

ROMANS 11:25-27 AND THE FUTURE OF ISRAEL IN PAUL'S THOUGHT

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Ethnic Israel is a dominant theme in Scripture, particularly as it pertains to the future. Paul divulges some key elements in his own Spirit-inspired thinking on this subject in Rom 11:25-27. He looks forward to a time of salvation for the Jewish people by divulging hitherto unrevealed details about their future, i.e., their salvation will follow the bringing in of a prescribed number of Gentiles. Currently beset by a partial spiritual hardening toward God, a significant group of Jews will experience a future repentance and salvation. This will come at some future point in the church age, perhaps as one of the series events that will compose Christ's second coming. Paul adduces proof of this salvation with two quotations from Isaiah. Through this significant passage God's future program for Israel becomes clearer than before.

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Significant contemporary interest surrounds the subject of the Jewish nation. Israel's prominent and permanent place throughout the Bible has been a focus of dispensational theology. A recognition of this prominence is one of the marks distinguishing that system from covenant theology that has often assumed that Israel's privileges and promises have been transferred to the church. The crux of the matter

¹After a successful pastorate in a midwestern city for a number of years, Michael Vanlaningham answered God's call to return to the classroom for further training in the study of God's Word. It is with great pleasure that the staff of *TMSJ* makes available in the following essay the fruit of some of his study.

is: Does Israel have a future? The future of Israel is a focal point from both secular and biblical perspectives, a subject that requires understanding for anyone attempting to discern present trends and their relationship to theological themes. Romans 11:25-27 is one of the key Scriptures that teach about this subject. It is worthy of the closest scrutiny in a quest for information on this vital subject.

The following discussion will examine the Romans passage to ascertain the concept of the future of Israel by investigating the hardening of Israel (v. 25a), the identity of "all Israel" (v. 26), the timing of Israel's salvation (v. 26), and the manner of the salvation's accomplishment (vv. 26b-27).

ROMANS 11:25 ` THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING ISRAEL'S SALVATION

An explanatory *gr* (*gar*, "for") links Rom 11:25 closely with 11:24 and the reasoning of the passage up to v. 25.² In 11:7-10, Paul has described the divine perspective regarding a hardening that has afflicted the non-elect of Israel, accounting for their rejection of the Messiah. In 11:11-24, Paul has argued that the hardening of Israel has given the Gentile world an opportunity to be recipients of blessings from the Messiah.

While the primary emphasis in this section is the relationship of the salvation of Gentiles and very few Jews, there are hints woven throughout it. Israel "has not stumbled so as to fall" (11:11), that Paul's ministry to the Gentiles would provoke the Jews to envy so that they would seek their own Messiah (11:14), that there would be a restoration of Israel that would be "life from the dead" (11:15), that there was the promise of a spiritual restoration of Jews because of the presence of some who had accepted their Messiah (11:16),³ and finally that the Jews could be grafted in once again if they did not persist in their unbelief (11:23).

The explanatory *gar* beginning v. 25 develops the hints of a possible future restoration of the Jews, and how this restoration fits with God's historical plan for the salvation of the Gentiles.

The phrase *o . . . ulv mw gnoen, delfo* (*ou . . . thel hymas agnoein, adelphoi*, "I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren," v. 25) occurs in other connections in Paul's letters to highlight what he is about to say and to ensure the full attention of his readers.

²Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988) 419.

³Scholars are divided on the identification of the "first-fruits" (11:16). Some view them as a reference to the patriarchs (Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972] 397; Morris, *Romans* 411-12), or to Christ (suggested, though not held by C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Book of Romans* [New York: Harper, 1957] 216). Either of these options is defensible; it seems preferable to see the first-fruits as a reference to the Jewish remnant of Paul's day (Barrett's preferred view [*Romans* 216]). Earlier in Chapter 11, Paul used himself as proof that God had not permanently cast off all of His people, and supports this contention with an appeal to 1 Kgs 19:18. Furthermore, *parx* (*h aparch*) is used by Paul in Rom 16:5 and 1 Cor 16:15 for the initial converts of his ministry in a particular area, suggesting that those first-fruits were viewed as a foreshadowing of a greater redemptive work of God in a geographical area (cf. Dan G. Johnson, "The Structural Meaning of Romans 11," *CBQ* 46 [1984]:98-99). The figures of the root and the branches complicate the interpretation of 11:16. While the first-fruits may be the remnant, Nils A. Dahl (*Studies in New Testament Theology for the Early Christian Mission* [Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977] 151) and C. E. B. Cranfield (*The Epistle to the Romans* [2 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979] 2:564) suggest that the metaphor of the root seems to refer to the patriarchs, from whom all Israelites descend. Paul draws upon the continuity of the Israel of his day with the patriarchs as proof of an eventual spiritual restoration for all Israel.

(Rom 1:13; 1 Cor 10:1; 12:1; 2 Cor 1:8; 1 Thess 4:13).⁴ In the expression *na m te aytow frnimo* (*hina m te [par'] heautois phronimo*, "that you not be wise in your estimation," v. 25), the writer reiterates briefly the warning against arrogant thinking toward the Jews on the part of the Gentile believers in the Roman church (cf. v. 20). *6lna* (*Hina*, "That") expresses his purpose in revealing the mystery regarding the hardening of Israel. He was supremely concerned that Gentile believers understand that Israel was not "finished" in the program of God, having been replaced by Gentile believers.⁵ Paul opposed a smug attitude in the church against Jewish constituents, especially in light of the Jewish role in God's future plans.⁶

ROMANS 11:25B` THE MEANING AND IDENTITY OF "MYSTERY"

One of the more difficult points of interpretation in 11:25-27 is the meaning and identification of *to mystrion* (*to mystrion*, "the mystery"). The earliest known uses of the word are in works related to the Greek mystery religions. These describe secret rites or teachings known only by the initiated of a religious cult. Later the word spoke more generally of a secret of any kind. Its only uses in the LXX are eight occurrences in Daniel, where Daniel spoke of an eschatological secret pertaining to what God has decreed for the future (Dan 2:28). A similar usage is found in the Jewish apocalyptic writings, where it also designated a divine secret of which that He alone discloses through revelation at the appointed time. The Jewish background of the word influenced Paul more strongly than the Greek.⁷

Complicating the understanding of "mystery" in v. 25 is the use of the word in the NT to refer to spiritual truths revealed in the OT, but revealed in the NT with varying degrees of obscurity. In the case of the rapture of the church, call

⁴John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT, 2 vols; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965) 2:91.

⁵Cf. Morris, *Romans* 419 and n. 108. Barrett (*Romans 222-23*) takes the tendency of the Gentile to be arrogant toward the Jew as indicating that the Gentile fails to recognize (1) that the acceptance of the gospel implies no merit at all, but faith alone (11:22); (2) that the Gentile's faith is itself the result of God's initiative and mercy (11:16); and (3) that the Gentile's faith and inclusion in the program of God are only one stage in the unfolding of God's all-embracing purpose.

⁶Otto Glombitza ("Apostolische Sorge. Welche Sorge treibt den Apostel Paulus zu den Stämmen 11:25ff," *NovT* 7 [1965]:312-18) emphasizes the apostle's concern about the unity of the church in Rome. He argues that the primary (if not the sole) motivation for Paul's mention of the mystery of Israel's hardening and restoration is that of seeking to keep the Gentiles from becoming arrogant. Glombitza's point is well taken, but the broader context indicates that Paul's objective in Romans 11 was also to provide an *apologia* for God and His faithfulness in light of Israel's rejection of the gospel.

⁷Gunther Bornkamm, "mystrion, myv, " *TDNT* 4:813-14; G. Finkenrath, "Secret, Mystery," *NIDNTT* 3:501-2. One of the main differences between Jewish and Greek uses of *mystrion* is the ineffability and impenetrableness Greeks ascribed to their mysteries, as well as their desire to manifest or explain mysteries to those outside the cult. J. Armitage Robinson points out that the Jewish and Christian concept of *mystrion* involves an unveiling and revealing by God of divine secrets, and that He charges His apostles and prophets to declare them to those who are called to hear (*St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* [London: MacMillan, 1903] 240).

mystery in 1 Cor 15:51, no unequivocal OT revelation treated this event making it very obscure, even hidden).⁸ No clear explanation of this event occurs prior to its unveiling to Paul and thus to the church.

Some truth related to a mystery may be the subject of revelation in the OT but the mystery itself is hidden until at God's appointed time it becomes a major event.⁹ Ephesians 3:4-5 reflects this "present-in-the-OT-but-unclear, then clarified in-the-NT" use of mystery,¹⁰ as does Rom 16:25-26.¹¹ Extrabiblical support for this understanding of *mystrion* is in the Dead Sea Scrolls (especially 1QpHab. 7:4, [the Teacher of Righteousness] God made known all the mysteries of the world to His servants the Prophets," and CD. 3:12-14, "[God was] revealing to them [the righteous remnant of the Qumran community] the hidden things in which Israel had gone astray")¹² where the mystery is revelation from God *regarding the clarification of spiritual truths already revealed in the OT*. These parallels illustrate Paul's use of *mystrion* in Rom 11:25. The OT had much to say regarding the Messiah and the inclusion of Gentiles in blessings through the seed of Abraham but God gave further revelation to deepen the knowledge of His people regarding broad OT themes present.¹³

It was not new revelation that Gentiles would be blessed through the seed of Abraham (cf. Gen 12:3; etc.), nor was it new revelation that God could have mercy on the Jews (cf. Rom. 11:8-9 where Paul cites Deut 29:4; Isa 29:10; Ps. 69:22). Therefore, neither of these points is identifiable as Paul's mystery in v. 25.

Two viable options for the content of the mystery remain. Possibly

⁸Markus Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1990) 170. Robert Gundry hints at the fact that the rapture is new revelation in the NT found in the OT (*The Church and the Tribulation* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973] 14).

⁹Cf. Walter Schmithals, *Der Rmerbrief: Ein Kommentar* (Gtersloh: Gutersloher Verlagshaus Mohnen, 1988) 403; Werner DeBoor, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Rmer* (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus Verlag, 1967) 268; Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975) 46-47; Bornkamm, "mystrion," *TDNT* 4:820; and F. W. Grosheide, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953) 64.

