

The Meaning of “All Israel Will Be Saved” (Romans 11:26)

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ABSTRACT—Rom 11:26 is both exegetically and theologically enigmatic. Yet, it is a central verse within the pericope (vv. 25-32), so that a satisfactory resolution of its difficulties is integral to a better understanding of its larger context (chaps. 9-11). Despite the volume of previous studies and the resultant polarization of scholarly interpretations of v. 26, it appears that a full-fledged exegesis of the text within the contexts of Rom 9-11 and the OT has not fully been undertaken. Through historical-literary contextual, lexical-syntactical, and intertextual analyses, this article suggests that by the phrase “all Israel shall be saved,” Paul envisages the acceptance of the gospel by the majority of ethnic Israelites and thus their participation in the present salvation with Paul and the remnant (vv. 1,5,14,15). Thus understood, the mystery Paul relates in vv. 25-27 is a mystery that authenticates God’s promises to save Israel retrospectively (rather than prospectively, cf. Isa 27:9; 59:20-21), but which are otherwise unknown to, or overlooked by, the proud Gentile Roman Christians. Such a conclusion may not only contribute towards resolving an exegetical difficulty but also towards reshaping perceptions among Evangelicals about Jewish eschatological soteriology.

Keywords: Israel, periscope, Roman

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I. Introduction

One of Paul's concerns in Romans 9-11 is to exhort Gentile believers in Rome to desist from pride, even though they have been grafted on to the olive tree of God's people and the Jews have largely been pruned down. As part of this exhortation, Paul reveals a mystery: "A partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:25,26a). The apostle partly quotes Isa 59:20-21 (cf. Isa 27:9) with reference to the mystery: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will remove ungodliness from Jacob. This is my covenant with them, when I take away their sins" (Rom 11:26b-27). This mystery has been at the "heart of much Christian reflection about eschatology" (Baruch, 1989, p. 63). Much of the scholarly debate has centered on the meaning of the clause "and so all Israel will be saved" (v. 26).

In the Greek, Rom 11:26a reads, *καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται* ("and so all Israel will be saved"). Each of the lexical items in v. 26a has received differing interpretations. The adverb *οὕτως* may be understood in one of four ways. Some scholars give a temporal significance to *οὕτως* (i.e., "then"), suggestions that coming in of the *πλήρωμα* ("fullness") of the Gentiles (v. 25) is a "chronological and necessary prerequisite to Israel's salvation" (Vaughan and Corley, 1976, p. 129; cf. van der Horst, 2000, p. 524; Olshausen, 1983, p. 373). Some also understand *οὕτως* inferentially (i.e., "therefore"), introducing a consequence or conclusion (Kim, 1997, p. 412; Fitzmyer, 1993, p. 622). Others take *οὕτως* as a correlative adverb (i.e., "so") and then connect it with the clause that follows, that is, *καθὼς γέγραπται* ("just as it stands written") (Bauer, 1979, p. 597-98). Still, others construe *οὕτως* in a modal sense (i.e., "thus") and then connect it with the preceding clause in v. 25b (Moo, 1996, p. 720).

The adjective *πᾶς* ("all") may denote either a representative group (Ibid., p. 722) or 'every' individual (Robinson, 1982, p. 136; Godet, 1977, p. 411). The term *Ἰσραὴλ* has been understood by some scholars to signify spiritual Israel (i.e., the Church comprising both Jews and Gentiles) as in Gal 6:16 (Archer, 1977, p. 73; Barth, 1968, p. 416). Some also take *Ἰσραὴλ* to refer to a majority of ethnic Israel (Moo, 1996, p. 722; Cranfield, 1985, p. 282; Bruce, 1963, p. 222), while others equate it with the remnant or elect of ethnic Israel (Horne, 1978, p. 333). Some suggest that *Ἰσραὴλ* signifies both the remnant and "the rest" mentioned in Rom 11:7 (Glancy, 1991, p. 196;

Baruch, 1989, p. 70; Käsemann, 1980, p. 313). If Ἰσραήλ denotes ethnic Israel, then, taken together, the phrase πᾶς Ἰσραήλ (1) may be construed either synchronically (Moo, 1996, p. 723) or diachronically (Fitzmyer, 1993, p. 623) and (2) may denote either a representative group within Israel (e.g., Moo, 1996, p. 722-723) or ‘every’ single ethnic Israelite (Robinson, 1982, p. 136; Godet, 1977, p. 411).

