

DIFFERENT ANSWERS TO DIFFERENT ISSUES:  
ISRAEL, THE GENTILES AND SALVATION HISTORY IN  
ROMANS 9-11

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One of Paul's purposes in Romans is to establish that the community of God's people is marked out by nothing other than faith in Jesus Christ. In order to affirm faith as the sole criterion, Paul must, conversely, deny all others. The main target of his attack is the law, or 'works of law'—Paul's shorthand symbol for Jewish covenantalism<sup>1</sup>—which he disqualifies altogether from consideration in this regard. But by denying the salvific centrality of the law, Paul endangers the centrality of the people of the law, whom God had placed in the centre of salvation history. As S. Sandmel well writes, 'Israel and the Torah constituted a blended entity; without Israel the Torah had no significance, and without the Torah Israel had no uniqueness'.<sup>2</sup> Thus, to deny the law, with its distinctively ethnic character, is simultaneously to deny the ethnic people with whom it had been associated, a people with whom God had entered into covenant. Fundamentally, therefore, to remove the law from one's pattern of religion is simultaneously to call into question the faithfulness of God. How can God, whose people are presently marked out by their faith in Jesus Christ, be a faithful God if, in the past, he promised Israel a unique place as his covenant people?<sup>3</sup> Has he not, in fact, rejected Israel and gone back on his word?<sup>3</sup> Paul addresses this issue in Rom. 9-11.<sup>4</sup>

The solution which Paul proposes in Rom. 9-11 is a multifaceted and complicated one. He approaches the issue from various angles, giving, as it were, different answers to different issues. This is not to say, however, that Paul's answers are inconsistent or incompatible.

Instead, as I will suggest, an underlying scheme of salvation history holds his various answers together. Special interest will be paid herein to Paul's claim in 11.26 that 'All Israel will be saved' and, from this, to define the role of ethnic Israel in Paul's thought.

### 1. *Who is Meant by 'All Israel'?*

Paul's assertion that all Israel will be saved causes one to ask: Of whom he is speaking? The answer lies in the case he presented earlier in Rom. 9–11. In 9.6, Paul writes, 'For not all who are out of Israel are Israel' (οὐ γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ). There is no doubt that the first reference to Israel here has an ethnic sense. The second, however, has obviously undergone some redefinition: 'Not all who are from (ethnic) Israel are Israel'. It is most important to be sure of what Paul has in mind here. Too often Paul's second mention of Israel in 9.6 is understood as a reference to the community of believers.<sup>5</sup> In this interpretation, Jewish and Gentile believers have embodied what Israel herself was intended to be, and have displaced the Jews who do not have faith in Christ. But, although this may come close to what Paul says elsewhere,<sup>6</sup> it is not his point in 9.6.<sup>7</sup> Those who Paul has in mind here are almost certainly those of ethnic Israel who have faith in Christ.<sup>8</sup> They alone are the *true* members of Israel, in contrast to the rest of ethnic Israel. The contrast, therefore, is not between unbelieving Jews on the one hand and Christians on the other, but between unbelieving Jews and Jewish Christians. The true Israel of 9.6 does not constitute the whole of the believing community—both Jewish and Gentile believers—but is made up of those ethnic Jews who have believed in the Messiah—the pinnacle of Jewish history (9.4f.). This allows Paul to argue for the existence of a remnant within ethnic Israel: only Jewish believers have kept to the course divinely established for Israel. As early as 9.6, therefore, Paul has set up a distinction within ethnic Israel between those of faith and those of unbelief. Within this distinction, the term 'Israel' (with the sense 'true Israel') applies only to the believing Jews.

It should be noted, however, that as soon as this distinction has been established, Paul drops the terminological argument and proceeds to apply the term 'Israel' wholly in an ethnic sense. Thus, the terminological play of 9.6 is not carried any further than that verse,<sup>9</sup> and has no part in his larger case. Only the logic that facilitated it—that is, remnant theology—still carries on.

The point of all this is to illustrate three things: First, the specialized use of the term 'Israel' applies only in 9.6 and should not be allowed to determine one's reading of 11.26. Second, except for 9.6, every occurrence of the term 'Israel' in Rom. 9-11 points specifically to a racial group—ethnic Israel.<sup>10</sup> It seems, as E.P. Sanders states, that Paul is reluctant 'to deny to the unconverted [Jews] the title "Israel" and to appropriate it for a new group or sub-group'.<sup>11</sup> Third, as a consequence of the first two points, there is no reason to believe that Paul means in 11.26 to identify the Christian community as 'all Israel'.<sup>12</sup> (A few minutes' work with a concordance illustrates that what Paul says of Israel in Rom. 9-11 cannot be attributed to the community of believers.) Instead, in 11.26 Paul is thinking exclusively of an ethnic entity, and moreover, of that entity as a whole. Throughout 9-11, Paul draws out the disparate courses of two groups—believing and unbelieving—within ethnic Israel.<sup>13</sup> By the inclusive 'all' in 11.26, he joins both groups together. Thus, Paul looks forward to the time when not only the remnant of Israel who have believed but also those of Israel who have strayed from the course by their unbelief will be saved.<sup>14</sup> When Paul speaks of 'all Israel' in 11.26, what he has in mind is an ethnic group whose members at present are schismatically divided. In this sense, his point is not so much that all *Israel* will be saved, but that *all* Israel will be saved.

What are we to do, then, with the statement, 'All Israel will be saved'? It does not fit well with the rest of the case that Paul has tried to establish throughout his letter to the Romans. Paul's thesis that salvation is by faith would seem to undermine this return to a Jewish ethnocentrism. The problem is a real one, for Paul seems to have deviated significantly from his case for salvation by faith alone. He himself seems to recognize the tension within his own argument when he writes in 11.28, 'As far as the gospel is concerned, they [Israel] are enemies on your account. But as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs'. Whereas the whole of his argument up to this point might have led us to expect his final verdict on unbelieving Israel to be encapsulated by the first sentence ('they are enemies'), Paul precedes into another logic which is in tension with, if not contradictory to, his case for justification by faith ('they are loved on account of the patriarchs'). Although he can sustain the logic of salvation by faith throughout most of Rom. 9-11,

at this point he admits to a salvation which will ultimately spring from an ethnic condition. What are we to do with this? In my estimation Paul's statement in 11.26 should be considered an integral part of Paul's view of salvation history and God's working in it. As such, the conviction that all Israel will be saved is just as necessary to Paul's presentation in Romans as his case for salvation by faith.<sup>15</sup> This will be illustrated below.

## 2. *How Will All Israel be Saved?*

We must ask, then, how it is that salvation will come to all Israel. Will it be due simply to the fact that Israel is elect? Or, conversely, will it occur because Israel will be turned to faith in the Messiah? That is to say, is *election* the reason for the salvation of Israel, or is election only the assurance that Israel will, in the end, turn to *faith* in the Messiah? In other words, does faith have any place in the final salvation of Israel?

The identity of the deliverer from Zion, mentioned in Rom. 11.26, is usually thought to be the decisive indicator in determining this matter. That is, did Paul think the deliverer to be God himself or Christ? Although the passage does not make an explicit identification, most think it probable that Paul has the *parousia* Christ in view here. Elsewhere in his writings, Paul does retain a place for Christ's future role in the eschatological events (1 Cor. 15.20-28).<sup>16</sup> Although this may not be conclusive for the issue in Romans,<sup>17</sup> one peculiarity of his argument there might help to confirm this identification—that is, the phrase ἐκ Σιών in 11.26. Paul's reference to the coming of the deliverer is made within a proof-text from Isa. 59.20f.<sup>18</sup> In Hebrew, this passage speaks of the deliverer coming 'to' or 'for' Zion (לְיִשְׂרָאֵל). Paul's Greek text probably spoke of a deliverer who comes 'on behalf of' or 'because of' Zion (ἐνεκεν Σιών). Paul, however, has a different reading which speaks instead of a deliverer coming 'from' Zion (ἐκ Σιών). As E. Ellis says, Paul seems to have departed from the traditional text 'evidently with a hermeneutical purpose in view'.<sup>19</sup> Many scholars consider the purpose for this change to have been Paul's desire to equate the redeemer with the *parousia* Christ who will appear *from* the *heavenly* Zion.<sup>20</sup> If this is the case, then Paul's innovation (ἐκ Σιών) is to be credited to his christological reading of Isa. 59.20f., and serves to establish the identity of the redeemer as Christ himself.<sup>21</sup>