¹⁰Ephesians 3:4-5: "And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men *as now been revealed* [W nn pekalfuh]. . . ." While it has been argued that the particle W carries a comparative sense (i.e., the mystery was not known at all previously as it is now known; cf. R. B. Ryrie, "The Mystery in Ephesians 3," *BSac* 123 [1966]:29), the fact that the OT contains a significant amount of teaching regarding the blessing of Gentiles along with Jews weighs against seeing the mystery related to the mystery in Ephesians 3 as something entirely new. Though the OT foresaw the blessing of Gentiles with Jews, it did not, however, predict the joining together of the two groups into one body, the church, as was revealed to Paul according to the Ephesians 3 passage. For an interpretation of W with a comparative force, cf. Harold W. Mare, "Paul's Mystery in Ephesians 3," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* 7 (1965):83-84.

¹¹It may be instructive that the other occurrence of "mystery" in Romans (16:25-26) refers to the event likely to the "Christ event," which cannot be viewed as completely new revelation.

¹²P. T. O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon* (Waco: Word, 1982) 84; Raymond E. Brown, *The Background of the Term "Mystery" in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968) 24-28; and Martin, *Colossians and Philemon* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1974) 71.

¹³Chrys Caragounis, *The Ephesian Mystrion: Meaning and Content* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1974) 104 n. 24; Mare, "Mystery" 83-84.

Paul calls the mystery is the way the hardening of the Jews relates to the salvation of the Gentiles. Ridderbos maintains that the mystery pertains to the "back and forth" fashion in which the salvation is effected, beginning first with the Jews, after the divine hardening, encompassing the Gentiles whose blessings and salvation in turn provoke the Jews to jealousy and consequently salvation in turn as well.¹⁴ The "back and forth" characteristic applies, but it is discussed in 11:11 with v. 25 contributing nothing new to it.¹⁵

A second option is preferable. What is new both in the context of Romans 11 and in salvation history is the *order* of salvation of the Gentiles and of Israel." The salvation of Israel will not occur until the "fullness of the Gentiles come in."¹⁶ This understanding of *mystrion* has much in its favor. It fits well the concept of "mystery" as new revelation or as an extensive development and clarification of previously given revelation. What is not new is the blessing of the Gentiles and the hardening of the Jews; what is new (not seen in the OT but revealed here) is the *sequence of salvation* for Jews and Gentiles.¹⁷ This view has further support in *totō* (*touto*, "this") which probably looks forward to the dependent clause introduced by *ti* (*hoti*, "that"), which in turn designates the remainder of vv. 25-27 as the content of that mystery.¹⁸

ROMANS 11:25C ` THE HARDENING OF ISRAEL

The phrase *ti p mroyw t llsral ggonen* (*hoti prsis apo merous t Isral gegonen*, "hardness in part has happened to Israel") furnishes the first element of the mystery. The concept of hardening comes frequently in the OT¹⁹ and in the literature of Early Judaism.²⁰ In the NT, *prsiw* (*prsis*, "hardness") occurs only two other times (Mark 3:5; Eph 4:18). In both instances it refers metaphorically to hardness of heart (the hard-heartedness of the Jewish witnesses of Jesus' ministry and the hard-heartedness of Gentiles alienated from God, respectively). In 11:25 it means "hardness, insensibility, obstinacy,"²¹ conveying the notion of a condition that leaves the people of Israel unresponsive to the gospel and excluded from salvation.²² God is the agent behind the hardening (cf. 11:8, *uew* [*ho theos*, "God"]).

¹⁴Ridderbos, *Paul* 358-60. Cf. also William Hendriksen, *Exposition of Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981) 378; J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980) 334.

¹⁵F. A. G. Tholuck, *Exposition of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Philadelphia: Sorin and Ball, 1833) 388-89; Bruce Corley, "The Jews, the Future, and God," *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 19 (1977):50.

¹⁶Nils Dahl, *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1967) 152 and n. 44.

¹⁷W. D. Davies, "Paul and the People of Israel," *NTS* 24 (1977-78):28.

¹⁸Cf. Max Zerwick and Mary Grosvenor, *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1979) 485.

¹⁹Cf. especially the hardening of Pharaoh in Exod 4:21; 7:3; 9:12. See also Ps 95:8; Isa 6:10; 63:10.

²⁰*T. Levi* 13:7; 1QS 1:6; 2:14, 26; 3:3; 5:4; CD 2:17-18; 3:5, 11; 8:8.

²¹BAGD, 732.

²²John Piper, *The Justification of God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 9:1-23* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983) 155-56.

The Extent of the Hardening

The phrase ρ $\mu\rho\omicron\gamma\omega$ (*apo merous*, "in part") expresses the extent of hardening. The precise meaning and syntactical relationship of this phrase engendered much debate. One of the problems associated with the phrase is determining whether it is adjectival, adverbial, or temporal in force. The evidence for an adverbial use is the fact that *apo merous* is roughly like the Classical use of phrases such as $\kappa\alpha\tau\ \mu\rho\omicron\gamma\omega$ (*kata merous*, "according to a part") and $\mu\rho\omega\ \tau\iota$ (*ti*, "some part"), and on this basis, according to Tholuck, "cannot well signify anything else but *in part*. . . ." The preposition ρ (*apo*, "in"), when used with substantives in Classical Greek, commonly has an adverbial force. Furthermore, *apo merous* is roughly parallel to the *tines* (*tines*, "some, certain ones") of 11:17, which stands somewhat in contrast to $\rho\omega$ ι ι σ ρ α ι (*pas Isral*, "all Israel") of 11:26.²³

Ksemann maintains that *apo merous* is adjectival and connects it with $\tau\omicron$ μ ρ \omicron γ ω with the resulting sense "a partial hardening has come upon Israel." This connection finds support in 11:7 through the reference to the hardening upon non-Christian Jews alone, leaving Jewish Christianity unaffected by the hardening.²⁴ Yet this is weak in that Paul apparently deals *extensively* with the numeric expanse of hardening rather than *intensively* with its severity.

The temporal interpretation of *apo merous* is probably the least defensible. Hodge maintains that the phrase is temporal in Rom 15:24 and that α χ ρ ι \circ (*achri*, "until") (11:25), which is also temporal, supports the same understanding of *merous*.²⁵ Against a temporal understanding, however, is the emphasis of $\tau\omicron$ μ ρ \omicron γ ω throughout Romans 11. It is arguably more natural to understand the phrase to refer to numbers rather than time.²⁶ Also, the position of the phrase and its apparent antithesis to *pas Isral* speak against such a temporal force.²⁷ A temporal interpretation of *apo merous* is unlikely in 2 Cor 1:14 and 2:5, suggesting that Paul usually intends the phrase to be non-temporal. If he had temporal matter in mind, he possibly would have used a phrase like $\tau\omicron$ $\nu\upsilon\eta$ (*to nyn*, "the present time") instead.²⁸

Although the problem is difficult, the adverbial force has stronger support. A further issue relates to the phrase. Should *apo merous* connect with $\tau\omicron$ μ ρ \omicron γ ω ?

²³Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) 280; Tholuck, *Romans* 388-89; A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1934) 550.

²⁴Ernst Ksemann, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 313.

²⁵Charles Hodge, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (rpt. of 1886 ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950) 373. Cf. also R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg, 1945) 719, for a summary of this position (though Lenski does not adopt it himself).

²⁶Lenski, *Romans* 720. For the points supporting a numerical emphasis of Paul in this context, see especially the 7,000 of 11:4; the remnant in 11:5; the \circ $\lambda\omicron\iota\pi\omicron$ in 11:7; the phrase $\iota\eta\upsilon\ \gamma\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron$ in 11:16; "first-fruits" and "root" in 11:16; and the parallel between $\tau\omicron$ μ ρ \omicron γ ω $\tau\omicron$ $\nu\upsilon\eta$ and $\rho\omega$ ι ι σ ρ α ι in 11:26.

²⁷Ksemann, *Romans* 313.

²⁸H. A. W. Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistle to the Romans* (rpt. of 6th Furber ed.; Wagnalls ed.; Winona Lake, Ind.: Alpha, 1979) 446-47.

(*gegonen*, "has happened"),²⁹ *Isral*,³⁰ or *prsis*?³¹ It is preferable to see the preposition modifying *gegonen*, a verb (based on other Pauline usage), but a choice of any of the three options does not affect the essential meaning, since interpreters choosing different connections have reached the same conclusion: only a part of all the people of Israel are hardened.

The Time-frame for the Hardening

A time-frame for this hardening is suggested by the clause $\chi\rho\iota\ \omicron\ \dots\ \epsilon\sigma\lambda\upsilon\chi\eta\ \eta\ \mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\ \tau\epsilon\ \sigma\epsilon\iota\sigma\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$, "*until . . . has come in*". The phrase (*achri hou*) is a shortened form of $\chi\rho\iota\ \tau\omicron\ \chi\rho\nu\omicron\upsilon\ \dots$ (*achri tou chronou h . . .*, "until the time at which . . .").³² The precise nature of its temporal force has been a subject for strenuous debate. It appears to denote a time after which the hardening of Israel will cease, bringing a change in her spiritual condition. NT usage of the phrase elsewhere may overturn this understanding, however. In a number of passages it can plausibly mean "while" or even "during and after,"³³ implying the possibility in the present passage that

²⁹This view is maintained by Cranfield, *Romans* 2:575; Meyer, *Romans* 446; Michel, *Romans* 446; Joachim Jeremias, "Einige vorwiegend sprachliche Beobachtungen zu Rm 11,25-36," in *Die Israelforschung nach Rm 9-11* (ed. Lorenzo de Lorenzi; Monographische Reihe von 'Benedictina,' vol. 3; Roma: Paul's Abbey, 1977) 195. This view is probably the best based on the other four Pauline uses of the phrase in which $\rho\ \mu\rho\omicron\upsilon\omega$ modifies the verb. Cf. Rom 15:15 (toImhrteron d graca mn p mroyw, "I have written boldly to you on some points"); Rom 15:24 (mn prton p mroyw mplhsu, "after I have come to your company for a while."); 2 Cor 1:14 (kauw ka pognvte mw p mroyw, "just as you partly understand us"); and 2 Cor 2:5 (lelphken . . . p mroyw, "someone has caused sorrow . . . in some degree").