The brief review of literature presented above indicates that Rom 11:26 has received scholarly attention, albeit there is a polarity of interpretations. Despite the volume of previous studies, it appears that a full-fledged exegesis of v. 26 within the contexts of Rom 9-11 and the OT has not been undertaken. This article, therefore, seeks to determine the meaning of v. 26 by doing a thorough exegesis of the text, particularly through historical-literary contextual, lexical-syntactical, and intertextual analyses.

II. Understanding the Context

The dismissal of the Jews from Rome (Suetonius, 25.4) by Claudius in A. D. 49 had a significant effect on the church in Rome as a whole (Schreiner, 1998, p. 13; Bruce, 1969, p. 296-300). With this eviction, the membership of the church comprised mainly of Gentiles who developed a number of years with minimal Jewish influence and thus had “evolved in a new direction” (Schreiner, 1998, p. 13). The return of the Jewish Christians to Rome with the accession of Nero (A. D. 54) resulted in great tensions between the Gentile believers and their Jewish counterparts (Walters, 1993, p. 63). One can imagine the inevitability of such tensions since the Gentiles would not be as devoted to the law as were the Jews. If the Gentiles “were willing to accept returning ‘Jewish’ Christians into their household meetings, they would have resisted attempts by these returning Christians to make the ‘life of the Jew’ compulsory for all community members” (Ibid.). These tensions, which probably posed a threat for unity (Schreiner, 1998, p. 22) among the two parties, seem to be confirmed by Rom 9-11.

The immediate literary context of Rom 11:26 is the unit 11:25-32, which in turn has chaps. 9-11 as its larger context. In order to understand the import of 11:26, we have to trace the argument of Paul up to this point. In Rom 1-4, Paul shows that God’s redemptive action is in and through Christ and that this has brought freedom from condemnation (Rom 5), sin (ch. 6), law (ch. 7), and death (ch. 8). In

chapters 9-11, Paul brings his argument to a climax, its central issue being God's faithfulness to his promises (cf. Schreiner, 1998, p. 472). That this is the main argument is evident by the thesis statement of these chapters: "It is not as though the word of God has fallen" (9:6).

Apart from 9:1-5, where Paul is grieved because of Jewish rejection of Christ, the argument of 9-11 falls into three sections: 9:6-29, 9:30-10:10, and 10:11-11:36. The first section (9:6-29), set in a chiasmic structure (Ibid.), explains God's faithfulness by emphasizing his election, mercy, will, and power (9:14-18). The second section, 9:30-11:10, argues that salvation is equally accessible to Jews and Gentiles by faith (9:30,32; 10:10-12). God's plan of salvation included the Gentiles and the Jews could have understood this by reading the Scriptures (10:10-12). In 11:1-6, Paul restates the conclusion from chap. 9 that a remnant of Israel will be saved (cf. 9:27) while a majority of Israel have proved resistant to the gospel. The third section, 11:11-32, basically asks whether Israel has permanently strayed from God's plan of salvation. Paul rejects this idea and maintains that God "has planned salvation history (vv. 11-16) so that the current ingathering of Gentiles will provoke Israel to jealousy and salvation" (Schreiner, 1998, p. 591). Verse 16, a transitional verse, introduces the illustration of the olive tree of God's people (vv 17-24). God has removed many Jewish branches of the olive tree and grafted in Gentile branches in their stead. The Gentile believers, however, should not fall prey to pride, despite the fact that they have been included in the tree and the Jews seem to be largely pruned away. The Gentiles remain in the olive tree because of their faith (11:20), so that if they abandon their faith, they too will be removed from the tree. Conversely, the Jews who exercise faith will be re-grafted, even so easily (11:23).

