THE REMNANT OF ISRAEL: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE



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I say then, Did God cast off his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. Romans 11:1



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INTRODUCTION

A. The Meaning

The doctrine of the Remnant of Israel means that there are always some who believe within the Jewish nation as a whole, and all those who believe constitute the Remnant of Israel. Thus there are two Israels: Israel the Whole and Israel the Remnant. Ethnically, the two are the same, but spiritually, they are not. The Remnant at any point of history may be large or small, but there is never a time when it is non-existent, except immediately after the Rapture.

B. The Ramifications

There are five ramifications concerning the Remnant of Israel. First, only believers make up the Remnant. Secondly, not all believers are part of the Remnant, for the Remnant is a Jewish Remnant and is therefore made up of only Jewish believers. Thirdly, the Remnant is always part of the nation as a whole, not detached from the nation as a separate entity; the Remnant is distinct, but distinct within the nation. Fourthly, this means that Jewish believers have a dual citizenship; they are part of both Israel and the Church. And fifth, within the concept of the Remnant, there is a twofold contrast: a contrast between the miraculous and the non-miraculous and a contrast between the noise and the quiet.

C. The Concept

The concept of the Remnant of Israel was apparent from the very beginning of Israel's history as they began to multiply. As a doctrine, the theology of the Remnant began with Elijah the Prophet, then was developed by the writing prophets, and continued through the New Testament.

I. THE PAST

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A. Elijah: I Kings 16:29-19:18

1. The New Religious System: I Kings 16

With Omri, not only was there a new capital over Israel, Samaria, but also a new dynasty. However, Omri continued in the sin of Jereboam, the worship of the golden calf (I Kg. 12:25-33). Jereboam's sin was not a totally foreign religion, but a corruption of the true one. This was a corruption of Jehovah worship in that it reduced the God of Israel to an idol. In fact, when Jereboam introduced the worship of the golden calf, he did so by using the same words Aaron used when he introduced his golden calf: "This is the god who brought you out of the land of Egypt" (Ex. 32:4).

In verses 29-34, when Omri's son Ahab ascended to the throne, he married Jezebel, a Phoenician princess from Sidon and, with her, there is the introduction of an altogether new religion: the worship of Baal, the Canaanite storm god. Thus the whole religious situation of Israel changed radically, and so did God's relationship to the Northern Kingdom. Into this new environment, God called Elijah, whose life was a life of paradoxes or ironies.

2. The Historical Event that Gave Rise to the Doctrine: I Kings 17

Because of Israel's worship of Baal, God decreed a drought over the nation in verses 1-7. In this manner, the ministry of Elijah is introduced. This is the first contrast between the miraculous and the non-miraculous. Food is miraculously provided for Elijah by means of ravens, but water is non-miraculously provided by means of a brook. Eventually, the drought affected the brook so that it dried up. Obviously, God could have easily provide the water miraculously for one man as He did for two million in the wilderness over a forty-year period. But God does not always choose to work miraculously.

Instead, in verse 8 God told Elijah to leave the country of Israel and go north to Phoenicia to the widow of Zarepheth, a town belonging to Sidon. This is the first of many ironies in the life of Elijah. Jezebel came from Sidon to Israel; Elijah went from Israel to Sidon. Because of Jezebel, Jews are worshipping Baal, the god of Sidon; because of Elijah, by the end of this chapter Sidoneans are worshipping the God of Israel.

3. The Divine Duel: I Kings 18

When the drought had reached its most severe straits, in verses 1-24 God sent Elijah back to Israel for a contest with the prophets of Baal. The terms of the contest are for Israel to decide once and for all who is God. If Baal proves to be god, then let all Israel continue to worship Baal. But if Jehovah proves to be God, then let all Israel repudiate the worship of Baal and worship Jehovah alone.

This event provides the second contrast: the contrast between the noise and the quiet. In verse 29, the prophets of Baal go first and are characterized by noise, but as noisy as they get, the heavens remain silent. When it is Elijah's turn, he does everything in a quiet way by

rebuilding an altar and praying a simple prayer. In response to Elijah's quietness, the heavens become noisy and, in verse 38, fire from Heaven consumes the entire sacrifice in spite of its being drenched with water. Jehovah has proven Himself to be God. The prophets of Baal are slain and the drought comes to an end.

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4. The Experience of Elijah: I Kings 19

a. The Flight of Elijah: I Kings 19:1-8

And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not your life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belonged to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper-tree: and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough; now, O Jehovah, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And he lay down and slept under a juniper-tree; and, behold, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was at his head a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of Jehovah came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

Elijah's victory turned sour when Jezebel threatened his life. In verses 1-4, Elijah understood her actions to mean that Israel would not repudiate the worship of Baal and fled Israel for Judah; in a depressed state, he entered the Negev Desert and prayed to die. This provides another irony in Elijah's life: he is the only prophet who asked God to take his life, but in the end, he will not die at all!

Instead, in verses 5 8, he was fed twice by an angel and continued his journey to Mount Sinai, where he had a unique encounter with God. Mount Sinai is the place where God entered into a covenantal relationship with Israel. There God warned Israel not to worship any other god and Israel committed herself to obeying all that God commanded.

b. Elijah's First Complaint: I Kings 19:9-10

And he came thither unto a cave and lodged there; and, behold, the word of Jehovah came to him, and he said unto him, What do you here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for Jehovah, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and slain your prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

In verse 9, God asked Elijah the purpose of his coming to Mount Sinai where the Mosaic Covenant was made. In verse 10, Elijah's response was his first complaint. This is a severe indictment against Israel by a prophet who suffered and struggled to bring the nation to repentance, but to no avail. If this type of indictment were true, it would require divine discipline.

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c. God's Response: I Kings 19:11-13a

And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before Jehovah. And, behold, Jehovah passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before Jehovah; but Jehovah was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but Jehovah was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but Jehovah was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entrance of the cave.

God's response to Elijah's first indictment was to send three noisy things that did not contain the presence of God and then a fourth, quiet thing, that did: *a still small voice*. Elijah's response was: *he wrapped his face in his mantle*; this was a common Jewish reaction whenever one thought he might be in the presence of God.

d. The Interpretation of the Revelation: I Kings 19:13b-18

(1) Elijah's Second Complaint: I Kings 19:13b-14

And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What do you here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for Jehovah, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and slain your prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

In verse 13b, God again asked Elijah why he came to Mount Sinai. Elijah responded in verse 14, again issuing the same indictment against Israel.

(2) God's Answer: I Kings 19:15-18

And Jehovah said unto him, Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when you come, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria; and Jehu the son of Nimshi shall you anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shall you anoint to be prophet in your room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him that escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet will I leave me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which has not kissed him.

The parallel of these verses with verses 11-13a should not be missed. In response to Elijah's second indictment against Israel, in verse 17 God will send three noisy things against Israel. While He will send all three noisy things, God's presence was not in them. The first was *Hazael*, the king of Syria, who corresponds to the wind. Just as the wind beat against the mountain, Hazael beat against Israel until he reduced Israel's holdings considerably (II Kg. 8:7-15; 10:32-33; 13:3, 22-25). The second noisy thing was *Jehu*, who corresponds to the earthquake. Just as the earthquake split the mountain, Jehu caused a civil war that totally destroyed the dynasty and House of Ahab, as well as royal members of the House of Judah (II Kg. 9:1-10:36). And the third noisy thing was *Elisha*, who corresponds to the fire. Just as the fire burned against the mountain, Elisha burned against Israel, for often where Elisha went, death followed (II Kg. 2:23-24). God did send all three noisy things, but God's presence was not in them.

In verse 18, God then tells Elijah that he was not the only one left who was faithful, for God had *seven thousand* others. These *seven thousand* were the Remnant of that day, quite small when compared to the nation as a whole. The Remnant corresponds to *the still small voice* of verse 12. The Remnant, in contrast to *Hazael, Jehu,* and *Elisha*, is the quiet thing; so quiet, that Elijah did not know they even existed. God's presence was in this Remnant. It was with this historical Remnant, the *seven thousand* of Elijah's day, that the doctrine of the Remnant of Israel began.

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B. The Book of Immanuel: Isaiah 7:1-12:6

It is Isaiah the Prophet who put the Remnant concept into theological terms. It is found mostly in the unit composed of chapters 7-12 and called "The Book of Immanuel." In the Hebrew text, this name is found three times: in Isaiah 7:14; 8:8, and 10. In Isaiah 7:3-9, Isaiah told Ahaz, king of Judah, not to fear; He was to trust with quiet confidence in the God of Israel. Instead, Ahaz chose to trust in the noisy Assyrian army to save him. Building on the contrast of the noise and the quiet, Isaiah 8:5-8 points out that the non-Remnant tends to put its trust in that which is noisy such as the Assyrian army, but the Remnant has a quiet confidence in the God of Israel and the One to come, Immanuel. This is contrasted by the *waters of Shiloah* that flow quietly, as over against the noisy Euphrates River. Ultimately the noise will destroy the non-Remnant, but Immanuel will save the believers, according to Isaiah 8:9-11. Immanuel will thus become the point of division between the Remnant and the non-Remnant. In Isaiah 8:14-15, Immanuel will prove to be *a sanctuary* for the Remnant, but for the non-Remnant, Immanuel will prove to be *a stone of stumbling* and *a rock of offence*. In Isaiah's day, what separated the Remnant from the non-Remnant was their attitude toward the Law and the Prophets. In Isaiah 8:16-17, the Remnant placed its trust in the Law and the Prophets and waited upon the Lord.

So important was the doctrine of the Remnant to Isaiah that, in Isaiah 7:3, he named one of his sons *Shear jashub*, which means "a Remnant shall return." With that naming, in Isaiah 10:20-23, Isaiah was looking forward to the future, final salvation of the Remnant of Israel. Until then, it was God who protected the Remnant and guaranteed its survival, according to Isaiah 46:3-4. But in the future, Immanuel will be the new point of division between the Remnant and the non-Remnant.

