jesus is the Messiah of the Jews, it would be the greatest anti-Semitism not to preach the gospel of Jesus to the Jews.⁵² Furthermore, the church would betray its evangelistic mandate if it withholds the gospel of salvation to the Jews.⁵³

Daniel Carroll R. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 56. For more discussion on the topic, see also John H. Sailhamer, "The Messiah and the Hebrew Bible," *JETS* 44 (2001): 5-23.

⁵¹J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letters of the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 298.

⁵²Wright rightly comments, "The irony of this is that the late twentieth century, in order to avoid anti-Semitism, has advocated a position (the non-evangelization of

Conclusion

In this dissertation, we have sought to find out the meaning of Paul's climactic statement in Romans 11:26, "and so all Israel will be saved." Paul quotes Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9 to support his claim. Hence, we approach the problem by first examining the meanings of the Isaiah passages in their own contexts and see how Paul uses these texts to support his statement in Romans 11:26. We have followed the footsteps of those scholars who argue that Paul reveres the Hebrew Scripture as the authoritative inspired word of God. He is truthful to the original meaning of the Scripture. At the same time, the revelation Paul has in Christ gives him new insight into the meaning of the Scripture.

Paul quotes Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9 to support his claim that all Israel will be saved. The central message of salvation in Isaiah is summarized in these two verses. Throughout the book of Isaiah, there are the rebellious Israel and the chosen Israel. The rebellious Israel will be judged and the chosen Israel will be blessed. The hope of Israel is that the deliverer will come to Zion. He will make a covenant with them and he will forgive their sins. It is on this ground that Paul proclaims that all Israel will be saved. The Messiah has come. Whoever believes in him will be saved.

Next, we studied the use of the phrase "all Israel" in the Old Testament and in early Jewish literature. We observed that the phrase "all Israel" is most often used to represent the covenant people of God, that is, those who have a covenant relationship with God. The rebellious people such as the idol worshippers, or those who only give

Jews) *which Paul regards precisely as anti-Semitic* [italics his]. The two-covenant position says precisely what Paul here forbids the church to say, namely that Christianity is for non-Jews." See Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, 253.

⁵³ Donald G. Bloesch, " 'All Israel Will Be Saved': Supersessionism and the Biblical Witness," *Interpretation* 43 (1989): 140-42.

God their lip services but disobey God's commandments in their everyday life are not included in this community of faith. Just as Jesus said, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt 7:21). Jesus specifically applied these words to the eschatological day (Matt 7: 22-23). Furthermore, he said, "Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity! There you will weep and gnash your teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves thrown out" (Luke 13:27-28).

The diachronic use of the phrase "all Israel" representing the covenant people of God throughout the ages is evident in early Judaic literature, especially when the context is eschatological. The phrase "all Israel" in the Old Testament as well as in early Jewish literature refers primarily to the ethnic Israel. It is not used for Gentiles, although in the Old Testament, Gentiles are included in the congregation of Israel. Furthermore, the phrase "all Israel" does not mean to include everyone in Israel. It only refers to those Israelites who have an active covenant relationship with God. Those Israelites who have fallen away from the faith of Yahweh are excluded.

We argue that Paul's use of the phrase "all Israel" in Romans 11:26 was influenced by the early Jewish apocalyptic literature, which was popular in his days. The context of Romans 11:26a is in the eschatological future. Paul applies this understanding of the phrase "all Israel" to his arguments in Romans. He warns the Gentile Christians not to become conceited over the Jews because God has not forsaken Israel. All whom God has called, he will redeem, and in the end, they will all be saved.

The redemption of "all Israel" is not apart from Christ, since in the epistle of Romans Paul argues that redemption comes through Christ only, both for the Jews and

for the Gentiles (Rom 1:16, 17). In fact, the whole world, not meaning everyone in it, is redeemed through Christ (Rom 3:23-25; Rom 5:12-21). This interpretation is supported by Paul's quotation of Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9. Paul sees the fulfillment of these prophecies in the first coming of Jesus who has established the New Covenant for the forgiveness of sin.

The salvation of "all Israel" is accomplished as individual Israelites throughout the ages turn to Christ in faith. They are provoked to do so when they see God's blessings upon the believing Gentiles. Throughout the epistle of Romans, Paul emphasizes that salvation is by faith through Jesus Christ (Rom 1:16, 17; 3:22-26; 10:9). The Jews are cut off because of their disbelief (Rom 11:20). They are grafted in when they believe (Rom 11:23). They receive God's mercy whenever they turn to Christ (Rom 11:31).⁵⁴

We also argue that Israelites come to faith in Christ in the same way as the Gentiles do, by hearing and believing in the gospel, and not by seeing Jesus at his second coming. We have argued that "Zion" in the Old Testament refers not to heaven but to the earthly Jerusalem. "Zion" representing the heavenly Jerusalem is a New Testament concept (Heb 12:22). Furthermore, the context of Romans 11:25-32 makes no mention of Jesus' second coming, and it makes no hint of Jews seeing Jesus and believe. If this was what Paul meant, he would have made it clear, as he describes Jesus' second coming vividly in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; and Philippians 3:20-21. In all these texts, Paul makes no mention of Jews believing in Jesus at his second coming.

⁵⁴Seifrid argues rightly that faith represents obedience to God, and unbelief is a refusal to "obey the gospel." See Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Justification*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 9 (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 133-39.

Some scholars argue that the salvation of Israel is at the heart of the message of Romans, and the “mystery” of Romans 11:25 is that all ethnic Israel will be saved at the Parousia. If the salvation of the ethnic Israel is such an important message, why does Paul write in this obscure manner in Romans 11:25-28, and why does he not mention this elsewhere?⁵⁵ On the other hand, Paul writes about the gospel in all of his letters because the gospel is the mystery of God, which Paul is commissioned to reveal and proclaim (Rom 16:25-27; Eph 3:6-7). Therefore, we argue that “all Israel” in Romans 11:26a refers to all the elect of Israel throughout the ages. They are saved by believing in Jesus Christ when they hear the gospel. This interpretation is coherent with the messages of Paul in the epistle of Romans and in the entire Pauline corpus.

We have treated the topic of the salvation of Israel in Romans logically, exegetically, and biblically. The greatest assurance for the Jews to have eternal life is to believe in Jesus Christ now. Why count on one’s salvation or a nation’s salvation upon the interpretation of one obscure verse, Romans 11:26, which scholars have disagreed upon its meaning throughout the centuries? In the end, will the Jews after the first advent of Christ, who have been faithful to Yahweh and the Torah, be granted the atoning benefits of Christ? This is a mystery that cannot be solved by logic and exegesis. Meanwhile, the best we can do is to believe in the Son so that we may have eternal life (1 John 5:13), and to take up the commission of the Messiah Jesus: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am

⁵⁵As Räisänen notes that this Romans 11:25-27 is a completely singular passage for the understanding of the salvation of the Jews at the second coming of Jesus. See Räisänen, “Paul, God, and Israel,” 191.

with you always, to the close of the age” (Matt 28:19-20). Israel is included among the nations, for Jesus said, “I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of man comes” (Matt 10:22).

Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit forever and ever! Amen!

הַנְּסִתָּרֶת לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהַנְּגִלָּת לָנוּ וְלְבָנֵינוּ עַד-עוֹלָם
לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-כָּל-דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת: ס
Deut 29:28

τὰ κρυπτὰ κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν τὰ δὲ φανερά ἡμῖν καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις ἡμῶν
εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ποιεῖν πάντα τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ νόμου τούτου (Deut 29:28 LXX)

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