In Rom 11:25-27, Paul reveals a mystery to the Gentile believers which states that the hardening of Israel is only temporal and that when the "fullness" of the Gentiles has come in, "all Israel" will be saved. This mystery, therefore, is disclosed to forestall Gentile pride; God has not finally rejected his people (11:1, 11). Verses 28-32 inform readers that God desires the salvation of everyone. Paul concludes chapter 11 with a poetic exaltation of the greatness of God (vv.33-36). It would seem, then, that 11:25-27 serves both to dispel Gentile pride and to generate their appreciation for the Jewish "provenance of the gospel and the place that nation [Israel] holds in the purpose of God" (Harrison, 1971, p. 302). As has rightly been noted, "The relatively greater vulnerability of the returning Jews

would at least partly explain why Paul felt it necessary to warn his Gentile readers against any feelings of superiority over the Jewish fellows (11:17-21)” (Dunn, 1988, p. liii).

III. Lexical Analysis of Rom 11:26b

In this section, the usages and contextual meanings of the words οὕτως, πᾶς, Ἰσραήλ, and σωθήσεται are briefly studied.

A. Οὕτως

The word οὕτως (‘thus’, ‘so’, ‘in this way’) is used in different senses in the NT. It may refer to what precedes it, often with a preceding correlative word, for example καθάπερ (Rom 12:4,5; 1 Cor 12:12), καθὼς (2 Cor 1:5; 10:7), and ὡςπερ (Rom 5:12,19,21; 6:4). It may summarize an idea expressed in what precedes (Mat 11:26; 1 Cor 14:25), or draw an inference from what precedes (Rom 1:15; 6:11). Οὕτως may also refer to what follows it, with correlative words which usually follow, for example καθὼς (Luke 24:24; Phil 3:17), ὡς (Mark 4:24; 1 Cor 3:15), and ὥστε (Acts 14:1) (cf. Bauer, 1979, p. 597-98). It may also be used before quotations (Acts 7:6; 13:34; Rom 10:6); sometimes γέγραπται follows immediately (Matt 2:5). It is also used to mark intensity (Gal 1:6; Heb 12:21; Rev 16:18), or in comparisons (Luke 11:30; Rom 5:15) (Vine and Unger, 1985, p. 632; Bauer, 1979, p. 598).

In Romans, οὕτως occurs seventeen times and is found, apart from 11:26, four times within chaps. 9-11. In Rom 9:20, which is a quotation from Isaiah (29:16; cf. 45:9), οὕτως seems to convey a specific meaning, referring to the ‘nature’ a person is created with: here οὕτως qualifies ἐποίησας. In 10:6, οὕτως λέγει introduces a quotation from Deut 30:13 and therefore cataphorically refers to the quotation. In 11:5, Paul uses οὕτως to draw an analogy that *just as* there was a faithful remnant in Elijah’s day *so* is there a remnant of Israel in Paul’s day. In 11:31, οὕτως is used comparatively, anaphorically referring to the ὡςπερ clause in v. 30: *just as* the Gentiles disbelieved but were shown mercy, *so* also have the Jews now disbelieved and will be shown mercy. Thus, in Rom 9-11, οὕτως is used to refer to (a) what has just been said, (b) an affirmation that follows, or (c) to make a comparison. As in Rom 11:26, οὕτως is sometimes coupled with καὶ, either as οὕτως καὶ or καὶ οὕτως. In

5:12, the construction καὶ οὕτως refers to the fact that sin entered the world through one man *and so* by this death came to all people. It therefore connects with what precedes. In 1 Cor 11:28, Paul says that a man should examine himself *and so/and in this way* may eat of the Lord's Supper. Here, the expression refers back to the activity of self-examination before partaking of the bread (cf. 1 Cor 14:25; 15:11). Gal 6:2 is illustrative here. Paul says believers should carry one another's burdens, καὶ οὕτως ('and in this way'), they will fulfill the law—the fulfillment of the law comes with the carrying of one another's burdens. While the phrase καὶ οὕτως usually refers to a preceding statement, οὕτως καὶ seems to be used in comparisons, at least in Romans (5:15,18,19,21; 11:5,31).