II. THE PRESENT

The doctrine of the Remnant of Israel teaches that there is always a segment of the Jewish people who are believers. The teaching of the New Testament is that the Remnant of Israel today is composed of Jewish believers in the Messiahship of Yeshua (Jesus). In the New Testament, that doctrine is found primarily in Paul's Israelology of Romans 9, 10, and 11. There is one other passage on the Remnant of

Israel relevant to Israel Present, I Peter 2:1-10.

NOTES

A. I Peter 2:1-10

1. Introduction: I Peter 1:1-2

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

By taking Peter's words literally, it is clear that this Epistle was not written to the Church at large, nor to a body of Gentile believers, but to Jewish believers living outside the Land within a majority Gentile population. Not once does Peter use the term "Church" in this epistle. The term *the Dispersion* of I Peter 1:1 is a technical Jewish term for Jews who live outside the Land. It is used twice elsewhere: John 7:35 and James 1:1, which all commentators agree refer to the Jews of the Diaspora. There is no reason to make I Peter the exception, since it fits well into Peter's calling as the Apostle to the Circumcision (Gal. 2:7-8). Furthermore, Peter keeps making reference to the fact that his readers live among Gentiles (I Pet. 2:12; 4:3). While many try to make the term "Gentiles" mean "unbelievers," that is never its Jewish usage, nor even a New Testament usage, as a look in a concordance will show. Peter is using the term "Gentile" in its normal usage of "non-Jew." Peter is addressing Jewish believers living among a majority Gentile population. Expressions such as *vain manner of life handed down from your fathers* (I Pet. 1:18) have clear Jewish overtones, distinguishing these Jewish believers from their past lives in Rabbinic Judaism.

In this section of the Epistle, Peter draws a contrast between the Remnant and the non-Remnant. His purpose is to show that, while the non-Remnant has failed in its calling, the Remnant has not failed. Thus, what Peter states here may not necessarily be true of the Church as a whole, but it is true specifically of Jewish believers who now make up the Remnant of Israel.

2. The Spiritual State of the Remnant: I Peter 2:1-3

Putting away therefore all wickedness, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation; if ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Peter's statements show that he is writing to the Jewish believers who are in need of the *spiritual milk* of the Word of God.

3. The Stone of Stumbling and the Rock of Offence: I Peter 2:4-10

After describing the spiritual state of the Remnant in verses 1-3, Peter then deals with the topic of the Stone of Stumbling and the Rock of Offence.

a. The Messiah, the Living Stone: I Peter 2:4

unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious.

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The Messiah Yeshua is described as the *living stone*, who, though *rejected* by men, is *elect* and *precious* with God.

b. The Status of the Remnant: I Peter 2:5

ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

With Exodus 19:5-6 clearly in his mind, Peter states that, because of the kind of salvation they have, Jewish believers are two things. First, they are *living stones* and as such are part of *a spiritual house*. This spiritual house is the spiritual House of Israel, the Remnant of Israel or, in Paul's words, the *Israel of God* (Gal. 6:16). Secondly, Jewish believers are a *holy priesthood*. This, too, was the calling of the nation as a whole. The nation failed, but the Remnant of Israel has not failed and is today offering *spiritual sacrifices* to the Lord.

c. The Distinction Between the Remnant and the Non-Remnant: I Peter 2:6-8

To explain the distinction between the Remnant and the non-Remnant, Peter begins with the status of the Remnant in verses 6-7a: *Because it is contained in scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: And he that believes on him shall not be put to shame. For you therefore that believe is the preciousness.*

Verse 6 is a quotation from Isaiah 28:16 to point out that the *chief corner stone* is the Messiah who is *elect* and *precious* before God the Father, and those who believe in Him will not be ashamed. In verse 7a, he then makes the application and states that, while the Messianic Stone is indeed precious, it is only *precious* for the Remnant.

Concerning the non-Remnant, verses 7b-8 state: *but for such as disbelieve, The stone which the builders rejected The same was made the head of the corner; and, A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; for they stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.*

In verse 7b, Peter quotes from Psalm 118:22 to show that the Messianic Stone that would be rejected by the leaders of Israel was already predicted. In verse 8a, he quotes Isaiah 8:14 to show that, for the unbeliever, the Messianic Stone was to be *a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence*. In the Isaiah passage that was discussed earlier, it was shown that Isaiah dealt with the contrast between the Remnant and the non-Remnant. Peter concludes with an application in verse 8b: the non-Remnant indeed stumbled, for those who rejected the Word were destined to stumble. Isaiah predicted that Immanuel would be the point of division between the Remnant and the non- Remnant. Peter teaches that this has now taken place and Yeshua the Messiah has become that new point of division.

d. The Status of the Remnant: I Peter 2:9-10

This passage concludes with a further description of the status of the Remnant in verse 9a: *But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession.*

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With Exodus 19:5-6 still in mind, Peter now adds four other descriptions to show the position of the Remnant in contrast to Israel the Whole. First, they are *an elect race*, based on Isaiah 43:20. Being elect shows that they were chosen at God's initiative (I Pet. 2:4, 6). This is a reference to their individual election. The use of the term *race* shows that Peter is also dealing with their national election. The Church, however, is not a race; it is composed of believers from all races. Secondly, the Remnant of Israel is *a royal priesthood*. In verse 5, the Remnant was called *a holy priesthood*, emphasizing their right to approach the Heavenly Sanctuary. Now, they are also *a royal priesthood*. Since the High Priest Jesus is a priest king after the Order of Melchizedek (Heb. 7:1-28), these believers are therefore *a royal priesthood*, for they are both priests and kings. For now, they are functioning as priests (Heb. 13:15-16), but in the future they will function as kings, exercising royal authority in the Messianic Kingdom (Rev. 5:10; 20:6). While it is true that all believers constitute a priesthood, the priesthood of all believers cannot legitimately be derived from this passage; rather, the concept of the priesthood of the believer is taught in Revelation 1:6; 5:10; and 20:6. Thirdly, the believing Jewish Remnant is *a holy nation*. Israel became a nation at Mount Sinai and was called upon to be *holy* and separated from sin to God. However, the nation as a whole failed, but the Remnant has not failed. The Church is not a nation (Rom. 10:19), it is composed of believers from all nations. Fourthly, they are *a people for God's own possession*. This is based not only on Exodus 19:5-6, but also on Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Isaiah 43:21; and Malachi 3:17. While they became a nation at Mount Sinai, they became a people with Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. The Remnant is *God's own possession*, for those Jewish believers were purchased by the blood of the Messiah, and therefore belong uniquely to God (I Pet. 1:18-19).

Having described the status of the Remnant in this way, Peter next gives the purpose for their election in verse 9b: *that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*
The background to this concept is Isaiah 43:20-21. They are to *show forth the excellencies* or the attributes *of the God who called* [them] *out of darkness into his marvellous light.* They are to proclaim the message to those outside.

In verse 10, this section concludes with a reference to Hosea 1:10-2:1 and 23: *who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*
Formerly, they were part of the non-Remnant; spiritually, *in time past* [they] *were no people* [and] *had not obtained mercy*. Now they are members of the Remnant, *the people of God,* and *now have obtained mercy.*

4. Summary

To summarize the status of the Remnant, Peter is not drawing a distinction between Israel and the Church or between unbelieving Jews and believing Gentiles. The distinction is between Jews who

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believe and Jews who do not believe. His point is that, while Israel as a whole failed, the believing Remnant of Israel has not failed, thus the Remnant of Israel is fulfilling the calling of the nation as a whole. Paul will make the same point in his theology of Israel in Romans 9, 10, and 11.

B. Romans 9:1-11:24

1. Introduction

Chapters 9, 10, and 11 are sometimes skipped in commentaries on the Book of Romans. Such commentators do not take what God says about Israel too seriously and teach that the Church is the "new Israel." They, therefore, do not feel that these chapters are important. Or perhaps it is because of what Paul has to say here that contradicts their theology. These commentaries provide a verse-by-verse, word-by-word commentary covering chapters 1-8, then skip over to chapters 12-16, totally dropping chapters 9, 10, and 11. Other commentaries that do take these chapters somewhat seriously and do comment upon them will often refer to them as being merely "parenthetical," not part of Paul's main argument. Before moving on to the exposition of this passage, there are three things to note by way of introduction.

a. The Place of Chapters 9, 10, and 11

It is always wrong to ignore three entire chapters of Scripture that God has put into the text, because He certainly must have had a reason for revealing it. Furthermore, chapters 9, 10, and 11 are not parenthetical. If anything they are very pivotal, because they vindicate God's righteousness in His relationship to Israel.

In chapters 1-8 of the Book of Romans, Paul dealt with the theology of the righteousness of God after introducing the book in 1:1-17. He then spelled out the details of the theology of God's righteousness and pointed out that everyone has fallen short of the righteous standards of God in chapters 1-3, including all sections of humanity: the pagan Gentiles, in Romans 1:18-32; the cultured Gentiles, in Romans 2:1-16; and the Jews, in Romans 2:17-3:18. Paul's conclusion in Romans 3:19-31 is that all have sinned and have come short of the righteousness of God.

Having shown that everyone is a sinner, both Jews and Gentiles, and everyone has fallen short of the righteousness of God, Paul describes what God has done in order to provide righteousness for men: He provided righteousness through salvation in Yeshua the Messiah. This salvation has three aspects: past, present, and future. The past aspect of salvation is justification (Rom. 4:1-5:21); once one believes, he is justified or declared righteous by God. The present aspect of salvation is sanctification (Rom. 6:1-8:18); sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit in believers' lives today, conforming the believer more and more into the image of the Son of God. The future aspect of salvation is

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glorification (Rom. 8:19-39); glorification is guaranteed in light of the fact that believers have been justified and are being sanctified, and therefore will some day be glorified and be like Him.

