

Prophecy Spiritually Understood - Pt 3 'Romans Eleven and the Two Israels'

by Charles Alexander

The sermon explains the prophetic significance of Romans 11 and the distinction between Israel after the flesh and Israel after the spirit, emphasizing the spiritualization of Israel into its final form as the Church of Jew and gentile.

Scripture: Isaiah 53:10, Isaiah 59:20, John 17:2, Romans 11:26, Hebrews 13:20

Topics: "Election Of Grace", "New Covenant Theology"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher delves into the deep theological and prophetic discussions of Romans 11, emphasizing the rejection of earthly Israel and the enduring nature of the election of grace. The preacher highlights the agony of Paul over the fate of Israel, showing that 'all Israel shall be saved' refers to the election of grace, not a future restoration of the Jewish nation. By connecting Paul's arguments to Isaiah 59, the preacher reveals that 'all Israel' symbolizes the Church of the Redeemed, composed of both Jew and Gentile, under the New Covenant of Grace.

Transcript

The understanding of verse 26 of Romans 11 does not depend upon the verse 25 going before, but upon its own internal connection with the entire range of prophecy, and is to be considered not as an addendum to the 11th chapter of Romans but as the summation of three chapters of close reasoning, which in their turn express the New Testament and apostolic doctrine of prophecy.

It is surely a highly questionable theory which hinges so tremendous an issue upon such a slight procedure, and our criticism extends not only to the methods of our futuristic brethren, but to those of our friends who, while concluding rightly that the Israel mentioned in the verse is the spiritual Israel, the Church, make no attempt to prove their case by a thorough exposition of the text from Isaiah 59:20, which Paul makes the ground of his assertion: "And so all Israel shall be saved".

This paper attempts to rectify that serious omission, and at the same time to present a clear and consistent interpretation of Romans 11.

THE TWO ISRAELS

AN EXPOSITION OF ROMANS 9 - 11

"The Christian Church being then the legitimate and proper continuation of Israel, to it must belong most of the promises which, superficially examined, are supposed to furnish a pledge of the future salvation of the Jews. They have already found their fulfillment in the victorious career pursued by the Church through all the past centuries, in its irrepressible tendency to spread out to the very ends of the earth, in the spirit of reformation by which it is swayed, and in the light which arises to it ever afresh out of the darkness. In a word these promises are being fulfilled every day before our eyes.

"It is a sad denial of the grace vouchsafed by God to His Church, to refer the glorious promises of Scripture almost exclusively to the future, not to be able to follow out the hidden traces of divine blessing, both in the past and the present, to fail to discern in the Church the true Israel, and in its place to dress up an Israel of the fancy, out of the Jews, to speak slightly of the Church, and contrast it with that Kingdom of God which is first to come when the Jews are converted.

"This is one of the many subjective aberrations of the present day, which must vanish as soon as the Church has been awakened to a sounder estimate of its position and privileges. Indeed one might prophesy the downfall of these opinions from the circumstance of their late origin: they have against them the consentient voice of all the various sections of the entire Christian Church.

"A recent writer has said, 'It is not to be denied that, for the Church as a whole, the Old Testament is of comparatively little use'. But then, by way of set-off we can console ourselves with the thought, that we are a community of heathens, and that is the necessary consequence of setting the Jews in the place of the Church of Christ. But the apostle teaches us that all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. The scriptures of the O.T. to which these words primarily refer must have been differently interpreted by him who could speak in such a way."

Dr. E. W. Hengstenberg, Berlin.

"The Jews and the Christian Church"

(Edinburgh translation, 1860).

This celebrated theologian, whose strong sledgehammer blows pulverized the theological Rationalism of Germany a century ago, has been described by Dr. B.B. Warfield as, "The greatest Old Testament exegete of all time." His searching words quoted above are all the greater rebuke to the specious prophetic interpretations current among evangelicals today, because in fact he was a friend of the teaching of a future (spiritual) restoration of earthly Israel. The present writer does not follow him there, but with all the greater readiness acknowledges the debt he owes to the mighty Biblical scholarship of this celebrated man whose name is almost unknown today in the land of his birth, though if they had given due heed to him, German rationalism would have been strangled in its cradle and a century of history would have taken a different course.

That God did not permit this to be so must be regarded as a judgment upon our age, but this does not excuse the evangelical expositor for ignoring the greatest treasure house of Biblical exposition available since the Reformation. We hear that an American agency is planning to reissue the whole of the English translations of Hengstenberg. This to us is a far more momentous event than the recent landing of men on the moon.

HOW STRANGE!

If we needed a defense for taking up this subject of prophetic interpretation we have it in the words of the great doctor above. How strange that WE should be regarded as disturbers of peace for protesting vigorously against the unscholarly and facile views of Biblical exposition today, when the entire evangelical world is in a state of acute decline after several generations of increasing ineptitude in the handling of the Word of God and after a brief era of gargantuan "Crusades" at the cost of millions of money, the net result of which is to leave the churches very much weaker than they were even ten years ago.

That we should have to explain ourselves to such an age as this, and defend ourselves against the charge of being disturbers of the peace (however false that peace may be) is to us a pathetic symptom of the sickness which prevails.

We have not sought this battle. Others have thrown down the gage. We have but taken it up, with much reluctance, but being persuaded that it is a task which has to be done, we intend with the help of God and the support of friends who long for the end of these days of famine, to press the battle to the gates.

THE EXPOSITION

PAUL'S PROPHETIC AGONY PROVES ISRAEL'S REJECTION

We now begin our exposition of Romans 11, but we commence at the natural beginning of the chapter, that is, with the first verse of chapter 9. This is where Paul begins, but it is not usually where our opponents begin.

The period commences with five intense verses in which Paul voices a mysterious agony over the rejection of the Israelitish nation. He could wish himself accursed from Christ, if his own rejection could bring about the salvation of his fellow-countrymen.

The attempts throughout history to make sense of this solemn exercise in the depths of the apostolic spirit have been mournful in the extreme. The simple truth has been overlooked. It is this: PAUL'S AGONY OVER THE REJECTION OF HIS PEOPLE WAS PROPHETIC IN ITS NATURE. Like the agony of Jeremiah in his 20th chapter, it was the direst possible indication of the divine purpose totally to reject and disinherit the unbelieving nation which for a thousand years had killed the prophets and stoned those sent unto them with the message of God. There was to be no respite in that rejection, NO RESTORATION OF ISRAEL.