In Rom 11:26, καὶ οὕτως seems to be anaphorically used as is the case with its other occurrences. In v. 25, Paul introduces a mystery and since the salvation of Israel in v. 26 is part of this mystery, it is reasonable that καὶ οὕτως be taken as referring to what immediately precedes it (i.e., v. 25b; cf. 1 Thess 4:17; 1 Cor 11:28; 14:25). It is well noted that 11:25b is a summary of vv. 11-24 (Moo, 1996, p. 720), where Paul notes that the salvation of the Gentiles serves the function of exciting Israel's jealousy (11:11,14), which will lead to their salvation. In this light, οὕτως, while immediately referring to v. 25b, may, in its near context (vv. 11-24), refer to the provocation of the Jews by the coming in of the Gentiles (Cairus, 1999, p. 94). It is the partial hardening (cf. Bauer, 1979, p. 506; Fitzmyer, 1993, p. 621; Dunn, 1988, p. 679) of Ἰσραὴλ that has opened the way for the salvation of the Gentiles; this Gentile salvation in turn will lead to the salvation of Israel.

Some scholars have noted that οὕτως in 11:26 refers to what precedes (esp. vv. 11-12,15-16,23-24) (Hvalvik, 1990, p. 97). However, they hold that οὕτως is used in a logical sense, serving as the presupposition of what follows. The implication is that the salvation of the Gentiles is the only condition for Israel's salvation. Fitzmyer puts it this way: "The salvation of 'all Israel' *can and will only occur* when the full number of the Gentiles has come in . . ." (Fitzmyer, 1993, p. 623). In the first place, this logical sense of οὕτως has temporal undertones: the salvation of πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ will occur 'after' the coming in of the Gentiles. Secondly, to take the coming in of the Gentiles as the condition or ground of Israel's salvation not only has no scriptural support but also ignores Paul's reference to faith as the condition for salvation (11:23). In any case, οὕτως does not seem to have such a temporal-logical connotation. None of the

occurrences of οὕτως and καὶ οὕτως in Romans has temporal significance (Ibid., p. 622). Yet, it may be noted that while οὕτως has no inherent temporal significance, the “partial hardening” of Israel “until” (ἄχρι) the coming in of the “fullness of the Gentiles” lends some temporal significance to v. 26a. This notwithstanding, the coming in of the Gentiles is not conceived as the precondition for the salvation of the Gentiles (cf. vv. 1,5). Paul himself notes in vv. 11-14 that the coming in of the Gentiles will provoke the Jews to accept the gospel. Again, though several occurrences attest to the correlative use, οὕτως in 11:26 does not seem to have correlative function (cf. Moo, 1996, p. 720). Since οὕτως is separated from γέγραπται (which is used with καθώς), it should not be understood as correlating with καθώς γέγραπται which only serves to introduce scriptural support for Paul’s thesis (Kim, 1997, p. 412). Rather, οὕτως in 11:26 should maintain its normal meaning and be construed in a modal sense (Moo, 1996, p. 720; Schreiner, 1998, p. 621): it refers back to the coming in of the Gentiles which will provoke the Jews to jealousy (11:11,25), and will eventually lead to the re-grafting of all Israel (11:26) (Dunn, 1988, p. 681).

B. Πᾶς

The adjective πᾶς may convey different meanings depending upon its usage with or without the article, predicatively or attributively (Reicke, 1964-76, p. 887). Used with a singular noun without the article, πᾶς emphasizes the “individual members of the class denoted by the noun” (Bauer, 1979, p. 631; cf. Matt 3:10; 15:13; Luke 3:9; Rom 2:9; 3:4). However, it is interesting to note that πᾶς “before proper names of countries, cities, and nations, and before collective terms, like ‘Israel’ signifies either ‘all’ or ‘the whole’” (Vine et al, 1985, p. 21; Bauer, 1979, p. 631; Graber, 1975, p. 94). In such cases, πᾶς may be representative or collective rather than individualistic. For example, in Mat 2:3, *all* Jerusalem is said to have been troubled with King Herod when he heard the news about the birth of Christ. In Mat 3:5, “*all* Judaea, and *all* the region round about Jordan” are said to have followed John the Baptist. It is clear from these passages that πᾶς does not denote every single individual; rather it denotes ‘the whole of’, or a ‘majority.’ Commenting on such usage of the adjective, H. Langkammer states that πᾶς ‘can signal a narrative style that reports a certain event with exaggeration’ (Langkammer, 1981, p. 48). It is also interesting to note that πᾶς may be used to illustrate a