At the end of chapter 8, as he concludes the theology of God's righteousness, he points out that in light of all that God has done for believers in justification, sanctification, and glorification, there is absolutely nothing that can separate believers from the love of God. Nothing in heaven can separate them, nothing on earth, nothing below the earth, nothing outside of them, nothing inside of them, not even they themselves can separate believers from the love of God.

One would think that, having stated all this, Paul would immediately proceed to deal with the practice of God's righteousness. For example, in the Book of Ephesians he dealt with theology in chapters 1-3, and the practical application of that theology in chapters 4-6. Yet in the Book of Romans, having spelled out the theology of God's righteousness, Paul did not immediately proceed to the practice of God's righteousness. Instead, between the theology of God's righteousness in chapters 1-8 and the practice of God's righteousness in chapters 12-16, he inserted three chapters dealing with God's righteousness in His relationship to Israel. Why? Because at the end of chapter 8, Paul concluded that in light of all that God has done, in light of His promises, there is nothing that can separate believers from the love of God. At this point, one might object and ask, "But did not Israel have promises from God, and did not God make certain commitments to Israel, including national salvation and worldwide restoration? Yet, the majority of Israel is in a state of unbelief. It does not seem that God's promises to Israel have been kept. If God's promises to Israel have not been kept, how can anyone really believe that there is nothing that can separate them from the love of God, since that seems to be the case with Israel?" Therefore, Paul must deal with the question of God's righteousness in His relationship to Israel.

For this reason, these three chapters should not be ignored as some commentators have chosen to do. Nor should these chapters be viewed merely as being parenthetical, not related to his argument. Rather, they should be considered pivotal in that they justify or vindicate God's righteousness in His relationship to Israel. They form a bridge between the theology of God's righteousness in chapters 1-8 and the practice of God's righteousness in chapters 12-16. In these three chapters, 9, 10, and 11, Paul explains the program for the Remnant of Israel in the present age and how the Remnant relates to both Israel and the Church.

b. The Three Questions

The second thing to note by way of introduction is that Paul answers three questions in the development of Israelology in the Book of Romans.
The first question is: "If what Paul wrote in Romans 1:16 is true, that the gospel is to the Jew first, why are there so few Jews being saved?"

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To summarize Paul's answer, in Romans 9:1-5 he confesses that he has a deep love and sorrow for Israel. In Romans 9:6-13, Paul then teaches that their rejection of the Messiahship of Yeshua was not due to a failure of God's promises nor was their rejection in Romans 9:14 -29 due to an injustice on God's part. The real problem in Romans 9:30-10:21 is their own rejection of the righteousness of God. However, consolation is to be found in Romans 11:1-10 in the salvation of the Remnant in the present day according to the election of grace. Consolation should also be seen in Romans 11:11-22 in the present acceptance of the Gentiles. Consolation should also be seen in the future in that all Israel will believe, and there will be a future restoration of Israel in Romans 11:23-32. Finally, in Romans 11:33-36, all of these are evidences of the wisdom and the glory of God.

The second question is: "How do the Gentiles know they can trust God when His promises to Israel have not been fulfilled?" That is a logical question in light of what Paul said at the end of chapter 8. To summarize his answer to this question, Paul says three things. First, Israel's failure is related to spiritual pride and self-sufficiency, therefore, the fault does not lie with God. Secondly, Israel's rejection is not complete nor total; there were Jewish people who did not reject the Messiahship of Jesus. Thirdly, Israel's rejection is not final; in fact, the nation as a nation will receive the Messiah some time in the future.

The third question that Paul answers in these chapters is: "Has the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles nullified God's promises to Israel?" He will answer with a very firm "No."

c. The Exposition of Romans 3:1-2a

The last thing by way of introduction to these three chapters is to point out that in Romans 9, 10, and 11 Paul expounded further upon a statement he made in Romans 3:1-2a: *What advantage then has the Jew? or what is the profit of circumcision? Much every way.*

2. The Theology of Israel's Rejection: Romans 9:1-29

a. Paul's Sorrow and Israel's Privileges: Romans 9:1-5

Paul introduces his theme on the theology of Israel by pointing to his own sorrow and describes his own emotions over Israel's rejection in verses 1-3: *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh.*

Having that strong Jewish and Pharisaic background, Paul realized that the truth had to be affirmed at the mouth of two or three witnesses. He presents two witnesses to the fact that he is deeply sorrowed over the issue of Israel's rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus in verse 1: his *conscience*, and *the Holy Spirit*. Paul's *conscience* and *the Holy Spirit* are bearing witness that he is saying the truth about something. In verse 2, that "something" is the fact that Paul has *great*

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sorrow. The Greek word means "grief," "to be in a state of mind that is projecting grief." He also has *unceasing pain*, which is the physical expression of that mental anguish. Paul can truly testify by his conscience and through the Holy Spirit that he had great mental anguish over Israel, and this mental anguish resulted in physical pain. Paul was that concerned over his own people. Paul then expressed his desire in verse 3: *I could wish*. In the Greek, this is an imperfect tense emphasizing continuous action in times past that remains unfinished. Paul is wishing that he could be *anathema*, that he could be set apart for destruction if it would mean Israel's immediate salvation. In other words, he was willing to go to Hell and to the Lake of Fire if it would bring about Israel's salvation. This wish was not for the lost in general, but specifically on behalf of the Jewish people, Paul's *kinsmen according to the flesh.* These were not his spiritual brethren, they were his physical brethren, the Jewish people. However, he realized that this was not the way it was going to happen; he was simply expressing a personal desire.

Paul next outlined Israel's eight privileges and Israel's prerogatives in verses 4-5: *who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.*
The purpose of listing these privileges and prerogatives was to show that Israel really should have received the Messiah, but did not. This was their fault and not the fault of God.

Furthermore, if they did not believe, these eight privileges and prerogatives did not guarantee their salvation. First, *the adoption*; this is speaking of Israel's national adoption by which Israel became the national son of God (Ex. 4:22). Just as believers are individually children of God by adoption, Israel as a nation is the national son of God. Israel was never disinherited from that position (Is. 63:16; Jer. 3:17-19; 31:9, 20). Secondly, *the glory*; specifically, this is the *Shechinah* Glory, the visible manifestation of God's presence. This glory belonged to Israel (Ex. 13:20 21; 16:10; 40:34 38, among others). Thirdly, *the covenants*; specifically, these are the four unconditional, eternal covenants that God made with Israel: the Abrahamic Covenant, the Land Covenant , the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant. Fourthly, *the giving of the law*; specifically, this is the one conditional and temporary covenant God made with Israel: the Mosaic Covenant, which contained the Mosaic Law (Ex. 19:16 20:1). Fifth, *the service of God*; specifically, this included the priesthood, the entire Levitical institution, and all the various offerings. This is something reaffirmed in Hebrews 9:1-10. Sixth, *the promises*; specifically, these are the messianic promises, the promises of the First Coming, the Second Coming, the establishment of Messianic Kingdom, through which He will righteously rule the world in general and Israel in particular. Seventh, *the fathers*; these are the Patriarchs:

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Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Deut. 10:14-15; Heb. 11:1-12:2). It is through them that the Jewish nation came into being and was established. The biblical definition of a Jew is one who is a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The eighth and last privilege he mentions that belongs to Israel is the Messiah Himself. Concerning the Messiah, he states three things. First: *concerning the flesh*, emphasizing His humanity. Jesus was born a Jew; so He had a physical relationship to Israel (Mat. 1:1; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 7:14). Paul's claim that the Messiah belongs to Israel is something that Yeshua Himself affirmed when He stated that He had not come *but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel* (Mat. 15:24). Secondly: *He was over all*, emphasizing His sovereignty. Thirdly: He is *God blessed for ever*, emphasizing His deity; He is God who is blessed forever.

b. Israel's Rejection in Light of Biblical History: Romans 9:6-3

(1) The Two Israels: Romans 9:6

But it is not as though the word of God has come to nought. For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel.

Paul begins this unit in verse 6 with the word But to show he is about to do some explaining. The problem is not that the Word of God nor God's promises have failed or have *come to nought*. The Word of God and His promises have not failed. Paul then uses biblical history to show that Jews are not heirs of blessing just because they are the natural seed of Abraham. While certain blessings come because of the natural seed, there are other blessings of God that are conditioned upon other matters. Spiritual blessings that deal with the issue of salvation are not conditioned purely upon being the natural seed of Abraham, because physical descent by itself was not enough. While it did put one within the scope of the Abrahamic Covenant, something else was required. This verse is the key to this entire unit. The Greek word translated *come to nought* means "to fall out" or "to fall from." It is a Greek word that is used to speak of withering flowers in James 1:11 and I Peter 1:24, and of falling away from a straight course in Acts 27:17, 26, and 29. The point is that the Word of God has not fallen off its straight course, which is the plan and the purpose of God. The Word of God has not suddenly been frustrated by Israel's rejection. In fact, the rejection by Israel of the Messiahship of Yeshua was very much part of the divine program and plan.

He then expounds using the particle *For*. As it is here, this is often used as an explanatory particle. The explanation is: *they are not all Israel, that are of Israel*. It is important that this verse not be misunderstood. Paul is not distinguishing between Israel and the Church nor between Jews and Gentiles. Rather, he is distinguishing between Jews who believe and Jews who do not believe or between the Remnant and the non-Remnant. The first expression, *all Israel*, refers to the believing Jewish Remnant, the believing natural seed. The second expression, *of Israel,* refers to the entire nation, the whole natural seed. In other words, not the whole of Israel is the true Israel or believing Israel. What Paul is

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saying is that there are two Israels: first, Israel the Whole, which includes all physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and, secondly, within the nation of Israel, there is the Israel of God, the believing Israel, the true Israel. The contrast is between Jews who believe and Jews who do not believe. There is one Israel that constitutes the entire nation, and within the whole of physical Israel, there is a spiritual Israel. Spiritual Israel is never stated by Scripture to be the Church, it is always those Jews, within the nation, who believe. In this way, Paul expounds or elaborates upon statements he made in Romans 2:28-29.