³⁰A. Rese, "Die Rettung der Juden nach Rmer 11," in *L'S Aptre Paul: Personalite, Style et Contexte du Ministere*, (ed. A. Vanhoye; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1986) 427; Cranfield, *Romans* 313; Morris, *Romans* 420; Ksemann *Rmans*, 313; de Boor, *Rmer* 268; Nygren, *Romans* 404; Barrett, *Romans* 223; and Hendriksen, *Romans* 378. This view is supported by the context (11:7, $\omicron\ \delta\ \lambda\omicron\iota\ \rho\iota\ \rho\upsilon\upsilon$) and by the apparent contrast with $\rho\omega\ \ \iota\ \sigma\rho\alpha\iota$ in 11:26. Thus the limits of the hardening are delineated, and Jewish Christianity is not affected by it. Also, Romans 11 says earlier that not

Jews were hardened, supporting the view that only part of Israel has been affected during this time.

³¹Dunn, *Romans* 2:679; Corley, "Jews" 52 n. 48. Paul is still looking at the nation as a whole (according to this view), and this unified whole is blinded somewhat. This is the most natural connection of the phrase (it is argued), is a grammatically permissible use of the preposition phrase as an adverb, and denotes a quantitative limit, indicating that only a part of Israel is affected.

While this is a defensible position, it is probably not the best option for several reasons. First, as was mentioned above, Paul usually uses $\rho\ \mu\rho\omicron\upsilon\omega$ as a modifier of the verb, not a noun as this interpretation requires. Second, this interpretation is not altogether clear. "A partial hardening" is taken by *et al.* as a reference to part of Israel being affected; but "partial hardening" seems to be understood better as "a hardening of low intensity," and the context suggests that this is probably not the point. Meyer (*Romans*, 446) maintains that the phrase should be understood *extensively* in light of $\lambda\omicron\iota\ \rho\iota\ \rho\upsilon\upsilon$ in 11:7, and $\tau\iota\ \nu\epsilon\omega$ in 11:17, and not *intensively* as is the sense demanded by a connection with $\rho\rho\upsilon\varsigma\ \iota\omega$.

³²Zerwick and Grosvenor, *Analysis* 2:485.

³³E.g., Heb 3:13, "But encourage one another day after day *as long as* [while] it is still called *today* [$\chi\rho\iota\omega\ \tau\ \sigma\mu\epsilon\rho\nu\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$]; Acts 27:33, "And . . . *until* [while] the day was about to dawn [$\ \mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\ \tau\ \mu\epsilon\lambda\lambda\epsilon\nu\ \gamma\eta\sigma\upsilon\alpha\iota$], Paul was encouraging them all to take some food"; and Luke 21:24, "Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles *until* the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled

hardening of Israel does not stop when the fullness of the Gentiles arrives rather that it continues during *and after* the fullness comes in.³⁴ In other words *achri hou* may not refer to a new spiritual "beginning" for Israel after a future event (the fullness of the Gentiles); instead, it may refer to prevailing circumstances in Israel *even after the fullness of the Gentiles has come in*.³⁵

This view of *achri hou* has been challenged. Murray contends that though it may mean "while" in some contexts, in Rom 11:25 that meaning is unnatural, especially in light of the aorist ἐσθι (*eiselth*, "has come in"). He writes,

In every other instance in the New Testament, whether used with the aorist or future, the meaning "until" is the necessary rendering and indicates a point of eventuation or a point at which something took place (cf. Acts 7:18; 1 Cor. 11:26; 15:25; Gal. 3:19; Rev. 2:25). . . . In Rom. 11:25 it would require a departure from the pattern to render the clause other than "until the fulness of the Gentiles will come in". The context makes this the necessary interpretation of the force of the clause in question.³⁶

Also opposed to the meaning of "while" for *achri hou* are the verses cited above which support that interpretation.³⁷ The most that can be said from these passages

plhrvusin kairo unn]." These verses are suggested by Murray, *Romans* 2:92 n. 45, though Murray himself does not hold to this understanding of Χρὶ 0 in Rom 11:25.

³⁴In support of this understanding of Χρὶ 0, there are at least three passages in which it is used with aorist verbs and could be rendered "while" or "during and after." In Matt 24:38 ("they were eating and drinking . . . until [Χρὶ W] the day that Noah entered the ark"), the "until" does not indicate the cessation of eating and drinking; in fact, Gen 7:4, 10 indicate that after Noah entered the ark, additional seven days elapsed, during which there is no indication that the godless behavior of Noah's coevals ceased. In Acts 7:17-18 ("the people increased and multiplied in Egypt, until there arose another king over Egypt who knew nothing about Joseph" [Exod 1:8]), it is apparent from Exod 1:12 that the ascension of the new king of Egypt did not terminate the fruitfulness of the Hebrew people. In the following two examples (1 Cor 11:26; 15:25) the aorist subjunctive is used, as it is in Romans 11:25. In 1 Cor 11:26 ("you proclaim the Lord's death until [Χρὶ 0] He comes [u, aorist subjunctive]"), the coming of Christ does not stop the observance of the Lord's Supper, since according to Matt 26:29 there will be at least one more observance of it with Christ "in [His] Father's kingdom." Finally, in 1 Cor 15:25 ("For He must reign until [Χρὶ 0] He has put [u, aorist subjunctive] His enemies under His feet"), the reign of Christ does not cease at the time His enemies are put under His footstool; it continues past that point.

³⁵For this understanding of Χρὶ 0, cf. Louis A. DeCaro, *Israel Today: Fulfillment of Prophecy?* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974) 111-14; O. Palmer Robertson, "Is There a Distinctive Future for Ethnic Israel in Romans 11?" in *Perspectives on Evangelical Theology* (eds. Kenneth S. Kantzer and Stanley N. Gundry, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979) 219-21; and Marten H. Woudstra, "Israel and the Church: A Case of Continuity," in *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments: Essays in Honor of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.* (John S. Feinberg, ed.; Westchester, Ill.: Crossings Books, 1988) 236.

³⁶Murray, *Romans* 2:92 n. 45; cf. also Cranfield, *Romans* 2:575, who writes, "Paul's meaning is that Israel is in part hardened during the time in which the fullness of the Gentiles is coming in, and that the hardening will last until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. The entry of the fullness of the Gentiles will be the event which will mark the end of Israel's hardening."

³⁷The support of the verses is not as clear-cut as it might appear. In Matt 24:38, a serious event took place for the godless after Noah entered the ark, just as happened for the Hebrews when

support the contention of DeCaro, Robertson, and Woudstra is that the hardening of Israel may briefly *overlap* the coming in of the Gentiles' fullness, only canceled shortly thereafter. Hence, in Rom 11:25, *achri hou* points to a time (the arrival of the fullness of the Gentiles) after which the hardening of Israel will cancel.

Identifying the "fullness of the Gentiles" has been difficult for interpreters. BAGD prefers the meaning "fulfilling" or "fulfillment" in Rom 11:12 (cf. Rom 11:13 also), but stipulates that some prefer "that which is brought to fullness, completion, full number, sum total, fullness, superabundance of something" in the verse (cf. Rom 15:29; Col 1:19; 2:9 also).³⁸

Space considerations permit only a presentation of conclusions regarding the use of this word in Paul's writings. In his classic essay on *plrma*, Lightfoot writes,

Substantially one meaning runs through all the passages hither quoted from St. Paul. In *plrma* (*plrma*) has its proper passive force [that which is filled, rather than that which fills]. . . . a derivative from *plhron* (*plroun*, "to fill") 'to make complete.' . . . It is . . . the complement, the plentitude, the fulness.³⁹

When analyzing Rom 11:25, he adds that the word refers to "the full number of the whole body."⁴⁰ But even with this conclusion, the precise meaning of *plrma* in connection with *tn ethn* ("the Gentiles") in the verse is contested.

The "fullness of the Gentiles" has been interpreted in two ways: qualitatively and quantitatively. (1) In a qualitative sense it refers to the fullness of the blessings of the Gentiles. This view finds support in the contrast of 11:12 between *to plrma* and the spiritual conditions of *to parptma* (*to paraptma*, "the transgression") and *to h eq \O(h) tthma* (*to h eq \O(~,e)tt eq \O(~,e)ma*, "loss, defeat"). Neither provides a suitable opposite to *pl eq \O(~,e)r eq \O(~,o)ma* if it is understood in an arithmetic sense of "full number."⁴¹

(2) A second view is that the "fullness of the Gentiles" is quantitative, referring to the "full number" or the "numerical whole" of the Gentiles, though it probably does not encompass every individual Gentile. Rather it denotes a representative representation of Gentiles from throughout the world. This is the preferred view with several scholars⁴² and finds support in Paul's frequent discussion of numbers.

Pharaoh ascended the throne of Egypt (Acts 7:17-18) and will happen for the observance of the Lord's Supper after Christ's second coming (1 Cor 11:26) and for Christ's rule following the subjection of His enemies (1 Cor 15:25; cf. 15:24).

³⁸BAGD, 672.

³⁹J. B. Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (rpt. of 1879 ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959) 260-61 [transliteration and translation added].

⁴⁰Lightfoot, *Colossians* 260.

⁴¹Murray, *Romans* 2:94-95; Morris, *Romans* 420.

⁴²Cf. Matthew Black, *Romans* (NCB; London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1973) 143, 147; W. L. Osborne, "The Old Testament Background of Paul's *All Israel* in Romans 11:26a," *Asia Journal of Theology* 2 (December 1988):289-90; Lightfoot, *Colossians* 260; Roger D. Aus, "Paul's Travel Plans for Spain and the *Full Number of the Gentiles* of Rom. XI:25," *NovT* 21 (1979):232-62; Gerhard D. Fee, "plrhw, k. t. l.," *TDNT* 6:302; Charles Journet, "The Mysterious Destinies of Israel," in *The Bible*

throughout Romans 11.⁴³ A few important references from Early Judaism reflecting the apparently common belief in an eschatological conversion of a number of Gentiles add credence to this position.⁴⁴

Deciding between the two options is not easy, but the second has a somewhat stronger case. Even Murray recognizes that *pl eq \O(\sim,e)r eq \O(\sim,o)ma* does not exclude a numerical connotation and that a combination of the views might be preferable to excluding one or the other.⁴⁵ Besides, understanding *pl eq \O(\sim,o)ma* in a numeric sense with spiritual overtones provides an adequate rejoinder to the objection that *to pl eq \O(\sim,e)r eq \O(\sim,o)ma* does not provide a logical contrast with *to parapt eq \O(\sim,o)ma* and *to h eq \O(\sim,e)tt eq \O(\sim,e)tt* 11:12. The better interpretation sees Paul as pointing to the spiritual conversion of a large number of Gentiles.