The entire process of reasoning leading up to the words in the 11th chapter, "And so Israel shall be saved", begins here. If Paul knew that within minutes of writing this description of his agony in which he was ready to surrender his own hope of salvation, his pen would be describing the exact opposite of Israel's rejection, and even (according to our opponents) foretelling a future for Israel, so grand and glorious that it would not only excel all their previous history, but even dim the glories and the conquests of the Christian Church for the last 2,000 years, his distress was meaningless. He was wrestling with a phantom.

Is this what our friends wish the Christian Church to believe? They set up our great apostle as a mere man of straw, with an extravagant style of useless rhetoric. We repel the suggestion. Paul's agony was the greatest of proofs against any restoration of the earthly nation of Israel and we challenge all comers to

make sense of Paul's statement by declaring otherwise.

Toward the end of this paper we have reason to refer again to this matter.

THE TWO ISRAELS

The intense sorrow of Paul for rejected Israel, his "kinsmen according to the flesh", does not prevent him from declaring his confidence in the promises of God to Israel. But these promises, he tells us, were not made to the earthly nation as such, nor were they confined to any portion of that nation considered as worthy of the heavenly inheritance. The apostle introduces a totally new conception of Israel. Not all are Israel who are of Israel. Here are his words:

"Not as though the word of God hath taken no effect,

FOR THEY ARE NOT ALL ISRAEL WHICH ARE OF ISRAEL. (Romans 9:6)

Our readers will notice Paul's use of the term ALL ISRAEL, and make a due comparison with that text in Romans 11:26, which our opponents regard as the keystone of their structure. "ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED" is their slogan, and they wave their banner, with that sentence upon it, in the faces of those who disagree with them, as though this were the end of all argument.

Alas for their confidence. We on our part breathe a hearty Amen, and declare, "All Israel SHALL be saved, but which Israel?" For Paul speaks of two Israel's, the one of the flesh and the other of the spirit. "They are not all Israel which are of Israel". The one is rejected and the other accepted. The one is blinded and other receives its sight.

The apostle goes on (in Romans 9) to enforce this conclusion by the analogy of Abraham's two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. The former was as much the child of Abraham as was Isaac, though born of the Egyptian bondwoman Hagar, but the verdict of inspiration is:

Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. (Verse 7)

Paul is pursuing an allegory, as he did also when writing to the Galatians (Gal. 4:22-31). He is treating Ishmael as the representative of all Israel after the flesh, though in fact no Jew was descended from Hagar's son. Isaac is put forward as the representative of all Israel after the spirit, though these include a stupendous majority of gentiles who in fact never descended from Isaac.

It is indisputable that this is the apostle's meaning, for he explains himself in the next verse (verse 8):

THAT IS, THEY WHICH ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE FLESH, THESE ARE NOT THE CHILDREN OF GOD: BUT THE CHILDREN OF PROMISE ARE COUNTED FOR THE SEED.

As in the allegory of Galatians 4, so here the apostle Paul makes a total distinction between the Two Israel's, based upon the PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE OF ABRAHAM'S TWO SONS. The one (Ishmael) represents Israel after the flesh, to whom no promises are made and who are not considered as the Seed of Abraham at all. The other (Isaac) represents Israel after the spirit or the true Church of the Redeemed, and of the Firstborn, who are written in heaven, and these - Jew and gentile together - are the true Seed of Abraham to whom the promises were made.

Nothing can shake this position which the apostle takes up, and it is a position fundamental to the gospel which Paul preached.

Our friends who triumphantly flourish the sentence, "And so all Israel shall be saved" as though this proves beyond argument that an earthly future of special privilege belongs to Jewry on the ground that they, the Jews, are the natural seed of Abraham to whom the promises have been made, had better be careful what they are about, for they are confusing flesh and spirit, and it is small wonder that in the process they deprive the Church of every significant prophecy in the Word of God and reduce the present status of the Church to that of a mere twilight episode in the purposes of God. A great eclipse to the Church is due (according to them) when the Jewish future will outshine all the triumphs of Christ's grace during the last two thousand years (including Pentecost itself) as life exceeds death.

Mr. Hulse, in process of arrogating to the cause of the future restoration of Israel the vision of Ezekiel 37 (the Valley of Dry Bones) says, "The prophecy applies to a period richer and fuller in scope than that of Pentecost" ("Restoration of Israel" page 90). To these dangerous lengths do the futuristic and carnal interpretations of prophecy inevitably lead.

"ALL THE SEED"

But compare the argument of Paul in Romans 9 with what he has already declared in Rom. 4:16: "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to ALL THE SEED; not to that only which is of the Law (i.e. the Jew), but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham who is the father of us all (i.e. Jew and gentile)." We wave THAT banner before our opponents and ask them to tell us if "all the seed" be not the "all Israel" which is to be saved.

Paul obliterates the distinction between Jew and gentile in the gospel, and makes it impossible thereby to re-establish that distinction without assailing the foundations of the gospel.

Test the Pauline doctrine where we will, we discover that "all the seed" and "all Israel" mean "the election of grace". Romans 11:26 is no exception as we shall see when we come to it.

In pursuance of his argument the apostle next adduces (Rom. 9:10-13) the example of the birth of Esau and Jacob, the two sons of Isaac and Rebecca, and attributes the rejection of the elder son and the preference for the younger to an act of free election on God's part. He is demonstrating two things:

1. That a further large and important section (Esau) of Abraham's natural seed is separated from the Promise and rejected from the inheritance though they are as much the natural descendants of Abraham as any Jew ever born.
2. That the true seed is determined not by natural birth but by election, according to the free pleasure of a sovereign God and consists of all the redeemed, Jew or gentile.

Paul is proving much more than a distinction between the Israel after the flesh and the prophetic Israel. He is introducing the high doctrine of Eternal Election, and he is applying this doctrine not merely to a distinction observed amongst Abraham's natural descendants (elect Jews and non-elect Jews), but to the Lord's eternal choice of the entire body of the redeemed in all ages, whether before or after Abraham. This is clear from his conclusion in verse 24: "Even us whom he has called not of the Jews only but also of the gentiles."

Paul views the whole panorama of redemption on one grand historic sweep. He adduces the example of Pharaoh to show the sovereign liberty of God in hardening the hearts of proud and impenitent men that they might fall into the destruction their sins have incurred, while at the same time, the judgment which falls upon them magnifies the power of God so that His Name is declared throughout all the earth.

Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. (Rom. 9:18)

Jacob is loved and Esau is hated (v. 13); Pharaoh is hardened; it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who shows mercy (v. 16); let no man question the right of God to act as He does: Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonor...