Although it is possible that Paul thinks of Christ as the future redeemer of all Israel, this identification alone does not necessarily determine that their salvation will be due to their turning to faith in the Messiah, or so F. Mussner contends. He agrees that the coming of the redeemer equates with the return of Christ, but argues that Paul nowhere states that Israel will come to believe in their redeemer. Christ will simply save them despite their lack of faith. Mussner writes: 'The *parousia* Christ saves all Israel without a preceding "conversion" of the Jews to the gospel'.<sup>22</sup> In fact, Mussner argues, Paul's doctrine of justification by faith remains completely intact even in this: Salvation comes to Israel through Christ, by the grace of God, apart from works of the law, and through faith alone 'since Israel's *emunah* turns now totally toward the Christ who comes again'.<sup>23</sup> Mussner contends, therefore, that unbelieving Israel will be saved by Christ through a 'special path' ('Sonderweg Israels zum Heil').<sup>24</sup>

Mussner's interpretation is intriguing and, in our ecumenical day, admirable. It suffers, however, from several miscalculations. First, in Mussner's hands, Paul's concept of 'faith' has undergone a radical redefinition from its Pauline sense of participating within the 'in Christ' community.<sup>25</sup> Second, throughout Romans, Paul has taken pains to draw his most predominant line between God and the whole of humanity, Jew and Gentile alike. That theological divide is crossed only when one enters the 'in Christ' community. Third, within Rom. 9-11 specifically, such concepts as God's grace, the hardening of Israel, Israel's disobedience, and salvation all converge on the theme of faith in Christ. When they appear in 11.26ff., there is little reason to suggest that they have any other coherent centre. Fourth, Paul has argued clearly early on in this section that Christ is the goal of Israel's hopes for salvation. For these reasons, it will not do simply to declare that, since Paul never *explicitly* stated that all Israel will be converted to faith in Christ, he cannot have held it.<sup>26</sup> Paul's logic runs in ways which render explicit mention unnecessary, as the following considerations will help to illustrate.

Two factors seem to clinch the matter in support of the view that Paul expected unbelieving Israel to come to faith in the Messiah. First, throughout Rom. 11.11-24, Paul reveals his expectation that all of Israel will become incorporated into the community of faith. In 11.11-15, for instance, Paul sets up a causal relationship between the

Gentile mission and Israel's coming to faith. It is because the Jews see that salvation has gone to the Gentiles within the community of faith that they will be provoked to jealousy and be saved themselves. Paul is thinking here of their (the Jews') reception into the same community which provoked them to envy. What Gentile believers have, Israel will become jealous of and attain by entering into membership with the people of faith. As Sanders states, 'The connection with the Gentile mission shows that the salvation of Israel does not take place apart from Christ. . . Israel will be saved not first, but as a result of the Gentile mission, through faith in Christ'.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, in the analogy of the olive tree (11.17-24), Paul indicates that those who have been broken off will yet again be grafted back into the tree. What they are presently excluded from (by their lack of faith) they will be included in (by their faith). Here again Paul expects unbelieving Israel to be reinstated into the community from which they have been broken off by their unbelief.<sup>28</sup>

Second, when the deliverer of 11.26 is said to turn away godlessness from unbelieving Israel, whose sins will be forgiven, Paul can only be thinking of a change of situation—a change in the condition that provokes sin. This condition is their posture of unbelief, whereby they prove themselves to be an obstinate people. Israel has stumbled on a stumbling stone. When commenting on their stumble, Paul labels their misstep 'transgression', but looks forward to a time when unbelieving Israel will regain their step (11.11-13).<sup>29</sup> Paul addresses the fact of their recovery finally in 11.26f. There he argues that their sin—that is, their unbelief—will be forgiven and the condition of their sin will be turned away, which, in the context, can only mean that Israel will come to believe in the Messiah.<sup>30</sup>

This leads to the conclusion that, whether or not Paul thought Christ himself to be the redeemer of Israel (11.26), he did expect unbelieving Israel to come to faith in the Messiah in the future.<sup>31</sup> The terminology and concepts he uses can be understood in no other way. Of course, Paul's own experience conforms perfectly with his expectation for unbelieving Israel, for Paul too had sought righteousness with zeal, but not by faith. Although he had heard the message of Christ, he, like unbelieving Israel, did not believe. Paul too had stumbled on the stumbling stone. But he had not fallen beyond recovery. Instead, by the grace of God, Christ was revealed to him as

the redeemer of humanity and Paul put his faith in him. Paul has simply transplanted this event from his own experience to the culmination point of the history of unbelieving Israel.

### *3. Israel and the Temporal Distinction in Paul's View of Salvation History*

If we are right to recognize in Paul a hope for the salvation of all Israel by faith in Christ, that hope will need to be placed within the larger context of his presentation in Romans.

Throughout Rom. 1-8, Paul concerns himself with the requirements for being a member of the people of God in the present age. Paul's case is that, in the present age, the identity marker of the people of God is not an ethnic peculiarity but faith in Jesus. As members of the people of God in the newly inaugurated age, those 'in Christ' have received the Spirit (5.5) and the love of God (8.39); they have died to sin (6.2) and to the law (7.4); the spirit intercedes for them (8.27); their Lord has been raised from the dead (4.25), and is presently at the right hand of God (8.34). But even in this age, those 'in Christ' wait in anticipation for the glory of God to be revealed in them (5.2), and to share in Christ's resurrection (6.4ff.) and in his glory (8.17). Just as they groan inwardly and await their adoption as sons and the redemption of their bodies (8.23), so all creation groans in anxiety while awaiting the final day (8.19ff.). In this way, Paul's vision of the present age is proleptic, always marked by anticipation. The penultimate is now, the ultimate is soon. 'The Messiah has come, but without his kingdom'.<sup>32</sup> Paul thought the previous age to have given way with the death and resurrection of Christ, but he still awaited the consummation of the present age.

It is this same plan of the temporal stages within salvation history, established in Rom. 1-8, which facilitates Paul's two estimates of ethnic Israel in Rom. 9-11: In the present age, ethnic lineage has no part in determining the membership of the people of God; with the culmination of this age, however, all Israel will be turned to faith in Christ. This temporal distinction is one of the determining factors underlying Paul's various estimates of Israel. Its significance is best seen in Paul's use of the stumbling motif. In 9.32, for instance, with his eyes on the present time, Paul states that Israel has stumbled (προσκόπτειν). The implication is that they are down, and therefore

out. They have lost the race. But in 11.11, when he turns his sight to the future, Paul distinguishes between stumbling (πταίνειν) and falling (πίπτειν). Israel has stumbled, but they have not fallen. In fact, Paul looks forward to the time when they will recover from their stumble and, in their fullness, come into membership with the people of God.

When we speak of Paul's view of Israel, therefore, we must clarify what we are saying, for he has neither a 'Yes' nor a 'No' concerning them. Our conclusions must be determined by the same temporal schematization that determined Paul's thought on the issue. With his sights focused on the present stage of salvation history, Paul excludes all considerations of race. Those of Israel who do not believe are excluded from membership in the community of God's people. They cannot escape this fact by virtue of their ethnic privilege. Without faith, they are out. Whether by their own disobedience or by God's hardening, they have strayed. What they sought zealously—righteousness—they have missed because they do not know the righteousness that comes by faith in God's Messiah. Although their disobedience has been used to bring others into the people of God, they themselves fall outside of this community. *In the present age*, therefore, Israel is said to be an 'enemy' on account of the people of God. *In the culmination of this age*, however, Israel will be shown to be 'loved on account of the patriarchs, for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable' (11.28f.).<sup>33</sup> Because they are elect, a deliverer—perhaps Christ himself—will come from Zion to Israel specifically and their sinful condition will be turned away. Because of God's mercy upon them, they will be turned to faith in Christ. They are the chosen people and will not be forsaken. As J.C. Beker writes, 'At the end, Israel's beginning, that is, its election by God, will be confirmed'.<sup>34</sup>

In this scheme of the stages within salvation history, the tension between (1) the logic of Paul's case for salvation by faith, where ethnic boundaries are disqualified, and (2) his certainty concerning the ultimate salvation of Israel, can be accounted for. Both logics function respectively at different stages in the unfolding drama of salvation. Paul's proleptic eschatology determines not only his characterization of the 'in Christ' community but of Israel as well: Those 'in Christ' have life now, and so will have resurrection and glory then. They have the Spirit now, but only the firstfruits of the Spirit. The full harvest is yet to come. They are heirs with Christ,



but have yet to receive their full adoption as sons. So also, those of Israel who do not believe are presently excluded from membership in the people of God, but in the future they will come to believe in the stumbling block of Zion and will be delivered from their sin. Then all Israel will be saved. Ultimately, God will not forsake Israel for, in the end, they too will be turned to faith in the Messiah of God, *precisely because of their membership in the ethnic race of the Jews.*

