

# WHEN THE DELIVERER COMES FROM ZION

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## Introduction (Romans Chapter 11)

Open your Bible to Romans Chapter 11. I will be reading from Romans 11 (see the Handout) which is *an amplification* of the 1975 ed. of the NASB that inserts the heading: “Israel Is Not Cast Away” before the beginning of the text at verse 1—key to understanding Chapter 11. The meaning of “all Israel will be saved” when the deliverer comes to Zion is central in verse 26 and it is variously understood among Christians as taught by the theological systems of Premillennialism (including all versions: Dispensational and Historic) and by Covenant Theology. Since this is a Doctrinal Conference, I will address the meaning of **Israel** in Romans 11 and especially in verse 26 when the Deliverer will come from Zion by observing two basic principles of interpretation: **context** and **how the NT interprets the OT**. Doing this, I trust, will help answer some questions as to the meaning of Israel in Romans 11.

But a few words of preface need to be said before addressing the title of my message: “When the Deliverer comes from Zion.” The contextual role Romans Chapters 9 & 10 leads up to Chapter 11’s answer of the question: “**Has God rejected His People, Israel?**” and what happens when the Deliverer comes from Zion.

Follow with me by turning to the opening verses of Romans Chapter 9 where the Apostle Paul expresses his heartfelt concern for his unsaved “kinsmen according to the flesh . . . who are Israelites.” To them, Paul writes, belongs “*the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh. . . .* (vv. 4-5). Near the end of Chapter 9, the Apostle addresses Israel’s pursuit of God’s righteousness by works of the law rather than by faith as were the Gentiles and the answer was “no” as evident in their failure to believe in Christ the stone (9:31-33—a citation from Isaiah 8:14 & Isaiah 28:16). And so the question had risen whether the word of God had failed (9:6a). Paul answers this question immediately by teaching that “they are not all Israel who are

descended from Israel; neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, and—referring to Genesis 21:12—he writes that ‘through Isaac your descendants will be named.’ That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise (who) are regarded as descendants.” Now the term “Israel” occurs ten times in Romans 9-11 before it occurs in Romans 11:26 and it always refers to ethnic Israel. And Paul makes clear that he is talking about **Israelites—ethnic Jews**; some who were chosen and some who were not, as Romans 9, verses 6b through 8 teach. Then the following verses of Romans 9 explain the sovereign electing purpose of God for those whom He calls not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles (v. 24). In Chapter 10, Paul explains to the Roman Christians who have believed in Christ and who are largely Gentiles that his “heart’s desire and prayer to God is (also) for the salvation of Israel” (10:1). By the end of Chapter 10 Paul stresses the fact that although Israel had heard the Gospel message, and had been taught from the OT that Gentiles would be included in the people of God, they (i.e., Israel) had stubbornly continued in their refusal to believe in Christ.

With these introductory words that speak about **Israelites—ethnic Jews**—in Romans Chapters 9 and 10, I want to address the title of my message: **“When the Deliverer comes from (or out of) Zion”** from the standpoint of what takes place leading up to the Deliverer’s coming and what takes place when He comes, according to Romans Chapter 11. Up front, it needs to be determined who the Deliverer is. Now, the Deliverer in the OT is stated to be “Jehovah” (Yahweh) as in Psalm 18:2 where David exclaims: “The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer.” **In the NT the Deliverer is Christ, the incarnate Jehovah, and the Deliverer’s coming refers to His Second Coming** as in I Thessalonians 1, verses 9 and 10. There the Apostle Paul commends the Thessalonian Christians for their turning from idols to serve God and “*to wait for His Son from heaven, who God raised from the dead, that is, Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.*” Clearly, this is a reference to Christ’s Second Advent. Now back to Romans 11. Paul’s citation in v. 26 of Isaiah 59:20 states that “a **Redeemer** will come to Zion,” supports that the Deliverer’s coming is a reference to the Second Advent as the salvation of Israel in verse 26 is seen to occur after the fulness of the Gentiles has come in (v. 25). **POINT: The Deliverer in Romans 11, according to the NT interpretation of the OT in Isaiah 59:20, is Christ and refers to His Second Coming not to His First Coming as some teach without contextual warrant.** Yes, Christ did come to earthly Zion at His first coming, but the **context** of Chapter 11 points to the future and His Second Coming.