So the argument runs, taking us into the transcendental regions of the eternal purposes of God, fixes in the Divine counsel and wisdom before the foundation of the world.

This eternal purpose of redemption, the redemption of the elect, chose not according to their will but according to the divine will, is the dominating object of all prophecy. This is the Kingdom of Grace and the Covenant of Grace which is the central feature of the Inspired Word. This is what God has all along been working to. In pursuance of this, He invades history, selects one man (Abraham) to become the channel through which the historic purpose must be worked out; selects and divides among his seed, according to His pleasure, rejecting this branch or that, in the vastness of His wise designs, giving no account of His matters, being answerable to none in any of His mighty and eternal acts, making of the same lump of human clay, some to honour and some to dishonor; rejecting entire segments and almost whole generations of Israelitish people, so that unless He had reserved to Himself a remnant according to the election of grace, the entire nation would again and again have become altogether as Sodom and Gomorrah. (Rom. 9:29).

THE JEW NOT ABRAHAM'S SEED

Perish the thought that the inheritance was to Abraham as such or to the Jew as such. The inheritance is to Christ and Christ alone. The seed is not the Jew but the Seed is Christ.

(Gal. 3:16 - "And to thy seed, which is Christ").

In pursuance of this sovereign purpose to glorify Christ and give Him a seed in which He, the Eternal Son should be eternally glorified and satisfied (see Isaiah 53), the Father in due time sent the Son according to promise, to be the Saviour of the world (1 John 4:14). That means, God sent Christ not only to be the Saviour of one race of men who were the natural descendants of Abraham, but to be for salvation to the ends of the earth, in a Kingdom of Grace which should know no boundaries, ethnic or geographic, but be composed of an election of grace drawn from every kindred, tongue, nation and clime.

The idea that after an experiment in this realm God will return again for the working out of His purpose to glorify the Son, to the narrow limits of one nation composed of those who claim natural descent from Abraham, is abhorrent to the New Testament, and a total denial of the nature of the Kingdom Christ came to establish. By the same token it is abhorrent to the Old Testament prophets, when those prophets are correctly understood.

The Jew served a temporary purpose in the plan of the Sovereign God, being privileged to bear the ordinances, exhibit the covenant, and be the custodian of the Word of God, till the time when Christ should come. Never was the earthly nation a converted people. In no generation were there many of them that were the true children of Abraham. Nor is that the case today. The Jew in Palestine is for the most part an agnostic. The Word of God and the Kingdom of God have been taken from them and given to an elect nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. (Matthew 21:43).

Paul's doctrine that the Jewish phase of the divine dealing has passed from the earthly nation to a new nation composed of Jew and gentile indifferent as to birth, and irrelevant as to genealogical descent, is reinforced by a series of quotations from the prophets. These quotations serve not only to show the validity of gentile salvation outside the law and the nation of Israel, but also to lay down

THE RULE OF PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION

That rule is the spiritualization of Israel into its final form as the Church of Jew and gentile. This is clear from Paul's first quotation, which is from the prophet Hosea:

I will call them my people which were not my people; and her beloved which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God.

Rom. 9:25-26; from Hosea 1:10 and 2:23.

Pause, brethren, and see this mystery.

HOSEA AND SOLOMON'S SONG

Hosea has always been regarded as THE FIRST OF THE WRITING PROPHETS. There had been an interregnum since the great days of Elijah and Elisha who worked miracles but did not write books. Now there came, in the twilight years of the Dual Kingdom of Israel and Judah, when the two were hastening on to the awful calamities which befell them in the days of the kings of Assyria and Babylon, a period of tremendous prophetic activity. Great prophets were contemporary with each other, overlapped each other; one third of the Old Testament was written in a few generations during which the prophetic voice was never silent.

Hosea began where the Song of Solomon left off. Israel, the bride of the Lord is about to be beaten in the streets of the city (Song of Sol. 5:2-7). She awakens in the dark night of her soul to despise the voice of Christ. She wanders into the streets. The watchmen - the prophets of the Lord - find her and chastise her with words of solemn denunciation and warning. Her veil is taken away. That judgment overtakes her which is only a prelude to the greater judgment when in fact the Heavenly Bridegroom comes to earth, is despised and rejected, comes to His own but His own receive Him not, is crucified and slain, and through His death of deaths and glorious resurrection brings in a new order. The Church enters the full blaze of the gospel day. She is released from the bondage of dead works and identification with the rotting corpse of carnal Israel, and emerges from the tomb, raised again with Christ, a new and holy people, endowed with all the promised graces and mercies which the old Israel despised.

THE CHURCH IS THE LAWFUL SUCCESSOR OF ISRAEL: INDEED SHE IS THE TRUE AND ONLY ISRAEL THOUGH COMPOSED FOR THE MOST PART OF THAT ELECT SEED FROM THE GENTILES WHICH TRACES NO NATURAL DESCENT FROM ABRAHAM.

Her words are, "Doubtless thou art our father though Abraham be ignorant of us and Israel acknowledge us not." (Isaiah 63:16)

HOSEA'S MARRIAGE THAT NEVER WAS

After Solomon in his mystic and mysterious Song of Songs, Hosea takes up the theme. He becomes in himself, the bridegroom, just as Solomon before him. He speaks in the name of Christ; is involved in marriage with a mystic women who is an adulteress. That woman is earthly Israel. The children of the adulterous wife, who are born to the prophet in spirit, are the descendants of Abraham according to the flesh. They are given the names Jezreel, Lo Ammi and Lo Ruhamah to denote their utter and final rejection. Jezreel, with slight modifications of the Hebrew orthography, is Israel, as anyone acquainted with the language sees at a glance. Jezreel is associated with the apostasy of Ahab, the destruction of his house by Jehu, and the appalling failure of Jehu's house, now to be judge in its turn in the person of its last representative, Jeroboam II, who was on the throne at the time Hosea began to prophesy (Hosea 1:1). Lo Ammi means, as the chapter explains, "Not my people". Lo Ruhamah is, "No longer mercy."

The last two verses of the chapter are a vision of the true Israel expanded into a number which cannot be measured (Rev. 7:9). Paul spiritualizes this in Romans 9 and says it is the election of grace, Jew and gentile.

Let our opponents wrestle with this passage in Hosea. Let them ponder over the divine commentary upon it in Romans 9:24-26. Let them humbly face the conclusion, and accept the downfall of their prophetic edifice, for the Israel which is to be restored even as the sands of the sea for multitude is not the earthly Israel, but the heavenly, the Church of the Redeemed, Jew and gentile together, those who are contemptuously thrust aside by the earthly Israel as not being the people of God and not being in the field of the divine mercy.

For that, dear reader is the meaning of Hosea. And in our next issue, God willing, we intend to show it is the meaning likewise of that strange word of Ezekiel in his chapter 11, verses 15-20: a word which none of our opponents has even begun to understand and which we very much question whether they have even attempted to study, so eager are they to seize upon every text where Israel and Jerusalem are mentioned, and appropriate it to the rejected nation: "SON OF MAN, THY BRETHREN, THE MEN OF THY KINDRED AND ALL THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL WHOLLY, ARE THEY WHOM.....(the people of Jerusalem reject)".

Hengstenberg warns us that the term "Israel" in Scripture is very subtle and may not be understood but by careful and painstaking study and spiritual receptiveness, which alas, most present-day commentators do not possess.

Before we leave Hosea, we take the opportunity of refuting the absurd theory that Hosea actually contracted a marriage - two in fact - which were in their nature adulterous. The marriage of Hosea to Gomer the daughter of Diblaim (1. verse 3) was in prophetic vision only. There was never a woman named Gomer. Her name and that of her father Diblaim contain a subtlety which is beyond most commentators. Gomer is Israel and Diblaim is Ephraim, and in the second chapter the visionary marriage of the prophet disappears altogether, and is lost entirely as it merges into the marriage of Jehovah with adulterous Israel.

Brethren, let us speak plainly. The adulterous wife is the earthly people. God breaks the marriage and divorces the wicked nation, and there appears in her place the true bride, the mystic Israel, the Church of

the Redeemed and the Firstborn. Let us not haggle, but rejoice in the rapture of that sovereign grace which has made us His and made Him ours, forever and forever.

If our opponents would only discard their prejudices for a moment and consider in these terms the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out, they would discover the true wealth of the Word of God and preaching would be transformed. God's people would no longer get stones for bread, or the front page of tomorrow's newspaper as exposition of that divine revelation which the surface and literal theological are incapable of understanding.

PAUL AND ISAIAH

Paul now travels on through Isaiah, to assure us that it was always the subject of prophecy that Israel would be rejected as a nation, a remnant only of them saved, and the gentiles admitted in their room, to eternal salvation as promised through Abraham.

Hosea's doctrine lays the foundation for all the writing prophets. His definition of Israel must be accepted as the key to all that the subsequent writers have to say upon the same theme. The Isaiah quotations at the end of the ninth chapter of Romans confirm the calling of the elect nation, Jew and gentile, on an equal footing, as the true Israel of God.

From these passages in Isaiah Paul teaches (verse 30-33) that the gentiles have attained to the blessing of free justification by faith, while the earthly Israel has fallen on the stumbling stone of Christ's righteousness imputed to all who believe.

Our readers will observe how Paul proves everything by appeal to the O.T. Scriptures. Yet our futuristic friends tell us the Church is not found in O.T. prophecy! And even our "post-millennialists" endeavor to convince us, that in effect, Paul is an inspired meddler who puts the Church in where we ought to read "Jew".

We travel on with the apostle through his 10th chapter, noting as we go how Paul disavows any hostile feelings towards unbelieving Israel and professes his prayerful concern in their salvation. But he forbids the error that the Jew has any precedence over the heathen in the matter of the grace of the God. On the contrary God is rich in mercy to all who call upon Him, for WHOSOEVER shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved (10:11-13).

He leaves the earthly people to ponder over the judgments of God in their rejection, by closing the chapter with references from the prophets the conversion of the gentiles, and the righteous condemnation of unbelieving Israel to whom God declares (as cited from Isaiah 65:2), "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

All this is the prelude to the question which is proposed and answered in chapter 11: HATH GOD CAST AWAY HIS PEOPLE?

No, replies Paul, else how comes it that I a Jew, am converted? If Israel has been wholly cast away, I myself would be cast away with them. My individual salvation proves this great fact:

GOD HATH NOT CAST AWAY HIS PEOPLE WHICH HE FOREKNEW.

As clearly as it is possible for anyone to prove anything, Paul declares in his answer that THE ISRAEL WHICH IS NOT CAST AWAY IS THE ELECTION OF GRACE, AND THAT THIS IS THE ALL ISRAEL OF VERSE 26.

"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace". (verse 5).

Israel (the rejected nation) has not obtained that which he sought, BUT THE ELECTION HATH OBTAINED IT AND THE REST WERE BLINDED (verse 7).

The apostle uses the case of Elijah to prove that the true Israel always existed as a remnant, and not as a nation (verses 2-4). The nation was, and is, and always will be, composed on the one hand of those who are elected to glory, and on the other, those who are "blinded" (margin, "hardened").

ISRAEL'S GRAVE

The hardening of earthly Israel because of unbelief is confirmed by quotations from Isaiah 29:10, and Psalm 69:22. God gives them the spirit of slumber that they should not see nor hear. Their table (that is, their Old Testament privileges, ordinances and promises) becomes a snare and a trap and a stumbling block to them. Thus was the unbelieving nation ensnared by its own privileges. They relied upon their birth certificates instead of repentance and faith. They proudly flaunted their national origin in Abraham - "We be Abraham's children and were never in bondage to any man" (John 8:33). This their boast became their grave and will remain so, though every evangelical and futurist philosopher the world has ever seen, stand outside their tomb and shout down into the darkened vault the very texts of Scripture which put them there.

This is what our opponents have been doing all our lifetime and long before, and in the process have perverted the true study and understanding of Holy Scripture till it has become impossible for the most of our preachers to make any pretense at expounding the spiritual riches of the prophets.

Verse 11. Have they stumbled that they should fall?

That is, has God no other end to serve in the judgment which has overtaken them than that of their destruction? By no means, is the apostle's reply. The product of their fall is the riches of the world. The removal from the program of God, of the special nation clause, has meant the opening of the door of grace on the grandest and most worldwide scale, to sinners of mankind everywhere.

"Through their fall salvation is come to the gentiles to provoke them to jealousy."

This provoking to jealousy is not the provoking to emulation of verse 14, but is a judgment of God upon the willfully hardened as in chapter 10:19, "I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people and by a foolish nation will I anger you."

HARVEST SHEAVES WITHOUT TEARS

Verse 12: Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the gentiles, how much more their fullness?

Our opponents make great play of this verse. They say it means that at some time yet future the Jews will be restored nationally to their former privileges, be converted as a nation, and as a consequence the gentile world will be enriched beyond anything that has ever taken place during the last two thousand years of Christian history. Mr. Hulse quotes Professor John Murray (a contemporary theologian for whom we have nothing but respect) as saying that 'the fullness of Israel will involve for the gentiles a much greater enjoyment of gospel blessing than that occasioned by Israel's unbelief... far surpassing anything experienced during the period of Israel's apostasy...this unprecedented enrichment... and so forth.

Mr. Hulse himself goes on in great enthusiasm to say, "The prophecy applies to a period richer and fuller in scope than that of Pentecost."

Now we have no hesitation in replying that the text says nothing of the sort. We go further, and say it is a shameful thing for any man to declare that the triumphs of faith and patience, of suffering and colossal achievement of the past 2,000 years of church history is going to be diminished into comparative insignificance by Jewish missionaries in a future time when by reason of a subdued or converted world, a golden millennium, a shackled devil and the crushing out from the earth of all dissent, blessing may be had without the cross and harvest sheaves without tears. What! Are the sufferings of the martyrs to be nothing beside the events of that easy time when according to the millennialists it is the evil doer (if any) who is going to suffer, and not the harried and persecuted believer?

"Greater enjoyment of gospel blessing," writes Professor Murray. Really! And from the land of Samuel Rutherford and Robert McCheyne too.

What enjoyment of gospel blessing is there on this earth beyond beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, which is the privilege of every believer now under the new Covenant of Grace? Is it numbers that will make the difference? But we refuse to believe that numbers of converts will make Christ more precious to the soul that leans upon Him now in days of famine. He whom our soul loveth comes in the nighttime as well as the day, and declares, "I am the Rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys", and beneath his shadow we rest with great delight and find His fruit sweet to our taste.

No, we would not exchange our cross for any blessings upon earth without it, even though they be the millennial blessings of a world without thorns and hedges. THAT we shall soon enjoy anyway in a far, far better world. We would thank nobody for the easy time which our friends envisage in millennial world which even according to their theory, is still reserved for rebellion, death and flames.

But richer than Pentecost! It is that which makes us afraid to express ourselves too freely lest we say too much. What! All the labors of the apostle Paul and all the mighty spiritual music of the Beloved Apostle, John, to be eclipsed by the events of some coming age?

GOLD AND GODLINESS

Even the well-known connection between gold and godliness is not overlooked by our opponents. Mr. Hulse for example quotes with evident approval a saying of a certain T. V. Moore, "A general conversion of the Jews would throw an amount of wealth into the treasury of the Lord of which we now can have no conception..."

Again we only comment, "The Lord save us from this millennium, in which yellow bullion will bulk large in the economy of salvation."

After all, Paul did it in an old coat, Peter never had any of the filthy lucre, and even John Wesley left little behind but those famous teaspoons.

But let us turn from these worldly involvements of our friends in money and numbers, and religion without crosses, to the true meaning of the verse.

It is small wonder, in the circumstances, that our friends should deprive the New Testament Church of every significant prophetic declaration of divine mercy and hand it all to the Jew, if, according to them, the coming days of Jewish dominance will exceed in 'blessing' anything known in the present era. At one time it was only the Jew who made this preposterous claim for himself, but now it is the gentile evangelical who says it for him.

Paul's purpose is far otherwise. When Paul says, 'How much more their fullness' he is pointing not to a future race of Jews, but TO HIMSELF, as representing a part of that 'fullness' - a fullness then existing in his day; not something to be waited for till the end of 2,000 years.

His argument is, "If the national rejection of Israel has meant great blessing to the world at large, how much more blessing will it be when out of the wreck of Israel there comes a steady stream of Jewish converts, an election of grace to join the main stream of divine election flowing from the gentile world? Is this not indeed, Life from the dead?"

Verse 13: "...I magnify mine office".

This statement by Paul proves that this is the true meaning of 'their fullness'. Paul points not to a future generation of millennial Jews but to the elect remnant in Israel which was powerful then, and has endured in every generation since, and will to the end of time.

Paul presents himself to his hearers in this verse as the apostle of the gentiles, and magnifies his office therein, thus indicating the blessing bestowed upon the world by one Jew. His abundant labors, his fruitful ministry, his vast understanding of the mystery of God, his clear revealing of the gospel and his defense of gentile liberty against all the encroachments of sly Judaizers who crept in unawares to spy out and to destroy the peace and quiet of the churches by their Jewish pride and envy. This is THE FULLNESS of Israel coming into the gospel church. To this day we read the Holy Scriptures which came to us entirely through men of Israel whom Christ called and equipped and sent to establish the Church and lay its foundations in every land.

This is the riches of the world coming in through the "fullness" of Israel. We like it better than that load of contemptible bullion on which Mr. Hulse has his eye. We are tempted to say with the old prophet from Bethel when he followed the Men of God who was sent from Judah, and found his corpse lying at the wayside between the ass and the lion - "Alas, my brother..."

Let those who take a derogatory view of the Church History and give it an almost contemptible comparison with what may be expected when Jewry as a nation is converted, reckon with the labors of the apostle Paul. Let them come forward boldly and tell us that those apostolic labors will pale into insignificance beside the fabulous results of Jewish ministry in an age yet to come.

"SOME OF THEM" - NOT ALL

Verse 14. "If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh and might save some of them".

This is the emulation of following a good and noble example. Having presented himself and his own conversion as part of the continuing 'fullness' of earthly Israel during the long gospel day, he holds out to his benighted countrymen that same destiny which he enjoys, if by any means some might hear and perceive and be saved.

Let his countrymen consider for themselves the superabundant mercy of God in Christ and see that the crowning and the fullness of their destiny also lies in the Kingdom of Grace over which Christ reigns, and ever will reign, world without end.

Not that Paul expects his example to provoke a national acceptance of Christ. He was far too spiritually informed to commit so gross an error. "That I might save SOME OF THEM" is what he says.

Nothing here of national salvation, Latter Day Glory, or Restoration of Israel to national sovereignty and privilege. The "election of grace" was always uppermost in the apostle's theology, and it is only of this he speaks when he says, "That I might save some of them".

Verse 15: "For if the casting away of them by the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead."

It is quite evident that those referred to as 'them' who are cast away, are a different people from the 'them' who are received. Our friends hesitate to distinguish between the nation that was 2,000 years ago and the nation which is yet to be, but at least they would acknowledge they are not the same individuals. What they fail to see is that the two peoples in the text are NOT separated by 2,000 years at all, BUT ARE CONTEMPORARY. The unbelieving majority of the nation is contrasted with the believing minority - that remnant according to the election of grace of which, again, Paul presents himself as a sample.

That some should be saved from the ruin of Israel - this is indeed life from the dead.

For our friends to allege that 'life from the death' does not refer to Israel at all but to gentiles becoming converted in unbelievable numbers through Israelitish testimony after the nation is restored, would be beyond exegetical credence if we had not seen it in cold print. Yet a high proportion of the expositors, old and new, make this elementary error.

Our author approvingly quotes a David Brown "19th century expositor", saying, "for if the casting away of them by the reconciling of the (gentile) world, what shall the receiving of them be (at that gentile world) but LIFE FROM THE DEAD." The marks of parenthesis are from the printed text. Our readers will no doubt make the necessary adjustments for themselves.

NOT ALL JEWS REJECTED

Verse 16: "For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy, and if the root be holy so are the branches."

Paul is stating the same thing in different words. He is showing that it was no part of his teaching that the rejection of the nation from its privileges meant likewise the rejection of every individual in the nation. Let not the gentiles glory therefore over the Jewish nation because the latter's privileges had become forfeit through unbelief. The fall of the nation did not mean there was no life remaining therein. That of which the

first fruit was but a sample must be the same in its substance and nature. In other words the salvation of individual Jews was to be expected to continue in accord with the apostle's position at the beginning of the discussion - "Hath God cast away His people?" The work of salvation in the earthly Israel continues as it did from the beginning. The election of grace remaineth.

That which springs from the same root must be of the same nature and substance. If the one is holy so is the other. The endeavor of many commentators, ancient, and modern, to fit this into the pattern of their preconceived notions of Jewish restoration has led them into strange country. The attempt by them to describe how and in what sense unbelieving Israel is holy though lost and rejected, is quite ludicrous. There can be only one meaning. Those of the rejected nation who bring forth the fruits of faith evince thereby that they are the true children of Abraham. They are the holy seed of a holy stock. The unbelieving portion of the nation is reprobate, never was holy, and is not even to be considered as the rightful seed of Abraham. "Ye are the your father the devil" said Christ (John 8:44).

ONLY INDIVIDUALS IN VIEW

Verse 17: "And if some of the branches were broken off and thou...grafted in among them...."

There is confirmation of our exegesis. All of earthly Israel were not cast away - only the unbeliever. "Some of the branches". What could be plainer than this, that the apostle is speaking of individual believers throughout this great chapter? "Some of the branches" my brethren: not all of them were broken off. The holy stock was not uprooted, just "some of the branches". Even though history has proved that the old stock was well nigh stripped of its natural branches, there still remained a remnant according to the election of grace.

This is borne out by the remainder of the verse as Paul turns to the gentile believers. You were grafted in among them, he says. What? The nations of the gentiles? No, individual believers from among the gentiles. There is no record of any gentile nation from the foundation of the world being grafted into the Abrahamic stem to partake of the root and the fatness of the Covenant of Grace in Christ Jesus. There is no such thing as national salvation either of Jew or gentile - no, not since the foundation of the world, and never even in a minor sense in the family and immediate descendants of the first and second generations of the Abrahamic stock. Ishmael was never in, nor Esau, nor half the sons of Jacob. Read what their father says about them on his deathbed (Genesis 49).

Verses 18 to 24.

Paul pursued for several verses his analogy of the olive tree and the graft. He shows that gentile believers must resist the temptation to boast against rejected Israel, for they, like Israel before them, stand only by faith and unless that faith of theirs is proved to be genuine and evangelical, they would suffer the same fate (as individuals), as the reprobate Jew, and for the same cause.

If the Jew abides not still in unbelief he will be grafted in again. If the gentile abides not in faith he will be cut out. But the absurdity of saying this is a national grafting, cutting out, and regrafting, must be self evident for Paul is not speaking to nations but to individuals, hence:

Verse 25: "I would not brethren that ye should be ignorant of this mystery lest ye should be wise in your own conceits....."

It is 'brethren' not nations whom he is addressing. Those commentators who speak of the end of gentile Christianity as though the gentile nations were enjoying the benefits of the Israelitish olive tree, are estranged from reality, for no gentile nation was ever in that position. The only nation ever grafted into Christ is that described by Peter: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy NATION, a peculiar people...." (1 Peter 2:9). This is the nation of the elect, chosen from every land, clime, people and tongue. This nation will never be "broken off" though individuals who profess to be of it but who prove by their fruits that they are no such thing - those will be cut off.

"That blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the gentiles be come in."

Paul tells us two things here:

1. That Israel's blindness always was in part only - that is, the whole nation was not blind but a part thereof. He, Paul, was an example of the part which was not blind. We dismiss as unworthy of comment the strange opinion that "in part" means a period of time.
2. The enduring nature of that great condition of 'blindness' which had befallen the greater part of the nation.

The first point is proved by verse 7 of this chapter, "The election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded".

The second point requires further elucidation. The word "until" no more means that the time is coming when Israel will be no more blind, than the same word in Psalm 110, verse 1, means that Christ will cease to reign after His foes are made His footstool.

If we take the verse the way our opponents would have it, we obtain a contradiction. Our opponents have been busy telling us all the way through (and it appears to be fundamental to their thesis) that when Israel is restored, the gentiles will reap such a benefit as will dwarf out of recognition all that they ever enjoyed during the period of their dominance. Now they cannot have it both ways. Israel (according to them) will not be restored till gentile 'fullness' has been achieved. Yet they maintain that gentile salvation so far from being "FULL" at the restoration of Jewry, will only enter upon a fuller, more glorious phase than ever before. If ever a theory fell down under its own weight, this is it.

We hope our readers can see plainly this gross inconsistency. If our opponents had said, "Now is the time of gentile salvation, now God is saving gentiles while Israel's blindness continues; but the day is coming when gentile salvation will be at an end; the number of elect gentiles will have been made up; the fullness will be in; henceforth salvation will be confined to Jews". - if this was what they said we could admire their consistency while disagreeing totally with their premise. But this is what they say: "Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the gentiles be come in - and then, with the salvation of Israel a greater fullness than ever shall be awarded to the gentiles."

Whatever else the text means, we ask our readers to perceive that at least it cannot mean that.

There remains but one alternative - that the fullness of the gentiles will coincide with the end of the world and the day of the judgment, and Israel's 'blindness in part' endures till then without respite.

Why then does Paul use this argument at all? What encouragement can such a statement afford to sincere Israelites? None at all, if they abide still in unbelief, but every encouragement to free themselves

and save themselves from the untoward generation of their countrymen (Acts 2:40). Paul leaves the door wide open for the entry of every believing, repenting Israelite, in that he does not say "all the nation blind", but, "blindness in part".

Our good friends do not seem to be aware that the word 'until' often bears in Holy Scripture a durative sense, and not that of temporal limitation. Hence Christ reigns till all his foes are made his footstool then goes on reigning. Rom. 11:25 teaches ultimacy and contains no suggestion of any alteration in Israel's national status. The present boundaries of the divine decree are unalterable. The blindness in part must endure till the end of time, which time is coincident with the fullness of gentile salvation.

THE GREAT 26th VERSE OF ROMANS 11

"AND SO ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED: AS IT IS WRITTEN, THERE SHALL COME OUT OF ZION THE DELIVERER AND SHALL TURN AWAY UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB."

It is a fundamental error of our opponents that they make this verse dependant upon the previous verse, where as it is not a dependant verse at all, but a summary, a summing up, a grand condensation and verdict upon a discussion which began with the first verse of chapter 9.

We go further and say that we may not make out Paul to be inconsistent with himself; therefore this verse must be interpreted according to the consistent Pauline doctrine of the heavenly nature of the true Israel, the Church of the Redeemed and the Firstborn whose names are written in heaven.

In the Pauline doctrine the N.T. Church is the last and final phase of all God's dealings in history. There is nothing after the Church. Eph. 3:10-11: "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known BY THE CHURCH the manifold wisdom of God: according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

In the Pauline doctrine Zion, or Mount Zion, is the Church and not earthly Israel. Heb. 12:22: "Ye are come to Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven...." Gal. 4:26: "Jerusalem WHICH IS ABOVE is free, which is the mother of us all" (i.e. Jew and Gentile).

Even Mr. Hulse in his book, "The Restoration of Israel" (page 50) concedes that "Zion" in Romans 11:26, cannot mean the earthly Jerusalem: "Zion therefore should be taken here in the figurative or symbolic sense". How our author can go on to say that though the first part of the Pauline quotation from Isaiah is symbolical, the second part of the same sentence is literal ("shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob") is something we leave to others to explain.

Despite the well-known practice of the Hebrew authors in duplicating expressions for the purpose of emphasis, our friends persist in setting one phrase in Isaiah against the other, though obviously the one is the amplification of the other.

If our friends persist in declaring that Zion does not mean Zion, then to be consistent they must go on to say that Jacob does not mean Jacob. To do so, however, would destroy their books and leave them with no reason for having written them, for this, dear reader, is the verse of verses to our opponents. Upon this verse they rely in totality for their N.T. proof of a "Restoration of Israel". They balance the pyramid upon its apex and found their entire theory upon one verse and even in that verse, betray their own confusion and inconsistency.

We fear that our friends exhibit not only a fatal exegetical inconsistency, but a complete ignorance of Hebrew poetical style.

PAUL'S AGONY FOR THE JEWS

But let us not be turned aside from our main task to which we now devote ourselves, of a thorough exposition of our verse.

Our premise is twofold:

1. Our verse is not dependant upon its predecessor but is a summary of the entire argument of the preceding three chapters;
2. The words, "And so all Israel shall be saved", are to be interpreted by what follows, "As it is written..."

The first of these premises we have already laid down as a self-evident fact, but by way of reminder we add the following: If Paul were speaking of all earthly Israel being saved, how could he have begun his argument in chapter 9 with that so mysterious, moving, shocking, and agonizing cry, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh"?

In whatever way we may attempt to explain the awful agony and conflict lying within this cry, the saying becomes meaningless if the apostle already knew, and it was with him a settled conclusion, that "all Israel was going to be saved anyway". If Paul knew that there was to be such a great and noble destiny for Israel as our opponents allege he was working to, we can only conclude that the Pauline agony over Israel was but an uninspired extravagance, altogether unworthy of a man with a mind so well ordered as that of Paul.

This we reject of course. We believe that Paul's agony over the rejection of earthly Israel was real and prophetic it was of the same order as the agony of the prophet Jeremiah when he cursed the day of his birth, that he should have been called into being to be the bearer of such ill-tidings as he was forced to convey concerning the destruction of his people (Jer. 20:14-18). As Jeremiah is almost totally misunderstood, by the commentators, ancient and modern, Reformed or unreformed, so the apostle Paul is misunderstood.

The intense grief of both men over the fate of earthly Israel IS THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE PROOF THAT ISRAEL HAS BEEN REJECTED TOTALLY AS A PEOPLE, AND HAS CEASED FOREVER TO BE THE CHANNEL OF DIVINE GRACE.

Paul's grief is either total and its cause irremediable, or it is a total farce inasmuch as (according to our opponents) it is only the starting point of a discussion which is designed to prove that the nation has not been cast away but is destined to a more glorious future than ever in the past.

It is thus we show to our readers that our authors, with whom we are compelled to disagree, do not carry their argument far enough back. They rush in haste to chapter 11 as though it stood by itself and do scant justice to the complete sweep of the Pauline epistle.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ISAIAH 59

We now proceed to show that the words "All Israel shall be saved" are to be understood by what follows: and what follows is a quotation from Isaiah 59, verses 20-21. We implore our readers to open their Bibles at that reference and keep their finger upon the two verses as we proceed, noting also that as a rule our

opponents end their exposition of Romans 11 at verse 26 ignoring verse 27 which contains a further portion of the Isaiah prophecy.

Isaiah 59 graphically describes the awful failure of Israel to fulfill the function allotted to it. Paul in Romans 3 makes a quotation from this chapter to show how Israel is an unqualified sharer in the universal guilt of the human race, despite its unique privileges (compare Isaiah 59:7-8, and Romans 3:15-17).

The prophet (verses 16-19) describes how it is the marvel of heaven that the sinful nation exhibited no sign of repentance. There was no intercessor, and none to take up the righteous cause of God.

So the Lord arms himself for the task, but the goal he sets himself is utterly beyond the destiny of a small nation like Israel. The Lord girds himself for a far mightier task, that of establishing a worldwide dominion. While taking a fearful vengeance on the evildoers of Israel and indeed of all his foes, he decrees that from the rising to the setting sun he will establish in Christ a gospel dominion which shall never end and which, by reason of its very nature, cannot fail.

"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." (Isaiah 59:19)

Quite properly this eminent sentence is used to cover all eventualities in the history of the Lord's people. Its primary intention however should be obvious: It describes the coming in of the gospel salvation at a time when Satanic power had reached its zenith. Then it was that Christ appeared, and made a complete atonement for his people, dying upon the Cross and rising again as conqueror over the tomb. His ascension to the right hand of power to begin his eternal reign was the signal for the pouring out of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The figure of the flood and the overcoming power of the Spirit is borrowed in the case of the mystic woman of Revelation 12, who, after the birth of Christ (verse 5) flees into the wilderness where she is prophetically sustained. The serpent (Satan) casts out of his mouth water as a flood to destroy the woman, but is foiled by the intervention of the Lord's providence. The flood is the means employed by Satan to destroy the Church, whether by false doctrine or open persecution.

The woman is the Church of the Old and New Testaments. This is fixed by the first verse where she is considered as being clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, and crown of twelve stars on her head.

The moon is the reflected light of the Old Testament and the sun is the great gospel in continuity. The twelve stars are the symbol of the church in her dual form under the two testaments - the twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles of the Lamb. The man child is Christ who comes midway in the history of the Church at the dividing point of the two Testaments, the Church of all ages being both the means of his entry into the world, and the Kingdom of Grace which was the consequence of his coming.

Here is another proof that the Church is the same in O.T. and N.T. times and that the Church as now constituted of Jew and Gentile is the sole and legitimate heir to the promises made to Abraham.

Revelation 12 thus becomes a divine commentary upon Isaiah 59:19 and a further preparation for the understanding of who Israel is in Isaiah 59:20 and Romans 11:26. To that point we are now come.

ISAIAH & PAUL RECONCILED

"And the Redeemed shall come to Zion and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." (Verse 20.)

There is a difference between Isaiah and Paul in this quotation. Paul's version is, "There shall come out of Zion the deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob".

The Pauline version is a free translation into the Greek, of the Hebrew text. It is sanctified by apostolic use and shows there is an equivalent meaning in both texts. The Redeemer who comes to Zion is the one also who proceeds from Zion, and those who turn from transgression in Jacob are those who, by grace, are turned from their ungodliness by the power of Christ.

There is a specific limitation in Isaiah, of the Redeemer's work; "to them that turn from transgression in Jacob." Paul's version sees these repentant ones as the whole of Jacob. The election of grace is here. Mr. Hulse, who takes Zion in a symbolic sense and Jacob in a literal is in serious embarrassment here, for neither does he believe that Jacob means the whole of Jewry in the days of the alleged Restoration.

NOT all Israel (after the flesh) shall be saved, he tells us in his book, but only a token number so as to make it appear that the nation as a whole has turned from its unbelief. He appears to be satisfied if the number of converted in Jacob amount to something like ten percent of the whole.

Allowing for the fact that our author derives this conclusion from a succession of commentators covering the whole of the Reformed period, we believe this only shows the embarrassment of all those commentators who begin with the preconceived idea of a Jewish restoration which they try to fit in with Romans 11:26.

Other and more extreme futurists and dispensationalists of course have no such inhibitions, and declare that "all" means "all" - a conclusion we share with them in this case, only we declare that the text does not refer to Jewry at the end of time, but to the elect in all time.

Even our futurist brethren however, have their own peculiar difficulties, which they have never honestly faced. They do not really believe that "all" means "all", or they would have to include Judas Iscariot and Caiaphas, Jeroboam who made Israel to sin, Ahab and the Baal worshippers, and every other Israelite who ever lived, in a universal Israelitish salvation regardless of their evil record, for if "all Israel" means what it says in a Jewish sense, then no Israelite of any age can be excluded.

The only consistent interpretation of Romans 11:26 is that which we have the privilege to advance, namely that Paul is speaking of the election of grace, and so is Isaiah, that "all" means "all" and that the prophetic word embraces the entire field of redemption according to that glorious word in Isaiah 35:10 - "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads...."

That Isaiah's word is a gospel word and has naught to do with the Restoration of the Jew, is further borne out by his following verse (59:21):

"As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, not out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever."

Paul quotes from this verse also in Romans 11:27, "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

It is obvious that Isaiah's verse relates to the same subject as the preceding verse. The people mentioned in verse 21 as "thy seed" are the Zion and the Jacob of verse 20. Hence Paul also makes the same essential connection in Romans 11, and it follows that the "All Israel" who shall be saved are the covenant people whose sins are taken away, these and no one else. Who are these covenant people, "thy seed, and thy seed's seed", from whom the Word of Covenant life shall not depart forever?

Those cannot be descriptive of the earthly Israel; else there is no equivalent promise anywhere in the Old Testament upon which the Church of Christ can rely. The verse in short is

THE OPENING OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE

The words in the text are not addressed either to Jew or gentile. They are addressed to Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant, who acts always on behalf of those whom the Father hath given him (John 17:2, etc.). The Covenant is made primarily with Christ who fulfills its terms and seals it with his own blood (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 13:20). The elect are brought into the covenant by God's grace acting through the Spirit of Regeneration. This is expressed in the text, "My Spirit that is upon thee (that is, upon the Mediator, Christ) and my words which I have put into thy mouth (that is, the word of grace and salvation) shall not depart out of thy mouth (Christ shall never cease to be the Mediator of His people) nor out of the mouth of thy seed (that is, his elect shall hear and be effectually called from sin and death to life eternal and shall persevere in grace until the end) nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed (the succession of the generations of the saved to the end of time) from henceforth and for ever."

It is Isaiah who tells us also in his 53rd chapter, verse 10, that the elect are Christ's "seed" whom he should "see" (that is, they should infallibly be saved and persevered by grace). So should Christ see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied (Isaiah 53:11 and John 17:24).

That this covenant is not applicable to earthly Jacob is clear from the context which makes it a worldwide economy of grace.

Isaiah therefore clearly teaches that Zion is the Church and Jacob is the whole election of grace, and by his employment of Isaiah 59 as the conclusion of his discussion in Romans 9-11, Paul clearly shows what he means by the word,

"AND SO ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED"

In short he teaches that salvation is limited to the election of grace, and that this election of grace is the worldwide and age-long Kingdom of the Mediator Christ; therefore "Israel" is not, and by no stretch of the imagination can be made to mean, the nation of Jewry, present or to come, but the Church of Christ in which all distinction of Jew and gentile is for ever obliterated and forgotten.

Those who do not accept this conclusion undermine the entire conception of the Everlasting Covenant of Grace, which is the only instrument in view in these collateral writings of Isaiah and the apostle Paul.

Brethren, the case is proved. Let who will dissent. But let them beware lest they should find themselves fighting against thei

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