#### 4. *The Ethnic Character of Paul's View of Salvation History*

Just as his sketch of salvation history within Rom. 1-8 includes the whole picture, beginning to end, so also he answers the Israel question within this broader frame of reference (but, as we have seen, with different verdicts at different points of the drama). He has pulled back from his case concerning the present stage of salvation history and has broadened his sights to include the events of the future and Israel's place in them: All Israel will be saved by the deliverer from Zion who will turn away their godlessness (11.26). But Paul leaves room for his own Gentile ministry in bringing about the salvation of Israel. He writes: 'Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of Gentiles has come in. And thus,<sup>35</sup> all Israel will be saved' (11.25f.). Earlier, in 11.11-15, Paul elaborated on this relationship between his Gentile mission and the future salvation of Israel. There he expects that since salvation is presently going to the Gentiles, so Israel will be provoked to jealousy and their fullness will come in (cf. Deut. 32.21). Although his ministry appears to concern itself solely with bringing salvation to the Gentiles, Paul wants his readers to believe that there is a deeper motivation behind his mission—that is, the salvation of Israel.<sup>36</sup> Although he is the apostle to the Gentiles, he has not abandoned his fundamental concern for Israel. In a roundabout way, in fact, his Gentile mission is an effort to save Israel.<sup>37</sup> Paul works for the salvation of the Gentiles, but that does not mean that Gentiles have taken centre stage in God's plan. God has not transferred his favour to the Gentiles at the expense of the Jews. He still has Israel in view and in fact, as we have seen, the process of salvation culminates with them. Here, then, Paul portrays even his Gentile ministry as a catalyst for the eventual salvation of Israel.<sup>38</sup>

As soon as Paul has established that his Gentile mission plays a

necessary role in the salvation of Israel, Paul proceeds immediately to warn the Gentiles against boasting (11.17-24), just as he had earlier condemned *Jewish* boasting. Paul seems aware that his characterization of the Gentile ministry could be misperceived as indicating that Israel is indebted to the Gentiles for their ultimate salvation, that Israel has no existence apart from the Christian community, that it is the Gentiles who are in a position to save Israel, rather than *vice versa*. Furthermore, Paul's own gospel of salvation apart from ethnic boundaries may well have motivated an anti-Jewish sentiment within some Gentile circles of the Christian community, just as it did less than a century later in the theology of Marcion (85-160 CE).<sup>39</sup> Paul recognized this danger and took immediate steps to steer clear of it by clarifying, specifically for his Gentile readers, what he was *not* saying. Although Gentile believers are 'inside' and unbelieving Israel are 'outside' of the community, Gentile believers have no grounds to boast in themselves at the expense of the Jews. Paul undermines their pride by stepping back from the immediate situation and bringing into focus the whole scheme of salvation history, from beginning to end. His olive tree analogy serves his purpose well.<sup>40</sup> Three distinct groups appear in that analogy: (1) the natural branches that remain—that is, those of Israel who believe, and thereby remain attached to the root. This group equals the remnant—the true Israel of 9.6 who, by their faith, have followed the course intended for Israel by God; (2) the unnatural, grafted-in branches—that is, Gentile believers who have been grafted into the root by means of their faith, despite the fact that by race they have no natural right to its nutrients; and (3) the natural but cut-off branches—that is, those of Israel who, by their unbelief, have not kept to the proper course and thereby have been cut off from the root, even though they have a natural claim to it by race. The root itself is characterized by race and faith. On the one hand, since *Gentiles* have no natural right to it while *Jews* are said to be natural members of it, the root has an ethnic quality. On the other hand, since *unbelieving Jews* are cut off from it while *Gentile believers* are grafted into it, the root is marked out by faith.

With this analogy, Paul is trying to portray the complexities of his view of salvation history. He perceives it to involve a process which works through an ethnic people, some of whom have turned to faith in the Messiah of their God while others will come to believe only in

the final stage of the process. But, since faith is the means of admission into this stage of salvation history, the process is no longer exclusive to that ethnic group. Gentiles are admitted on the same basis. They must, however, be aware of their place, for they are like wild branches grafted into a tree who, in fact, bring nothing of value to the nurturing of the plant. Instead, they function merely as parasites who become productive only when they are nourished by the nutrients of the root.<sup>41</sup> The process itself does not end with them. It culminates, as it began, with Israel, for if the wild olive branches were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will the natural branches be grafted back into their own tree.

Here Paul has stepped back and perused the whole of salvation history in order to place the present situation into its fuller context. That is, when the whole picture of salvation history is in view, those of the present age who are admitted as members of the people of God apart from Jewish heritage must recognize that what they are participating in is fundamentally an *ethnic* process whereby the salvation of all humanity is effected. Gentiles are welcome to take part and, at this stage of the process, can enter fully into it. Now that the old age has passed away, admission is free. But, in fact, what Gentile believers have associated themselves with is the salvation that God has effected through the vehicle of the Jewish people.

This ethnic character of Paul's understanding of the process of salvation history is apparent in a number of his statements. God began the process of salvation with an ethnic people (9.4f.). The words of God were given to the Jews, and in this way they are advantaged (3.1f.). Although God has acted anew for the benefit of all humanity who live 'under sin' (3.9), the Messiah himself holds a membership card with the Jewish race (9.5). God oversaw the whole process (9.5)<sup>42</sup>—a process intricately tied to Israel's history and which has now unfolded into a new era in the history of salvation with the advent of the Messiah. Ethnic Jews keep up with the process when they believe in their Messiah. Only then can they claim to be the true Israel—the remnant, as illustrated in 9.6. Paul's point there is that the one who is *born* a Jew keeps in step when he *becomes* a believer in the Jewish Messiah, so that Jewish birthright is complete only in Christian faith (cf. 4.12).<sup>43</sup> As the programme of salvation history unfolds, some of the ethnic people with whom it began have 'evolved' with it by their faith in Christ, while others have lagged

behind by their lack of faith. Although Paul looked forward to the time when all Israel will believe in the Messiah, he retained a central role in the process of salvation history for those of Israel who do not believe. By their disbelief they have, says Paul, made room for others to join the ranks of God's people. Paul is convinced that God is using even their disobedience to bring salvation to all who believe. God is working the salvation of others through Israel, both the remnant—that is, believing Israel (11.17f.)—and those of Israel who have stumbled—that is, unbelieving Israel (11.19). Those of Israel who do not believe are still an object of God's mercy (11.31). They serve as an instrument of God's grace to all who believe, and thereby have a vital role in the process in which God is recognized as the God not only of the Jews, but of the Gentiles as well (3.29). When the process, of which they are a part, is completed, they themselves will be turned to faith in the Messiah and be saved by God's grace. Thus, things at present are not as they will be finally. There is more to come and Paul awaits the culmination of the age—when God's ethnic agents, through whom he brings salvation to all, will themselves turn to faith in Christ.

Since Paul perceives every stage of salvation history as operating through the agency of the ethnic race of the Jews, Paul draws out significant implications of this for his Gentile-Christian audience, whose apostle he is. He advises them that the benefits which they have received must always be kept in their proper perspective, for he views them as the *proleptic deposit of what God will bestow upon Israel at the culmination of salvation history*. This is the whole point, for instance, of Paul's jealousy motif. When Israel realizes that the Gentiles are taking part in the salvation that was promised to them (Israel), they will be provoked to jealousy and be saved by faith themselves. In this respect, it is interesting to examine what Paul says about adoption. On one hand, he states that believers are presently awaiting their full adoption as sons (8.23). On the other hand, he says that adoption as sons belongs to Israel (9.4). Perhaps the relationship between these two statements is explicitly explained later in 15.27 where Paul speaks of the Gentiles as *sharing in the spiritual blessings of the Jews*. In the present stage of history those who believe in the Jewish Messiah are (proleptically) participating in the eschatological salvation of Israel. At present, only the firstfruits of those blessings are evident. Paul looks forward to the time when all

Israel—that is, both ‘parts’ (cf. 11.25)<sup>44</sup>—will be saved by faith in Christ, for only then will the whole of salvation history be complete and the full blessings of Israel fall upon the community of believers. This community does not displace Israel. Instead, it is ‘an extension of the promises of God to Israel. . . the prophetic dawning of the future destiny of Israel’.<sup>45</sup>

### 5. *Paul’s View and Popular Expectations of Early Judaism*

At this point, Paul’s presentation of the course of salvation history and the place of Israel and the Gentiles respectively within that process can be compared with other Jewish eschatological expectations of his day. Like most other issues, no uniformity existed on this matter in Early Judaism. But despite the diversity of opinions, G.F. Moore has argued, correctly I think, that one conviction was presupposed by them all: ‘that Judaism as the one true religion was destined to become the universal religion’.<sup>46</sup> This conviction arose, especially under the influence of the prophets, as the tribal God of the Hebrew people took on universal proportions. In the course of time, the God of Abraham and his descendants outgrew his solely nationalistic garb and put on the robes of the Almighty of the world. The one who guided Israel’s history came to be recognized as the one who ruled over all of history. As Genesis takes pains to point out, the God of the covenant (Gen. 12ff.) is the God of all creation (Gen. 1–11). This is implicit within the developed monotheism of Early Judaism. The Jewish apocalypticists, with their heightened eschatological expectation, eagerly awaited the end of time—a time when the one who created it all, Israel’s God, will end it all. This expectation was not that of apocalypticists alone, but pervaded Judaism. At the end, Israel’s God will be there, and the religion of the Jews will be established at the expense of all others.<sup>47</sup> As Zechariah pronounced, ‘The Lord will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and his name the only name’ (14.9). This prophetic announcement captures a fundamental assurance of Judaism: ‘The golden age in the future, the goal toward which all history moved, was, above everything else, the fulfilment of Israel’s destiny’.<sup>48</sup>

If this is a given of Jewish expectations of the future, the specifics which describe how that supremacy is awarded to the Jewish religion vary. Sanders finds six basic prophetic predictions concerning the Gentiles in the end-times, which we give here:<sup>49</sup>

1. The wealth of the Gentiles will flow into Jerusalem.
2. The kings of the Gentiles will bow down, and the Gentile nations will serve Israel.
3. Israel will be a light to the nations; her salvation will go forth to the ends of the earth. It accords with this that the Gentiles may be added to Israel and thus be saved.
4. The Gentiles will be destroyed. Their cities will be desolate and will be occupied by Israel.
5. As a supplement to the theme of destruction we may add predictions of vengeance and the defeat of the Gentiles.
6. Foreigners will survive but will not dwell with Israel.

As Sanders admits, there is some degree of overlap in these distinct groups. Moreover, different views often appear alongside one another in the same work.<sup>50</sup> The lists compiled by Russell and Moore are simpler and consist of three views: The nations will be subjugated, destroyed or converted,<sup>51</sup> a listing which includes all six of Sanders's groups. For our purposes, it is the conversion of the nations which is of concern.

Within Isaiah, especially, the Jewish people are commissioned to be a means towards the establishment of God's rule for all humanity. Of them it is said, 'I will make you a light to the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth' (49.6; cf. 51.4). Similarly, in the last days, it is said that Mount Zion will be established above all others, 'and all the nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways so that we may walk in his paths". The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem' (2.2-3=Mic. 4.1-2; this is also a common theme of the Psalms). Elsewhere, it is said that those of other nations who bind themselves to the Lord, and who serve, love and worship him will be brought to Zion and into the house of prayer, for God's house 'will be called a house of prayer for all nations' (56.6-7). In this way, God will gather to himself both Israel and other nations with them (56.8). Zechariah proclaimed that, in the end, men from all nations will grab hold of the skirts of the Jews in order to enter Jerusalem with them and worship their Lord (8.20-23). On that final day when God will live in Zion with his people, many nations will be joined with the Lord and will become his people (2.11). Isaiah looks forward to the time when even Egypt

will turn to the Lord and worship him (19.19-25). They too will become God's people; 'Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork and Israel my inheritance' (19.25). In these passages, salvation is not granted without conversion to the Jewish religion.<sup>52</sup> That is, salvation comes to the Gentiles only as they learn the ways of God and walk in his paths by aligning themselves with the law and its practices, and this itself comes about through the instrumentality of the people of Israel.<sup>53</sup>

This prophetic expectation is carried on in the literature of Early Judaism. *1 Enoch* 10.21 states that all nations shall worship and bless Israel's God, prostrating themselves before him. In various texts, the nations are said to join with the righteous in worship of the God of Israel (*Syb. Or.* 3.115-31; *T. Dan* 9.2; 10.5, 9-11; *Pss. Sol.* 17.34-35; *Tobit* 14.6-7; *1 Enoch* 50.2-5).<sup>54</sup> The Gentiles accompany the Jews in procession to the Temple in order to ponder the law. It is said of Israel that they will be 'guides in life' for all humanity (*Syb. Or.* 3.195), just as in *T. Levi* they are depicted (as in Isaiah) as a light to the Gentiles, teaching the law of God to all (14.4). In the tannaitic period, R. Jose ben Halaphta also taught that in the messianic age the Gentiles would convert to Judaism (*b. Abodah Zarah* 3b), and the same can be found in the Midrash (*Num. R.* 7.1f.) and in the Palestinian Talmud (*Yebamot* 47b, 109b; *Kiddushin* 70b). It seems to have been a common expectation, therefore, that, in the next age, the nations will be gathered to Jerusalem where the Messiah will teach them the law.<sup>55</sup>

All this has led Sanders to argue that most Jews of Paul's time who gave the issue any consideration would have expected the Gentiles to be converted to the true (Jewish) religion at the end of the age.<sup>56</sup> But, whether or not it is true that *most* Jews believed this, the conviction was certainly in the air in Paul's day and had strong roots in the prophetic tradition. In the end, Israel will be vindicated and the true religion will emerge uncontested as all the world turns to worship the God of Israel. Contending religions would be wiped out by the emptying of their membership ranks by means of conversion to the true religion, thereby ensuring the final triumph of God over all creation. Salvation lay with Israel's God, and the way to him was through his people. As J. Jocz well writes, 'Between the God of Israel and the Gentile world stands the Jewish people. To come to God meant primarily to come to the Jews. Without first coming to Israel,

the way to God remained barred'.<sup>57</sup> In this way, the universalism of Judaism's outlook is 'nothing more than an extension of particularism, implying the absorption of the Gentile world by the chosen people'.<sup>58</sup>

While they awaited the end of the age when their God and their religion would triumph, the Jews were not adverse to admitting Gentile proselytes into their ranks. It would seem that, despite the few exceptions to the rule, Early Judaism was not a missionizing religion.<sup>59</sup> Active campaigning to bolster their membership was not one of its most recognizable traits. It has been said that Israel's mission is fulfilled simply by her existence.<sup>60</sup> The popular adage portrays much: 'Proselytes should be held back with the left hand and drawn near with the right',<sup>61</sup> the former being weaker than the latter. No one was dissuaded, perhaps, but proselytes were not often eagerly sought out. Thus, although would-be proselytes were not actively missionized, neither were they discouraged from converting if their intentions were proper. And, in fact, there do seem to have been a significant number of Gentiles who were attracted, for one reason or another, to the Jewish religion (or 'philosophy'). Most, of course, were respectful well-wishers who appreciated Judaism but were hindered from becoming full members because of its unattractive initiation rites—especially circumcision.<sup>62</sup> Circumcision was commonly recognized throughout the Greco-Roman world as the sign of the Jew and, as such, was a prerequisite for participating in the religion of the Jewish people.<sup>63</sup> If he so desired, a Gentile could fully embrace the Jewish religion by accepting the marks of the covenant people—circumcision being a necessary marker, but not the only one. It was understood from passages like Lev. 24.22 and Num. 9.14, that the proselyte (גר; προσήλυτος) who underwent the full process of initiation held the same position in the community as the native Jew (cf. the *Sifre* on Lev. 18.5). The Gentile convert was said to have 'entered into the covenant', the biblical precedent being that of Ruth the Moabite who converted to take refuge beneath the 'wings' of Israel's God.<sup>64</sup> Along with ethnic Jews, proselytes were often considered, in theory at least, to be full 'sons of the covenant' who have entered into the Jewish religion and people.<sup>65</sup> Accordingly, Judith 14.10 tells of Achior the Ammonite who, believing in God, had himself circumcised 'and joined unto the house of Israel'. As long as membership rites were fulfilled, converts were admitted as equal



members. On occasion, in fact, they were compared to Abraham himself, who abandoned his pagan ways to follow the true God.<sup>66</sup>

These two persuasions—the future entry of Gentiles into the salvation of the Jews, and the full status of the Gentile convert—provide the background for Paul's portrayal of Jews, Gentiles and salvation history in Rom. 9-11. What differentiates Paul from his contemporary Jews is his peculiar understanding of the successive stages of salvation history. The process began with an ethnic entity (9.4f.), continues as that ethnic entity turns to faith (9.6ff.) and will be completed when all of that ethnic people have turned to faith (11.11-15, 26). Judaism proper has outgrown its previous garb and is now marked out by faith in the Messiah. By faith, Gentiles too participate in this final form of Jewish religion. Their faith in the Jewish Messiah is the actualization of the Jewish hope for the eschatological ingathering of the nations. In essence, the Gentiles are coming to salvation on the skirts of the Jews—the whole point of the olive tree analogy.

This is consistent with the prophetic expectation of the conversion of the Gentiles to Judaism. Paul, of course, has changed the guise of Jewish religion, but he maintains its fundamental conviction that in the end 'Judaism as the one true religion was destined to become the universal religion'. For Paul, the Jewish religion has reached its apex, constituted by faith in Christ. As B. Byrne well states, 'Paul represents a Judaism *one stage ahead* of Palestinian Judaism in the apocalyptic programme'.<sup>67</sup> In the present stage, the entry requirement is faith, not works of law. Consequently, the Gentiles can participate in that same process of salvation by their faith, and God can truly be the God of both Jew and Gentile (3.29). In this way, salvation can go to the ends of the earth, thereby fulfilling the promises God made through Isaiah. Israel, whether by faith or disbelief, is the light to the nations, and the final triumph lies with Israel's God, whom all the world will worship by their faith.<sup>68</sup> It is not right, therefore, to say that Paul 'took from the Jewish Messianic idea its universalistic side, and ignored. . . its politico-national side'.<sup>69</sup> Such a distinction did not exist in Paul's mind and does not do justice to his case in Rom. 9-11. Instead, his universalism is an extension of his peculiar view of the unfolding drama of Israel's history, through which God works the salvation of the world.

Moreover, as we have seen, the convert who had undergone the

initiation rites of Judaism was considered, in theory at least, by Jews as a full member of Israel. The same is true of Paul. With the advent of the Messiah, Paul came to recognize that ethnocentric identity markers were no longer to be considered the requirement for membership in the community of God's people. This, of course, is the point of issue that Paul needed to defend in the first chapters of Romans. Paul's initial task is to prove that the new stage of salvation history took the form that it did—that is, that faith in Christ is the membership badge. But once that point is established, Paul argues that anyone who fulfils this requirement is on an equal footing with the ethnic Jew. The acceptance of the Gentile believers as full members follows as an outcome of the Jewish allowance that fulfilment of the entry rites placed the convert on the same footing with the ethnic Jew.

#### 6. *Conclusions*

After presenting his arguments of Rom. 1–8, Paul is compelled in Rom. 9–11 to address a problem which his peculiar case has provoked: Since God had entered into covenant relationship with Israel, and since salvation is granted now on a basis apart from race, can God be said to be faithful? Paul's attempt to resolve the problem is difficult to grasp because the problem itself straddles both Paul's ecclesiastical vision (*viz.*, there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile) and his theological conviction (*viz.*, the God of Israel is saving even the Gentiles). Sociologically speaking, the body of Christ is not Israel in the flesh, nor is it Gentile paganism. It is a new entity—a 'third entity',<sup>70</sup> a socially distinct unit. Theologically speaking, however, Paul is convinced that the God of this third race is the same God who worked and is working through ethnic Israel.<sup>71</sup> Paul wants to insist that there is a *sociological discontinuity* between the traditional Judaism of his day and the community of faith while still maintaining the *historical continuity* of the two. In practice, the Christian community is something new, while in theory it is simply a new stage in the development of something old; the caterpillar has become the butterfly. As J. Ziesler writes, the community of faith is 'as old as Abraham and as new as Jesus Christ'.<sup>72</sup>

Because the problem itself is precarious, Rom. 9–11 does not facilitate easy answers. One should not look for a single line of

argument, for Paul's case is worked out from various angles and approaches.<sup>73</sup> Underlying it all is a *distinctively ethnic view of salvation history and Israel's role in it throughout its successive stages*.<sup>74</sup> Put more succinctly, Paul is convinced that God is faithful to Israel. Thus, in the present, a remnant of Israel remains, and, in the future, all of Israel will be delivered from their godlessness. In the interim, the door into the community of God's people is opened to those who fall outside of the ethnic boundaries of Israel. What they are presently sharing in by their faith, however, are the eschatological blessings of Israel. All of salvation history is rooted in the history of Israel and will be completed with Israel. In the process, God will have mercy on all humanity, and Israel will have been the instrument of his grace. Thus, whether by their present faith or disobedience, Israel will have fulfilled the task which God commissioned her to do: 'I will make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth' (Isa. 49.6). Thus, Paul views his Gentile ministry as realizing the 'eschatological expectation of the Old Testament that in the latter days the nations will come to worship the God of Israel'.<sup>75</sup>

This is Paul's solution. The verdict Paul gives concerning Israel depends upon the specific issue he is addressing. But underlying his different answers is a profound understanding of salvation history that holds them all together in a fairly neat, although complex, package. When only the present stage of salvation history is in Paul's view, he vehemently defends the right of Gentile believers to be free from ethnic constraints. When, however, the whole of salvation history is in Paul's view, Paul makes a different claim. Then his point is not simply that Gentile Christians *cannot exist without Israel*<sup>76</sup> but, even more, that Gentile Christians *cannot exist except within Israel*.<sup>77</sup> This double aspect of Paul's case is well reflected in F. Watson's analysis, in which he writes, 'whereas elsewhere Paul sets his view of salvation of the Gentiles *in polemical opposition to the Jewish theology of the covenant*, in Rom. 11 he argues that this view of the salvation of the Gentiles is *compatible with the Jewish theology of the covenant*, and may be incorporated into it'.<sup>78</sup> Unfortunately, in Watson's estimation these two aspects of Paul's thought are completely incompatible theologically.<sup>79</sup> But they are not. Instead, they are maintained in complementarity by a dynamic awareness of the process whereby God works in history with a particular people

for the salvation of humanity. In an elaborate argument, Paul maintains two fundamental convictions: (1) One does not need to adopt any ethnic symbols of the people of Israel in order to experience God's grace; and (2) God works the salvation of the world through an ethnic people, Israel.

If these results are on the right track, the fact that Paul allows for no ethnocentricity in the present age does not deny the ethnic character of his understanding of salvation history. The universalism of his gospel is rooted in, and comes to fruition with, an ethnic particularism. In Rom. 9-11, Paul illustrates that his is a universalism contained within the confines of Jewish ethnocentrism.

#### NOTES

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1. See especially J.D.G. Dunn, 'The New Perspective on Paul', *BJRL* 65 (1983), pp. 95-122; 'Works of the Law and the Curse of the Law', *NTS* 31 (1985), pp. 523-42; *Romans* (2 vols.; Waco, 1988).

2. S. Sandmel, *Judaism and Christian Beginnings* (New York, 1978), p. 182. So also, J. Jocz: 'It was not race but the Torah that made Israel a people' (*The Jewish People and Jesus Christ* [Grand Rapids, 1949 & 1979], p. 302). Cf. *Mekilta Exod. 12.6*: 'Under covenant nothing other than Torah is to be understood'.

3. R. Badenas illustrates this problem for Paul in his *Christ the End of the Law* (Sheffield, 1985), pp. 81-87. W.D. Davies states Paul's problem somewhat differently: 'If God who had made the promise to the Jewish people had failed to bring his salvation to them, what guarantee was there that he would complete the work of the believer's salvation?' ('Paul and the People of Israel', in *Jewish and Pauline Studies* [Philadelphia, 1984], pp. 123-53, cited here at p. 131). Cf. also J.C. Beker ('The Faithfulness of God and the Priority of Israel in Paul's Letter to the Romans', in *Christians among Jews and Gentiles*, ed. G.W.E. Nickelsburg & G.W. MacRae [Philadelphia, 1986], pp. 10-16, esp. 14) and E.P. Sanders (*Paul, the Law and the Jewish People* [Philadelphia, 1983], p. 197).

4. H. Räisänen rightly claims that the same disturbing problem also lies behind Paul's case in 3.1-8 ('Zum Verständnis von Röm 3.1-8', in *The Torah and Christ* [Helsinki, 1986], pp. 185-205).

5. See the way this verse is handled by E. Dinkler ('The Historical and the Eschatological Israel in Romans, Chapters 9-11: A Contribution to the Problem of Predestination and Free Will', *JR* 36 [1956], pp. 109-27), E. Ellis

(*Paul's Use of the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids, 1957], pp. 137-39) and J.W. Aageson ('Typology, Correspondence, and the Application of Scripture in Romans 9-11', *JSTNT* 31 [1987], pp. 51-72). Aageson understands this verse to distinguish between the 'Jews who do not believe' and 'the Jews and Gentiles who do' (p. 55, emphasis mine).

6. For example, Gal. 6.16. See Sanders's handling of this verse in *The Jewish People*, p. 173, as well as that of N. Dahl, 'Der Name Israel: I. Zur Auslegung von Gal. 6.16', *Judaica* 6 (1950), pp. 161-70.

7. Beker writes: 'Paul corrects in Romans 9-11 the argument of Galatians... where Israel seems simply absorbed into the Church. Thus Paul argues in Romans against any conception of the church as the "true Israel"' ('Faithfulness of God', p. 16).

8. F. Mussner: The term 'Israel' 'breaks through a purely folkish conception of "Israel", without encompassing the Gentile Christians in Israel' (*Tractate on the Jews*, trans. L. Swidler [Philadelphia, 1984], p. 29). Cf. also H. Hübner (*Law in Paul's Thought* [ET: Edinburgh, 1984], p. 58) and J.C. Beker (*Paul and the Apostle* [Philadelphia, 1980], p. 316).

9. Sanders: 'Paul seems to be headed toward a distinction of two "Israels"... but the terminology is not carried through' (*The Jewish People*, p. 174).

10. Mussner, *Tractate*, p. 29. More often than not, it refers to those of ethnic Israel who do not believe in the Messiah.

11. *The Jewish People*, p. 176. He continues: 'Although Paul thought of the members of the church as the heirs of the promises of Israel, he did not (with one exception) give them the name'. The exception Sanders refers to is Gal. 6.16.

12. Contra D.E.H. Whiteley (*The Theology of St. Paul* [Oxford, 1964], p. 97), N.T. Wright ('The Messiah and the People of God' [Oxford Ph.D. thesis, 1980], pp. 200ff.), E. Güttgemanns ('Heilsgeschichte bei Paulus oder Dynamik des Evangeliums; Zur strukturellen Relevanz von Röm 9-11 für die Theologie des Römerbriefes', in *Studia linguistica Neotestamentica* [Munich, 1971], pp. 34-58, esp. 47-49), J.W. Aageson ('Scripture and Structure in the Development of the Argument in Romans 9-11', *CBQ* 48 [1986], pp. 265-89, esp. 284f.) and J. Jeremias ('Einige vorwiegend sprachliche Beobachtungen zu Röm 11,25-36', in *Die Israelfrage nach Röm 9-11*, ed. L. de Lorenzi [Rome, 1977], pp. 193-205). As Dahl writes, 'There ought to be no doubt that the statement in Romans 11.25 (*sic*), that all Israel will be saved, applies to the people of Israel, not to the church as a new Israel' ('The Future of Israel', in *Studies in Paul* [Minneapolis, 1977], pp. 137-58, cited here at p. 138). Cf. also F. Watson, *Paul, Judaism and the Gentiles* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 229 n. 38.

13. Thus, immediately before referring to the salvation of 'all' Israel in 11.26, Paul speaks of Israel in parts—a part of Israel (ἀπό μέρους τῶ

Ἰσραήλ) has been hardened. Similarly, earlier in Rom. 11 he had spoken of the 'remnant of Israel' (11.5) and of 'the elect' in contrast with 'the rest' (11.7).

14. E. Käsemann: 'The point is that there will no longer be a distinction between the true and the false seed, the remnant and the people. In virtue of the promise given it, Judaism is an eschatological entity as πᾶς Ἰσραήλ' (*Commentary on Romans*, trans. G.W. Bromiley [Grand Rapids, 1980], p. 305).

15. The importance of 11.26 for Paul's overall project in Romans is often not given its due by interpreters of Paul. This is especially true of Watson, who attributes it to an expedient move on Paul's part to pacify the Jewish Christians who were already suspicious of him (*Paul*, pp. 167ff.) and C. Plag, who considers it to be material introduced at a later date into Romans (*Israels Wege zum Heil* [Stuttgart, 1969], esp. pp. 41-45, 60f., 65ff.). P. Stuhlmacher argues against Plag on this point, but accepts his theory that 11.25-27 betrays a primitive conception of an eschatological pilgrimage to Zion in Christian procession ('Zur Interpretation von Röm 11,25-32', in *Probleme biblischer Theologie*, ed. H.W. Wolff [Munich, 1971], pp. 555-70). H. Hübner argues, however, that such a conception cannot be found in these verses (*Gottes Ich und Israel* [Göttingen, 1984], p. 112 n. 400).

16. See Sanders (*The Jewish People*, p. 194), H.J. Schoeps (*Paul* [ET: Philadelphia, 1961], p. 243), M. Hengel ('The Origins of the Christian Mission', in his *Between Jesus and Paul* [trans. J. Bowden; London, 1983], p. 51), Davies ('The People of Israel', pp. 144f.), and Aageson ('Typology', p. 63).

17. So L. Gaston, 'Israel's Misstep in the Eyes of Paul', in *Paul and the Torah* (Vancouver, 1987), pp. 135-50, esp. 147.

18. This same text is understood as referring to the redemption of Israel in the messianic age in *b. Sanh.* 98a, 93b.

19. *Paul's Use*, p. 140. Ellis explains Paul's innovation as arising from his identification of the church as the body of Christ—that is, the new Zion—from which the redeemer will go forth (p. 123 n. 5).

20. So Käsemann (*Romans*, p. 314), Stuhlmacher ('Röm 11.25-32', p. 561), Hübner (*Gottes Ich*, p. 114), and Davies ('The People of Israel', pp. 141ff., although he approaches the issue from a different angle in his *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine* [Berkeley, 1974], pp. 196ff.). Somewhat differently, D. Zeller (*Juden und Heiden in der Mission des Paulus* [Stuttgart, 1973], pp. 259-61), Aageson ('Scripture and Structure', p. 285), and Dahl ('Future', p. 153 n. 47) all suggest that ἐκ Σίων includes a reference not only to the heavenly Zion but to the earthly Zion as well. That is, the deliverer both came from Zion and will return again from the heavenly Zion.

21. Perhaps another, more 'poetic' explanation should also be considered

in the light of Paul's comments in 9.33. There, Paul cited another proof-text (a conflation of Isa. 28.16 and 8.14) which states that a stumbling block—that is, Christ—was placed in Zion. It is possible that, with two proof-texts of 9.33 and 11.26 (both of which make mention of Zion, a reference which appears nowhere else in Romans or the rest of the extant Pauline corpus), Paul is constructing a curious image: A stone is laid *in* Zion which unbelieving Israel have stumbled over (9.33); this same one, however, will come *from* Zion to deliver them and turn away their godlessness (11.26). If Paul's thought ran along these lines, his unprecedented reading of Isa. 59.20 (ἐκ Σιών) might be explained as an attempt to create a christological symbolism between 9.30 and 11.26.

22. *Tractate*, p. 34. So also, Gaston: 'It may be that Christ was in Paul's mind but even so it would be completely wrong to speak of an end-time conversion. If Christ is meant, then it is Christ in a different role' ('Israel's Misstep', pp. 147f.).

23. *Ibid.*

24. See also his 'Ganz Israel wird gerettet werden' (Röm 11,26): Versuch einer Auslegung', *Kairos* 18 (1976), pp. 241-55; "'Christus (ist) des Gesetzes Ende zur Gerechtigkeit für jeden, der glaubt"' (Röm 10,4), in *Paulus—Apostolat oder Apostel*, ed. M. Barth et al. (Regensburg, 1977), pp. 31-44; and more recently his *Die Kraft der Wurzel: Judentum—Jesus—Kirche* (Freiburg, 1987), pp. 34-54, 62-64, 153-59.

25. All attempts to defend this 'special path' interpretation must redefine the sense that Paul gives to the term 'faith' in 11.1-17, 3.21-31, and 10.5-13. For instance, Gaston ('Israel's Misstep', p. 140) and J.G. Gager (*The Origins of Anti-Semitism* [New York, 1983], p. 264) identify the Jews' lack of faith with their failure to see the legitimacy of the Gentile mission.

26. L. Gaston, who also has proposed this 'special path' interpretation, makes much out of this omission in Rom. 11.26f. ('Israel's Enemies in Pauline Theology', in *Paul and the Torah*, pp. 80-99, esp. 92-99). Others who advocate a 'special path' reading of Paul include K. Stendahl (*Paul among Jews and Gentiles* [Philadelphia, 1976], pp. 4, 40), P. Lapide (*Paul: Rabbi and Apostle* [co-authored by P. Lapide and P. Stuhlmacher; trans. W.W. Deneff; Minneapolis, 1984], p. 51), Gager (*Anti-Semitism*, pp. 261-64), and B. Klappert ('Traktat für Israel (Römer 9-11): Die paulinische Verhältnisbestimmung von Israel und Kirche als Kriterium neutestamentlicher Sachaussagen über die Juden', in *Jüdische Existenz und die Erneuerung der christlichen Theologie*, ed. M. Stöhr [Munich, 1981], pp. 58-137). For criticisms of this interpretation, see Hübner (*Gottes Ich*, pp. 114-20), Davies ('The People of Israel', p. 143), Sanders (*The Jewish People*, pp. 194f.), and R. Jewett ('The Law and the Coexistence of Jews and Gentiles in Romans', *Interpretation* 39 [1985], pp. 341-56, esp. 343f., 348f.). In recent times, the same 'double path' understanding of the relationship between Judaism and Christianity has

been proposed by Jewish authors, most notably by H.J. Schoeps (*Aus frühchristlicher Zeit* [Tübingen, 1950], esp. pp. 120-53), and M. Buber (*Die Stunde und die Erkenntnis* [Berlin, 1936], p. 153; see also his *Two Types of Faith* [New York, 1961]). For a good discussion, see Jocz, *The Jewish People*, pp. 315-22.

27. *The Jewish People*, pp. 194f.; cf. his comments on p. 193.

28. Mussner himself admits that Rom. 11.23 is problematic for his interpretation ("Ganz Israel", pp. 252f.). See also F. Hahn ("Zum Verständnis von Röm 11,26a: ". . . und so wird ganz Israel gerettet werden"), in *Paul and Paulinism*, ed. M.D. Hooker & S.G. Wilson [London, 1982], pp. 221-36, esp. p. 230 n. 39) and Hübner (*Gottes Ich*, p. 117).

29. Dahl: 'Paul identifies the people's disobedience with their rejection of Christ and looks forward to the disappearance of this disbelief' ('Future', p. 153).

30. For other evidence that Paul expected Israel to come to faith in Christ, not all of which is convincing, see Sanders (*The Jewish People*, pp. 194f., 205 n. 90), P. Richardson (*Israel in the Apostolic Church* [New York, 1969], p. 127), and J. Munck (*Christ and Israel* [trans. I. Nixon; Philadelphia, 1967], p. 139).

31. This is the basis of R. Reuther's scathing attack on Paul in *Faith and Fratricide* (New York, 1974), pp. 95-107.

32. Beker, *Paul*, p. 346.

33. Schoeps thinks that 'Paul here wished to express the fact that God is bound *legally*' (*Paul*, p. 242; emphasis mine). It is better, however, to explain the 'irrevocable call' in terms of God's faithful nature. Thus, L. Goppelt writes: 'God would remain faithful to the calling through which he bound himself to his people' (*Theology of the New Testament* [2 vols.; trans. J.E. Alsup; Grand Rapids, 1982]; cited here at II, p. 115). Cf. also Käsemann (*Romans*, p. 315), U. Luz (*Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus* [Munich, 1968], p. 296), and Mussner (*Tractate*, pp. 17f.).

34. *Paul*, p. 87. Cf. his 'Faithfulness of God', p. 14.

35. It is extremely difficult to decide how Paul meant οὐτως to be understood here—whether it has a modal sense ('in this way') or a temporal sense ('in the end'). Neither position is grammatically conclusive, and perhaps the one reading is not mutually exclusive of the other. R. Schmitt, for instance, considers the sense of οὐτως to be primarily modal, but argues that a temporal element cannot be ruled out in the light of 11.11f. and the temporal conjunction ἄχρις οὖν in 11.25 (*Gottesgerechtigkeit—Heilsgeschichte—Israel in der Theologie des Paulus* [Frankfurt, 1984], p. 111). Moreover, although Hübner is outspoken in his rejection of the temporal reading, finding it 'überaus unwahrscheinlich' (*Gottes Ich*, p. 110), he nonetheless continues to give the phrase a temporal significance: 'dass Gott am Ende ganz Israel rettet' (p. 118; cf. pp. 120, 123).



36. D. Senior calls this a partial but not fundamental explanation of the impetus behind Paul's Gentile mission (*Biblical Foundations for Mission*, by D. Senior & C. Stuhlmüller [London, 1983], p. 178). He may well be right, but this is not the impression Paul wants to leave in 11.11ff. See Watson, *Paul*, pp. 161f., 169. Käsemann's understanding, which considers the utter urgency of Paul's mission to come from this eschatological vision of the salvation of Israel (*Romans*, p. 304-307) comes closer to the way Paul would have wanted to be read by his Roman audience.

37. When Paul states that he hopes to see *some* from ethnic Israel come to faith as a result of his ministry, he is not denying that all Israel will be saved. Rather, he is recognizing that ultimately the final salvation of Israel will be accomplished not by him but by God who bestows mercy on all. Cf. Sanders, *The Jewish People*, p. 190f.

38. S. Kim has suggested that *from the very beginning* Paul conceived of the Gentile ministry as ultimately bringing about the salvation of all Israel. This conviction, Kim believes, is rooted in Paul's Damascus road experience and confirmed by his reading of Isa. 6 and 49.1-6 (*The Origin of Paul's Gospel* [Tübingen, 1981], pp. 82-96). H. Räisänen, however, prefers to distinguish between Paul's call experience and the significance it later comes to have for Paul in the light of his later experiences in ministry ('Paul's Call Experience and his Later View of the Law', in *The Torah and Christ*, pp. 55-92). Räisänen's position is much preferable. Cf. also J.D.G. Dunn, "A Light to the Gentiles": The Significance of the Damascus Road Christophany for Paul', in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Memory of G.B. Caird*, ed. L.D. Hurst & N.T. Wright (Oxford, 1987), pp. 251-66.

39. Many think that Paul was aware of anti-Jewish tendencies within the Roman churches. See, for instance, W. Wiefel ('The Jewish Community in Ancient Rome and the Origins of Roman Christianity', in *The Romans Debate*, ed. K.P. Donfried [Minneapolis, 1977], pp. 100-19), C. Muller-Duvernoy ('L'Apôtre Paul et le problème juif', *Judaica* 15 [1959], pp. 65-91), P. Minear (*The Obedience of Faith* [London, 1971], p. 79), Badenas (*Christ*, pp. 83, 87), Mussner (*Tractate*, pp. 35f.), Davies ('The People of Israel', p. 144). On the other hand, Käsemann writes: 'The admonitions of vv. 16-24 arise naturally *out of the problem of the chapter* and give evidence of Paul's foresight, but tell us little about the situation in Rome' (*Romans*, p. 305; emphasis mine). Similarly, J. Schlier denies that a Gentile Christian anti-Semitism can be traced to Rome from Paul's comments in Romans 11 (*Der Römerbrief* [Freiburg, 1979], p. 333).

40. Several factors suggest that the analogy is an important one in informing our understanding of Paul's case. Firstly, it is quite developed, not merely an allusion made in passing. Secondly, the analogy is, horticulturally speaking, thoroughly problematic. It is a forced analogy, to say the least. That he took the time to fit it to his argument illustrates that it is more than

a rhetorical detour. Paul has, in fact, gone to great lengths to shape the analogy by his theology. Thus, as Aageson states, the olive tree analogy serves as 'an adequate illustration of the way Paul conceived of the relationship between Jews and Gentiles' ('Scripture', p. 283).

41. D.W.B. Robinson: 'the very pattern of salvation remains part of the heritage of Israel, and can only be learned by the Gentiles from Israel. The olive tree, which has as its root God's promise of blessing to Abraham, is Israel, and Gentiles can partake of that rich root only as wild branches grafted on to the stem, in among natural Israelite branches' ('The Priesthood of Paul in the Gospel of Hope', in *Reconciliation and Hope: New Testament Essays on Atonement and Hope presented to L.L. Morris on his 60th Birthday*, ed. R.J. Banks [Exeter, 1974], pp. 231-45, esp. p. 235). Cf. also E. Jacob (*Israel dans la perspective biblique* [Strasbourg, 1968], p. 32).

42. ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός in Rom. 9.5 is not a christological but a theological appellation, referring to God's own occupational role in the process of the unfolding drama.

43. Or as J. Munck writes: 'Paul is a Jew, and in fact it is as a Christian that he feels himself to be a true Israelite who... is in the true Israelite tradition' (*Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* [trans. F. Clarke; Atlanta, 1959], p. 131).

44. Cf. Hübner, *Gottes Ich*, p. 113 n. 404.

45. Beker, *Paul*, pp. 332, 316. He continues: Paul 'intends to show that the true *ekklesia* is a future eschatological reality that will only be realized when it comprises the whole people of Israel'.

46. *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*, 3 vols (Cambridge, Mass.; 1927-30); cited here at I, p. 323. A parallel phenomenon is the popular Jewish belief that any honourable aspect of pagan society originally sprang from Jewish culture. See D.S. Russell's *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Patriarchs and Prophets in Early Judaism* (London, 1987), pp. 98-102.

47. Accordingly, the Law of God took on universal significance. Rabbinic literature especially evidences the conviction that the law was not intended to be the exclusive possession of one people. The law had been offered to all the nations, but only Israel received it. Moreover, Israel received it, not in their own country but in the wilderness, a no man's land, since by nature it is prescriptive for the whole world, not for one nation alone. In Moore's estimation, since this conviction was so firmly established in the tannaitic Judaism of the second century, it is likely that it had strong roots in the Judaism of the first century (*Judaism*, I, p. 277). Pseudo-Philo 11.2 would seem to support this conclusion. Moreover, J. Levenson has illustrated that this idea is not merely a later development in Jewish thought but is apparent already in the Jewish canon (*Sinai and Zion* [Minneapolis, 1985], pp. 19-23).

48. Moore, *Judaism*, I, pp. 225f.

49. *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia, 1985), p. 214.
50. Isaiah appears in the first four of Sanders's groups and Micah is listed in the first three and the fifth.
51. D.S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (London, 1964), pp. 297-303; Moore, *Judaism*, II, p. 371.
52. Cf. J. Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations* (trans. S.H. Hooke: London, 1958), p. 60.
53. E.E. Urbach points out: 'The stronger the stress placed by the prophets upon universalism, the greater is their emphasis upon the special position of Israel' ('Self-Isolation or Self-Affirmation in Judaism in the First Three Centuries: Theory and Practice', in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition, Volume II: Aspects of Judaism in the Greco-Roman Period*, ed. E.P. Sanders, A.I. Baumgarten & A. Mendelson [Philadelphia, 1981], pp. 269-98; cited here at p. 273).
54. Also significant are the first phrases of Isa. 54.15 in the LXX: Ἴδού προσήλυτοι προσελύσσονται σοι δι' ἐμοῦ, καὶ παροικήσουσί σοι.
55. Levenson, *Sinai*, p. 126; Beker, *Paul*, p. 248.
56. *Jesus and Judaism*, pp. 216-18. Davies is more cautious: 'The anticipation of the inclusion of the Gentiles in the people of God in "the end of days" was well marked in the eschatological thinking of Judaism' ('The People of Israel', p. 126).
57. *The Jewish People*, p. 306.
58. C. Guignebert, *The Jewish World in the Time of Jesus* (trans. S.H. Hooke; 1939), p. 157. For an excellent examination of universalistic and particularistic themes in Jewish religious expression, see Urbach's well-nuanced article 'Self-Isolation or Self-Affirmation'.
59. The exceptions are cited by Watson (*Paul*, p. 214 n. 34). S. Zeitlin seems to make too much of these cases, arguing that, in fact, the 'general attitude towards proselytism was highly favourable' (Who is a Jew? A Halachic-Historical Study', first appearing in *JQR* 49 [1959], but now found in his *Studies in the Early History of Judaism*, vol. II [New York, 1974], pp. 470-99, cited here at p. 482).
60. See Jocz, *The Jewish People*, pp. 317-20.
61. *J. Sanhedrin* 29b, a rabbinic saying which seems to reflect also the general attitude of Early Judaism.
62. In his 1959 article 'Who is a Jew?', Zeitlin argued that circumcision became an entry rite in Judaism only after 70 CE (pp. 478-80 in vol. II of his *Studies*). He stated that it was only in response to Paul's claim—that God's covenant with Abraham was not by circumcision but by faith—that circumcision became necessary as an entry rite in Judaism. More recently, however, Zeitlin appears to have corrected this view, admitting that circumcision was a symbol of covenant status before 70 CE and a requirement even then of the proselyte ('The Jews: Race, Nation or

Religion', in his *Studies*, vol. II, pp. 425-69, esp. pp. 463ff.). N.J. McElaney has argued that, if necessary, circumcision could be waived as an initiation rite in (liberal) Diaspora Judaism ('Conversion, Circumcision, and the Law', *NTS* 20 [1974], pp. 319-41). In a response article, however, J. Nolland demonstrates that McElaney's evidence does not support the conclusions he draws ('Uncircumcised Proselytes?', *JST* 12 [1981], pp. 173-94). See also L.H. Schiffman ('At the Crossroads: Tannaitic Perspectives on the Jewish-Christian Schism', in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, II, pp. 115-57, esp. 127).

63. See, for example, Schiffman ('Schism', pp. 125-27), who also points out that circumcision served as a test of a proselyte's sincerity, thereby keeping at bay those whose intentions may not have been as honourable as might be hoped.

64. See Zeitlin, 'Who is a Jew?', p. 482.

65. Moore points out, however, that the social reality often failed to live up to this ideal (*Judaism*, I, p. 335). M. Weber's study of this issue is still valuable (*Ancient Judaism* [New York, 1952], pp. 418-21).

66. Zeitlin, 'Who is a Jew?', p. 482.

67. *Sons of God—Seed of Abraham* (Rome, 1979), p. 232. R. Rubenstein writes: Paul did not abandon his Jewish faith but revised 'his understanding of where he stood in the divine timetable' (*My Brother Paul* [New York, 1972], p. 40). Cf. also M.D. Hooker, 'Beyond the Things that are Written? St. Paul's Use of Scripture', *NTS* 27 (1981), pp. 295-309, esp. 308, and her 'Paul and Covenantal Nomism', in *Paul and Paulinism*, pp. 47-56, esp. 54.

68. Of course, one must avoid the tendency to individualize Paul's statements that God will have mercy on *all*, and that the 'full number of ἔθνη will be saved'. As has been well pointed out by others, ἔθνη in this context has less the sense of 'Gentiles' than 'nations'. Paul is thinking of all the *nations* taking part in God's salvation. That is, (representatives of) all the *nations* will be present in the final salvation. See esp. A.J. Hultgren, *Paul's Gospel and Mission* (Philadelphia, 1985), p. 136.

69. J. Klausner, *From Jesus to Paul* (trans. W.F. Stinespring; New York, 1943), p. 446.

70. The language of 'third entity' is dangerous, for Paul would not have conceived of the Christian community as such. The term is anachronistic, but appropriate to some extent. Sanders employs it frequently (*The Jewish People*, pp. 171-79). He writes: 'Paul's view of the church, supported by his practice, against his own conscious intention, was substantially that it was a third entity, not just because it was composed of both Jew and Greek, but also because it was in important ways neither Jewish nor Greek' (pp. 178f.). As we have seen, in Paul's eyes, the one who was Jewish by birth had yet to become a member of the community of faith in order to retain his true standing in Israel.

71. Davies, 'The People of Israel', p. 147.

72. *Pauline Christianity* (Oxford, 1983), p. 67. This tension is exhibited in two of Sanders' portrayals of Paul. On the one hand, Paul was a Jew who, 'in the fulfilment of a Jewish eschatological expectation, becomes in fact engaged in creating something other than Judaism'. On the other hand, Paul 'thought of the church as the fulfilment of the promises of Abraham. In that sense it was not a new religion. Jews who entered the Christian movement did not have to convert in the way Gentiles did: they did not have to renounce their God' (*The Jewish People*, pp. 198 and 178).

73. Badenas speaks of an oscillating movement in Paul's argument which 'advances in successive "waves" or restatements' (*Christ*, p. 88). Harrington describes Rom. 9-11 as a text which 'twists and turns through a difficult argument' (*God's People*, p. 58). Gaston states that 'Paul gives too many answers to his own question' ('Israel's Misstep', p. 147).

74. Beker makes the same point, but with different terminology: 'The priority of Israel and the universality of the gospel can be maintained simultaneously because they both have a theocentric foundation' (*Paul*, p. 335).

75. Hultgren, *Paul's Gospel*, p. 136. Cf. also W.D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (Philadelphia, 1948, 1980), pp. 59-61.

76. Käsemann, *Romans*, pp. 309f.; Harrington, *God's People*, p. 64; Davies, 'The People of Israel', p. 145.

77. Jocz writes: 'The Church knows herself incomplete without the Jewish people' (*The Jewish People*, p. 314). Jocz comes close but still fails to do justice to Paul's portrayal of salvation history. M.A. Getty correctly writes: 'Far from asserting that Israel must become part of the church, Paul says that the Gentiles will be brought in to Israel' ('Paul and the Salvation of Israel: A Perspective on Romans 9-11', *CBQ* 50 [1988], pp. 456-69; cited here at p. 459).

78. *Paul*, p. 170.

79. Cf. also Hübner, *Gottes Ich*, pp. 122f. Sanders writes: Paul's is 'a problem of conflicting convictions which can be better asserted than explained' (*The Jewish People*, p. 198). Cf. Richardson, *Israel*, pp. 136, 147.



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