(2) **The Two Illustrations: Romans 9:7-13**

After stating that there are two Israels and that there is a distinction between Israel as a whole and Israel as the believing Remnant, Paul then gives two illustrations from the Old Testament. The first illustration is that of Ishmael and Isaac in verses 7-9: *neither, because they are Abraham's seed, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall your seed be called. That is, it is not the children of the flesh that are children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed. For this is a word of promise, According to this season will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.*

The purpose of this first illustration is to point out that physical descendants who believe are Abraham's real children. Not to all physical descendants, but only to those physical descendants, *the children of promise*, are these promises given.

The second illustration is that of Esau and Jacob in verses 10-13: *And not only so; but Rebecca also having conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, for the children being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that called, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. Even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.*

In the first illustration, the two sons had the same father but different mothers. In the second illustration, the two sons had the same father and mother, in fact, they were twins.

Through these two illustrations, Paul says four things. First, although Israel has failed, God's Word has not failed; God's plan is still working its way out, and everything is going according to plan. Secondly, the spiritual blessings do not come through one's physical descent or personal merit. Thirdly, they come by the grace of God, due solely to the will of God. Fourthly, physical descent alone will not obtain these promises; they are obtained by physical descent and its spiritual appropriation. What he is not saying, and indeed will not say, is that the promises were taken away from physical Israel and given to the Church. What he is saying is that these promises are still going to be given to physical Israel, but only to that part of physical Israel that believes. As in I Peter 2:1-10, it is the Remnant of Israel that is attaining the spiritual promises.

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c. Israel's Rejection in Light of Biblical Principles: Romans 9:14-29

In this section of the theology of Israel's rejection, Paul raises two questions and provides an answer to each: first, "Is God unrighteous?" Secondly, "Why does God still find fault?"

(1) Is God Unrighteous? Romans 9:14-18

What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

The first question is introduced in verse 14a: *What shall we say then?* Whenever Paul introduces a question with these words, it is a question to be refuted. The question is: *Is there unrighteousness with God?* Is God unrighteous in that He chose only the portion of Israel that believes and not Israel as a whole? Again, the question anticipates a negative answer, and it comes in three points in verses 14b-18.

The first answer is in verse 14b: *God forbid*. The Greek word means, "May it never be!" "Perish the thought!" This is the strongest possible negative in Greek.

The second answer shows that God has absolute right to dispense His mercy as He pleases in verses 15-16: *For he said to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. So then it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that has mercy.* In verse 15, Paul quotes Exodus 33:19. If God's favor were free and unmerited to Moses, how much more so it is to others. Moses was declared to be the most meek of all the men of the earth, yet his meekness did not merit God's mercy. God's mercy was totally apart from any human merit, and if that were true with Moses, it is certainly true of all.

After giving this answer, Paul draws a logical conclusion in verse 16. The words *So then* show a logical conclusion based on what has just been said: mercy does not depend on the one willing or running. In other words, mercy is not dependent upon human works. Mercy depends solely upon God's grace. God has chosen to extend His mercy only to that part of Israel that believes, the Remnant of Israel.

In verses 17-18, the third answer is a quotation from Exodus 9:16: *For the scripture said unto Pharaoh, For this very purpose did I raise you up, that I might show in you my power, and that my name might be published abroad in all the earth. So then he has mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardens.* In verse 17, Paul introduces another Scripture to prove divine sovereignty, that God is absolutely free in His dealings with men. For in Moses, we see the goodness of God; in Pharaoh, we see the severity of God. It shows that God raised up Pharaoh at this specific point in history and put him on the throne to serve as an example of what divine justice is all about. God had both an immediate purpose and a distant purpose. The immediate purpose was: *that I might show in you my power.* The distant purpose was: *that my name might be published abroad in*

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all the earth, and so it has been. Forty years later, when Joshua entered the Land, the Canaanites were still afraid because they had heard what God had done to Egypt and to Pharaoh (Josh. 2:8-11). Paul then draws another logical conclusion in verse 18: *So then*, God will have *mercy on whom he will*; Moses is an example of election in regard to mercy. The phrase *whom he will he hardens* refers to Pharaoh as an example of hardening in reference to judgment. The Remnant of Israel is the recipient of God's mercy and the non-Remnant of God's hardening.

(2) Why Does God Still Find Fault? Romans 9:19-29

The second question is raised from a human viewpoint in verse 19: *You will say then unto me, Why does he still find fault? For who withstands his will?* The question is: "If God hardens hearts, how can He blame anyone when they are doing what He willed them to do?" Paul never answers this question directly, but deals with the attitude of the heart that produced the question. The question implies a total forgetfulness of the relationship of the created to the Creator, the relationship of man to God.

He begins to answer the question by giving an illustration of the potter and pottery in verses 20-21: *Nay but, O man, who are you that replies against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why did you make me thus? Or has not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?*
The point of the illustration is to place man in a proper relationship to the Creator: if God did not elect, none would have been saved, for *there is none that seek after God* (Rom. 3:11). Men are not lost because they are hardened; men are hardened because they are already lost. They are already filled with sin; they have fallen short of God's righteous standards, and they are lost because they are sinners and do not seek God.

After the illustration comes the application in verses 22-23: *What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory.*
In verse 22, Paul first describes the unbelievers as *vessels of wrath*. He uses the Greek middle voice, which means that men fit themselves for destruction. It is their own sin that condemns them because, in reality, God has been *longsuffering*. He has been merciful, and there can be no real complaints against Him. God has *endured with much longsuffering* vessels that fitted themselves for destruction.

In verse 23, Paul then describes the *vessels of mercy*. Here he uses the passive voice, which shows that they were made fit for salvation. While men fit themselves for destruction, God makes those who believe fit

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for salvation. To those whom He fits for salvation, He makes known *the riches of his glory*, prepared beforehand *unto glory.*

He then spells out a new truth in verse 24: *even us, whom he also called, not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles?*
While Paul has been dealing primarily with national election, the principle holds true regarding individual election. Until now, Paul has been concerned with two different groups of Jews: Jews who believe and Jews who do not believe. Now, he turns to the calling of the Gentiles to point out that, among the Gentiles also, God has fitted some for salvation.

As he moves to his conclusion of this first section in verses 25-29, Paul picks up from verse 24 and points out that vessels of mercy are also to be found among the Gentiles in verses 25-26: *As he said also in Hosea, I will call that my people, which was not my people; And her beloved, that was not beloved. And it shall be, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, There shall they be called sons of the living God.*
At this point, he quotes from two segments of the Prophet Hosea. This was not a fulfillment of Hosea, but it is an application of Hosea because of a similar situation. Verse 25, is a quotation from Hosea 2:23 where God declared that Israel was His people; but because of their sin, He was going to expel them from the Land. For a period of time, they would become *not my people*. Although positionally speaking, Israel is always the people of God, they only experience the benefits of being the people of God when they believe. Experientially speaking, Israel started out as being God's people, but then God said that they would no longer receive the benefits of being His people for a period of time. However, later Israel would repent and become experientially God's people again. What Hosea was speaking about is Israel's moving from the position of *not my people* to becoming *my people.*

Verse 26 is a quotation from Hosea 1:10 in which a similar situation has happened with the Gentiles who believe. The Gentiles, in a state of unbelief, were *not my people*, but now that they have been made vessels of mercy, and God has fitted them for salvation, they have become *my people*; they moved from being not my people to being *my people*. Because of this point of similarity, Hosea 2:23 and 1:10 are applied to them. This calling of the Gentiles is what Paul deals with here. Hosea had Israel, specifically the Ten Tribes, in mind. Peter applied this to the Remnant in contrast to the non-Remnant. But Paul, because of a similar situation, applies these verses to the Gentiles.

While many Gentiles became vessels of mercy, a great portion of Israel became vessels of wrath in verses 27-29: *And Isaiah cried concerning Israel, If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that shall be saved: for the Lord will execute his word upon the earth, finishing it and cutting it short. And, as Isaiah had said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, We had become as Sodom, and had been made like unto Gomorrah.*

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In verses 27-28, Paul quotes from Isaiah 10:22-23. The point of verse 27 is that *it is the remnant that shall be saved*. The point of verse 28 is: God will accomplish His purpose and the Remnant will survive. Here, Paul reaffirms the point he made in verse 6 that the Word of God has not failed because Israel as a nation has rejected the Messiah. It was all part of God's plan, so the Word of God is proceeding according to plan.

In verse 29, he quotes from Isaiah 1:9, pointing out that if God did not intervene with grace, they would have been entirely destroyed. It is the Remnant through whom God will fulfill His program, not the entire nation. God keeps the nation alive because of the believing Remnant; thus, the believing Remnant is responsible for keeping the entire nation alive. The reason all attempts to annihilate the Jews have consistently failed is because there has always been a believing Remnant among the Jews.

d. Summary

To summarize this first division, Paul shows that Israel's rejection of the Messiahship of Yeshua did not mean that God's plan and program had come to naught, that it had fallen short, or that it had fallen aside; rather, this was all proceeding according to divine plan. It was in the program of God that Israel would reject the Messiahship of Yeshua, and it is because of Israel's rejection of His Messiahship that mercy was extended to the Gentiles. The mercy shown to the Gentiles was not to the total exclusion of the Jews, however, because there is a Remnant coming to saving faith even among the Jews. There are vessels of mercy among both Jews and Gentiles, and there are vessels of wrath among both Jews and Gentiles. The reason the gospel went out freely among the Gentiles is because Israel as a nation had rejected it. It is something God had already planned in the Old Testament, because what Paul teaches here is what Isaiah predicted in Isaiah 49:1-13.