fulfillment of an OT prophecy. Mark 1:2 quotes Isa 40:3 as having its fulfillment in John the Baptist. Thus in Mark 1:5 where “*all* the land of Judea” is sad to have followed the Baptist, *πᾶς* here may serve to mark an indication of its fulfillment of the OT prophecy. That *πᾶς* before collective/geographical terms may denote ‘the whole’ rather than ‘every individual’ or may signal the fulfillment of an adjacent OT prophecy is instructive for understanding *πᾶς* in Rom 11:26. Just as *πᾶς* is not to be taken to mean ‘every individual’ in Matt 2:3; 3:5 and in Mark 1:5, so also it need not be construed as such in Rom 11:26 (Vaughan and Corley, 1976, p. 129; Brunt, 1996, p. 23).

C. Ἰσραὴλ

It is debated whether the term Ἰσραὴλ in Rom 11:26 refers to majority of ethnic Israel, spiritual Israel, or a remnant within ethnic Israel. A look at its usage in Rom 9-11 may be helpful to the discussion. The term Ἰσραὴλ occurs some thirteen times within chaps. 9-11 but nowhere else in the rest of the epistle. Apart from 9:6, Ἰσραὴλ in all its occurrences (11:26 excluded) unambiguously refers to ethnic Israel. In 9:6b, Paul declares, “For they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel” (KJV). Paul states this when supporting the thesis that God’s word has not failed (v. 6a). What he seems to mean in v. 6b is that there has ever been a winnowing process with respect to God’s election, so that “it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants” (9:8). Thus, God chose Isaac and Jacob, leaving out other children of Abraham and Isaac respectively (vv. 7-15). Accordingly, God’s promises still stand in that a remnant of Israel will be saved (9:27; cf. 11:5).

To understand Ἰσραὴλ in 9:6 as referring to both Jewish and Gentile believers would harmonize generally with Pauline thought (Gal 6:16; cf. Rom 2:28,29; 4:9-25). Nonetheless, it seems more likely that in this particular context, the second Ἰσραὴλ (in the Greek text) of 9:6 is restricted to ethnic Jews who believe in Jesus as the Messiah (Moo, 1996, p. 494). It appears that Ἰσραὴλ here parallels ὑπόλειμμα (“remnant”) of v. 27, and that just as Ἰσραὴλ refers to ethnic Israel so does ὑπόλειμμα. The issue Paul confronts in this chapter is whether the promises made to ethnic Israel will be fulfilled (Ibid.) as his thesis (v. 6a) goes. There is no clear indication in the context to support the reading of ‘Israel of God’—the church—in this passage. The fact that Paul subsequently argues that a winnowing

process has always occurred in the midst of Israel indicates that here Paul is talking about ethnic Israel and not spiritual Israel. In other words, the first reference to Ἰσραὴλ in v. 6 denotes ethnic Israel in the flesh (both believing and unbelieving Israelites) and the second reference to Ἰσραὴλ has ethnic Jewish-Christians in view. This distinction is further called by the interface between the partitive/ablative genitive construction οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ (which contains the first “Israel”) and the predicate construction ο τοι Ἰσραὴλ (which contains the second “Israel”). These constructions, especially in view of the negative particle ο , seem to indicate that while the first “Israel” refers to purely ethnic Israelites irrespective of the spiritual orientation, the second “Israel” refers to a group within, but at least slightly different from, the first “Israel.” Moreover, it is to be noted that the point of v. 6 is reiterated in v. 7 where πάντες τέκνια (“all children”) seems to parallel οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ (“the ones of Israel”) of v. 6. The true children are those of the promise (v. 8).