With this as background, look at Roman Numeral One in the message Outline.

- I. **God has not permanently rejected His people Israel (11:1-15). God's electing grace of a remnant of Israelites is designed, as is His purpose for Israel's stumbling, to bring salvation to the Gentiles and then to Israel when Israel will receive an astonishing future fulfillment of the riches of God's saving grace.**

Starting with the opening verse and a half the Apostle Paul declares emphatically that God has not totally rejected His people Israel. (**READ vv. 1-2a.**) "I say then, God has not rejected **His people** [i.e., **Israel** as an **ethnic entity**], has He? **May it never be!** For I too am an **Israelite**, of the seed of Abraham—a descendant of Abraham—of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected **His people [Israel]** whom He foreknew. . . ." Paul himself is proof that God has not rejected Israel. In the following verses through verse 10, Paul explains that in the past God kept 7000 from bowing their knee to Baal, only a remnant of Israel; yet they were the object of the blessing of God's elective grace; the rest of Israel God hardened so that they would not believe for the express reason explained in **verse 11 (READ)**.

11 I say then, **they** did not stumble so as to fall, did **they**? ["**They**" refers to **Israel** as an ethnic entity as the remainder of verse 11 establishes after Paul's answer: "**May it never be!** [**God forbid! Israel has NOT permanently fallen from God's grace!**, as Elijah and the remnant according to the election of grace have proven (vv. 4-5). Paul then explains the reason for **Israel's** fall by saying:] But by **their [Israel's]** transgression salvation *has come* to the **Gentiles**, to make **them [Israel]** jealous. [Implying that making **Israel** jealous will be used in the future by God to cause them to receive the riches of His saving grace.]

**Verse 12 explains.** 12 **Now if their [Israel's] transgression be the riches for the world [Gentiles] and their [Israel's] failure be riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their [Israel's] fulfillment be!** [This *fulfillment* refers not to the believing remnant of vv. 5-7 but to **Israel's acceptance** in the future (v. 15 when "**all Israel will be saved,**" i.e., **when the Deliverer comes from Zion** (vv. 26-27).]

[By the way, for any Arminian and other universal atonement person reading this message, "**world**" here is referring to **Gentiles** not **Jews**. "World" does not here refer to everyone without exception for whom Christ died; or as they say, "world" means "**world**"!]

Paul continues:

**(READ vv.13-15).** 13 But I am speaking to **you** who are **Gentiles**. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of **Gentiles**, I magnify my ministry,  
14 if somehow I might move to jealousy my **fellow countrymen [Israelites]** and save **some of them**” [i.e., **those whom God calls out from among Jews**, Paul’s “**kinsmen according to the flesh**”—Rom. 9:3, 24].  
15 For if **their [Israel’s—Paul’s countrymen, his “kinsmen according to the flesh,”]** rejection be the reconciliation of **the world [Gentiles]**, what will **their [Israel’s, Paul’s fellow countrymen “according to the flesh”]** acceptance be but life from the dead?

[“Life from the dead” is likely emphatic referring, in the context either to “all Israel” in verse 26, to their end-time spiritual resurrection from the dead when the Deliverer comes from Zion or to the physical resurrection of saved deceased Israelites, Daniel 12:2, which also occurs at the climax of history when the Deliverer comes from Zion.]