This conclusion does not resolve all the problems with the phrase "fullness of the Gentiles," however. Those who embrace a quantitative understanding of the phrase disagree about the manner and time in which fullness is reached. This issue is closely related to the timing of the salvation of Israel that is more fully discussed below.

One of the factors in determining the time of the arrival of Gentile fullness is the correct understanding of the verb *eiselth eq \O(\sim,/,e)* (v. 25). Though *e eq \O(3,e)rxomai* (*eiserchomai*) has the basic meaning of "come in/into," "go in/enter,"⁴⁶ the term's significance in the present context is not completely clear.

The verb occurs in the Gospels in reference to entering the Messianic Kingdom or eternal life,⁴⁷ so many scholars take the phrase *t eq \O(4,o) \O(/,h)rvma t eq \O(:v)n eq \O(1,e) un eq \O(:v)n e eq \O(1,i)s eq \O(3,e)lu eq \O(:h) (to \O(\sim,e)r eq \O(\sim,o)ma t eq \O(\sim,o)n ethn eq \O(\sim,o)n eiselth eq \O(\sim,/,e), fullness of the Gentiles come in)* to refer to the fulfillment of God's purpose in bringing the Gentiles into the Messianic Kingdom.⁴⁸ Yet several reasons make

Yearbook of Judaeo-Christian Studies (ed. John M. Oestereicher; New York: Pantheon, 1956) 142; Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 142, 144; Ziegler and Grosvenor, *Analysis* 2:485; Cranfield, *Romans* 2:575-76; and Lenski, *Romans* 720.

⁴³See note 25 above.

⁴⁴Cf. *2 Bar* 23:4-5; 30:2; *4 Ezra* 2:38, 40-41; 4:35-36. Both *2 Baruch* and *4 Ezra* were written after the fall of Jerusalem (George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981] 277-94).

⁴⁵One of the problems with Murray's view (that the fullness of the Gentiles refers to the completion of spiritual blessings) is that it is difficult to determine just what is meant by this. If it does not entail some form of numerical enlargement, then the statement is meaningless in the present context. When a Gentile finds salvation in Christ, he receives all the blessings to which Christ entitles him, including the promise of glory (Rom 8:29-30). Paul is referring to more than this as Murray himself concedes. The fullness must involve not only full spiritual blessings, but full spiritual blessings *for a number of Gentiles*.

⁴⁶BAGD, 232.

⁴⁷Cf. Matt 5:20; 7:13-14, 21; 18:3, 8; 19:17; 23:13; Mark 9:43-47; 10:15, 23-25; Luke 13:24; John 3:3.

⁴⁸This is the view of Sanday and Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902) 335; Morris, *Romans* 419-20; Cranfield, *Romans* 2:6; Corley, "Jews" 52. Corley maintains that the phrase refers to the completion of the gospel mission among the Gentiles, thus giving a view slightly different from the "Kingdom" view of the

view unsatisfactory. Though *eiserchomai* is used frequently for entering Kingdom or eternal life, the majority of its 194 NT occurrences have an eschatological technical sense.⁴⁹ More importantly, Paul uses *eiserchomai* elsewhere only in Rom 5:12; 1 Cor 14:23, 24, with neither passage containing eschatological connotations. With a thorough discussion of the timing of the fullness of the Gentiles and the salvation of all Israel yet to follow, this much can be concluded: it is preferable to understand *eiserchomai* in a non-technical, non-eschatological sense. The more defensible sense in 11:25 is the one suggested by Black who says it is better to view Paul's use of *eiserchomai* as parallel to its use in the LXX for the Hebrew בָּרַח (*b eq \O(=,o)@*, "he comes"), which means simply "has come," "has arrived," and so "has been realized."⁵⁰ In summary, Paul does not use the verb in an eschatological sense, and the context, while referring to events future to the time of writing, does not refer unequivocally to the future Messianic Kingdom or eternity as other views require, further proof of which will follow below. The verb refers to the arrival of the fullness of the Gentiles with no allusion to the Gentiles entering the Kingdom or eternity.

ROMANS 11:26-27` THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF SALVATION

The Manner of Salvation

With the phrase καὶ οὕτως (*kai hout eq \O(~,o)s*, "and thus") in 11:26 Paul changes from the order and time of salvation in 11:25 to concern primarily the manner of the salvation of all Israel in 11:26-27.

Viewing 11:26-27 as instruction about the manner of salvation of the Gentiles presupposes a modal, non-temporal use of οὕτως (*hout eq \O(~,o)s*, "thus") which is problematic. Some scholars maintain the phrase is best understood temporally, resulting in the following sense: "There will be a time of hardship until the fullness of the Gentiles arrives, and then all Israel will be saved." Classical Greek usage supports the temporal explanation of *kai hout eq \O(~,o)s*,⁵¹ as does NT usage in Acts 17:33.⁵² In Paul it is probably temporal in 1 Cor 11:28; 14:22; Thess 4:17.⁵³ Further support for the temporal view comes in the deictic *αὐτὸς*

scholars mentioned in this note. But Corley also assigns a semi-technical eschatological force to the verb, and for this reason he is listed here with the others.

⁴⁹Dieter Zeller maintains that the eschatological connotation of *εἰσερχομαι* in the Gospels has no bearing on Rom 11:25 (*Juden und Heiden in der Mission des Paulus: Studien Zum Rmerbrief* [Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1973] 254).

⁵⁰Black, *Romans* 147. Cf. Mark 9:28; Luke 7:6; 14:23; Acts 1:13; 3:8; 5:21; 9:12, 13:14, etc. Black does not appear to assign an eschatological sense to the verb, but does not make himself clear on whether or not an eschatological sense is warranted. Cf. also Johannes Munck, *Christ & Israel: Interpretation of Romans 9-11* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967) 132, who says that Paul does not use *εἰσερχομαι* in the same eschatological way it is used in the gospels. However, in Acts 14:22, Luke does use this word with an eschatological sense in quoting Paul ("Through many tribulations we will enter [εἰσελευσόμεθα] the kingdom of God.").

⁵¹Cf. Xenophon, *Anabasis* 3.4.8; Epictetus, *Dissertationes* 4.8.13 (LSJ, 112).

⁵²Ksemann, *Romans* 313.

⁵³Corley, "Jews" 53-54.

(v. 25) as well.

The temporal understanding has several important drawbacks, however. The passages from Paul cited as possibly temporal can be as easily (and perhaps more favorably) understood as non-temporal.¹ ¹On a modal view of otvw in 1 Cor cf. C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968) 273 (his translation "that [in the previously-mentioned manner] is how he should eat" in a modal interpretation); in 1 Cor 14:25, cf. Charles Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians* (1857 ed.; Carlisle, Penn.: Banner of Truth, 1983) 298; and in 1 Thess 4:17, cf. F. F. Bruce, *Thessalonians* (WBC, vol. 45; Waco: Word Books, 1982) 103. In Robertson's opinion not a single one of the seventy-three occurrences of *houts* in Paul can be viewed as certainly temporal.¹ Robertson, "Future" 221. In addition, in the nine places where Paul writes *kai hout* in the same order as 11:26, no temporal understanding is probably justified.¹ 11:26; 1 Cor 7:17, 36; 11:28; 14:25; 15:11; Gal 6:2; 1 Thess 4:17. As already mentioned, 11:26; 1 Cor 11:26; 14:25; 1 Thess 4:17 are disputed, but are probably not temporal as some claim. On the basis of these observations, a purely temporal force to the phrase is improbable.

The key word in the previous statement is *purely*. A number of conservative scholars maintain that though *houts* on its own is not temporal, the context virtually infuses such a sense into it in v. 26 because of the strong sequential emphasis surrounding *houts*. Therefore, *houts* is probably best understood as modal and not primarily temporal, but it is modal with a temporal ambience.¹ ¹Pace Peter Stuhlmacher, "Zur Interpretation von Röm 11:25-32," in *Probleme biblischer Theologie* (ed. Gerhard von Rad zum 70. Geburtstag (ed. Hans Walter Wolff; München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1971) 103. For the opinion that otvw is modal with a temporal flavor, cf. Scott Hafemann, "The Salvation of Israel in Romans 11:25-32: A Response to Krister Stendahl," *Ex Auditu* (ed. Robert Guelich) 4 (1988):53; Dunn, *Romans* 2:681; Bruce Longenecker, "Different Answers to Different Issues: Israel, the Gentiles, and Salvation History in Romans 9-11," *JSNT* 36 (1989):118 n. 3; Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., "Kingdom Promises as Spiritual and National," in *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments: Essays in Honor of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.* (John S. Feinberg, ed.; Westchester, Ill.: Crossway, 1988) 301-3. Even Corley ("Jews" 53-54) maintains that a temporal understanding of otvw can include a modal sense, so that the two options need not be mutually exclusive. Verses 26-27 are essentially concerned with the manner of Israel's salvation, one aspect of which is its future occurrence.

A further problem associated with *kai hout eq \O(~,o)s* is determining whether it is retrospective (looking back to what Paul has written in v. 25) or prospective (looking ahead to vv. 26 ff.). Jeremias refers *hout eq \O(~,o)s* back to the hardening of Israel, the salvation of the Gentiles, and the reversal in order of salvation (Gentiles preceding Jews). He says that to construe the adverb *kau eq \O(/,v)w* (*kath eq \O(~,o)s*, "just as") (v. 26), which follows, is contrary to typical Pauline syntax.¹ ¹Jeremias, "Beobachtungen" 198-99. See Jeremias's treatment for the details. Cf. also, for the same perspective (that otvw is retrospective), Dieter S eq \O(^,a)nger, "Rettung der Heiden und Erw eq \O(^,a)hlung Israels: Einige vorl eq \O(^,a)ufige Erw eq \O(^,a)ngungen zu R eq \O(^,o)mer 11.25-27," *KD* 32 (1986):107-8; and Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer* (EKK, 3 vols.; Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 1980) 2:254-55. But a review of other uses of otvw . . . *ka* (*houts* . . . *kai*, "thus . . . also") construction, including those in which it divulges that they do not shed much light on the problem.¹ ¹In Luke 24:24 (*ka \text{otvw} \text{kauw} \text{ka} \text{a} \text{gynakew} \text{epon}*), the otvw clearly refers to what precedes, as is the case in Eph 1:1 (*eq \O(~,y)me eq \O(@,i)w d eq \O(4,e) o eq \O(' ,y)x o eq \O(+,y)tw eq \O(1,e) m eq \O(/,a)ue*

\O(4,o)n Xrist eq \O(3,o)n, kau eq \O(? ,v)w eq \O(1,e) stin eq \O(' ,a) l eq \O(/ ,h)ueia eq \O(1,e) \O(; ,v) 1lho eq \O(; ,y); but in Rom 15:20 (o eq \O(+ ,y)tw d eq \O(4,e) filotimo eq \O(/ ,y)me eq \O(' ,y)aggelizesuai o eq \O(' ,y)x eq \O(6,o) poy eq \O(' ,v) nom eq \O(/ ,a)suh Xrist eq \O(3,o) eq \O(' ,a) ll eq \O(? ,a) kau eq \O(? ,v)w g eq \O(3,e)graptai) it refers to what follows. The other occurrences of the o eq \O(+ ,y)tw . . . kau eq \O(/ ,v)w construction provide no assured conclusion on the grammatical relationship of o eq \O(+ ,y)tw in Rom 11:26. Cranfield offers the sanest account

With ka otw (*kai hout*s) begins the last of the three parts of the content of the *mystrion* (mystrion), the part on which the main stress falls (it is the part which is supported by the quotation which follows). The word otw (*hout*s) is emphatic: it will be in this way, and in this way, that is, in the circumstances which are indicated by the first two parts of the statement [i.e., (1) prvsiw . . . ggonen (*prsis* . . . *gegonen*); (2) xri o eq \O(y) . . . e eq \O(3,e)lu eq \O(: ,h) (*achri hou* . . . *eiselth eq \O(~ , / ,e)*)], that p eq \O(; ,a)w 1l eq \O(/ ,h)l (*pas Isra eq \O(~ ,e)l*) will be saved. The o eq \O(+ ,y)tw (*hout eq \O(+ ,y)tw*) indicates an inversion of the order in which salvation is actually offered to men according to 1.16. . . .⁵⁴

The Identity of the Saved

Regarding the identification of p eq \O(; ,a)w 1lsra eq \O(/ ,h)l (*pas Isra eq \O(~ ,e)l* "all Israel"), there are two basic views.⁵⁵ One view, held by John Calvin, refers to the expression to the church as the new spiritual Israel, comprised of both Jews and Gentiles. An appeal made to Gal 6:16 ("the Israel of God") supports this view, but the more probable interpretation of the Galatians passage fails to support this conclusion.⁵⁶ A consistent interpretation of Old and New Testaments requires that the two peoples be distinguished from each other.

A second view on the meaning of "all Israel" is better here. "All Israel" in Rom 11:26 must have the same sense as "Israel" in 11:25 ("a hardness has come in part against Israel"). The context requires that *Isra eq \O(~ ,e)l* be understood to refer to ethnic Israel, mentioned in 11:23 ("if they [ethnic Israel] do not continue in unbelief") and in 11:30-32 in a contrast between Gentiles and Jews.⁵⁷

Beyond this conclusion four options for the sense of "ethnic Israel" remain. (1) One is that ethnic Israel refers to the elect among the Jews saved throughout the entirety of the church age.⁵⁸ This finds support in the progressive salvation of increasing numbers of Jews throughout this age concurrently with the salvation of Gentiles. When the full number of the Gentiles comes in, then the full number

⁵⁴Cranfield, *Romans* 2:576 [transliteration added].

⁵⁵These views are presented and summarized well in Charles Horne, "The Meaning of the Phrase 'And Thus All Israel Will Be Saved,'" *JETS* 21 (December 1978):331-33.

⁵⁶See S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., "Paul and 'The Israel of God': An Exegetical and Eschatological Study," in *Essays in Honor of J. Dwight Pentecost* (Stanley D. Toussaint and Charles H. Dyer, eds.; Chicago: Moody, 1986) 181-96.

⁵⁷Horne, "Meaning" 331-32.

⁵⁸For the sake of clarity, "church age" (a phrase used several times in the pages that follow) refers to that period of time beginning on the day of Pentecost and concluding at the second coming.

elect Jews will be saved too.⁵⁹ According to Horne, to view 11:25-32 as referring to the future salvation of *national* Israel (Israel as a whole, as a nation) disregards the entire thrust of Romans 9-11, a context where Paul adamantly denies that salvation is afforded to the nation (i.e., all ethnic Israel) as such. Horne writes,

I would state therefore in summary that when Paul states that 'all Israel shall be saved' means to refer to the full number of elect Jews whom it pleases God to bring into his kingdom throughout the ages until the very day when the full number of the Gentiles also shall have been brought in. In keeping with the context, 'all Israel' means 'the remnant according to the election of grace' (11:5), not the nation in its entirety.⁶⁰

This view has several weaknesses. If "all Israel" is simply the elect ethnic Israel who are saved along with the Gentiles throughout the age, the revelation to Paul in the form of a *mystical revelation* (v. 25) is pointless, since it was clear to him and everyone else even superficially familiar with Christianity in the first century that some Jews were being saved. Also militating against this view is the consideration that the salvation of all Israel comes at a particular point in time in the future as indicated by *achri hou . . . eis elthē* (v. 25), as well as by the future *svu* (v. 26) (*setai* "will be saved" v. 26).⁶¹ To conceive of "all Israel" as elect Jews saved throughout the church age is unconvincing.

(2) A second option associated with "ethnic Israel" is to refer it to Israel as a whole. Some scholars maintain that "Israel" in Romans 9-11 denotes the Jewish people as a totality, and not the multitude of individual Jews. The main support for this view is that the saved in "all Israel" consist in both the believing remnant and the hardened remainder of Israel. Paul is looking forward to a time when not only the remnant but those of Israel who have strayed will be saved. Furthermore, the concept of "Israel as a whole" finds support in the fact that *pas Israēl* stands in contrast to the *leimma* ("remnant") of 11:5 and *tinew* ("some, certain ones") of 11:17.⁶²

Several deficiencies in the view are apparent, however. First, "Israel as a whole" is rather ill defined. Several maintain that *pas Israēl* refers to

⁵⁹William Hendriksen, *Israel in Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968) 44.

⁶⁰Horne, "Meaning" 334; cf. also Hoekema, *Bible* 144, 146.

⁶¹That the salvation of Israel takes place at a specific point of time in the future is argued by Stanley E. Porter, who writes,

In the logic of the argument here, Paul claims that the hardness has come and will last until such time when the fulness of the Gentiles may come (Aorist Subjunctive). . . . The future *svu* [svu setai] is used parallel to the Subjunctive, here designating a logically subsequent event in relation to another projected event . . . , with the added assurance that if the fullness of the Gentiles enters then the salvation of Israel is expected (*Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood* [Studies in Biblical Greek, vol. 1; New York: Brill, 1989] 435).

⁶²Cf. Longenecker, "Answers" 96-97; Munck, *Christ & Israel* 136; Stuhlmacher, "Interpretation" 557; Dahl, *Studies* 153; BDF, par. 275(4), p. 143; W. D. Davies, "Paul" 16 n. 2; Dunn, *Romans* 2:68

as a whole, but not every individual Jew is included in the salvation.⁶³ If by they mean that enough of the individuals in future Israel have exercised faith in Christ to say that the nation or people as a whole are saved, then this is an acceptable view. Otherwise, their definition is incongruous. Second, as was argued under the third view below, *pas Isra eq \O(~,e)l* was used in the LXX to refer to a group of Jews, with the size of that group left unspecified. Hence, to say that *pas Isra eq \O(~,e)l* means "the people or nation as a whole" makes no sense, and is unjustifiably specific based on LXX usage. Third, this view is shaped by some (e.g., Stendahl and Dunn) to argue that Paul's goal was not to maintain a sense of individualism in the future salvation of the Jews, but to affirm the salvation of the Jewish people as a consolidated group. In Stendahl's case, the salvation of the entire group is distinct from the individuals' exercise of faith in Jesus Christ. This approach is difficult to sustain in light of repeated emphasis on individualism in Romans 9-11.⁶⁴

(3) A third option, the strongest of the first three, is that "all Israel" refers to a future group (of unspecified size, though probably a majority) of elect Jews who will be gathered at the time of the fullness of the Gentiles. A number of considerations support this view. In his helpful study of "all Israel" in 1-2 Chronicles (LXX), Osborne has described some intriguing observations from a survey of thirty-four uses of the phrase. In the record of the United Kingdom, the Chronicler used "all Israel" to describe the support David had from the Jewish people before his coronation (1 Chr 11:14-12:38), the soldiers of Israel (1 Chr 19:17), Israel's civic and military leaders (1 Chr 15:25, 28), and the consolidated kingdom over which David reigned (1 Chr 14:1-15:2).

In relation to the Divided Kingdom, the phrase was used for the group of Jews who was to participate in the crowning of Rehoboam (2 Chr 10:3) and for Judah alone (1 Chr 12:1). It was apparently ". . . used specifically for those who are loyal to the king and the cult of Yahweh, and the people from the Northern Kingdom who were included if they meet the criterion."⁶⁶

For the period of the fall of the Northern Kingdom through the exile, "all Israel" was used corporately for the whole nation whose sins needed to be expiated through sacrifice (2 Chr 29:24; cf. also 31:1) and for those who were loyal to the Lord (2 Chr 35:3).

Osborne concludes,

This term usually means those people who attach themselves to the Davidic house and worship of Yahweh. . . . The term always has the theological meaning of "the people of Israel." "All Israel" in its final definition is a term signifying the representatives of Israel who attach themselves to the Davidic figure, the king, in an expression of loyalty. This suggests that in Romans 11:26a "all Israel" is a term designating a majority of people loyal to the messianic king.

⁶³E.g., Longenecker and Davies.

⁶⁴E.g., the testimony of Paul himself as proof that God has not rejected His people [11:1]; the fruit and the root [11:16]; the individual branches that are broken off [11:17]; and the opening of the entire three-chapter section [Rom. 9:1-5] in which Paul expresses intense concern regarding the salvation and condemnation of *individual* Jews (Piper, *Justification* 38-48, 54).

⁶⁵Osborne, "Background" 285-86.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 87.

Davidic figure. It is a collective word used for a whole people who may or may not have saving faith. It never has an individualistic connotation.⁶⁷

Osborne's findings require a number of qualifications. First, his final statements in the otherwise helpful quotation above are in a sense true. "All Israel" is collective, and hence does not always refer (in the OT) to saved individuals. Many passages in 1-2 Chronicles and other OT passages in which "all Israel" occurs, do specify what kinds of individuals make up "all Israel" (i.e., tribal leaders, military leaders, soldiers, etc.). "All Israel" may refer to a group, but individualistic connotations are not absolutely eclipsed.

Second, the picture painted by the OT use of "all Israel" is neither as simple nor as attractive as Osborne makes it.⁶⁸ In 1-2 Chronicles *pas Isra eq \O(~,e)l* refer to those loyal to the king or to the Lord, but in Judg 8:27, for example, "all Israel" played the harlot and pursued idolatry. A further example is 1 Sam 15:19, "all Israel" was forced to have its tools sharpened by the Philistines. "All Israel" might even be inclined to help de-throne David (2 Sam 17:13). In 1 Kgs 12:10, "all Israel" (here restricted to the northern tribes) rejects Rehoboam as king and supports Adoram, the king's representative (1 Kgs 12:18). These excerpts indicate a fluid use of "all Israel" than Osborne implies.

Finally, it may be possible to take the diverse uses of "all Israel" and find a common denominator that is more all-encompassing than Osborne's rather incomplete synthesis. As one investigates the many occurrences of "all Israel" meaning no more technical than "the Jews" emerges specifically, the Jews who were in the immediate context of the phrase "all Israel."⁶⁹ Thus "all Israel" could be the Jews that made up a relatively small group of soldiers (1 Kgs 11:16), the Jews who buried Samuel (1 Sam 25:1), the Jews who were in close proximity to Korah and his demise (Num 16:34), and the Jews who, with King Rehoboam, apostasized (2 Sam 12:1). Second Sam 3:37 is an especially interesting use of *pas Isra eq \O(~,e)l*: "the people and all Israel understood that day that it had not been the will of the king to put Abner the son of Ner to death." Note the distinction between "all the people" (*p eq \O(,a)w eq \O(2,o) la eq \O(3,o)w [pas ho laos]*) and "all Israel" (*pas Isra eq \O(~,e)l*). The author could have written simply "all Israel" instead of using "all the people" and "all Israel," but he apparently wanted to distinguish between those more intimately associated with and in closer proximity to King David and *ho laos* (cf. 2 Sam 3:31, 32, 34, 35, 36), and a wider group, *pas Isra eq \O(~,e)l*.

(4) A fourth option in the meaning of *pas Isra eq \O(~,e)l* in Rom 11:13 is seemingly a more defensible interpretation of the phrase. The above data suggest that Paul intended the phrase to convey nothing more than this: "And thus I will save the Jews (i.e., as suggested by the context, those who are alive and have faith in Christ).

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸With the help of *IBYCUS/TLG*, I searched the LXX for the phrase *pw llIsral* (to limit the search and to provide the closest parallels to Romans 11, only the nominative singular was considered) and found 73 occurrences, some of which are mentioned in this second caveat.

⁶⁹The exception to this comes in the geographical references to "all Israel," from Dan to Beer Sheva (1 Sam 3:20; cf. also 1 Kgs 8:65).

at the time of the fullness of the Gentiles) will be saved."⁷⁰ Hence, *pas Isra eq \O(~,e)l* contains no hint of the size of the group (a majority, or Israel as a whole) but instead is simply a non-specific statement that Jews in the future *will* be saved. This group of Jews is probably at least a majority because their salvation was a consuming hope for Paul and a minority remnant would not have satisfied his longings. But from the wide range of usage in the OT, *pas Isra eq \O(~,e)l* cannot be pressed to yield such a specific understanding.

The Time of Israel's Salvation

The verb *s eq \O(~,o)th eq \O(~,e)setai* provides a natural occasion to consider more fully the time of Israel's salvation and the fullness of the Gentiles. Four opinions regarding when these events take place have surfaced: (1) in the immediate future; (2) throughout the church age; (3) at a time in the more remote future, but still during the church age; and (4) at the second coming. View 2 is discussed above in connection with the first explanation of *pas Isra eq \O(~,e)l* that it refers to Jews saved throughout the church age), and was found to be unsatisfactory.

(1) The first option is that Paul envisioned the fullness of the Gentiles and the salvation of Israel taking place in his own immediate future. Aus offers one of the most articulate defenses of this position. He envisages Paul as anticipating the fulfillment of the many OT prophecies regarding the Gentiles who come to Jerusalem in Messianic days. Romans 15:16 portrays Paul as foreseeing that his ministry in Spain would be the fulfillment of these OT prophecies (Isa 60:1-6; 66:18-20; Ps 72:8-11).⁷¹

However, Aus's work has several serious methodological flaws. First, Aus apparently has misread his OT texts (p. 241). He holds that Paul's offering of the Gentiles in Jerusalem would usher in the second coming, but in Isa 60:2-3; 66:18-20 it is the second coming that results in the gathering of Gentiles, Jews, and offerings to Jerusalem. Second, he draws some unwarranted inferences, claiming that in Rom 15:16 the "offering of the Gentiles" is the Gentiles themselves (appositional genitive) because Paul is thinking of the eschatological doctrine of such an offering (pp. 236-37). He fails to demonstrate this eschatological element in Romans 15, however, and is reasoning circularly. He also avers that the "fulfillment of the Gentiles" in 11:25 and the offering of the Gentiles in Rom 15:16 are "intimately tied" (p. 242), but fails to show clues from either passage that demonstrate the connection.

Third, Aus maintains that Paul's collection for the Jerusalem church (including not only a sizeable amount of money, but also an impressive number of Gentile converts, thus fulfilling the prophetic "gathering" motif) had de-

⁷⁰As an aside from this exegetical study, it is interesting to note how this identification of "Israel" coincides with a premillennial return of Christ to establish on earth a kingdom in which Jewish people will play the leading role.

⁷¹Aus, "Travel Plans" 234. Against Aus, and for a more plausible understanding of Paul's missionary plans and expectations, cf. Peter Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969) 145-46.

eschatological overtones (pp. 261-62), though Paul never mentions these discussing the collection.⁷² One must ask how Aus can discern that eschatological hopes were important to Paul without Paul ever mentioning them. Fourth, Aus has Paul revising OT motifs so completely as to make them unrecognizable. Instead of the Messiah coming (Isa 60:2; 66:15-17, 19-20), restoring nation Israel (Isa 60:2), gathering Gentiles (Isa 60:3; 66:18) who in turn gathered dispersed Jews to Jerusalem (Isa 66:19-20), Aus's reconstruction has Paul (a leading Gentile) leading Gentiles to Jerusalem (Rom 15:16) in hope of bringing about the end (Rom 11:25c) and the Messiah's return. It is problematic to perceive of Paul as fulfilling any OT prophecies when what he was doing was so diverse from the OT. Finally, Rom 11:14 (s eq \O(/,v)sv tin eq \O(/,a)w eq \O(1,e)j a eq \O('y)t eq \O(;,v)n (*kai s eq \O(-, \O(-,o) tinas ex aut eq \O(-,o)n*, "and I will save some of them") shows Paul's hope to be high, but probably not so grandiose as Aus suggests. This view is fraught with enough problems to remove it from consideration.

(2) See the first view regarding the meaning of *pas Isra eq \O(-,e)l* discussed above.

(3) The third view, that the fullness of the Gentiles and all Israel's salvation takes place in the more remote future but during the church age prior to the second coming, is based on four inferences of the Romans text. [1] In Rom 11:14 and 15, the restoration of the Jews will have an amazing impact on the world for an indeterminate time following this restoration.⁷⁴ This weighs against the first view below which interprets these events as taking place at the second coming. [2] In Rom 11:23, the key for the "in-grafting" of the Jews is faith. There is no indication in the context of 11:25-27 that this faith is sparked by observing the second coming of Christ. Rather, faith may be sparked as it is in Roman 10:17 through hearing the preached Word of God.

[3] The salvation of all Israel entails the forgiveness of sins which is based on a covenant, according to 11:26b-27. In the NT the New Covenant which Paul was a minister (2 Cor 3:6) is probably the covenant intended in this passage. If the New Covenant is in view, it is difficult (though surely impossible) to see how the salvation of all Israel and the fullness of the Gentiles can take place at a time other than during the church age. [4] Finally, in Rom 11:32 the deictic indicators *p eq \O(3,o)te . . . n eq \O(;,y)n . . . n eq \O(;,y)n . . . /n eq \O(;,y)n/* (*pote . . . nyn . . . nyn . . . [nyn]*, "formerly . . . now . . . now . . . [now]") are crucial to a correct understanding of the timing of the fullness and salvation. Dunn rightly sees *pote/nyn* antithesis as a reference to the salvation-historical division of epochs, *pote* expressing the pre-Christ era and *nyn* expressing the arrival of Mess

⁷²This is Aus's observation ("Traveling Plans" 261-62).

⁷³For Paul's statement of his goal for the collection, cf. 2 Cor 8:13-15, where he says the collection is designed to meet pressing physical needs in the Jerusalem church.

⁷⁴Journet, "Destinies" 85.

⁷⁵To be sure, Journet's point can support the view that the second coming is in mind; if Israel is blessed at the second coming, then those blessings can continue to have an impact on the earth even into the millennial kingdom (assuming a premillennial eschatology). But the remaining arguments taken together with this one make the second coming difficult to connect with the salvation and fullness if it consists only of a single event.

days.⁷⁶ The final disputed *nyn*¹ The second *nyn* of 11:31 has a spotty MS tradition, rise to the use of brackets in the NA²⁶ and the UBS^{3c}, with a "D" rating in the latter. But the evidence to suggest that it was the original reading. All three readings ($\text{eq } \backslash O(y) \text{steron}$ $\backslash O(,y)n$; *omit*) have reasonably strong MS support. Following the critical apparatus of NA $\backslash O(y) \text{steron}$ is supported by diverse text types: 33 is an excellent MS with largely Alexandrian readings as is the Sahidic; 365 is largely Caesarean or Western. This reading is also ancient, with Coptic originating in the third or fourth century and finding wide acceptance in geographically diverse places (Egypt = Sahidic; the West = 365).