3. The Explanation of Israel's Rejection: Romans 9:30-10:21

In the previous section, Paul dealt with Israel's rejection of the Messiahship of Yeshua from the standpoint of divine sovereignty. In this section, he explains why Israel failed from the standpoint of human responsibility.

a. The Stumbling of the People: Romans 9:30-33

Paul begins by describing a paradox in verses 30-31: *What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, who followed not after righteousness, attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith: but Israel, following after a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law.*

In verse 30, the Gentiles did not have *a law of righteousness* to quicken their moral sensibilities like the Jews did; neither were they seeking to attain righteousness like the Jews. Yet these Gentiles did attain righteousness, because they came on the basis of faith, not works. But

in verse 31, Israel did pursue after righteousness, did not obtain it.

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Paul then explained the paradox in verse 32a: *Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by works.*
The reason Israel did not obtain righteousness was because they did not come to it on the basis of faith; rather, they trusted their own works that, in the end, failed to bring them to righteousness. So Israel that sought it, failed to attain it, because they were trying to attain it by works. The Gentiles that did not seek it, did attain it in the end, because they found it by faith.

Paul then deals with the result in verses 32b-33: *They stumbled at the stone of stumbling; even as it is written, Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence: And he that believes on him shall not be put to shame.*
The result of seeking it by works and not by faith is given in verse 32b: *They stumbled at the stone of stumbling*. It was Israel's avoidance of faith and insistence upon works that caused the problem. This was due to the guilt of Israel in stumbling at the doctrine of righteousness by faith in the Messiah. Their trying to attain righteousness by works carried with it the attitude of rejection of the Messiah Himself. Salvation is by grace through faith in the Messiah alone, plus nothing. In this verse, Jesus became the *stone of stumbling* because they must trust Him for salvation. When they failed to trust Him, they stumbled over Him and, as a result, they failed to attain righteousness. They sought righteousness through the Law and they stumbled.

In verse 33, Paul quotes Isaiah 8:14, which confirms the twofold attitude of both stumbling and rejection. Jesus' offer of salvation by pure faith in Him, apart from works, proved to be two things: *a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence*. They stumbled over the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith plus nothing, and then they were offended by it. Paul then quotes Isaiah 28:16 concerning those who believe: they will not be ashamed of this doctrine of salvation. The Jewish Remnant did not stumble over Yeshua. For the Jewish believer, Jesus is not the Stone of Stumbling nor the Rock of Offence; He is a *sanctuary* (Is. 8:14) and *the preciousness* (I Pet. 2:1-10).

The picture of the Messiah as a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offence was first taught by Isaiah and developed by Paul and Peter. All three point out the distinction between the Remnant and the non-Remnant in relationship to this Stone.

b. Israel's Ignorance of the Channel of Salvation: Romans 10:1-11

After dealing with the stumbling of the people, Paul then spells out the reason behind it, which was due to these lines of ignorance. Each line of ignorance is based on the other.

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(1) Paul's Personal Desire: Romans 10:1-2

Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

As Paul began to explain their ignorance of the channel of salvation, he again expressed a personal *desire*, as he did in the beginning of chapter 9. In verse 1, he addressed his readers as *Brethren*, thereby uniting all believers with himself. All believers, then, should share this same *desire*. Regarding that burden and desire, Paul stated: *my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved.* The thing for which Paul kept praying was that the Jewish people might be saved. Paul's desire was to be able to see the salvation of the Jewish people, not only on a national level, but also on an individual level.

In verse 2, Paul then bears witness for the Jewish people. He testifies that the Jewish people do *have a zeal for God*, and this zeal is the cause of Paul's pain. The problem was that their zeal was *not according to knowledge,* because sincerity is not enough. This verse becomes the key to this division, just as Romans 9:6 was the key to the first main division. While the Jewish people had a knowledge of God, they did not know God in the Messiah, and that is crucial for salvation. In the Greek text, Paul wrote that they had *gnosis*, meaning "knowledge," but they did not have *epignosis*, which means "full knowledge." This is the same point that Hosea made: the reason Israel is lost is because of *a lack of knowledge* of spiritual truth (Hos. 4:6).

(2) The Distinction Between Legal Righteousness and Faith Righteousness: Romans 10:3-11

(a) Legal Righteousness: Romans 10:3-5

For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believes. For Moses writes that the man that does the righteousness which is of the law shall live thereby.

Paul once again emphasizes their failure in that they failed to attain *the righteousness which is of the law*. In verse 3, their failure lies in the fact that they were *ignorant of God's righteousness*; this is the sentence of justification, which is conferred upon those who believe. But they did not seek *God's righteousness*, they did not seek to be declared righteous by faith. Rather, they sought *to establish their own righteousness*; this is the sentence of justification sought by the way an individual kept the Law. They sought to establish their righteousness to their own glory by works. As soon as they tried to establish righteousness by their own works, it meant that they refused to *subject themselves to the righteousness of God*. Because the righteousness of God is attained by grace through faith plus nothing, this turned out to be an act of disobedience.

Paul explains the reason for it in verse 4: *For Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness.* The Greek word translated *end* is *telos*. It is a Greek word that can mean two things. First, it can mean "termination," that

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the Messiah is the termination of the Law. Secondly, the word *telos* can also mean "goal," that the goal of the Law was the Messiah. The Law was not an end in itself, rather, it was intended to bring one to faith in the Messiah. From other passages, it is clear that both are true. The Messiah was the goal of the Law to bring one to faith (Gal. 3:10-4:7). The death of Yeshua also brought the Law to an end (II Cor. 3:1-18; Heb. 7:11-18). But the primary meaning of the word is "termination." Within the context of the Book of Romans, Paul has already stated that the Law of Moses no longer has any authority over the believer (Rom. 7:4-6). In either case, Israel the Whole failed on both counts; Israel failed to realize that the goal of the Law was faith in the Messiah and that the Law had ended as a rule of life. The Law was never a means of salvation. They also failed to realize that the Law was rendered inoperative and that Jesus was to be seen as the One through whom man attains righteousness, not by the works of the Law.

To prove his point, in verse 5 Paul quotes Leviticus 18:5 where Moses himself saw the impossibility of keeping the Law. In this particular passage, the contrast is not between Law and faith; the contrast is between righteousness proceeding from the Law and righteousness proceeding from faith. No man attains any righteousness that proceeds from the Law because he fails to keep the Law perfectly. Therefore, the only way man is justified or declared righteous is if he proceeds on the basis of faith. Legal righteousness is trying to attain righteousness by the works of the Law, failing to see that salvation can only be granted by grace through faith in the Messiah.

(b) Faith Righteousness: Romans 10:6-11

Paul begins with a description of faith righteousness in verses 6-7: *But the righteousness which is of faith says thus, Say not in your heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down:) or, Who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.)*

In these verses, Paul quotes from Deuteronomy 30:12-13 where Moses explained the nearness of God's righteousness. He said that one does not need to go up *into heaven* to bring it down or to go down *into the abyss* in order to bring it up. What Moses said to Israel is here applied to Messiah. To obtain this righteousness, one does not need to go either into Heaven or to Hell, because it is apart from human merit. Man does not need to initiate the Incarnation *to bring Christ down*, for this has already been done. Nor does man need to initiate the Resurrection *to bring Christ up*, for this has already been done. Faith righteousness is not initiated by human merit.

Then Paul quotes Deuteronomy 30:14, which spells out the means of faith righteousness in verse 8: *But what says it? The word is nigh you, in your mouth, and in your heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach.*

The means is *in your mouth, and in your heart*, showing its nearness and accessibility. The *word of faith* is the message, and the subject of the message is faith. This is the message or gospel that Paul has been preaching.

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Paul explains the one thing that is essential to salvation, and that is belief in verses 9-11: *because if you shall confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and shall believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved: for with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture says, Whosoever believes on him shall not be put to shame.*

Verses 9-10 reveal how belief will naturally flow out in confession: with the mouth, one confesses *Jesus as Lord*; with the heart, he believes that God raised Him from the dead. *With the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* This chiastic construction, mouth heart; heart mouth, means that believing and confessing occur at the same time. Confession is not something one does later as part of gaining salvation. Belief in the heart brings righteousness and justification. The confession is made to God. The content of this confession is that Yeshua died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. The content of faith is that Jesus is Savior; this is what one confesses the moment he believes.

In verse 11, Paul then quotes from Isaiah 28:16 to prove that faith is the only condition for salvation. The point of his argument is that the universal way of attaining salvation is through faith.

c. Israel's Ignorance of the Universal Character of Salvation: Romans 10:12-13

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him: for, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

The first line of ignorance led to the faulty conclusion and second line of ignorance: that God intended to save only Jews. Earlier Paul proved that salvation in the Old Testament was to those who believed, not on the basis of human works. In verse 12, Paul proves that salvation is universal to all who believe. Because salvation is free, it is necessarily universal. It is free to both Jews and Gentiles alike; insofar as the way a man is saved, *there is no distinction*. In Romans 3:22-23, he pointed out that all are sinners, both Jews and Gentiles. Now he points out that all may be saved, both Jews and Gentiles. The Lord of the Jews is the Lord of the Gentiles; He is *the same Lord*. This Lord *is rich* in His gracious dealings and graciously responds to *all that call upon him.* To prove it, in verse 13, Paul quotes from Joel 2:32, which is the evidence of universality in that anyone who will *call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*. In verse 12, the emphasis is upon the character of God: *He is the Lord of all*. In verse 13, the emphasis is on the promise of God: *Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* This includes both Jews and Gentiles.

Paul is not saying that all distinctions between Jews and Gentiles have been erased. The point here is that as far as the way one is saved, there is no distinction. All are saved by grace through faith. But Israel's ignorance of the universal character of salvation caused them to

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stumble over belief in the Messiahship of Yeshua. Since the Law was given to the Jews and not to the Gentiles, the Jewish people wrongly concluded that God intended to save Jews, but not the Gentiles. They wrongly concluded that salvation was not available to Gentiles unless they took upon themselves fully the works of the Law; they assumed that, if they kept the Law, they would be saved. However, salvation was never on the basis of the Law; it was always on the basis of grace through faith. This is true for both Jews and Gentiles.

d. Israel's Ignorance of the Universal Preaching of the Gospel: Romans 10:14-21

The second line of ignorance led to the third: that there was no need to proclaim a message of salvation to the Gentiles, since God intended to save only Jews. In this section, there is another proof that the stumbling of Israel was the fault of Israel, not God's fault. The nature of salvation, which he just explained, necessitated that it be preached without distinction. This freedom of the offer of salvation to all proved to be a stumbling block to unbelieving Jewish people, but they did not have the excuse of not having heard.

He presents the chain of the preaching in verses 14-15: *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!*

Each question is a link in the chain of the argument, and each conclusion is tacitly assumed, forming the grounds or basis for the next question. He points out four things in these questions. First, there is no calling upon the name of the Lord without faith. Secondly, there can be no faith without hearing; faith must have content and one must hear the content of faith before he can believe it. Thirdly, there is no hearing without preaching. And fourthly, there is no preaching without sending. A universal gospel is a necessary corollary to a universal salvation, and that requires a universal proclamation of the gospel. Israel rejected the preaching, and their ignorance was the cause of rejection. Here Paul quotes Isaiah 52:7 to show that the message had been preached, but it was simply not believed. Because of the previous problem, their ignorance of the universal character of salvation, they failed to preach salvation through faith to the Gentiles. Yet there can be no calling without faith, no faith without hearing, no hearing without preaching, and no preaching without sending.

Because of Israel's failure to do the sending, the Gentiles did not hear. A fact that was not true of Israel, for Paul shows that the message was heard in verses 16-18: *But they did not all hearken to the glad tidings. For Isaiah said, Lord, who has believed our report? So belief comes of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. But I say, Did they not hear? Yea, verily. Their sound went out into all the earth, And their words unto the ends of the world.*

In verse 16, the word *hearken* means "obey" "a voluntary submission."

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Paul points out that they failed to voluntarily submit to the demands of the gospel. He then quotes Isaiah 53:1 to prove that there was a failure to obey, and this chapter of Isaiah deals with Israel's rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus.

In verse 17, he speaks of the relationship between faith and hearing. The relationship is that one must have a message to believe. But how is he going to believe a message unless he hears it? Belief of a message comes by hearing, and hearing is by the Word of God.

In verse 18, he shows that the Jews had the message. The problem was not a lack of hearing, but a lack of obedience. Paul quotes Psalm 19:4 to show that the Jewish people were inexcusable, for the message that came only through nature or general revelation should have brought them to faith. But they had more than just the message of nature preached to them, they had the gospel, which was special revelation. By this time, the gospel had been preached in virtually every Jewish community. This shows that Israel had heard.

In verses 19-20, Paul quotes Old Testament prophecy, Deuteronomy 32:21 and Isaiah 65:1, which anticipated a salvation that would be sent out to every nation, and that Gentiles among those nations would receive it: *But I say, Did Israel not know? First Moses said, I will provoke you to jealousy with that which is no nation, With a nation void of understanding will I anger you. And Isaiah is very bold, and said, I was found of them that sought me not; I became manifest unto them that asked not of me.*
The message that the Jewish people were rejecting, Gentiles were accepting. Those who believe will constitute a new entity that, in turn, will provoke Jews to jealousy, a point Paul will detail in Romans 11:11 -14. This new group, however, is not a nation; it is *no nation*, for it is composed of believers from all nations.

He then concludes by quoting Isaiah 65:2 to show that, even though Israel rejected Him, God's attitude toward Israel was still one of love in verse 21: *But as to Israel he said, All the day long did I spread out my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.*
God keeps His hands open continuously; anytime Israel wants to respond, He will accept them. Israel has rejected the Lord, but the Lord has not rejected Israel; He is still waiting to receive Israel.

4. The Consolation of Israel's Rejection: Romans 11:1-24

a. The Rejection by Israel is Not Total: Romans 11:1-10

I say then, Did God cast off his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.
The word *then* connects verse 1 with Romans 10:21 that portrays Israel in unbelief. Paul begins with a question: *Did God cast off his people?* This question is based on the statement in Romans 10:21 and shows that the *people* of these two verses must be the same, national Israel. In these verses, Paul taught that Israel's rejection of the Messiahship of

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Yeshua is not complete or total, because even today there are Jewish people coming to a saving knowledge of the Messiahship of Jesus. The answer comes quickly: *God forbid* or more strongly in the Greek, "May it never be!" "Perish the thought!" The problem was not that God had *cast off his people.* The fact that Israel rejected the Messiahship of Yeshua does not mean that God has rejected Israel. Even in unbelief, they are still his people. As Paul states, God did not cast off His people. If He had, it would mean that no single Jew could ever be saved. To prove it, Paul first cites himself as an example. The fact that Paul himself was a Jewish believer showed two things. First, it showed that Israel's rejection of the Messiah was not total. And, secondly, it showed that God has not rejected or cast off His people. Otherwise, Paul would not have been saved. Although the majority do not believe, still God has not cast off His people; He has not rejected His elect nation. The fact that Paul refers to Israel as *his people* in the present age shows that they are still the Chosen People.

Paul then brings out the choice of God in verse 2a: *God did not cast off his people which he foreknew.*
The relationship between God and His people is that of foreknowledge. God had, in His foreknowledge, chosen Israel in spite of His knowledge that Israel would reject the Messiahship of Jesus. The very concept of the foreknowledge of God forbids the concept of the casting off of Israel. Since Israel was chosen, God could not cast off Israel.

Then to show that Paul was not alone in his Jewish faith of the Messiahship of Yeshua, he next deals with the calling of the Remnant in verses 2b-10. There are many other Jews who have come to saving faith, both in the past and at the present time. Paul gives the historical example of Elijah in verses 2b-4: *Or know ye not what the scripture said of Elijah? how he pleaded with God against Israel: Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have digged down your altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what said the answer of God unto him? I have left for myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal.*
The point is to show that God has always had a Remnant, although the Remnant may have been quite small at times. While apostasy was general, it was not universal among Jews. The point Paul is making with the example of Elijah is that what is true today has always been true: it is the Remnant that comes to saving faith. The Remnant in Elijah's day was only *seven thousand* strong. What has happened since the ministry of Jesus is nothing new because, throughout Jewish history, the majority have always been in a state of unbelief.

After giving the example of Elijah, Paul gave the application in verse 5: *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*
The expression *Even so* is the comparison and the word then is the inference; what was true then is true now: *there is a remnant according to*

the election of grace. By declaring that it is the election of grace, Paul gave the standard according to which the Remnant comes into existence. It is not on the basis of the Law of Moses (Rom. 10:4), but on the basis of grace. Paul uses the Greek perfect tense, which shows that the Remnant has existed in the past and still exists in the present. The present Remnant of verse 5 corresponds to the *seven thousand men* of Elijah's day. This Remnant is the Israel of God of Galatians 6:16.

He then gives the explanation in verse 6: *But if it is by grace, it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.*
He drives the point home that *grace* and *works* are mutually exclusive; this is the same point he made in chapter 10. If it is *by grace*, it cannot be *of works*; the reason is that it would make "grace no longer grace." No one, not even the Jew, can make any claim on God, but God will save men only by grace though faith, among both the Jews and among the Gentiles. Insofar as the basis of salvation is concerned, Law and grace, works and faith, are mutually exclusive.

Paul next draws a logical conclusion in verse 7: *What then? That which Israel sought for, that he obtained not; but the election obtained it, and the rest were hardened.*
What then? The inference is: that which Israel the Whole sought, *he obtained not*. Israel the Whole sought righteousness, but as Romans 9:31-33 pointed out, they sought this righteousness on the basis of their own works and the works of the Law, thus they did not obtain it. The *elect obtained* righteousness, while *the rest were hardened*. Again, the distinction here is not between the Church and Israel or between Jews and Gentiles, but between Jews who believe and Jews who do not believe. That which Israel the Whole failed to obtain, Israel the Remnant did obtain. Jewish believers have obtained this righteousness of God. This same point was made in I Peter 2:1-10. While Israel the Whole has failed to obtain the righteousness of God, there is a Remnant within Israel that has not failed. It is this Remnant, the Jewish believers, that is the Israel of God. Again, the distinction is between the Remnant, *the election* that *obtained it*, and the non-Remnant, *the rest were hardened.*

In verses 8-10, Paul then quotes from the Old Testament to show that the present hardening of Israel was anticipated by all three divisions of the Old Testament: *according as it is written, God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this very day. And David said, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, And a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them: Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, And bow you down their back always.*
He quotes the Law in Deuteronomy 29:4, the Prophets in Isaiah 29:10, and the Writings in Psalm 69:22-23 to show that Israel as a whole has been hardened.

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The point of Romans 11:1-10, then, is that while Israel as a nation has failed to attain righteousness, this rejection of the Messiahship of Yeshua is not a total rejection; there are Jewish people who do believe. These Jewish believers have attained the righteousness of God. At the present time, there are Jewish believers that are the Remnant according to the election of grace. So instead of using the existence of a minority of believers as evidence that God has cast off His people, in reality, it is evidence that He has not.

b. The Purpose of Israel's Stumbling: Romans 11:11-15

Paul again raises a question to be refuted in verse 11a: *I say then, Did they stumble that they might fall? God forbid.*

The expression *I say then* raises the question: *Did they stumble that they might fall?* Was Israel's stumbling in Romans 9:30-33 for the purpose of Israel's falling? Was the purpose so that God could reject and cast off His people? Paul is referring to the majority that did stumble. The Greek word that Paul used for *fall* refers to "a complete and irrevocable fall." So, was the stumbling of Israel for the purpose that Israel would irrevocably fall and never rise again? Paul then gave the answer: *God forbid.* "May it never be!" "Perish the thought!" In the light of God's faithfulness, this is unthinkable. They have stumbled, but it was not for the purpose of falling irrevocably. God planned for Israel to stumble for the purpose of Gentile salvation, but Gentile salvation is subservient or subordinate to Jewish salvation.

Having said this, in verses 11b-15 Paul then spelled out the purpose of Gentile salvation. Verses 11b-14 state: *but by their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy. Now if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? But I speak to you that are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry; by any means I may provoke to jealousy them that are my flesh, and may save some of them.*

In verse 11b, the purpose is to provoke Jews *to jealousy*. This is a reference to Deuteronomy 32:21, already cited in Romans 10:19. The answer to the question, "Why is God saving Gentiles today?" is to provoke the Jews to jealousy. The expression *provoke to jealousy* is a Greek word that means "to come alongside someone, causing him to boil or seethe with jealousy." The reason God is saving Gentiles is so that a believing Gentile will come alongside an unbelieving Jewish person and cause the Jewish person to become jealous because of what the Gentile believer has so that he becomes a believer in the Messiah also.

Verse 12 presents a contrast between the partial and the fullness. Concerning the partial, there is now a reduction of the nation to a Remnant of believers today, but in the future, there will be a national salvation of the nation as a whole and this will be *their fulness*. Paul points out that since Israel's stumbling was for the purpose of Gentile salvation, which is *the riches of the world*, the riches of the Gentiles, this

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fact should lead to some key lessons. The first lesson to learn about the purpose of Israel's stumbling is that Israel did not stumble for an irrevocable fall, rather, it was so salvation could now go out to the Gentiles.

Now that salvation has gone out to the Gentiles, the purpose of Gentile salvation is to provoke the Jews to jealousy and thus to bring them to salvation in verses 13-14. The purpose of Israel's stumbling was Gentile salvation, and the purpose for Gentile salvation is Jewish salvation. This is the methodology by which God has chosen to work.

There is a second lesson to be learned about the purpose of Israel's stumbling in verse 15: *For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?*
The second lesson is that all of this will result in blessings for Israel. Paul states that if the stumbling of Israel meant the reconciliation of the Gentile world, then the *receiving* of Israel would mean life from the dead. This is the statement of Israel's place in God's blessing. The unbelief of Israel was directed toward the restoration of faith; the fall of Israel was directed toward their ultimate reclamation. Their *fulness* of verse 12 refers to Israel's complete restoration. If, by the fall of Israel, the Gentiles received the gospel, how much more will the Gentiles be blessed by Israel's return. This is an argument from the lesser to the greater. If the Gentiles have received this much blessing by virtue of Israel's stumbling, just think how much more blessing the Gentiles will have when Israel is saved. This will lead to the Second Coming and the establishment of the Kingdom. This is why Paul labored so hard among the Gentiles. In this way, even more Jews will be provoked to jealousy and believe, and this, in turn, will mean even more blessings for the Gentiles.

The point Paul makes in this section is that it was God's plan for Israel to reject the Messiahship of Jesus; for awhile, the gospel would go out to the Gentiles, during which time they were to provoke Jews to jealousy; until eventually, all Israel is saved. Paul builds upon Isaiah 49:1-13 where Isaiah taught the same thing: that the Messiah would come to Israel; Israel would reject Him, and the Messiah would then, for awhile, become the light to the Gentiles; but eventually, Israel will return to Him and be restored. Paul does not say anything new here; he just points out the way Isaiah 49 is being fulfilled in this day. In verses 1-10, Paul taught that there is still a Remnant coming to saving faith. Now in verses 11-15, he states that the primary way Jews now come to faith is by being provoked to jealousy by Gentile believers.

c. The Olive Tree: Romans 11:16-24
Paul begins this segment by giving the illustration and the principle of the Olive Tree in verse 16: *And if the firstfruit is holy, so is the lump: and if the root is holy, so are the branches.*
The connecting word *if* or "now" provides the reason for believing in

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a future national restoration. The illustration is that of the *firstfruit* and the *root*, which refer to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the Abrahamic Covenant. They are *holy* because they were separated and consecrated by God for a divine purpose. Israel as a nation is the *lump* and the *branches*. The principle is based on Numbers 15:17-21: the holiness or consecration of the *firstfruit* and the *root* is passed on to the *lump* and the *branches*. Just as the *firstfruit* sanctifies the whole harvest, *lump*, even some day all Israel will also be sanctified. The Abrahamic Covenant made with the Patriarchs is the basis for the expectation of Israel's future national salvation.

The *natural branches* are the Jews or Israel and the wild olive branches are the Gentiles in verse 17: *But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them, and did become partaker with them of the root of the fatness of the olive tree.*
The Olive Tree in this passage does not represent Israel or the Church, it represents the place of spiritual blessing. Israel is the owner of the Olive Tree, but Israel is not the tree itself. The *root* of this place of blessing is the Abrahamic Covenant. Paul makes the same point here that he made in Ephesians 2:11-16 and 3:5-6. Gentiles, by their faith, have now *become partaker* of Jewish spiritual blessings as contained in the Abrahamic Covenant. This Olive Tree represents the place of blessing and now Gentiles have been grafted into this place of blessing and are partaking of its sap. The Gentiles are not "takers-over," but partakers of Jewish spiritual blessings. In this verse, Paul spoke of the grafting of *wild olive* branches into a good olive tree. Critics of Paul have said that it is obvious Paul did not understand horticulture, because it is unnatural to graft a wild olive branch into a good olive tree. That is exactly the point Paul was making; it is unnatural for Gentiles to be grafted into this place of blessing that comes out of the Abrahamic Covenant. In verse 24, Paul states that this is *contrary to nature.* Normally, such a graft would be unfruitful. The point he is making is that God is doing something that is unnatural: He is bringing Gentiles into the place of blessing based on the Jewish covenants.

Paul then gives a warning in verses 18-22: *glory not over the branches: but if you glory, it is not you that bears the root, but the root you. You will say then, Branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; by their unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by your faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, neither will he spare you. Behold then the goodness and severity of God: toward them that fell, severity; but toward you, God's goodness, if you continue in his goodness: otherwise you also shall be cut off.*
The warning is that the basis of Gentile blessing is faith, not merit; if Gentiles are to remain in the place of blessing, they must continue in faith. Israel's failure should be a lesson to them. He is not dealing with individual believers and unbelievers, but with nationalities of Jews and Gentiles. The Jews were in the place of blessing as a nationality, but because of their unbelief they were *broken off*. Now Gentiles are to be

found in the place of blessing; but if they fail in faith, they will also be broken off from the place of blessing. This is not a loss of salvation, but a removal from the place of blessing. Gentiles are warned against boasting over the *natural branches*, for they are not self-sustained; they are sustained by the root: the Abrahamic Covenant, which is a Jewish covenant.

Paul next presents the argument for Israel's eventual restoration in verses 23-24: *And they also, if they continue not in their unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of that which is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?*
In verse 23, Paul points out that the only thing preventing Israel's restoration is their unbelief, for God has full ability *to graft them in again.* In verse 24, he then gives the reason why all should expect Israel to be restored. Paul stated that it is *their own olive tree.* This Olive Tree, this place of blessing, belongs to Israel. How so? The place of blessing is based upon the four unconditional covenants God made with Israel. Because these are Jewish covenants, the place of blessing belongs rightfully to the Jews. This is part of Israel's advantage of Romans 3:1-2. Gentiles are merely partakers and are sharing in their covenant blessings. Because of this, one ought to expect Israel to be restored into it. For, if God would graft wild olive branches *contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more* will God graft back in the natural branches *into their own olive tree*. The fact that Israel owns the tree shows that Israel is not the tree, for the owner and that which is owned are distinct entities. Having spelled out the expectation, in the next segment, Paul declared that this is exactly what is going to happen some day.

III. THE FUTURE

A. The Remnant of Israel During the Tribulation

All individual Jews who become believers during the seven years of the Tribulation are part of the Remnant of Israel. This includes the 144,000 Jews (Rev. 7) and those Jews of Jerusalem who become believers in the middle of the Tribulation (Rev. 11:13). It includes all individual Jews who become believers as a result of the preaching of the 144,000 or the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11. It also includes the Remnant of Revelation 12:17 that Satan will attack in a particular way.

B. The Faithful Remnant

1. The Definition

There will be a large portion of the Jewish population who will become members of the Remnant of Israel only at the end of the Tribulation. These can be called the Faithful Remnant. Based upon all the passages involved, this group will make up the majority of the one-

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third of the nation that will survive the Tribulation. Throughout the Tribulation, they will be unbelievers as far as the Messiahship of Yeshua is concerned and also unbelievers as far as the Antichrist is concerned. They are the "non-many" of Daniel 9:27 who will refuse to have anything to do with the covenant. They are the ones who *shall not be in haste* of Isaiah 28:16. They are faithful in the sense that they will believe in the God of Israel to the extent of Old Testament revelation and this is their trust. However, at the end, they will come to know Jesus as Messiah.

2. The Fact of the Faithful Remnant: Isaiah 10:20-23

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and they that are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again lean upon him that smote them, but shall lean upon Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though your people, Israel, be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them shall return: a destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness. For a full end, and that determined, will the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, make in the midst of all the earth.

Verse 20 states that, unlike the rest of Israel, the Remnant *shall lean upon Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel.* In verse 21, Isaiah declares that ultimately they will return to the God of Israel, a return that can only be accomplished by faith in the Messiah Yeshua. Verse 22a points out that in spite of the numerical strength of the Jews, only the Remnant will return to God. Verses 22b-23 talk about a decree of destruction that has been *determined* upon the whole earth, which the Remnant will survive. The words used here are much the same as those found in Isaiah 28:22 where the decree of destruction is issued with the signing of the Seven Year Covenant, the event that begins the Tribulation. Synthesizing these two Isaiah passages, it is clear that, during the Tribulation, the Remnant will survive the persecution of the Jews by the Antichrist and the massive destruction of the earth. Hence, they are referred to as the *escaped* of Israel in verse 20 and in Isaiah 4:2; 10:20; 37:31-32; Joel 2:32; and Obadiah 17.

3. The Protection of the Faithful Remnant: Isaiah 41:8-16

But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend, you whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth, and called from the corners thereof, and said unto you, You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you away; fear you not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you; yea, I will help you; yea, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness. Behold, all they that are incensed against you shall be put to shame and confounded: they that strive with you shall be as nothing, and shall perish. You shall seek them, and shall not find them, even them that contend with you: they that war against you shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. For I Jehovah your God will hold your right hand, saying unto you, Fear not; I will help you. Fear not, you worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help you, says Jehovah, and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I have made you to be a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth; you shall thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shall make the hills as chaff. You shall winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them; and you

shall rejoice in Jehovah, you shall glory in the Holy One of Israel.

This is a promise to preserve the Faithful Remnant in the midst of tremendous persecution during Satan's campaign to destroy the Jews in the second half of the Tribulation.

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4. The Provision for the Faithful Remnant

a. Isaiah 41:17-20

The poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue fails for thirst; I Jehovah will answer them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, the pine, and the box-tree together: that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of Jehovah has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it.

In this passage, miraculous provisions will cause them to reconsider their relationship to God. Just as God miraculously provided food and water for Israel *in the wilderness* of Sinai, He will do so again in the Tribulation when the Jews flee to the *wilderness*.

b. Isaiah 65:8-16

Thus says Jehovah, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one said, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains; and my chosen shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me. But ye that forsake Jehovah, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for Fortune, and that fill up mingled wine unto Destiny; I will destine you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter; because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spoke, ye did not hear; but ye did that which was evil in my eyes, and chose that wherein I delighted not. Therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be put to shame; behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall wail for vexation of spirit. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen; and the Lord Jehovah will slay you; and he will call his servants by another name: so that he who blesses himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that swears in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from my eyes.

This passage makes clear that, while the apostates will be allowed to suffer and die, the Faithful Remnant will be divinely protected and provided with food and water. By this means, the Faithful Remnant will be able to survive the persecutions and devastation of the Great Tribulation.

C. The Faithful Remnant and Israel's National Salvation

1. Romans 11:25-36

With the connective and explanatory word *For* connecting this passage with Romans 11:24, Paul made a clear declaration of Israel's final restoration in verses 25-26a: *For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this*

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mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part has befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved.
In verse 25, Paul pointed out that there were limitations to Israel's hardening in that Israel was hardened only *in part* and only for a temporary period of time. There was a partial hardening, but never a total hardening; this is also the point of Romans 11:1-10. The fact that there are Jewish people coming to saving faith proves that the hardening was partial. But Israel was hardened only temporarily, *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.* The Greek word translated fulness means "a full number" or "a complete number." In other words, God has a set number of Gentiles that He has destined to save into the place of blessing, the Olive Tree of verses 16-24.

After the *fulness of the Gentiles* has come in, after that set number is reached, verse 26a states: *all Israel shall be saved*. According to Acts 15:14, one of the key purposes of the Church Age is to call out from among the Gentiles a people for His Name. This calling out from among the Gentiles will continue *until the fulness*, that set number of Gentiles, is reached. At that time, the Church will be complete and will be removed by the Rapture. Then God will deal with Israel as a nation again, rather than just with Jewish individuals. This national dealing will lead to all Israel's being saved. When Paul stated all Israel, he meant all Jews living at that time, not all Jews of all time. In some circles, this verse has been misinterpreted to mean that all Jews will eventually be saved and, therefore, Jewish evangelism and Jewish missions are unnecessary. However, that is not what the passage teaches. For example, the Bible speaks of all Israel, the whole congregation of Israel, coming out of Egypt at the Exodus. Of course, not all Jews who ever lived came out of Egypt, but every Jew who lived at that time did come out of Egypt. This verse should be interpreted in the same way: every Jew living at that time will be saved. The *mystery* of this passage is not that of Israel's national salvation, for that was revealed in the Old Testament. The *mystery* is that of a partial, temporary hardening of Israel until the full number of Gentiles is reached. The *Israel* of this verse must refer to national Israel, for that has been its meaning the other ten times *Israel* has been used since chapter 9; this is something that even replacement theologians admit. There is no reason to make this verse the one exception, especially since it makes perfect sense and is a contrast to the Gentiles in the previous verse.

Paul next related Israel's future national salvation with its present status in verses 26b-29: *even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: And this is my covenant unto them, When I shall take away their sins. As touching the gospel, they are enemies for your sake: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake. For the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of.*
Verses 26b-27 give the evidence of Israel's future salvation from the Old Testament by quoting Isaiah 59:20-21 and 27:9. This truth was

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then analyzed in verse 28a: *As touching the gospel, they are enemies for your sake.* The alienation of Israel in spite of the covenant promises is God's way of bringing Gentiles to Himself. As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies for the Gentiles' sake. Paul states in verse 28b: *but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake*. The word *election* refers to Israel's national election as the Chosen People of God. The *fathers' sake* relates to the covenants God has made with Israel, particularly the Abrahamic Covenant made with the Patriarchs. God, being the Covenant-Keeper, will fulfill His covenants for His own sake. Part of that covenant promise is the national salvation of Israel. For now, Israel has been partially hardened. As a result, the hardened element is an enemy of the gospel. Eventually, God must bring the whole nation to Himself because *they are beloved for the fathers' sake;* He has made covenant promises to them that He must fulfill. Verse 29 states: *the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of*. The reason He must fulfill them is because of the unconditional and unchanging nature of God's promises. The calling has to do with Israel's national election; the *gifts* are the covenantal promises that are the result of that election. Neither are subject to being recalled; they are irrevocable.

Paul provided the principle for what is going to happen concerning the calling out of the Gentiles and Israel's national salvation in verses 30-32: *For as ye in time past were disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by their disobedience, even so have these also now been disobedient, that by the mercy shown to you they also may now obtain mercy. For God has shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all.*
Paul pointed out that unbelief has given God a chance to reveal His mercy, not only on the deserving, but also on the undeserving. Once the Gentiles were disobedient, *but now have obtained mercy.* Now, Israel is in disobedience, so the Jews have been put on the level where they are eligible for mercy: *For God has shut up all unto disobedience*, that he might have mercy upon all, and that is the summary of the gospel. This is all without distinction, not *all* without exception, because within this context, he is dealing with the nationalities of Jews and Gentiles, not with all individuals. He will have mercy upon all without distinction, meaning both Jews and Gentiles, but not all without exception. Obviously, not all people will be saved as individuals, but there will be salvation both among Jews and Gentiles as nationalities. If anyone is saved at all it is by God's *mercy*.

Paul concludes his Israelology with a doxology in verses 33-36: *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? or who has been his counsellor? or who has first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen.*
As Paul reflected on God's plan and program in relationship to Israel, how He brought Israel into this state; how He is calling out from among the Gentiles today to bring many of them to salvation and how this Gentile calling will come to an end some day; and how God will

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again deal with Israel and bring them all to salvation, he concludes with this tremendous doxology. This doxology extols the *wisdom* of God and the *riches* of God in that wisdom. Indeed, if one fully understands God's dealings with the Jewish people, if he clearly understands God's plan and program for Israel, and if he appreciates it from God's standpoint, he, too, will have to say with Paul: *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!*

2. The Contradiction and the Solution

According to Romans 11:25-27, all Israel will be saved. According to Isaiah 10:20-23, only the Remnant will be saved. This is not a contradiction if it is understood in the context of Israel's national salvation. As Zechariah 13:8-9 has pointed out, two-thirds of the Jewish population will be destroyed in the persecutions of the Tribulation. This will include the entire non-Remnant so that only the Remnant will survive, the escaped of Isaiah 4:2; 10:20; 37:31-32; Joel 2:32; and Obadiah 17.

Since all of the remaining one-third become believers, at that point, *all Israel* and the Remnant of Israel become one and the same. This is made clear in Micah 2:12-13: *I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of you; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The breaker has gone up before them: they have broken forth and passed on to the gate, and are gone out thereat: and their king is passed on before them, and Jehovah at the head of them.*
This is expressed in the parallelism of Hebrew poetry. The first parallel is in verse 12a in that *all of you* and *the remnant of Israel* are one and the same, for with Israel's national salvation, the whole nation now becomes part of the Remnant. Because of Israel's national salvation, Messiah returns to rescue them in verse 13.

D. The Faithful Remnant of Israel in the Messianic Kingdom

Since all Israel throughout the Messianic Kingdom will remain a saved nation, all Israel will remain the Remnant of Israel throughout that period. Everything said of Israel and the Kingdom will be true of the Remnant of Israel. However, certain verses do emphasize the Remnant motif in the Messianic Kingdom and so, for the sake of completeness, these will be summarized in this section.

Concerning the regathering of Israel, Isaiah 11:11, 16 and Zechariah 8:6-7 picture it as the gathering of the Remnant. Micah 4:7 emphasizes the salvation of the Remnant. This means that the sins of the Remnant will be forgiven, according to Micah 7:18-20. This will also mean that the Remnant will spread the Word of God among the Gentile nations, according to Micah 5:7-8. The Remnant will also be in possession of the Land, according to Zephaniah 2:7, 9 and Zechariah 8:12. They will be sinless in the Land and live in security according to Zephaniah 3:13.✡