**Four Observations:** Before moving on to verse 16 and following verses, I want to make four observations. **First**, clearly, God has not permanently rejected His people **Israel** as expressly stated in verses 1 & 2a and 11). **Second**, the term “**Israel**” in vv. 1 and 2a has special reference to **ethnic Israelites** among whom the majority in Elijah and Paul’s day were not saved (vv. 8-10). **Third**, in addition to the Apostle Paul, there was in the past a believing remnant within **ethnic Israel**, Elijah and the 7,000 of his day, that were elect according to grace (vv. 2b-7) proving that God had not rejected His people, Israel. **Fourth**, Paul teaches that an astonishing number of Israelites will be saved in the future (vv. 12 & 15) where the ethnicity of the saved Israelites is distinguished from the “*world*” of saved Gentiles. This leaves the meaning of the distinction between believing Jews and Gentiles to be further explained in verses 16-24.

(Now to Roman Numeral Two in the Outline)

II. **An OT metaphor is used to show that God has not cast away His people Israel (vv. 17-24).** With verse 16 being transitional between verses 11-15 and verses 17-24, Paul uses the metaphor of the root and the branches of the (*good*) olive tree to show that there is one people of God consisting of both believing wild (Gentile) and natural (Israelite) branches.

**(READ vv. 16-24)**

16 And if the first piece of dough [the “*firstfruit*”—KJV—a metaphor drawn from Numbers 15:17-21 referring to **the patriarchs**, i.e., the spiritual heirs of the Abrahamic Covenant] be holy [i.e., set apart or consecrated for this redemptive historical role], **the lump** is also [**the whole lump, Israel** is also set apart for the same role]; and if the root be holy [i.e., set apart—a parallel metaphor referring again to **the patriarchs**], **the branches** are too [**the branches** are parallel to **the whole lump**, i.e., **Israel**]. [Also see v. 28 where **Israel** is said to be “beloved for the sake of **the fathers**.” **NOTE:** God loves **Israel** for sake of **the fathers**—Abraham and those of his descendants called according to promise through Isaac (as recorded in Rom. 9:6-8).]

17 But if some of the branches [unbelieving Israelites] were broken off, and you [i.e., **believing Gentiles**], being a wild olive tree were grafted in among them [i.e., **believing Israelites**] and became partaker with them [believing Israelites] of the rich root of the olive tree [i.e., **the olive tree** referring to the one people of God—saved Gentiles partaking with saved Israelites, heirs in Christ of the promised blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gal. 3:28-29) **now** being fulfilled, as the Apostle Paul explains elsewhere, but not in Chapter 11, under the New Covenant in the body of Christ, which is “the church” ( Eph. 2:11-3:11) that “God purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28)],

18 do not be arrogant [i.e., **you Gentiles**] toward **the branches** [i.e., **Israel**]; but if **you** are arrogant [i.e., **you Gentiles**] *remember* that it is not **you** [**Gentiles**] who supports **the root** [i.e., **the patriarchs**, spiritual heirs of the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant], but **the root** [**the patriarchs**] *supports you* [**the Gentiles**].

19 **You** [**Gentiles**] will say then, “**Branches** were broken off [**from Israel**] so that I might be grafted in” [referring to the egotistical boasting of the **Gentiles** over branches being broken off from **Israel** and **Gentiles** being grafted in].

20 Quite right, **they** [**unbelieving Israelites**] were broken off [from God’s covenantal promise to **Israel through the Patriarchs**] for **their** [**Israel’s**] unbelief, and **you** [**Gentiles** who were grafted into the good olive tree] stand *only* by your faith. Do not [**you Gentiles** as an entity] be conceited, but fear;

21 for if God did not spare the **natural branches** [**Israel** as an ethnic entity], neither will He spare **you** [**Gentiles** as an entity].

22 Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to **those who fell** [**Israel**], severity, but to **you** [**Gentiles**], God’s kindness, if **you** [**Gentiles**] continue in His kindness; otherwise **you** [**Gentiles**] also will be cut off.