Ἰσραὴλ in Rom 11:26 presents a difficulty. At first sight it seems ‘spiritual Israel’ (the church) is a good option. The construal of the term in this passage must, however, be dependent solely upon the immediate context, that is, the ‘mystery’: “I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved. . . .” (Rom 11:25,26a). This mystery, specifically addressed to Gentile believers, serves to dispel the pride of these believers who think that they have shifted position with the Jews. The Gentile believers are to note that the hardening that has come on Israel is only temporary. Thus, we may observe that in this mystery, there is a clear contrast between Gentiles and Jews; the latter temporarily rejects the gospel while the former accepts the gospel. It seems clear that Paul uses Ἰσραὴλ here in an ethnic sense (Ibid., p. 721; Brunt, 1996, p. 202; Bruce, 1963, p. 222; Schreiner, 1998, p. 615). If Ἰσραὴλ is understood to denote spiritual Israel, which would include both Jews and Gentiles, then it becomes difficult to understand how this mystery could serve to dismiss Gentile pride. The literary context seems to suggest that Ἰσραὴλ in 11:26, just as in any of its occurrences in the epistle, be taken to refer to ethnic Israel (cf. LaRondelle, 1983, p. 127-29).

The salvation of a remnant of Israel is undisputed (Rom 9:27; 11:5). Paul himself is an Israelite and for that matter is part of the remnant of Israel saved by grace (11:5). This remnant, of course, includes all the believing Jews in Paul’s day. But in 11:26, Paul seems

to imply the salvation of more than the few remnant of ethnic Israel. This is explainable by the olive tree metaphor: the Israel that could easily be re-grafted is not the remnant—who already remain in the tree—but rather many others who would believe in Christ (Schreiner, 1998, p. 617). Further, πᾶς in v. 26 seems to parallel πλήρωμα in v. 25, so that the coming in of the πλήρωμα of the Gentiles would parallel the salvation of πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ. (cf. vv. 11,15). The contrast thus remains clear. Paul says that it is because of unbelief that ethnic Israel has been cut off (11:23), but their being cut off opens the way for the grafting of the Gentiles (vv. 17-20). In the same way, if Gentiles should boast (vv.18,20) and continue in unbelief (v. 22), they too will be cut off (11:22); but if Israel believes, she will be grafted in again (v.23). That ethnic Israel is meant in v. 26 is further brought to view when Paul contrasts “they” (i.e., unbelieving Jews) and “you” (i.e., believing Gentiles) in vv. 28-31. In v. 32 Paul intimates that all (i.e., those who believe) will be saved, while in vv. 25,26 he seems to make the point that the offer of salvation is equally for Gentiles and Jews. For this reason, if the πλήρωμα of the Gentiles is expected, the salvation of πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ (i.e., majority of ethnic Israel) is also expected.

D. Σωθήσεται

The meaning of σωθήσεται has not been debated as the other words in Rom 11:26. In Pauline writings in general, salvation may be a present reality (Rom 11:14; 1 Cor 9:22) or an eschatological event (1 Cor 1:18, 21; 3:15; 2 Cor 2:15). In Rom 11, Paul refers to the salvation of the Gentiles as a result of the transgression of the Jews (11:11). This salvation of the Gentiles is the same as their being ‘grafted’ onto the olive tree (vv.17- 19), which is the same as the coming in of the “fullness of the Gentiles” (v. 25). The ‘salvation’ of the Jews is the semantic equivalent of the “fullness of the Gentiles” (vv. 25-26), and re-grafting of the Jews onto the olive tree (v. 23) is also equivalent to the grafting in of the Gentiles (vv. 17-19). It appears, therefore, that salvation in v. 26 refers to the acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ (cf. v. 14), and thus participation in the present salvation.

IV. Relating Rom 11:26 to the Old Testament

In Rom 9:26, Paul quotes Isa 59:20-21 and partly 27:9 in support of the thesis that ethnic Israel has not totally been rejected by God. Isa 59 begins with the statement that the Lord is able to save his people, but the people have separated themselves from him due to their iniquities (vv. 1-15a). The people will be punished for their sins, a judgment that seems to be both within and outside Judah (vv. 15b-18). Vv. 19-21 announce the coming of the Lord/Redeemer to Zion, particularly to reaffirm his covenant with the righteous in Israel. Contextually, then, Isa 59:20-21 asserts that while the unrighteous will be judged, the righteous will be saved, for the Lord is faithful to his covenant promises. Similarly, Isa 27:9 is an assurance that the Lord will have forgiven the iniquities of Israel after their punishment through the exile; Israel will be gathered after the punishment (cf. v. 12). It appears from the brief discussion of Isa 27 and 59 that Paul does not primarily use these texts semantically/contextually, but rather thematically: covenant (Isa 59:20-21) and salvation (Isa 27:9). Thus understood, Paul in Rom 11:26 is reminding the Gentile believers that God has already promised to save Israel, and that such promise of salvation is not made void by the current unbelief on the part of the Jews.