The omission of $n \text{ eq } \backslash O(,y)n$ is supported by the proto-Alexandrian and very ancient (copied ca. A.D. 200), the later Alexandrian A (from the fourth century), the second corrector (Western text), the Western and later F and G (both from the ninth century), and C as well as Old Latin and many Syriac (Byzantine text-type) MSS. These MSS also indicate a wide acceptance from Egypt to Syria to the West.

The inclusion of $n \text{ eq } \backslash O(,y)n$ has strong MS support as well. The great ^{A} is joined by strong proto-Alexandrian reading (and these are ancient as well: ^{A} is from the fourth century from the fifth). D* is a Western text originating probably in the sixth century but it has numerous singular readings and should be used with caution in resolving textual problems. The Beza apparently was based on a similar Greek text to B, giving Alexandrian readings.

From the MS evidence, $n \text{ eq } \backslash O(,y)n$ should probably (with great caution) be accepted as original. But when coupled with the transcriptional probability, the caution may be somewhat. Of the three readings, the one that may have given rise to the others is probably $\backslash O(,y)n$. Metzger writes, "The difficulty in meaning that the second occurrence of $n \text{ eq } \backslash O(,y)n$ seems to introduce may have prompted either its deletion or its replacement by the superior more appropriate $\text{eq } \backslash O(y) \text{steron}$ " (*A Textual Commentary of the Greek New Testament* [Stuttgart: United Bible Societies, 1971] 527). Furthermore, $n \text{ eq } \backslash O(,y)n$ is also the harder reading (cf. Zuck and Grosvenor, *Analysis* 2:486). From a scribe's perspective, it makes less sense to say that Israel *now* being saved when in fact this was not the case. Hence a possible substitution of $\text{eq } \backslash O(y) \text{steron}$ for $n \text{ eq } \backslash O(,y)n$, or else a complete omission. It is difficult to see how the omission could be original since it makes fine sense without any other additions, and is thus less likely to give rise to the other two readings. Also, $\text{eq } \backslash O(y) \text{steron}$ is cogent by itself as well, making it difficult to see how it could give rise to $n \text{ eq } \backslash O(,y)n$.

In light of its solid MS evidence (including antiquity and geographical diversity), the likelihood that $n \text{ eq } \backslash O(,y)n$ gave rise to the other readings, and the fact that it is the harder reading, the support for $n \text{ eq } \backslash O(,y)n$ of 11:31 should be preferred as the original reading and with slightly less reticence Metzger expresses. should not be understood in a manner any different from the preceding: Gentiles are being saved *now*, during the present age; Israel is hardened *now*, during the present age and Israel is saved *now*, during the present age. No special eschatological sense for the final period is justifiable. Therefore, the three occurrences of *nyn* refer to the gospel era, the interim period between the first and second coming climaxed by the salvation of Israel. Corley writes,

It cannot be stated with precision whether this episode culminates in the *parousia* or precedes it in time; however, the time period for the fulfillment of the prophecy has its *operandi* in gospel proclamation and its *terminus ad quem* at the return of Christ.⁷⁷

The weaknesses of the third view lie in the nature of the evidence for it. The supporting arguments are admittedly inferential, with one of them, the fo

⁷⁶Dunn, *Romans* 2:687.

⁷⁷Corley, "Jews" 56; cf. also Robertson, "Future" 227.

relying on a disputed textual variant.

(4) A fourth view of the timing of the fullness of the Gentiles and salvation of all Israel, one not too distinguishable from the third, is that events take place at the very moment of the second coming of Christ to earth. This is a popular view with interpreters,⁷⁸ and a fair amount of evidence has proffered to support it. The context makes it probable that Paul is looking at the spiritual restoration of Israel as a whole *at the end*, making this salvation an eschatological event in the strict sense. Perhaps this coincides somewhat with Rom 10:23b and the conversion of all Israel will occur at the end of the age. Apocalyptic literature in its anticipation that the *eschaton* would follow the repentance of all Israel also supports this explanation.⁸⁰ In addition, the future tense verbs in 11:26-27 (svu eq \O(/,h)setai; eq \O(h)jei; eq \O(',a) postr eq \O(3,e)cei; \O(~,o)th eq \O(~,e)setai; h eq \O(~,e)xei; apostrepsei, "will be saved; will come; will turn") bolster this view.⁸¹ Further, the quotations from Isaiah, being from eschatological/apocalyptic sections of that book, support a reference to the second coming of Christ. Also, eq \O(2,r) eq \O(/,y) omai (*hryomai*, "I deliver") is used in 1 Tim 1:10 to refer to Christ at His second coming; why not here?⁸² Finally, the phrase \O(1,e) k Si eq \O(/,v)n (*ek Si eq \O(~,o)n*, "from Zion") in 11:26b is probably a reference to the Messiah coming from the heavenly Jerusalem at His second coming.⁸³

Several points vitiate this view, however. The future tense verbs may be understood as reflecting a future sense to *Isaiah*, but not to Paul. For Paul's future tense verbs could refer to an already realized fulfillment of the Isaianic prophecies rather than to a fulfillment yet future to Paul.¹ ¹Zerwick and Grosvenor, *Analysis 2:485*, note that the future verb *jei* is a future tense with the perfect sense "has come." This is Hvalby's perception when he writes,

For Paul the Deliverer has already come from Zion (cf. 9.33). This is clearly seen when Paul compares Rom. 11.28 with 15.8. In 11.26-28 the salvation of 'all Israel' is linked with the promises to the fathers (cf. also 9.5), and in 15.8 Paul tells how these promises have been confirmed when 'Christ became a servant to the circumcised'. This means that the truthfulness toward his promises is seen in Christ's first coming.¹ ¹Reidar Hvalby

⁷⁸Cf. Bockmuehl, *Mystery* 173; de Boor, *Rmer* 268; Stuhlmacher, "Interpretation" 561; Schmiedel, *Rmerbrief* 2:404; Dunn, *Romans* 2:682; Munck, *Christ and Israel* 134, 137; Jacob Jervell, "Die unbekannte Paulus," in *Die Paulinische Literatur und Theologie* (Sigfreid Pedersen, ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980) 45; W. D. Davies, "Paul" 27; Wilckens, *Rmer* 2:256; Kessel, *Romans* 314; Cranfield, *Romans* 2:578; Daniel P. Fuller, *Gospel & Law: Contrast or Continuum?* (Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 188, 191).

⁷⁹Cranfield, *Romans* 2:557. Dunn (*Romans* 2:682) avers that the salvation of all Israel will take place at the final salvation, i.e., the redemption of the body and the restoration of all of creation (Rom 8:19-23; 11:12).

⁸⁰Cf. *T.Dan* 6:4; *T.Sim* 6:2-7; *T.Jud* 23:5-24:2; *As.Mos* 1:18; *2 Bar* 78:6-7; *Apoc. Abr* 31:1-3. Elizabeth Johnson, *The Function of Apocalyptic and Wisdom Traditions in Romans 9-11* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989) 128.

⁸¹Wilckens, *Rmer* 2:256.

⁸²Stuhlmacher, "Interpretation" 561 n. 31.

⁸³Corley, "Future" 55; de Boor, *Rmer* 268; Schmithals, *Rmerbrief* 404.

'Sonderweg' for Israel: A Critical Examination of a Current Interpretation of Romans 11:25-27. *JSNT* 38 (1990):93; cf. also Dieter Zeller, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1985) 199.

Hvalvik also argues that *ek Sin* may have been a pre-Pauline reading so that it did not change the LXX *neken Sin* (*heneken Sin*, "on account of Zion") to suit his needs.¹ ¹Cf. the brief discussion of this in the section below on "The Scriptural Proof of Israel's Salvation." But by the phrase *ek Sin* Paul may have meant simply that the Messiah would come in His humanity from the Jewish people (Rom 9:5),¹ ¹E. J. Epp, *Function* 162. or that the place of the resurrection was earthly Jerusalem.¹ ¹Hvalvik, "Sonderweg" 95. In Paul's other use of *Sin* (Rom 9:33) the reference is apparent to Jerusalem.¹ ¹In fact, in the NT when *Sin* refers to the heavenly Jerusalem, there are more clues present to make this clear (cf. Heb 12:22). In summarizing the problems against the view that Paul refers to the second coming 11:25-27, Hvalvik notes, "If arguments are given [in support of the second coming], they are few and not very strong."¹ ¹Hvalvik, "Sonderweg" 92. On the other hand, Hvalvik does not respond to all of the evidence to view 3 (e.g., the future tense *sthsetai* [v. 26] used by Paul outside of citations from Isaiah) and may be overly severe in criticizing it.

A conclusion about the timing of the fullness of the Gentiles and the salvation of all Israel must rule out the first and second views. A merging of views 3 and 4 is the probable solution. The timing of these events should probably be viewed as taking place during the church age at a specific time future to Paul but not just future to Isaiah, View 3) and as occurring perhaps several years before Christ's second coming to earth.¹ ¹That this conversion is "perhaps several years before the second coming" is suggested by the positive effect the renewed Israel will have on the world (15). Furthermore, Israel's conversion serves as a primary prerequisite for the second coming (hence the adjusted View 4).¹ ¹With due respect to D. A. Carson, "Matthew," in *Expositor's Bible Commentary* (vol. 8, Frank E. Gabelein, ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984) 487-88 and Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) 474, these scholars miss the point in Matt 23:35: *me dhte p' rti vw n epete*. The residents of Jerusalem will not see Christ until their Ps 118:22 confession. The order of events is not that they will not see Christ until they see Christ (which is though hopelessly tautologous, is an integral part of the posttribulationism), but that they will see Christ *until the Jews of Jerusalem acknowledge Him as being from God*. After that acknowledgment, Christ will return to the Jewish people, but not before. So their change of heart transpires before Christ's return as a necessary prerequisite to it, not *while* He is returning as posttribulationism requires. To be more specific than this is to import theological presuppositions not readily supported by the text.