23 And **they** also [**Israel**], if **they** [**Israel**] do not continue in **their** [**Israel’s**] unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft **them** [**Israel**] in again.

[**NOTE:** The grafting in “again” refers to the future and cannot refer to the elect remnant within **Israel** who were/are never broken off.]

24 For if **you** [**Gentiles**] were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated [good] olive tree, how much more shall **these** [**ethnic Israelites**] who are the natural *branches* be grafted into **their** [**Israel's**] own olive tree [the promised blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant]?

**Three Observations.** **First, Jewish (Israelite)** branches of/off the *good* olive tree are clearly distinct from the **Gentile** branches of/off the wild olive tree. **Second, Note Well:** The grafting in “again” in v. 23 refers to Israel’s future and cannot there refer to the elect remnant from among Israel who were/are never broken off. **Third,** know that the salvation of **Israel** in the future cannot refer to **Israel as a theocratic nation**, because that ended at Calvary with Christ’s fulfillment of the Old (Mosaic) Covenant illustrated by the miraculous tearing of the Temple veil from top to bottom followed by the destruction of Jerusalem and the Herodian Temple in 70 A.D.

**III. After the fulness of the Gentiles comes in, “all Israel” will be saved when the Deliverer comes from Zion (vv. 25-27).** The grafting in again of believing Israelites into their own olive tree is a mystery of God that is revealed to the uninformed Gentiles that the partial hardening of Israel will end after the fulness of the Gentiles has come in (v. 25). And thus “all Israel will be saved” (v. 26 a), that is, when the Deliverer comes from Zion and removes ungodliness from Jacob (v. 26b) in fulfillment of God’s covenant with them and takes away their sins (v. 27).

(READ vv. 25-27)

25 For I do not want **you, brethren** [**Gentile brethren**], to be uninformed of this **mystery**, lest **you** [**Gentiles**] be wise in **your** [**Gentiles**] own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to **Israel** until the fulness of **the Gentiles** has come in; [**NOTE:** The **mystery** is that **Israel’s** hardening is partial until the fulness of the **Gentiles** has come in, then the partial hardening will end, i.e., when the Deliverer comes from Zion, vv. 26-27.]

26 and thus [or in this manner as just explained or “and so all Israel will be saved as it stands written”] **all Israel** will be saved [a future, massive salvation of **Israel** as an ethnic entity when the “partial hardening” will have ended]; just as it is written, [**NOTE:** this does not mean that every individual **Jew** will then be saved anymore than every individual **Gentile** will be saved when “the fulness of the **Gentiles** has come in.” Both events are future—the coming in of “**the fulness of the Gentiles**” and the future salvation of “**all Israel**”—both culminate in conjunction with the Second Advent, but the emphasis in the immediate context as

in vv. 12 and 15 is upon the revelation that the future salvation of “**all Israel**” will climax and culminate when the Deliverer comes from Zion, vv. 26-27, according to the “irrevocable” “gifts and calling of God,” v.29.]

“THE DELIVERER [Redeemer, Isa. 59:20a] WILL COME FROM [OUT OF] ZION, [Heb. 12:22] HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB” [Isa. 59:20b referring to **ethnic Jews not Gentiles**; the fulness of the salvation of **Gentiles** is dealt with in v. 25. In vv. 26-27 Paul is dealing expressly with **Israel** as vv. 28-29 also show.]

27 “AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS” (a reference to Isa. 27:9; 59:21 and likely also to Jer. 31:33-34; Heb. 8:10, 12).

