

## **“And So, All Israel Shall Be Saved”**

Paul reminded Gentile brethren at Rome that just as God was able to graft a branch from an wild olive tree into a tame tree, so He was able to graft in those natural branches broken off through their unbelief. *“For I would not brethren have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in and so all Israel shall be saved ...”* (Rom. 11:25f). We must not conclude, as some do, that God has a certain number of Gentiles which He would allow to be saved, after which He would then save all Jews. Yet, such is the conception of many faiths. They conclude that ultimately all Jews will be converted to Christ but neither this nor any other passages teaches such.

First, God does not have a certain number of Gentiles (the fullness of the Gentiles) which will be saved. The gospel is offered to all with this invitation *“let him come, he that will ...”* (Rev. 22:17). *“He that will”* is *“he that will”* and this promise will remain as long as the world remains. Nor does the passage hold out expectation for the ultimate conversion of all Jews. The whole teaching of Romans 9-11 teaches the opposite.

So, if the passage does not sustain the popular notion of a future conversion of all Jews, what does it teach? Paul was seeing the “handwriting on the wall.” Given the Jews’ past rebellions, coupled with their almost wholesale rejection of Christ in his day, to which was added the great number of Gentiles, it did not take a Solomon to realize that soon the church, which in its beginning was composed exclusively of Jews, would be diluted more and more by Gentile converts to the point that only a small percentage of Christians would be of Jewish heritage. This not only was the natural consequences of things transpiring in Paul’s day, but Paul was guided by the Holy Spirit as he penned this letter. *“And so all Israel shall be saved.”* This phrase certainly “sounds like” Jews would ultimately all be converted, especially if the passage is isolated from the settings it is found in, but study shows otherwise. Who is the Israel of whom Paul writes; fleshly or spiritual Israel? In his early arguments in this mid-section of Romans the apostle declared, *“They are not all Israel who are of Israel ...”* (Rom. 9:6). He has labored extensively through three chapters to enlighten his readers of this point. *“All Israel”* does not refer to all the nation of physical Israel; *“all Israel”* refers to spiritual Israel, those from Jews and from Gentiles. The word “so” is a word indicating *“in this manner.”* *“In this manner”* shall all Israel (those from the Jews and Gentiles) be saved. In what manner? Hear Paul: *“even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn away ungodli-*

*ness from Jacob; and this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Rom. 11:29).*

The quotation cited was from Isaiah 59:20f. How was "all Israel" to be saved? By the Deliverer who came out of Zion -- Jesus Christ! How would Jacob be saved? By the turning away from his sins! The apostle did not promise a future conversion and restoration of national Israel; he promised that all Israel, Jew and Gentile, would be saved by the hand of the Deliverer who would take away their sins. This redemptive work has been wrought by Christ and is God's last message to man. Wild olive branches (Gentiles) had been grafted into the root and fatness of the tame olive tree -- the promise God had made to Abraham that "*in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*" "Natural branches" because of unbelief, had been broken off from that tree, but could be grafted in again were they to come to believe. "*For God shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all*" (Rom. 11:32). Thanks to God for His abundant mercy was due and Paul eloquently expressed it as he concludes: "*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath 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*" (Rom. 11:33-36). NEXT: "I beseech you ... by the mercies of God."

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