The Scriptural Proof of Israel's Salvation

A consideration of the purpose of the OT citations from Isa 59:20-21 and Rom 11:26b-27 is in order. Hvalvik argues that these verses should not be seen as speaking of the *time* of Israel's salvation, but rather as the ground for the statement *ka otvw pw llsrsl svusetai* (*kai houtos pas Isral sthsetai*, "and thus all Israel will be saved").¹ ¹Hvalvik, "Sonderweg" 95. Hvalvik probably overstates his point somewhat, however. The *tan* carries some deictic force, so that a temporal understanding cannot be completely ruled out. But for the most part he is correct. These verses use the OT to show that God will

Israel just as Paul also has said. Paul's citation of the two passages from Isaiah are signed to strengthen his case for the restoration of Israel. His use of these verses from Isaiah are important to his argument.

An important change from the LXX in Paul's use of Isa 59:20 (alluded to above in the discussion of the fourth view of the timing of the salvation) is the switch from *neken* (*heneken*, "for the sake of," "to") to the use of *k* (*ek*, "from . . . from").¹ Four items differentiate the MT, the LXX, and Romans in these verses. (1) In Isa 59:20 compare the phrase **log ,oy 'u** ("a Redeemer will come to/for Zion") with the LXX **\O(h) jei eq \O(6,e) neken Si eq \O(? ,v)n eq \O(2,o) eq \O(2,r) y eq \O(3,o)menow** ("a Redeemer will come for the sake of/to Zion") and Rom 11:26 **eq \O(1,e) k Si eq \O(? ,v)n . . .** ("*from Zion* . . ."). (2) Also compare the MT **bOq eq \O(1,;) eq \O(a,y) eq \O(e,B) eq \O(a,c) eq \O(e,f) y eq \O(E,b) eq \O(A,v) eq \O(1,l)u** ("and those who return from ungodliness/transgression in Jacob") with the LXX **ka eq \O(4,i) eq \O(3,e)cei eq \O(' ,a) sebe eq \O(3,i)aw eq \O(' ,a) p eq \O(4,o) 1lak eq \O(/ ,v)b** ("and those who turn away ungodliness from Jacob") and Rom 11:26b, which reads the same as the LXX. (3) In Isa 59:21, the MT reads **< eq \O(A,/)o' y eq \O(I,/)y eq \O(I,r) eq \O(1,B) /O'z y eq \O(I,n) eq \O(1,') eq \O(a,w)** ("and as for me, this is/will be my covenant with them") in comparison with the LXX and Rom 11:27a, both reading **eq \O(4,i) a eq \O(,y)th a eq \O(,y)to eq \O(@ ,i)w eq \O(" ,h) par' eq \O(' ,e) mo eq \O(;y) d' eq \O(/ ,h)kh** ("and this is/will be the covenant with them from me"). (4) In Isa 27:9, the MT reads **eq \O(1,;) eq \O(a,y) > ,o eq \O(1,;) r eq \O(a,p) eq \O(1,') eq \O(1,y) /O'z eq \O(1,B) , eq \O(E,k) eq \O(A,l)** ("therefore the iniquity of Jacob will be covered/atoned for/removed"), and the LXX has **eq \O(6,o) eq \O(3,e)lvmai a eq \O(' ,y)to eq \O(;y) t eq \O(? ,h)n eq \O(" ,a) mart eq \O(3,i)an** ("when I remove their sins") in comparison to Rom 11:27b which reads **eq \O(6,o) tan eq \O(' ,a) f eq \O(3,e)lvmai eq \O(? ,a)w eq \O(" ,a) mart eq \O(3,i)aw a eq \O(' ,y)t eq \O(;v)n** ("when I remove their sins"). On these differences, Archer and Chirichigno are probably right (if not overly simplistic) in saying, "The LXX has a conflate quotation, with four minor variants *that do not greatly affect the sense*. . . . A great deal could be said about the variations between the texts and how Paul's emendation of the LXX and MT indicates his thoughts in this passage. Schaller has examined the possibility of a variant Greek OT text which Paul may have been following, concluding that Paul did *not* simply adjust the text to fit it to his purposes, but probably relied on a variant.⁸⁴ This is a possibility (Schaller's arguments are cogent), but it is speculative and does not resolve anything.

In 11:26 Paul draws from Isa 59:21a the promise of the New Covenant. Rather than continuing to cite the rest of 59:21, which tells of the promise of the Holy Spirit, Paul shifts to Isa 27:9, emphasizing a different aspect of the New Covenant, namely, the forgiveness of sins. The theme of forgiveness fits better with Paul's argument for the restoration of Israel than a reference to the gift of the Spirit; Paul has emphasized Israel's *parapt eq \O(~ ,o)ma* and *h eq \O(~ ,e)tt eq \O(~ ,e)ma* (11:25) and her *eq \O(' ,a) pist eq \O(3,i)a* (*apistia*, "unbelief") (11:23), and the need for forgiveness is strong in this chapter. Hence, the shift away from Isa 59:21b to Isa 27:9

⁸⁴Brendt Schaller, "6Hjei k Sin ymenow: zur Textgestalt von Jes. 59:20f. in Rom 11:26f.," *Septuaginta: Studies in Honor of John William Wevers on his 65th Birthday* (ed. Albert Pietersma and Claude Cox; Mississauga, Ontario: Benben Publications, 1984) 205-6.

explicable. So Paul's use of the prophecies of Isaiah fits well with the essential thrust of his argument in Romans 11.

Paul's use of *hryomenos* ("delivered") is significant to some scholars. Getty notes that whenever Paul uses the verb *hryomenos* he uses it in reference to God (Rom 7:24; 15:31; 2 Cor 1:10). No doubt Isaiah uses *hryomenos* with God as its referent,⁸⁵ suggesting that God, and not Christ, is in view in 11:27. However, the rabbis apparently saw Isa 59:20 as Messianic (cf. *b.Sanh.* 98a),⁸⁶ and it is hard to believe that Paul would have used it referring to any other than Christ.

The phrase *apostrepsei asebeias apo Iak eq \O(-,o)b*, "will turn ungodly away from Jacob")⁸⁸ is an important link with Romans 4. Hvalvik writes,

These words in the quotation are significant particularly because they form a link with Rom. 4, the great chapter concerning justification by faith. In 4.5 Paul is speaking about God "who justifies the ungodly (t eq \O(4,o)n eq \O('a) seb eq \O(;,h) [*ton asebe eq \O(-,o)b* "the ungodly"])" and it is the same God who speaks in the quotation from Scripture. Paul quotes from Ps. 31.1 the word about those "whose sins (a eq \O(2,i) eq \O('a) m eq \O(3,i)ai [*hai hamartiai*, "the sins"]) are covered" it is they who are justified by faith, works. These connecting lines clearly indicate that when Paul speaks about the salvation of Israel in 11:25-27, he refers to justification of the ungodly and justification by faith. In other words, salvation is thus nothing else but salvation *sola fide* and *sola gratia*.⁸⁹

Thus the Isaiah quotations fit well again with Paul's Romans emphasis on salvation of all Israel by sin and ungodliness by grace through faith.

In 11:27a, the phrase *ka eq \O(4,i) a eq \O(,y)th a eq \O('y)to eq \O(@,i)w eq \O('f)emo eq \O(;,y) diau eq \O(/,h)kh* (*kai haut eq \O(-,e) autois h eq \O(-,e) par' emou diau eq \O(-,e)k eq \O(-,e)*, "and this is the covenant from Me with them") is clearly understood as referring to the New Covenant of New Testament times. Hvalvik writes that the phrase ". . . certainly refers to the 'New Covenant' which Paul construes as a promise of the salvation of all Israel."⁹⁰ This issue does not necessarily bear on the timing of the fullness of the Gentiles or of the salvation of all Israel (surely a salvation that might take place at the second coming would

⁸⁵Mary Ann Getty, "Paul And Israel in Romans 9-11," *CBQ* 50 (1988):461.

⁸⁶Dunn, *Romans* 2:682; Wilckens, *Rmer* 2:257; Tholuck, *Romans* 389.

⁸⁷E. Johnson, *Function* 128; Zeller, *Juden und Heiden* 259. One might view 1 Thess 1:10 as supporting the second-coming view of the conversion in Romans 11. Since the Lord Jesus Christ "delivers us from the wrath to come" and this deliverance is eschatological, then perhaps the salvation of Israel also should be located at the second coming. But 1 Thess 1:10 refers to those who are already saved and are awaiting His coming, and does not speak of a mass conversion at that time. Furthermore, though the deliverance spoken of in 1 Thessalonians is future, it is based upon the finished work of Christ at His first advent. This fits well with the interpretation given in this article: all Israel will be saved in the future, but this salvation is based not on the *second* coming of Christ but on His *first* coming.

⁸⁸To whom does *lakb* refer? It is never used in the NT for the church; the reference here must be to Jews. Cf. P. Richardson, *Israel* 128-29.

⁸⁹Hvalvik, "*Sonderweg*" 96 [transliteration and translation added]; cf. also Cranfield, *Romans* 2:100.

⁹⁰Piper, *Justification*, 20; cf. also Black, *Romans* 148; Corley, "Future" 55.

"New Covenant" salvation). The greater emphasis of Paul's teaching regarding salvation under the New Covenant points more to salvation during the church age and through the gospel proclamation of the church than to salvation at the second coming,⁹¹ though all the phases of the latter cannot be completely ruled out.

PAUL'S PICTURE OF ISRAEL SUMMARIZED

In Romans 11 Paul sought to curtail any spiritual arrogance the Gentile believers in Rome might feel in comparing themselves with Jewish believers. He did this by disclosing new revelation he had received regarding the spiritual destiny of the Jews. He pointed out the obvious: a large number of first-century Jews (and, by implication, subsequently throughout the church age) were temporarily hardened. After some future point when a large, divinely determined number of Gentiles will have been saved (probably some time prior to the conjunction with second-coming events), a (presumably) large number of Jews will be saved through the finished New Covenant ministry of Christ. This is apparently what Paul conveys in the three difficult verses, Rom 11:25-27.

A number of issues emerge from the exegetical conclusions of this study. How does the passage relate to suggestions that Paul taught two ways of salvation, one for the Jews and another for the Gentiles? What does this future salvation contribute to the future of *national* Israel? What is the *locus* of the people of God—the church or Israel? What is the contribution of 11:25-27 to theodicy? How does it further an understanding of eschatology as a whole? Further studies hopefully supply answers to these and other questions.

⁹¹Cf. 1 Cor 11:26; 2 Cor 3:6-18.