**Five Observations.** **First**, the future grafting of Israel into the *good* olive tree will occur after the fulness of the Gentiles has come in and the partial hardening of Israel has ended (v. 25). This reveals what had been a mystery purposed in “the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God” (v. 33) to climax when the Deliverer comes from (out of) Zion (v. 26b). **Second**, note that the context of Romans 11:26-27 is dealing expressly with *ethnic* Israel’s future salvation distinguished from the Gentiles in verse 25, as the context of Chapter 11 and the future tense in the phrase “**all Israel will be saved**” in the first part of v. 26 so state. To say as some do, that “**all Israel**” here in verse 26 refers to all elect Jews and Gentiles throughout history, that is, the Church, is contrary to the context of the Chapter which has a sustained emphasis upon the restoration of Israel to Gospel favor and blessing. In a word, as one writer has put it, “**it is the salvation of the mass of Israel that the Apostle affirms**” in verse 26 (John Murray). Therefore, it is highly irregular to give “all Israel” the meaning of the Church in this context. That is dealt with elsewhere, for example, in the Book of Ephesians (Eph. 1:22-23), but not here in Romans 11. Others say that “**all Israel**” refers to the total number of elect Jews saved throughout history—the saved remnant within ethnic Israel—a *kind of soteriological trickle down theory* (as my mentor, S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., used to say). But this is “**ant climactic**” for it plays down the “much more” “fulfillment” and “acceptance” of verses 12 and 15, let alone the strong inference of a future end time massive salvation of Israel in verse 26. Now it is true, however, that at the Second Advent of Christ, He will deliver all believers (both Jewish and Gentile) from God’s wrath to come (I Thess. 1:10), but the mystery revealed in Romans 11 and the explicit object of verses 26-27 is **ethnic Israel** (existing perhaps as the kernel within the “shell” of a “*secular geo-political nation??*,” but certainly not of a *theocratic nation*. Israel as a theocratic nation ceased in 70 A.D with Christ’s inauguration of the New Covenant at Calvary). **Third**, both the fulness of the Gentiles coming to be and the partial hardening of

Israel (v. 25) will culminate in conjunction with the coming of the Deliverer from/out of Zion (v. 26b)—I say “in conjunction with” because the precise timing of the sequence of end time events that occur at Christ’s Second Advent is nowhere stated. Also “Zion” here refers most likely to the *heavenly* Zion in Heb. 12:22) from whence Christ will come and remove ungodliness from Judah [Judah including both Israel and Judah as in Heb. 8:8] taking away their sins (v. 26c & v. 27b). **Fourth**, the sins of Israel will be removed when the Deliverer comes from Zion in fulfillment of OT prophecy (referring to Isa. 59:20-21; 27:9). **Fifth, Note Well:** there is nothing stated in the context of Romans 11, or elsewhere in the NT, where Israel is said to sin again **after** the Deliverer has come from Zion. Indeed, no sins by any believer, whether Jew or Gentile, will occur after Christ returns, for the sting of death, which is sin, will have been “swallowed up in victory,” “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet” (I Cor 15:52-55). **Question.** What does this mean for any view of a temporal Premillennial kingdom on earth after Christ’s Second Advent where sin is said by all Premillennialists to be present?

**IV. Paul sums up his argument of Chapter 11 showing that God has not permanently rejected His People, Israel. It was God’s purpose in showing mercy to Israel, beloved for sake of the fathers, to shut up all in disobedience so that God might show mercy to all and in so doing the future salvation of Israel would be brought to pass by God in fulfillment of His irrevocable promise to the fathers (vv. 28-32).**

**(READ vv. 28-32)**

28 From the standpoint of the gospel **they [Israel]** are enemies for **your [Gentiles]** sake, but from the standpoint of *God’s* choice [election] **they [Israel]** are beloved for the sake of **the fathers [the patriarchs]**;  
29 for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.  
30 For just as **you [Gentiles]** once were disobedient to God **but now** [under the New Covenant] have been shown mercy because of **their [Israel’s]** disobedience,  
31 so **these [Israelites]** also **now** [under the New Covenant] have been disobedient, in order that because of the mercy shown to **you [Gentiles]** **they [Israel]** also may **now** be shown mercy. [The second “now” in this verse is a textual variant with a high degree of doubt for being in the original text, but if so, it probably is expressing the “*not yet*” aspect of the New Covenant as supported by the context, especially vv. 11-12, 15, 17-24, 25, 26-27.]