It is also interesting to note that the usage of $\pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma \text{ Ἰσραὴλ}$ in Rom 11:26 recalls the usage of כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל “all Israel” in the OT, especially in Deuteronomy and 1-2 Chronicles. In its technical sense the phrase is used to refer to a group of persons representing the nation Israel. In a military setting, כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל refers to those summoned from all the tribes to take up a particular activity in the interest of the nation (e.g., 1 Chron 11:1,4,10; 2 Chron 1:2), while in religious settings the composition is those who are loyal to the king and the cult (e.g., 1 Chron 13:14; 28:1,8; 2 Chron 7:4-8) or those who appear before the Lord (e.g., Deut 31:11). Again, כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל is used in a synchronic sense, namely the persons in question are always alive and engaged in an activity at a particular point in time. In these two books, כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל is technically used to refer to a majority or a representation of Israel engaged in an activity at a particular point in time. This usage of the phrase is also found in Rabbinic literature, where it synchronically denotes the faithful in Israel (e.g., m. *Sanh.* 10:1).

V. Conclusions

On the basis of the foregoing exegetical analysis of Rom 11:26, the following conclusions have been reached:

1. The primary purpose of Paul's mystery in Rom 11:25-27 is to dismiss Gentile pride, hoping for peaceful coexistence between Jewish and Gentile Christians.
2. The adverb οὕτως in Rom 11:26 is anaphorically used, referring back to the coming in of the Gentiles (v. 25) which Paul hopes will provoke the Jews to jealousy (11:11), and will eventually lead to the re-grafting of πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ (11:26). While the ὅτι . . . ἄχρι clauses of v. 25 lend some temporal significance to the οὕτως clause of v. 26, the "fullness of the Gentiles" is least conceived as the precondition for the salvation of the Jews.
3. The sustained contrast between Gentiles and Jews in Rom 11:11-32 suggests that Ἰσραὴλ in v. 26 be understood to refer to ethnic Israel rather than the Christian church (cf. Gal 6:16). Thus, Ἰσραὴλ in v. 26 semantically equates Ἰσραὴλ in v. 25, which unambiguously denotes ethnic Israel.
4. The phrase πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ may be taken as a technical term referring to a majority of ethnic Israel who, Paul hoped, would respond to the gospel call. In this sense, πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ may parallel the technical use of לְיִשְׂרָאֵל in Deuteronomy and 1-2 Chronicles.
5. If, as asserted in this study, the major concern of Paul was to undercut the basis for the Gentile pride and mistreatment of their Jewish counterparts in the Roman church, then one may be right to say that the 'mystery' Paul tells the Romans is a 'mystery' that authenticates God's promises to save Israel retrospectively (rather than prospectively), but which are otherwise unknown to, or overlooked by, the Gentile Roman Christians. Such a conclusion may be supported by the very OT passages (Isa 59:20-21; cf. 27:9) Paul cites to buttress this 'mystery.' By citing these OT texts, Paul is reminding the Gentile believers that God, through the covenant, has promised to save Israel, and that this promise of salvation is still available to the Jews once they believe. In fact, it would be easier for the Jews, the seemingly 'broken off' original branches, to be re-grafted onto the 'mother Jewish' olive tree

than for the Gentiles, the wild branches, to be grafted onto the same tree (cf. 11:17-19).

6. It follows from conclusion number five (5) that the salvation Paul envisaged for Israel is not necessarily to be construed in an apocalyptic sense. Some dispensationalists argue for the restoration of Israel's theocracy in Palestine. As noted above, however, the 'salvation' of the Jews in 11:26 primarily refers to their acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ (cf. v. 14), and thus their participation in the present salvation even in Paul's day.

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