32 For God has shut up **all [both Jews and Gentiles—**not all without exception, but all without distinction] in disobedience that He might show mercy to **all [Jews and Gentiles without distinction]**.

#### **Four Concluding Observations Related to Romans 11, Especially Verses 25-27.**

- **God has not permanently rejected Israel.** The veracity of God assures that after the fulness of the Gentiles has come in a future massive ingathering of ethnic Jews, “all Israel,” will come to believe in Christ, the Deliverer, when He comes from Zion.
- **Israel’s sins will be forgiven when Christ returns at the Second Advent and consummates the New Covenant and God’s plan of salvation for both Jew and Gentile. Sin and death will occur no more after Christ returns for death will be abolished (I Cor. 15:26) having been swallowed up in victory (I Cor. 15:54).**
- **Neither the Context of Romans 11 nor the Apostle Paul’s interpretation of Old Testament prophetic texts supports a post-Advent millennial kingdom on earth; to say so, requires the importation of the 1000 years of Revelation 20 into Romans 11; yes, even into other writings of the Apostle Paul and other NT writings where the Second Coming of Christ is addressed, but such an importation is only consistent in importing a 1000 years wherever needed based upon one’s premillennial presupposition. However, it is not *consistent* hermeneutics for it not only violates the Context and the NT interpretation of the OT, but it also violates the hermeneutical principle that “clear” texts are to interpret “unclear” texts not the reverse as the greatly debated premillennial meaning of the apocalyptic text of Revelation 20:4-6 does.**
- **Other NT writings concerning the Second Coming of Christ do not suggest the need for importing a thousand year millennium to express what happens in conjunction with and following Christ’s Second Advent. For example, from seven (7) passages:**
  - **Matthew 24:31 when the Son of Man sends “forth His angels” . . . who “will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.” (This will include “all Israel” of Rom. 11:26.)**
  - **Matthew 25:31, 34, 41 when the Son of Man comes in glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne . . . and say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My**

Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world'. . . . Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.'"

- **I Corinthians 15:51-54** when "in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet" all believers will be "changed" and "will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, 'death is swallowed up in victory.'" NOTE: There is no millennial gap between the translation of believers in v. 51 and death being swallowed up in victory in v. 54.
- **I Thessalonians 4:16-17** when the Lord Jesus "Himself descends from heaven with a shout, . . . and with the trumpet of God." He will resurrect deceased believers and catch up living believers to meet Him in the air. This takes place immediately before/in conjunction with His revelation "from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God" (II Thess. 1:7-8).
- **Revelation 20:11-15** when at a "great white throne" the "books are opened and another book opened, which is *the book of life*," . . . and "death and Hades" are "thrown into the lake of fire . . . and if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."
- **II Peter 3:10** when "the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away . . . and the earth and its works will be burned up."
- **Revelation 21:1-4** when "a new heaven and a new earth" will replace "the first heaven and the first earth," and "every tear" shall be wiped away and "death shall be no longer."

[Where is there any contextual or NT interpretation of OT texts required for the importation of a thousand years into the meaning of these clear biblical examples? Now back to Romans 11 and the Chapter conclusion.]

**V. Conclusion. Paul expresses his wonder at the depth and the unsearchable riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God's providential control of salvation history for both Jews and Gentiles.**

**(READ vv. 33-36)**

33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! [**NOTE:** How awesome is God in revealing the mystery of His plan of salvation for **Jews and Gentiles** and His irrevocable promise that “**all Israel will be saved**” when the **Deliverer comes from Zion and takes away their sins** (vv. 26-27). This coming of the Deliverer from Zion will occur at the Second Advent of Messiah, Israel’s promised Deliverer-Redeemer, I Thess. 1:10.]

34 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR?

35 Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN?

36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen.