Paul’s Use of the Remnant Concept in Romans 9-11 and its Interpretative Implications for Romans 11:26

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Abstract

Sitting at the climax of Romans 9-11 is one of the most hotly debated verses in the New Testament, Romans 11:26. Much of modern scholarship has interpreted “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται” (“All Israel will be saved,” 11:26) as referring in some way to the salvation of ethnic Jews. Some believe that all of the Jews of Israel will be saved because they are God’s people and God has a different plan for and relationship with Israel compared to the Gentiles. Others believe that Romans 11:26 speaks of the salvation of just the elect from within Israel throughout history. The majority position though, is that all Jews, regardless of any prior faith in Christ, will find salvation at the Parousia as Christ reveals himself to his people, just as he did to Paul on the Damascus Road. There is a small group of scholars, old and new, who understand Ἰσραήλ in Romans 11:26 to include both Jews and Gentiles.

In this thesis, I look at Paul’s use of the “remnant” in Romans 9-11 and how this idea of a remnant of faithful believers might help us find our way through the debate on 11:26. Paul draws on the Old Testament extensively in Romans 9-11, and in doing so leans on Isaiah’s concept of “the remnant.” It will be shown that Paul’s use of the remnant in Romans 9-11 makes it more likely than is usually recognized, that in Romans 11:26, Paul has the Gentiles on his mind, as well as Jews, when he says “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται.”
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Introduction

I was first properly introduced to the conversation about the relationship between Israel and the church when the Rev. Dr. Stephen Sizer came and spoke at Laidlaw College in 2012.¹ I was aware of the debate surrounding the topic of Israel and the church, but due to the fact that Sizer’s visit to New Zealand meant he engaged with people I knew and much of his time was spent at Laidlaw College where I had studied for a number of years, I became much more aware of the intensity and the passion with which people engage in this topic. Sizer’s visit to New Zealand was the beginning of a deeper curiosity for me on the topic of the church and Israel. Whilst studying the book of Isaiah as a postgraduate student, I noticed that the concept of the remnant was occurring regularly. A simple word study pointed me to Romans, and I was intrigued by the connection between the remnant in Isaiah and the remnant in Romans. Due to the location of Paul’s use of the remnant in Romans, chapters 9-11, the remnant is a part of Paul’s argument building up to the climax of these three chapters, which are so influential in the conversation around Israel and the church. Thus, I decided to explore in what way(s) the remnant in Romans might contribute to the debate around Israel and the church, with a specific focus on the implications of the remnant for Romans 11:26.

To achieve this goal, I will follow a Historical Critical methodology where I will discuss the context of the church in Rome and how Paul uses the text of Isaiah in his letter to the church in Rome. I will be working with the Greek and English texts of the New Testament as well as the LXX and briefly the MT. My position on the writings of Paul in the New Testament is that in my view we can attribute authorship of all thirteen letters commonly linked with Paul as author, to Paul himself.² Fortunately for this thesis as I am focusing on Romans and authorship of Romans is not a problem I have to deal with and engaging with the wider debate about authorship of the other Pauline letters is not necessary for the purpose of this thesis.

Paul frequently quotes and alludes to the Old Testament in the book of Romans, nowhere more so than in Romans 9-11. In Romans 9-11 Paul is making his case for God’s ongoing faithfulness

¹ Stephen Sizer is a vicar in the Church of England. He has also earned a PhD through Oak Hill College and Middlesex University. His PhD research examined the historical roots, theological basis and political consequences of Christian Zionism in Britain and the USA from 1820. See https://www.stephensizer.com/about/. Accessed on 14/2/21.
² In regards to authorship, there are seven letters where Paul’s authorship is usually undisputed (Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, Philemon) and there are six letters where the authorship is disputed (Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus). Patrick Gray, Opening Paul’s Letters: A Readers Guide to Genre and Interpretation (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 139–52.
to his covenant with Israel and God’s desire that the Jews accept Christ as the Messiah. Much of the debate in these chapters centers around just who exactly constitutes Israel in 11:26 when it says, “all Israel will be saved.”

In these chapters Paul quotes frequently from the text of Isaiah (LXX) to help make his case that God has not abandoned Israel. In doing so, Paul also draws on a prominent concept found throughout Isaiah: the concept is the remnant. Paul includes the concept of the remnant in his letter in Romans 9:27-29 and 11:5. This thesis will examine how Paul uses Isaiah’s understanding of the remnant and how the concept of the remnant in Romans shapes our interpretation of Romans 11:26.

Firstly, this thesis will look at the context of the book of Romans itself (Chapter 1). Elements such as the purpose of Romans, the audience and the events of the day, such as the Claudius Edict, affect how we read and understand Paul’s letter. These factors are important for a general understanding of the whole letter, but especially for an understanding of Romans 9-11.

Then I will move into a literature review of the key texts for this thesis. Firstly I will survey the literature on Romans 9-11 (Ch 2) and summarise the different opinions on the purpose and importance of these chapters within the whole text of Romans. Following on from this, the literature review will look at the different interpretations of Romans 11:26 (Chapter 3).

I will then look at the theme of the remnant in the Old Testament (Chapter 4), followed by a more in-depth concentration on remnant in the book of Isaiah (Chapter 5). The remnant does occur elsewhere in the Old Testament and in Romans Paul uses the remnant from both Isaiah and 1 Kings. However, Paul definitely has Isaiah on his mind when writing chapters 9-11 and thus I will spend more time examining Paul’s use of the remnant from Isaiah, whilst still acknowledging its use in the wider text of the Old Testament.

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3 There is only one specific use of the remnant from Isaiah that Paul uses which is found in 9:27-29. The second remnant passage, which I will also focus on, is found in 11:5 and draws specifically on 1 Kings 19. However, as Oss notes, “when we consider the heavy concentration of these citations in Romans relative to Paul’s use of other OT books there, particularly his use of Isaiah in Romans 9-11, it becomes evident that as Paul explained the relationship between Jew and Gentile to the Roman church he was reflecting primarily on, and drawing primarily from, the book of Isaiah. Based solely on the number of times he cites Isaiah with regard to this issue, although there are other compelling reasons as well, it is reasonable to conclude that no other single OT book influenced Paul’s theology of Jew and Gentile in Christ as much as Isaiah.” Douglas A. Oss, ‘A Note on Paul’s Use of Isaiah’. Bulletin for Biblical Research, no. 2 (1992): 105.

4 Ibid.
Two exegetical sections will follow with each looking at the passages in Romans where the remnant theme is used. These texts are Romans 9:24-29 (Chapter 6) and Romans 11:1-10 (Chapter 8). Chapter 7 will fill briefly touch on Romans 10, considering the chapter between Romans 9 and 11. In the exegesis of Romans 9:24-29 and 11:1-10, I will look at how Paul is using the message of the remnant as part of his overall message in Romans 9-11. And finally, I will look at Romans 11:26 (Ch 9) and assess the various interpretations of the text through the lens of the remnant concept.

What I hope to show in this thesis, is that the concept of the remnant does not solve the debate on Romans 11:26. However, I will argue that Paul’s use of the remnant does shift the weighting of what is the more popular interpretation of Romans 11:26 (the Eschatological View), and places a stronger emphasis on the other views which are generally quickly dismissed. Typically, the majority of scholars have understood ‘πᾶς Ἰσραήλ’ in 11:26 to be speaking exclusively about ethnic Jews and only a minority have interpreted ‘πᾶς Ἰσραήλ’ as including Gentiles. This thesis will show that the remnant concept in Romans makes the inclusion of the Gentiles in ‘πᾶς Ἰσραήλ’ a more viable interpretation than it is typically considered to be.
Chapter 1: The Context of the Letter to the Romans

1.1 Authorship
The book of Romans begins with an introduction from the author who names himself Paul (1:1).\(^5\) The author of Romans is understood by the overwhelming majority of scholars to be Paul the Apostle and there is hardly any issue or debate concerning the authorship of Romans. As Schreiner notes, “Pauline authorship is one of the assured results of NT scholarship.”\(^6\) This was also the common view of the Apostolic Fathers, and every early list of Paul’s books includes Romans.\(^7\) Both the external and internal evidence points towards Pauline authorship.

With regard to the role of Tertius (16:22), the majority of scholars would agree that Tertius was an amanuensis or scribe, which was a regularly employed method of writing in the ancient world.\(^8\) Paul dictated his letter to Tertius, who recorded it either in short hand or long hand.\(^9\) It is less likely that Tertius wrote the letter for Paul under his instruction or guidance in something of a secretarial style.\(^10\)

1.2 Date and Location of the Writing of Romans
There is a broad consensus over the situation, date, and location of the writing of the book of Romans. The mention of Achaia in 15:25-28 suggests that Paul is writing to the Roman church from somewhere in Greece, not in Asia Minor.\(^11\) In 15:22-29 we learn of Paul’s immediate future travel plans (Jerusalem, then Rome, then Spain), and when we compare Romans and Acts it becomes clear that Romans is written towards the end of Paul’s third missionary journey.

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\(^5\) All Biblical references are from the NRSV unless stated otherwise.
\(^7\) Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 2.
\(^8\) Douglas J Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 1.
\(^9\) Fitzmyer suggests that because of the 143 occurrences of ‘γαρ’ throughout the letter, it is most likely that Tertius recorded Paul’s dictation using long-hand. Joseph A Fitzmyer, Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 42.
\(^10\) Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 3-5; Schreiner, Romans, 2. Moo notes that the style of Romans is very close to the style of Galatians and 1 Corinthians, and there is no evidence of Tertius’ involvement in the writing of those letters. Therefore, we must understand the involvement of Tertius in the writing of Romans to be on the ‘dictation’ end of the spectrum. Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 2.
\(^11\) Fitzmyer, Romans, 85.
and almost certainly during Paul’s three months in Greece (Acts 20:2-3). Based on the mention of Phoebe (16:1), a church deacon in the Corinth area, Gaius (16:23a; 1 Cor 1:14), who was baptized in Corinth; and Erastus (16:23b; 2 Tim 4:20), a treasurer in Corinth, it is highly likely that Paul wrote Romans while in Corinth before travelling to Jerusalem.

Clearly, determining the date when Romans was written will depend on when one dates Paul’s three-month stay in Greece, which “is dependent on the hazardous process of constructing an absolute chronology of the life of Paul.” Most scholars would date Romans as having been written between A.D. 54 and A.D. 59. Not knowing a more exact date has no major bearing on our interpretation of the text.

1.3 The Beginning of the Church in Rome
There was a strong Jewish presence in Rome since the arrival of Pompey the Great to the city in 62 B.C. References to the Jewish population by writers such as Cicero, Horace, Josephus and Suetonius, illustrate the numerical strength and political influence of the Jews in Rome.

In A.D. 19 under Tiberius, there was a large-scale expulsion of the Jews from Rome, as their influence and “lure” was deemed a threat to Tiberius. However, in A.D. 31 Tiberius’ attitude towards the Jews changed and he allowed them to return to Rome and also reinstated their rights.

The birth of the church in Rome has been dated between the late 30s A.D. and the early 40s A.D. It is unlikely that the church in Rome was born out of the evangelistic work of an apostle; rather it is highly probable that the Christian faith came to Rome through the

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12 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 2. See also Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 12.
13 Robert Jewett, Romans, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 21–22. See also: Fitzmyer, Romans, 85; Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 12.
14 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 3.
15 Fitzmyer, Romans, 86–87; Schreiner, Romans, 5; Colin G Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 13. Cranfield suggests a more specific date, arguing for some time between late A.D. 55 and early A.D. 56 or late A.D. 56 and early A.D. 57. Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 16. Moo also comes to a similar conclusion, suggesting A.D. 57, “though leeway of a year or two either way must be allowed.” Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 3.
17 Dunn, Romans 1-8, xlvi. Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, 18.81-84; Tacitus, Annales, 2.85.4; Suetonius, Tiberius, 36.
18 Jewett, Romans, 60; Schreiner, Romans, 11–12.
geographical movement of Jewish Christians. This could have happened through the work of Roman Jews who were present at Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts 2:10), then moved back from Jerusalem to Rome as slaves or merchants, or simply just returning to Rome, and taking their new faith in the Messiah with them. The faith of the Jewish Christians would have become a talking point and would have spread quickly through the synagogues. Both Jewish and God-fearing Gentiles who embraced the gospel would have formed what was to be the first Christian church in Rome.

1.4 The Claudius Edict
Through the writings of historians such as Suetonius and Dio Cassius, we know that there was conflict between Jews and Jewish Christians in the church in Rome over the identity of Jesus and whether or not he was the Messiah. This conflict was an ongoing problem that grew to the point where according to Suetonius, the emperor Claudius “expelled Jews from Rome because of their constant disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus.”

There is debate over the specific date of the Jewish expulsion. One view is that the Jews were expelled from Rome in 41 A.D. It was during 41 A.D., under the reign of Claudius, that the Romans forbade the Jews to hold public meetings. However, we learn from the writings of Dio Cassius (Hist. Rom. 60.6.6) that Claudius at this point in time was unable to expel the Jews because of their numbers, and nothing was mentioned about disturbances within the Jewish community.

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20 Dunn suggests that Paul’s use of the OT (LXX) in Romans is support of Christianity in Rome beginning in the synagogues. The OT scriptures were not at that time widely known by the Greco-Roman world, rather just the Jewish communities. Paul’s use of the OT implies the audience had a substantial knowledge of the scriptures, which would have almost definitely been gained through spending time at the synagogues. In addition, Dunn notes that Christianity only began to become recognized as a distinct entity around 64 A.D. under Nero. Previously, it had been understood as a sect within Judaism. Thus, Christianity in the 30s-60s A.D. must have had strong affiliations with the synagogues. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, xlix, l.
21 Dunn notes that “a string of Roman sources confirms that Judaism proved a considerable attraction to many non-Jews within Rome itself.” Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, xlvii; See also: Schreiner, *Romans*, 11-12.
22 Suetonius in Claudius 25.4. Dunn explains that “it is generally agreed that ‘Chrestus’ must mean ‘Christ.’” Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, xlviii-xlxi.
24 It is estimated that Jews numbered 40,000-50,000 in the middle of the 1st century. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, xlvi.
community, which indicates that the squabbling had not reached a level that warranted expulsion.\textsuperscript{25}

The alternative view, and the majority view of scholars today, is that the Claudius edict took place in 49 A.D.\textsuperscript{26} In the writings of Suetonius (Claudius 25.4), we learn of the expulsion of the Jews from Rome, but no date of the event is given.\textsuperscript{27} When we look at Acts 18:2 we also learn of the expulsion of the Jews from Rome in relation to the arrival of Prisca and Aquila in Ephesus. They came from Rome, an event which we know took place in the late 40s A.D.\textsuperscript{28} We can then gain a more exact dating through the writings of Orosius, who dates the expulsion of the Jews in the ninth year of the reign of Claudius, therefore dating the expulsion to around A.D. 49.\textsuperscript{29} Dunn describes the events of 41 A.D. as “an early palliative ruling, short-lived and limited in effect” and then 49 A.D. as “more deliberate and drastic after his (Claudius’s) patience [was] worn out.”\textsuperscript{30}

We cannot be certain if the Claudius Edict was as drastic as the Lukan account in Acts 18:2, which describes the expulsion of “all” Jews in Rome. However, most scholars agree that the expulsion involved at least the majority of Jews.\textsuperscript{31} Therefore the church in Rome after A.D. 49 probably became less Jewish and more Greco-Roman, both in population and in style. As a result, the church moved away from the synagogues and its Jewish nature and developed more towards a house church structure.\textsuperscript{32} As Dunn notes, “following the expulsion of the Jews in A.D. 49 most of the house churches would have become largely Gentile in composition…and in their continuing growth they would have drawn in other Gentiles who had not previously been attracted to or been familiar with Judaism.”\textsuperscript{33}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{25} Dunn, \textit{Romans 1-8}, xlix.
\bibitem{27} Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 19.
\bibitem{28} Ibid.
\bibitem{29} Ibid.
\bibitem{30} Dunn, \textit{Romans 1-8}, xlix.
\bibitem{31} Kruse, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 1–2; Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 11–12; Dunn, \textit{Romans 1-8}, xlix. Jewett argues that it was most likely only those who were responsible for the disturbances who were expelled. Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 60.
\bibitem{32} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 3–5.
\bibitem{33} Dunn, \textit{Romans 1-8}, liii.
\end{thebibliography}
In A.D. 54, after the death of Claudius and under the reign of Nero, the edict of Claudius lapsed and Jews were allowed to return to Rome.\textsuperscript{34} Jewish Christians (such as those listed in Romans 16: Prisca, Aquila, Andronicus, Junia and so on) would have made up part of the returning Jewish population. The situation then in the Roman church was that the once dominant Jewish Christian population was returning to a church which looked a lot different from the church they had left five years before. The Jewish Christians, who were once the majority, probably now returned to a church where they are the minority and to a church that had a distinctly Gentile feel to it.\textsuperscript{35} As a result, there were obvious tensions in the church, based on ethnic and theological differences.\textsuperscript{36} Romans 9-11 and 14-15 confirm this tension.\textsuperscript{37} As Dunn notes:

> It must be judged highly likely that Paul knew quite a bit, at least in general terms, about the situation of the new movement in Rome. In particular, he was aware of its political context and the tensions between Jew and Gentile created by its emergence within the Jewish synagogues and by the steady recruitment of gentile converts which left the latter in a sizeable majority.\textsuperscript{38}

This tension in the church helps to explain Paul’s motivation for writing his letter to the Romans.\textsuperscript{39}

### 1.5 Recipients of the Letter

Paul is writing to the church in Rome, a church he has not yet visited (1:11-13), but a church where he has at least some knowledge of their circumstances (6:17; 7:1) and some personal contacts (ch. 16).\textsuperscript{40} Paul’s intended audience has long been the subject of debate. It is important to note that the composition of the church in Rome is important for understanding Paul’s audience, but composition alone does not necessarily correlate to audience.\textsuperscript{41} As discussed earlier, we know that the church in Rome after 54 A.D. consisted of both Jewish and Gentile

\textsuperscript{34} Kruse, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 1–2.
\textsuperscript{35} Fitzmyer, \textit{Romans}, 33.
\textsuperscript{36} Dunn, \textit{Romans 1-8}, liii.
\textsuperscript{37} Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 13.
\textsuperscript{38} Dunn, \textit{Romans 1-8}, liv.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., xlv.
\textsuperscript{41} Mark D Nanos, \textit{The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul’s Letter} (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 75–76.
Christians. This begs the question of whether Paul is writing Romans to the whole church or is he writing specifically to the Jews or the Gentiles in the church?

The view of earlier scholarship understood Paul’s audience as entirely Jewish. F.C. Baur was one such scholar to hold this opinion, thinking the “addressees to be Jewish Christians who had emerged from the Jewish community in Rome.”

There are other scholars who argue the opposite, arguing that the implied audience of the Epistle to the Romans is entirely Gentile. This view is built on texts such as 1:1-7; 13; 11:13-14; 15:15-16. Whilst acknowledging that Jews were a part of the congregation in Rome, Nanos argues that “Paul, the apostle to the gentiles, was writing specifically to Christian gentiles in Rome in his opening and closing comments as well as in the body of his letter.”

Similarly, Fitzmyer acknowledges the mixed community, but understands Paul to be writing to a Gentile audience. He emphasises the fact that the church was predominantly made up of Gentiles at the time of Paul’s writing, that Paul refers to himself as an apostle, “speaking to you Gentiles” (11:13); and that Romans 6:17-22 and 12:1-2 also imply a Gentile audience.

Whilst Cranfield suggests that it is impossible to know with certainty what group made up the majority of the church at the time Paul wrote Romans, if there was even a majority at all, the majority of scholarship understands Paul to have a mixed audience in mind, with the majority of the audience being gentile and the minority Jewish. This view takes on board the texts of Romans listed above, which point to a Gentile audience, as well as the historical background discussed earlier involving the Claudius edict and it lapse, creating a predominantly Gentile church but with a Jewish minority. This mixed audience view, however, does acknowledge that the text of Romans points also towards a Jewish audience. Schreiner notes the dialogue

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42 Wiefel, ‘The Jewish Community in Ancient Rome and the Origins of Roman Christianity’, 85. For more on Baur’s view see: Jewett, Romans, 70.
43 Nanos, The Mystery of Romans, 78.
45 Fitzmyer, Romans, 33.
46 Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 21.
47 Dunn, Romans 1-8, xlv; Jewett, Romans, 70; Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 2; Schreiner, Romans, 14; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 9–12.
48 Dunn, Romans 1-8, xlv.
throughout chapters 1-11 with Jews and the Old Testament, and Kruse notes that 50% of the names in Romans 16 are Jewish, both of which indicate that Paul had Jews on his mind.

It is the view of this thesis that Paul is writing the letter to the whole of the church at Rome, which is predominantly gentile but also contains a strong Jewish presence. This view is further supported by Moo when he states that “we must assume that Paul has the whole community, a mixed group of Jewish and Gentile Christians, in mind as he writes.”

1.6 The Purpose of Romans

The question as to why Paul wrote to the church in Rome has long been a contested issue and is seemingly an unending debate. There are a number of views held by scholars about what the purpose of Romans is. Below is a summary and critique of the more popular views. Most scholars would align themselves with either one or more of these views.

1. A Compendium of Christian Theology

The traditional view on the purpose of Romans is described by Morris as “A Compendium of Christian Theology.” This view notes the sizeable collection of theological topics addressed in the epistle and sees the purpose of the epistle as being a presentation or summary of these great themes. As Shedd writes, “the object of the writer was to give to the Roman congregation, and ultimately Christendom, a complete statement of religious truth.” However, this view is not complete, since whilst there are elements of a theological summary in Romans, it is by no means a complete summary as it only lightly addresses certain elements of Paul’s theology or

49 Schreiner, Romans, 14.
50 Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 2.
51 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 12.
52 “Nobody doubts that Paul wrote it (Romans) in the middle or late 50’s of the first century, from Corinth or somewhere nearby, while planning his final trip to Jerusalem with the intention of going on thereafter to Rome and then Spain. But the remaining question, ‘why?’ has proved remarkably difficult.” N. T Wright, ‘The Letter to the Romans’, in The New Interpreter’s Bible: Acts - First Corinthians, ed. Leander E. Keck, vol. X, NIB (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 396.
53 The content of the summaries of the purpose of Romans in this thesis draws largely on the work of Morris, Jewett and Donfried: Leon Morris, The Epistle to the Romans (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 7–18; Jewett, Romans, 80–84; Karl P Donfried, The Romans Debate (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1991), 3–64.
54 Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 8. For “a modern scholar’s view” of this traditional understanding of Romans, see: Anders Nygren, Commentary on Romans (London: SCM Press, 1952), 4. Wright also describes Romans as a summing up of Paul’s theology, as well as addressing issues in the church and setting up a base for future missions work. N. T Wright, The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 234.
misses some elements completely. For instance, there is no mention of the Lord’s Supper and little discussion of the Church, eschatology, the Resurrection, or Christology. Therefore, describing Romans as a summary of Paul’s theology is unsatisfactory. Jewett argues also that the rhetoric of the letter shows clearly that Paul is writing to specific people with specific issues, and therefore its main purpose cannot be to provide a general summary or collection of theology.

This view has much in common with another view on the purpose of Romans, which describes Romans as Paul’s justification of his gospel and his last will and testament. Bornkamm describes Romans as that “which summarizes and develops the most important themes and thoughts of the Pauline message and theology…this letter is the last will and testament of the Apostle Paul.” Romans thus becomes a means for Paul to write a summary of his theology. Morris agrees that while much of Romans acts in this way, this viewpoint however, does not explain why Paul put these thoughts in writing and why they were sent specifically to the church in Rome.

2. A Circular Letter for Multiple Locations

Some understand Romans to be a circular letter or manifesto meant for multiple locations. The purpose of Romans was to present a summary of the conclusions reached after the controversy in the church in Corinth and Galatia “over Judaism and Christianity, law and gospel.” Paul would have sent this summary to the churches in Rome and Ephesus as well as making it available to all the churches in Asia. However this view does not account for the advice given in 14:1-15:13, which is addressing conflicts that seem to be unique to the church in Rome. Morris is also right to point out that again this view leaves us asking the question “why Rome?”

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59 Ibid.
60 Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 8–9.
62 Manson, 13–15.
Furthermore, it also raises another question – ‘why a circular letter’ - to which no satisfactory answer has yet been given.64

3. Providing Apostolic Foundations for Paul’s Plans

The purpose of Romans is to provide apostolic foundation for Paul’s plan to preach in Rome. This view understands Paul to be building this foundation by preaching the gospel to the church in Rome, a church which Paul regards as having no apostolic foundation (15:20).65 However, for this view to be convincing, chapter 16 of Romans must be considered not part of the original letter, since 16:7 speaks of Andronicus and Junia in Rome as “outstanding among the apostles.” In addition, 1:11-12 and 15:14 must be downplayed, as these texts reveal that there is already a high level of spiritual maturity within the church in Rome.66 As Morris notes, “it is more than difficult to see how, on New Testament premises, preaching the gospel to Christians whose faith was well known (1:8) and who were full of goodness and knowledge and able to admonish one another (15:14) could be justified.”67

4. Seeking Support for the Jerusalem Offering

The epistle to the church in Rome was to seek support for the Jerusalem offering. Jervell argues that the central content of Romans eliminates the possibility of the purpose of Romans being understood in terms of congregational or future missionary plans.68 Jervell suggests that Paul is anxious about his trip to Jerusalem and whether or not the Jewish Christians there will accept the offering from the Gentile churches.69 The purpose of Romans then is for Paul to secure the backing of the church in Rome for his visit to Jerusalem. This does not mean Paul was necessarily seeking physical or political support (although this may have been beneficial if things were to go wrong), rather Paul was seeking support through prayer (15:30).70 Karris describes Jervell’s understanding of Romans “as Paul’s defense speech in Jerusalem so that his

64 Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 10.
66 Jewett, *Romans*, 82.
67 Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 12.
69 Ibid.
70 Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, lvi.
collection and he himself will not be rejected.” However, Jewett notes the problem of fitting chs. 12-16 with this view, as these chapters would not have worked as part of Paul’s Jerusalem speech. Morris, while admitting that the impending trip to Jerusalem must have been on Paul’s mind, notes that again this view does not answer the following questions: why would Paul send this letter to Rome and why would he not be more explicit in his desire for support.

5. Raising Support for Mission to Spain

To gain support for Paul’s future mission to Spain (15:18-24, 28). As Moo says, “most scholars, whatever weight they give to other circumstances, think that one of Paul’s purposes in writing to the Romans was to prepare for his mission to Spain.” Paul was looking to establish the church in Rome as a support base for his work. Paul also would have needed contacts in Spain and help with translation, both of which he was likely to obtain from the church in Rome. In order to establish this relationship with a church Paul had never visited, he needed to write a letter as a form of personal introduction with the goal of enlisting the church as a sponsor. This shows the general theological focus of the letter to be Paul assuring the potential sponsors of his sound doctrine.

6. Dealing With Conflict Within the Church in Rome

The purpose of Romans is to help resolve internal conflict within the church in Rome and bring unity around theological beliefs. Romans 14:1-15:13 reveals a split in the church at Rome between Jewish and Gentile Christians, and disunity was a problem for the mixed-race church in Rome. As Schreiner notes, “one of Paul’s primary aims was to unify the church in Rome so

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72 Jewett, Romans, 83.
73 Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 10-11.
74 Fitzmyer, Romans, 79; Schreiner, Romans, 22; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 20-21.
75 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 15. Whilst many scholars agree with this statement, there are some scholars, such as Tom Holland, who have difficulty in believing that preparation for Paul’s Spanish missions is the principal reason behind the writing of Romans. “A more personal letter would have been far more appropriate for such a task.” Holland, Romans, 17.
76 Dunn, Romans 1-8, 1v; Schreiner, Romans, 22; Fitzmyer, Romans, 79.
77 Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 9.
78 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 17.
79 Fitzmyer, Romans, 79. Wright notices the similarity between Romans and the problems Paul dealt with at Antioch, except in Antioch it was the Jews who were dominating over the Gentiles, whereas here in Rome it is the Gentiles who are dominating over the Jews. Wright, The Climax of the Covenant, 234.
that Jews and Gentiles together would worship God in harmony.”

Schreiner argues that this tension, while definitely evident, should not be exaggerated, as Paul does commend the state of the church in Rome (1:8-12; 15:14-15; 16:19). However, Moo suggests that the tension was severe enough to cause a split between Jewish and Gentile Christians. Morris also criticizes this view, stating that nowhere in Romans does Paul appear to be taking on the role of a mediator, and then posing the question that if conflict was Paul’s principal reason for writing Romans, why did it take him until ch. 14 to raise the issue?

A number of scholars understand Romans to have multiple purposes, choosing not to single out one purpose over the others. As Ziesler writes, “when such good cases can be made for opposite points of view…it is hard to resist the conclusion that both may well be correct.”

Whilst acknowledging multiple possibilities for the purpose(s) of Romans, there is still disagreement about the precise significance of each of Paul’s reasons.

Kruse notes that Paul was ministering to the Romans via letter before he arrived in the city (15:15-16). Paul deals with divisions in the Christian community and objections to his gospel. This is the main reason why Paul wrote Romans, though it is important to remember the aforementioned secondary motivations. This thesis affirms Kruse’s view by means of a closer look. This view will be strengthened throughout a brief discussion of the structure of Romans and the study of Romans 9-11.

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80 Schreiner, Romans, 21.
81 Ibid., 20.
82 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 18–19.
83 Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 14.
85 Ziesler, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 15. Jewett on the other hand, argues that while multiple purposes for Paul writing Romans is “admirably tolerant,” the “concept of exigency in relation to the rhetorical purpose of a letter renders this implausible. Letter writers usually have a central goal in writing although subsidiary topics may be mentioned in passing.” Jewett notes Paul’s forthcoming missionary plans and the need to elicit support for this missionary work as the main reason for which Paul wrote the letter to the Romans.
86 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 16.
87 Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 11.
1.7 Theme

There is debate amongst scholars as to what the central theme of the book of Romans is, or whether there even is a central theme. The Reformers followed the understanding of Luther who saw chs. 1-5 through the lens of his theology of justification, as the central theme in Romans. However, many scholars today, whilst acknowledging the importance of “justification by faith” for understanding the book of Romans, argue that this is not the main overarching theme. At the beginning of the 20th century, Schweitzer, among others, argued that chs. 5-8, the doctrines of union with Christ and the work of God’s Spirit are the central theme. According to Moo, the main theme in Romans is the gospel. He acknowledges that there are a number of diverse themes in Romans, but that all of these come under the umbrella of Paul’s main theme, the gospel. However, “we must be careful not to impose on Romans a single theme when Paul may never have thought in those terms…Romans may, then, have several themes without having any single, unifying topic.” Kruse agrees with the notion that there are multiple themes in Romans, and similarly to Moo, sees the gospel as a key theme Romans. However, Kruse suggests that it is the righteousness of God as revealed in the gospel that is the major theme of Romans.

There are other scholars who have since moved away from an emphasis on individual salvation in Romans in favour of an emphasis on Gentiles being incorporated with the Jews as God’s people, without jeopardizing the importance of salvation history (chs. 9-11). Dunn is one such scholar who notes the dominance of the issue of Jew/Gentile relationships (1:16), identity (1:7; 2:25-29; 8:33; 9:6-13; 11:5-7, 28-32), and “an understanding of the gospel as no longer limited to Jews as such (chs. 2-5), in the hope that both Jew and Gentile can praise God together (15:8-12).”

The issue of determining what the main theme in Romans is, does not have a major bearing on this thesis. What will become clear through the analysis of Romans 9-11 and Paul’s use of

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88 Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 22–23. For Luther’s view of Romans 1-5, see Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works, Volume 25: Lectures on Romans, Glosses and Scholia*, vol. 25 (Concordia Publishing House, 1972), 286.
92 Ibid., 24.
94 Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, xlv.
Isaiah’s remnant theology in Romans 9-11, is that Jewish/Gentile relationships in relation to Paul’s gospel is a very important theme in the book of Romans.

1.8 Structure
The structure of Romans does not raise too many issues amongst scholars. There is mostly agreement over the divisions of the major sections of the letter. Some scholars, such as Robinson, who understand ch. 8 to be the climax of Romans, see the structure of the letter differently from the majority of scholars today. Robinson describes the structure of Romans using an analogy of journeying by canal across an isthmus with its various locks. Beginning at sea level (ch. 1), one moves through the book of Romans, with each lock taking the reader up a level towards the high point of the journey/letter, which Robinson pin-points as 8:1-39.95 The reader then descends down through the locks of the latter part of Romans towards the conclusion.96

Mostly, however, the only debate over the major divisions of structure in Romans is with regard to ch. 5. The Reformed Protestant tradition has often understood ch. 5 to be a part of chs. 1-4, but the viewpoint that places ch. 5 as part of chs. 6-8 is now gaining popularity.97 Fortunately, the focus of this thesis, chs. 9-11, are unanimously agreed to be a unit. However, the importance of chs. 9-11 in the overall structure of Romans is not universally agreed upon and will be discussed in the section looking specifically at chs. 9-11.

95 The climax of the letter and the implications of where one places the climax in the letter will be discussed further when looking at the place of chapters 9-11 in Romans.
97 Connecting ch. 5 with chs. 1-4: Dunn, Romans 1-8, 242. Connecting ch. 5 with chs. 6-8: Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 32; Schreiner, Romans, 25-27; Fitzmyer, Romans, 96-97.
Chapter 2: Literature Review: Interpretations of Romans 9-11

What exactly is the purpose of Romans 9-11? What is its message and how does it contribute to the overall book? To this day, scholars continue to disagree.

2.1 The Place of Chapters 9-11 in the Whole of Romans

There is a wide range of opinions over the place of chapters 9-11 in the letter to the Romans. Most scholars would fall into one of the following four categories:

2.1.1 “Downhill” After the Climax of Chapter 8

There are scholars, such as Robinson, who view ch. 8 of Romans as the climax of the letter.\(^{98}\) What precedes chapter 8 then is the build up to the high point of the letter and what follows is the downhill path towards the application and conclusion. Speaking about what follows on from the climactic chapter 8 (more specifically 8:31-39), Robinson suggests that the reader expects to move from the doctrinal section into a moral section with a “therefore” as in Ephesians 4:1, but instead the flow is postponed by chs. 9-11, which read more like an excursus “and could be detached from the rest without affecting its argument and structure.”\(^{99}\)

2.1.2 A Sermon Inserted Into the Epistle

This view also places the climax of the epistle at chapter 8 but notices that the style of chapters 9-11 is that of a sermon. Agreeing with the view of Robinson in the previous point, that we can understand chs. 9-11 in isolation from the rest of Romans, Dodd suggests that when we read this section within the context of the whole letter, “it naturally gains by such reference.”\(^{100}\) Both Dodd and Robinson argue that 12:1 would follow seamlessly on from 8:39 and that chs. 9-11 are possibly even an independent unit that Paul inserts here.\(^{101}\) Dodd notes that through reading chs. 9-11 in isolation from the letter, we see that these chapters take on the form of a separate treatise, and more interestingly, they appear to be written as a sermon separate from

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\(^{99}\) Ibid. Emphasis in original.


the writing of the rest of Romans.\textsuperscript{102} He describes chs. 9-11 as more of a sermon addressing the “question of Israel” that Paul had up his sleeve ready to be inserted on the right occasion.\textsuperscript{103}

### 2.1.3 An Integral Part of Romans Flowing on From Chapters 1-8

Modern scholarship has mostly moved away from the previous two views of chs. 9-11. Moo, sympathetic to the view of Dodd and Robinson, acknowledges that the exhortations in chapter 12 are expected at the conclusion of chapter 8, but the chapters that fill the gap, chs. 9-11, are not a detour from Paul’s main line of argument.\textsuperscript{104} Nor are they an excursus that disrupts the natural flow of the letter. Schreiner agrees with the general move away from viewing 9-11 as disruptive to the flow of Romans and sees 9-11 as an integral part of the letter. He sees chs. 9-11 as an essential section following on from chs. 1-8 and notes that the content of chs. 9-11 flows naturally on from them.\textsuperscript{105} Thus, we can rule out the suggestion that chs. 9-11 are a “preformed unit, a diatribe or missionary sermon.”\textsuperscript{106} Along with Schreiner, Cranfield notes that the content of 8:17-39, particularly 8:28-30, creates a natural point to move into a discussion of Israel in relation to God’s purposes.\textsuperscript{107} In fact, Cranfield argues that much of chs. 1-8 cannot be fully understood without being read in the light of chs. 9-11, such as Paul’s apostleship (1:5-7); God’s promise (ch. 4); and the golden chain (8:29-30).\textsuperscript{108} The problem raised in 9:6 and 11:1 (the faithfulness of God to his people, but the lack of acceptance from the people of God) is the same as that which is raised in 1:18-2:29. It is addressed by Paul firstly in 3:21-8:39. Far from resolving the issue, however, Paul merely phrases it sharply.\textsuperscript{109} The gospel set out in 1:16b-17, when read in the light of 1:1-4, shows that the gospel must be understood in relation to Israel. In 3:1-8 Paul touches on the fact that there is no advantage for Jews over Gentiles when it comes to salvation from sin. However, his argument requires more discussion on this topic, and it is in chs. 9-11 that these problems are fully addressed.\textsuperscript{110}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{102} Dodd, \textit{The Epistle of Paul to the Romans}, 149.
\item \textsuperscript{103} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{104} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 569.
\item \textsuperscript{105} Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 469.
\item \textsuperscript{106} James D. G Dunn, \textit{Romans 9-16}, WBC 38B (Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1988), 520.
\item \textsuperscript{107} C. E. B. Cranfield, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, vol. 2 (IX-XVI), ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), 447.
\item \textsuperscript{108} Cranfield, 2 (IX-XVI):445.
\item \textsuperscript{109} Dunn, \textit{Romans 9-16}, 519–20.
\item \textsuperscript{110} Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 469–71; Cranfield, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 2 (IX-XVI):446.
\end{itemize}
2.1.4 The Climax of the Letter

Wright takes the previous view one step further, suggesting that chs. 1-8 are written to set up chs. 9-11:

It is not simply that, having written chaps. 1-8, he finds he has to go on to 9-11; it is just as much that, because he wants to write chaps. 9-11, he finds he must write 1-8 in this way. Thus, in key passages in Romans 1-8, Paul seems deliberately to set up problems and questions that he leaves hanging in the air, only to resume them in chaps. 9-11.\footnote{Wright, ‘The Letter to the Romans’, 408.} (E.g. 3:1-8).

Not only does Wright see chs. 1-8 as setting up chs. 9-11, but he also argues that the central passage of chs. 12-16 is 14:1-15:13, which speaks about the unity of different cultures that worship the same God and is very similar to the message of chs 9-11, which addresses the attitudes of Christian Gentiles towards non-Christian Jews.\footnote{Ibid., 626} For Wright, chs. 9-11 are the climax of the whole epistle to the Romans;\footnote{Wright, The Climax of the Covenant, 236.} they complete chs. 1-8 and set the stage for chs. 12-16. Wright is not alone in labelling chs. 9-11 as the climax, with other scholars such as Fitzmyer\footnote{Fitzmyer, Romans, 541.} and Stendahl\footnote{Krister Stendahl, Paul Among Jews and Gentiles (London: SCM Press, 1976), 4.} coming to similar conclusions.

Whilst it may be difficult for many scholars to go as far as Wright in their understanding of chs. 9-11,\footnote{Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 551.} clearly Romans 9-11 is an integral part of the letter. The many parallels between chs. 9-11 and 1-8, particularly ch. 3, confirm the importance of chs. 9-11 in Paul’s epistle to the Romans. What we can say with certainty is that chs. 9-11 are necessary for understanding most of Romans and should be treated as one of the high points of the letter, if not its highest point.

2.2 The Purpose of Chapters 9-11

Moo notes “those who relegate chaps. 9-11 to the periphery of Romans have misunderstood the purpose of Rom. 9-11, or of the letter, or of both.”\footnote{Ibid., 547–48.} Scholars who have a low view of the

\footnotetext[111]{Wright, ‘The Letter to the Romans’, 408.}
\footnotetext[112]{Ibid., 626}
\footnotetext[113]{Wright, The Climax of the Covenant, 236.}
\footnotetext[114]{Fitzmyer, Romans, 541.}
\footnotetext[115]{Krister Stendahl, Paul Among Jews and Gentiles (London: SCM Press, 1976), 4.}
\footnotetext[116]{Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 551. Moo argues that those who make 9-11 the center or climax of Romans are doing so out of a desire to minimize the importance of an individual relationship with God in chs. 1-8. Moo sees the individual’s stance before God as central to Paul’s gospel.}
\footnotetext[117]{Ibid., 547–48.}
importance of chs. 9-11 in Romans (Points 1 and 2 of the previous section) have often understood the purpose of chs. 9-11 to be an opportunity taken by Paul to use Israel to illustrate theological points such as predestination (Dinkler)\textsuperscript{118} or the righteousness of God (Käsemann).\textsuperscript{119} However, the general consensus of modern scholarship has moved towards viewing the primary purpose of chs. 9-11 as addressing the tension between the gospel as both a continuation and fulfillment of salvation history.\textsuperscript{120}

One of the purposes of Romans is to make the claim that faith in Jesus Christ is what is required to be a part of God’s people (no longer race or observation of the law). In Romans, Paul effectively denies the place of the law as a way of salvation, which then raises questions about the status of the people of Israel and the faithfulness of God in his promises to them. Chs. 9-11 address whether God has rejected Israel and gone back on his word or remained faithful to his covenantal promises.\textsuperscript{121} The fact that the Jews have rejected the gospel is the cause of the problem that Paul is addressing in chs. 9-11.\textsuperscript{122} This problem is only made worse by the fact the Gentiles are now accepting the gospel.

Wright then describes the purpose of Romans 9-11 as providing the answers to two questions. Firstly, what are we to make of unbelieving Israel? And secondly, how then must we interpret God’s covenantal faithfulness to Israel?\textsuperscript{123}

Paul is making his case in 9-11 that the fact that Israel has rejected the gospel of Jesus Christ is a part of God outworking his plan and shows his covenantal faithfulness. Chs. 9-11 show how the promises to Abraham are fulfilled through Israel’s rejection of Christ, the Gentile acceptance of Christ, and the possible future acceptance of Christ for Israel. The main theme of chs. 9-11 is then the covenant faithfulness of God as outworked through the people of God throughout history.\textsuperscript{124}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{119} Ernst Käsemann, \textit{Commentary on Romans} (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 253–56.
  \item \textsuperscript{120} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 553.
  \item \textsuperscript{121} Bruce W. Longenecker, ‘Different Answers to Different Issues: Israel, the Gentiles and Salvation History in Romans 9-11’, \textit{JSNT}, no. 36 (1989): 95.
  \item \textsuperscript{122} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 549.
  \item \textsuperscript{123} Wright, ‘The Letter to the Romans’, 621.
  \item \textsuperscript{124} Wright, \textit{The Climax of the Covenant}, 236. See also Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 553; Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 471.
\end{itemize}
It is important to note that there is also a practical element in chs. 9-11 where Paul addresses the issue of Gentile arrogance over the Jews, as Gentiles now made up the majority of the church in Rome.\textsuperscript{125} This does not imply a specifically Gentile audience for chs. 9-11, as the main content, concerned with the Jewish rejection of the gospel, is highly relevant to Jewish listeners.\textsuperscript{126} Paul is writing chs. 9-11 to both Gentiles and Jews, as he has done throughout the letter.\textsuperscript{127} Paul gives a balanced approach to the issues in the church and “criticizes extremists from both sides, paving the way for his plea for reconciliation in chaps. 14-15.”\textsuperscript{128}

\textsuperscript{125} Schreiner, Romans, 471.
\textsuperscript{126} Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 367. Fitzmyer suggests that chs. 9-11 are mostly addressed to the Gentile Christians in Rome, explaining the problem of Israel and also how the Gentiles have entered into the people of God. Fitzmyer, Romans, 80.
\textsuperscript{127} Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 552.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., 553.
Chapter 3: Literature Review: Interpretations of Romans 11:26

3.1 Introduction

Just as there are differing opinions over the place and purpose of chapters 9-11 in Romans, so too is there a range of opinions over the interpretation of Romans 11:26. Paul claims in 11:26 that πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται, (“all Israel will be saved”), and in doing so, brings the topic of Israel’s future in chapter 11 of Romans to its climax. Merkle argues that in the eleventh chapter of Romans “we find Paul’s clearest description of the final destiny of Israel.” However, there is a sense of irony to this, as whilst we can clearly see that Paul’s intention in Romans 11 is to “remove a certain ambiguity for his audience in regard to God’s redemptive plan for Jews and gentiles,” scholars across the centuries have been puzzled by it. Thus, the debate over how we are to understand chapter 11, and in particular verse 26, is as strong as ever today.

The main question surrounding 11:26 has to do with who Paul has in mind for Ἰσραήλ when he says, “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται.” Alongside the interpretive challenge of answering the question “who is Israel?” in 11:26, we also need to answer the questions of “when” will all Israel be saved and “how” will all Israel be saved? When it comes to the range of interpretations of Romans 11:26, scholars have typically divided into four different camps. These four interpretations of Romans 11:26 can be grouped under the following headings: 1) Two-Covenant Theology; 2) the Eschatological Miracle; 3) Total National Elect; 4) the Ecclesiological Interpretation. These four categories are based on the work of Christopher Zoccali. Similar frameworks or groupings of interpretation are used by other scholars such as Staples and Witherington. Kruse breaks down the various interpretations of Romans 11:26 into six categories, but essentially his list is just a further breaking down of some of the broader categories Zoccali uses. I will use Zoccali’s four categories to frame my summary.

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but within each of his categories (except Two Covenant Theology) Kruse’s categories are all covered. The table below shows Zoccali’s and Kruse’s categories side by side and gives a snapshot of the different interpretations of Romans 11:26. Following the table is a summary of each of the four different categories of interpretation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoccali</th>
<th>Kruse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two-Covenant Theology</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eschatological Miracle</td>
<td>All Israelites from every age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Israelites alive at the end of the age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Israel as a whole alive at the end of the age, but not including every Israelite</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A large number of Israelites at the end of the age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total National Elect</td>
<td>All the elect of Israel of all time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecclesiological Interpretation</td>
<td>Israel redefined to include all Jews and Gentiles who believe in Jesus Christ.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2 Two-Covenant Theology

There are some, often dispensationalists,\(^\text{134}\) whose reading of Romans 11:26 is shaped by a two-covenant theology. The “two-covenant” or “Sonderweg” reading of 11:26 understands the salvation of “πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ” to be obtained in a different way, or offered through a different covenant, to that of the Gentiles. The salvation of Israel is obtained through their covenant with God made at Sinai whereas salvation for the Gentiles is obtained through Christ.\(^\text{135}\) Therefore salvation for the Jews and salvation for the Gentiles is secured via a different means. As Motyer writes, “there are, they say, two ways of salvation – one for Israel (the old covenant), and one for the church (the new).”\(^\text{136}\) Subsequently, the salvation of Israel in 11:26a, brought about by the deliverer out of Zion in 11:26b, “affirms God’s commitment to the Sinai covenant that applies only to Israel and according to which God faithfully forgives Israel’s sins.”\(^\text{137}\)


\(^\text{136}\) Motyer, *Israel in the Plan of God*, 151.

However, in my view the immediate context of Romans 9-11 eliminates this as a possible view. Romans 10 speaks of the salvation of Jews and Gentiles through belief and proclamation in the Lordship of Jesus (10:4-15). Paul in Romans 10 can be seen to be speaking against what the two-covenant or Sonderweg view espouses.

A further difficulty with this view is found when we consider the idea of Jewish Christianity.\textsuperscript{138} When we read Romans, we get a picture of Paul as one who is Jewish but also has faith in Christ. The existence of such a form of Jewish Christianity makes this view problematic, or at the least confusing, when reading Romans.\textsuperscript{139}

### 3.3 The Eschatological Miracle

The Eschatological Miracle interpretation of Ἰσραήλ in 11:26 is by far the “prevailing opinion among contemporary scholars.”\textsuperscript{140} This view interprets 11:26 as referring to all ethnic Jews being saved in a major event at the time of the Parousia. Those who subscribe to the “eschatological miracle” view understand the quotations from Isaiah 59:20-21 and 27:9 in 11:26b-27 to be referring to the Parousia.\textsuperscript{141} This interpretation holds that the salvation of “all Israel” will occur as follows: after the conversion of the last Gentile, which will bring in the total fullness of the Gentiles who are to be saved, there will then be a huge revival among the Jews, so that all the Jews will then find salvation and be ushered into the kingdom.\textsuperscript{142}

Within the “Eschatological Miracle” view there are different understandings of the makeup of the Jews finding salvation at the Parousia. On the one hand, there are some who interpret this verse diachronically, suggesting that all Jews from the whole of history will be saved at the

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\textsuperscript{138} “In effect, they (Jewish Christians) seemed to regard Christianity as an affirmation of every aspect of contemporary Judaism, with the addition of one extra belief — that Jesus was the Messiah.” Alister E. McGrath, *Christianity: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1997), 174.

\textsuperscript{139} Terence L. Donaldson, ‘Jewish Christianity, Israel’s Stumbling and the Sonderweg Reading of Paul’, *JSNT*, no. 29.1 (2006): 49.


\textsuperscript{141} Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 682; Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 727; Jewett, *Romans*, 704.

\textsuperscript{142} Motyer, *Israel in the Plan of God*, 151.
The majority of scholars who hold to the “Eschatological Miracle” view argue that the term Ἰσραήλ is used to refer to the nation of Israel as a whole, but not every single individual member of Israel. They find scriptural support for this rendition of “all Israel” in the Old Testament. For example, it is unlikely that every single Israelite was involved in the stoning of Achan even though the text states “all Israel stoned him to death” (Josh 7:25). Additionally, it is noteworthy that most scholars, regardless of whether they align with the “All Ethnic Israel’ understanding of 11:26 or one of the aforementioned interpretations, would also understand “all Israel” in this sense.

The “Eschatological Miracle” view looks at all of Paul’s uses of “Israel” in chs. 9-11 and claims that, because they unanimously refer to ethnic Israel, there is no possibility or likelihood that Paul would have something else in mind for Ἰσραήλ in 11:26. Even though elsewhere Paul includes Gentiles as part of the “people of God” or “Israel” (Rom 4:9-11, 17-18; Gal 6:15-16), it is argued that this is not the case in Romans 11. Whilst it is clear that Paul uses “Israel” to describe two groups in 9:6a, both the nation as a whole and the elect, scholars within this interpretation of v26 do not see any room for interpreting the “Israel” of v26 differently from v25, which is understood as a reference to ethnic Israel. “It is not feasible to understand ‘Israel’

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143 Jewett, Romans, 702; Bell, Provoked to Jealousy: The Origin and Purpose of the Jealousy Motif in Romans 9-11, 139.
144 Examples of those who hold to a synchronic view include every scholar listed above in footnote 140, except Jewett and Bell.
145 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 723.
146 Josh 7:25; 1 Sam 7:5; 25:1; 2 Sam 16:22; 1 Kings 12:1; 2 Chr 12:1; Dan 9:11. Merkle, ‘Romans 11 and the Future of Ethnic Israel’, 710.
147 Wright, who fits into the “Ecclesiological View” camp, agrees that usage of “all Israel” in the OT did not necessarily mean every single Israelite. “We are not forced to suppose that “all Israel” must mean all Jews or all living at the time of the end,” as it often means “the great majority of Jews alive at the time.” Wright, ‘The Letter to the Romans’, 689. Merkle, who belongs to the All Elect Jews Throughout History group, also shares these views. Merkle, ‘Romans 11 and the Future of Ethnic Israel’, 710.
148 Moo acknowledges the fact that Paul uses Israel to describe two groups in 9:6a, both the nation as a whole and the elect. Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 721.
in v. 26 in a different sense from that which it has in v. 25…that ‘all Israel’ here does not include Gentiles is virtually certain.”

In addition, Moo argues that Paul has more of a hortatory purpose in chapter 11 and that if Paul was to include the Gentiles with “Israel” in v26, it would feed the Gentile arrogance he is speaking against (11:18).

This view also sees the hardening of Israel to be limited and temporary. It will be lifted following the salvation of the Gentiles at the end of time, when “all Israel” will be saved.

3.4 Total National Elect
The Total National Elect view of Romans 11:26, understands “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” to be the complete number of elect from the historical/empirical nation of Israel. Those who hold this understanding of “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” argue that there will not be a mass salvation of Jews at the Parousia (9:1-6; 10:1). Instead, they argue that Paul’s understanding of salvation for Israel is rooted in the present time (11:5) with the hope that more Jews will come to follow Christ now. The Christ event is how both groups participate in God’s redemptive activity. Ethnic distinctions are not erased, rather there is now equality between the two races. Proponents of this view show a reluctance to embrace an interpretation of v26 that points to the salvation of “all Israel” at the end of the age as that seems to imply a special provision for the salvation of the Jews, in which the Gentiles are not included. This would not fit well with the overall argument of Romans, since when it comes to sin, judgment, and salvation in Romans, Jews and Gentiles are on a level playing field. Romans 11:26 is then understood to be referring to the elect of Israel from across all of time.

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150 Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 721.
151 Zoccali, *Whom God Has Called*, 104.
153 Zoccali, ‘“And so All Israel Will Be Saved”: Competing Interpretations of Romans 11:26 in Pauline Scholarship’, 304.
3.5 The Ecclesiological Interpretation

The Ecclesiological Interpretation understands “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” to represent the whole church made up of faithful Jews and faithful Gentiles.\(^\text{155}\) Those who hold to this view understand the covenant in 11:26b-27 to represent the inauguration of the new covenant, which has already taken place through Christ’s resurrection and as a result both Jew and Gentile receive salvation. Wright argues that the two references to Ἰσραήλ in 11:25-26 mirror the dual use of the word in 9:6.\(^\text{157}\) According to Wright, in both 9:6 and 11:25-26, Ἰσραήλ has two meanings, moving from ethnic Israel to faithful Israel. Whilst most scholars are in agreement with Wright’s interpretation of 9:6, those who hold to the Eschatological Miracle view or the Total National Elect view disagree with Wright and others who see the two different meanings for Israel in 11:25-26. In arguing against the dual use of Ἰσραήλ in v25 and v26, Motyer states, “this cannot be right. It means taking Ἰσραήλ in two different senses within the same sentence.”\(^\text{158}\) However, Wright argues that Paul’s definition of Ἰσραήλ in 9:6 comes “full circle” in 11:25-27.\(^\text{159}\)

Galatians 6:16 is also seen as offering support for this view. It is argued that the Church is the Israel of God, and that thus the whole church, made up of both believing Jews and believing Gentiles, “as the rightful bearer of the great covenant name ‘Israel’” will be saved.\(^\text{160}\)

3.6 Additional View

Whilst these four different understandings of Romans 11:26 encompass the majority of the scholarly interpretations of πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθείσαι, there is one other understanding that is worth mentioning. This view however, is one that has been developed quite recently and has not gathered the support of many scholars. Therefore it will not feature prominently in the exegetical sections of this thesis. Nevertheless, it is worth briefly noting here.

\(^{155}\) Zoccali, Whom God Has Called, 95.
\(^{157}\) Wright, The Climax of the Covenant, 250.
\(^{158}\) Motyer, Israel in the Plan of God, 150.
\(^{159}\) Wright, ‘The Letter to the Romans’, 690.
\(^{160}\) Motyer, Israel in the Plan of God, 149.
This more recent view has been put forward by Mark Nanos. Within this understanding of Romans 11:26, which Zoccali titles the “Roman Mission” interpretation, Nanos suggests that πᾶς Ἰσραήλ refers to Jews in Rome, both those who already follow Christ and those who are presently hardened. As a result of Paul’s mission to the Gentiles in Rome, the hardened Jews will be moved to jealousy and ultimately will come to follow Christ. What is positive about the Roman Mission understanding of 11:26, is that it clearly defines a difference within Israel between the remnant and the rest, and ultimately sees the inclusion into the people of God of all Jews who are faithful to Christ. However, Zoccali is right to point out the speculative nature of Nanos’ view that the Gentile mission only began when Paul arrived in Rome. Zoccali asks, “could he really have thought that the Gentile mission would only fully begin in Rome upon his arrival?”

3.7 Conclusion

There are four main views with which Romans 11:26 is interpreted and a few smaller, less common views as well. Three of the four main views mentioned interpret Romans 11:26 as referring to the salvation of Jews, whether all Jews, most of the Jews or the elect Jews, with this salvation happening at the Parousia. It is just the one view, the Ecclesiological view which considers faithful Gentiles as recipients of the salvation mentioned in 11:26, alongside faithful Jews and does not look to the Parousia as the moment “all Israel” will be saved.

In the next chapter I will discuss the background to the term “remnant” in the Old Testament apart from Isaiah. Then in chapter five I will discuss the use of the remnant concept in Isaiah.

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161 Zoccali, ““And so All Israel Will Be Saved”: Competing Interpretations of Romans 11:26 in Pauline Scholarship’, 295.
162 Nanos, The Mystery of Romans, 259–61.
163 Zoccali, ““And so All Israel Will Be Saved”: Competing Interpretations of Romans 11:26 in Pauline Scholarship’, 295–96.
Chapter 4: The Remnant Motif in the Old Testament

4.1 Background to the term “Remnant” in the Old Testament
The word “remnant” is derived from the Hebrew root רָשַׁא ("remain, “be left over"). In the Old Testament this verb “refers to that which is left over or remains.” It is often used as a reference to a group of people who physically survive a disaster, such as floods, famine, or war. “Theologically, ‘remnant’ usually refers to either God’s judgment on his sinful people or his mercy in preserving a small number as hope for the future.”

The root of the word רָשַׁא usually refers to a remnant looking back, the remainder after devastation. However, although not as common, it can also carry a sense of looking forward, focusing on the fact that a group of people actually remains. This can lead to what is known as the dual sense of the remnant. This dual sense of the remnant is based on the fact that the remainder or the group that is left can be understood either positively or negatively. If you consider the remnant from the perspective of what was lost and that the remnant acts as a witness to the destruction and devastation experienced, then it is a negative concept. But if you consider the remnant from the point of view of those who remain then the remnant can be seen positively. “Even when the ‘residue’ may be feeble, there is hope: hope of continuation, hope of possible renewed existence, hope of rebuilding; and so, the remnant becomes a positive sign of renewal and salvation.”

4.2 The Remnant in the Old Testament
The idea of a surviving remnant is found in a number of Old Testament passages. It occurs several times in Genesis, with the most dramatic being the story of Noah and the Flood (Gen 6-9): God chooses to preserve the human race by saving Noah as a righteous remnant along with his family. Genesis 6:9-10 states that Noah was a “righteous man” (אִישׁ צְדָκ) who “walked...
faithfully” (`תרחצ) with God. And then in Genesis 7:1 Noah and his family were saved from the flood because God found Noah to be “righteous” (`תרחצ). Another instance is the story of Lot. Along with his two daughters, Lot is seen as a saved remnant from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18-19). Joseph and his brothers, who survived the famine, are also described as a remnant (Gen 45:5-8).

Later in the Old Testament, we see the idea of the remnant being used in the book of 1 Kings. This is particularly important to note as Paul refers to this passage in the book of 1 Kings (1 Kings 19) in Romans 11 when he uses the remnant to speak of the future of Israel and the grace of God. The remnant in the context of 1 Kings 19 is used to contrast the majority of Israel who turned away from God and worshipped Baal. God punished Israel through the sword of Hazael, Syria and Jehu, but spared seven thousand faithful Israelites, who did not turn away from God (1 Kings 19:15-18). Those who do not apostatise or who remain faithful to God are saved, in part because of their faith, but ultimately because by God’s grace they were spared.

The use of רֹאש (remnant) is common in other prophetic books. In Amos it is used negatively when preaching of the coming destruction of Israel (4:1-3; 9:1-4) and neighbouring nations (1:6-8; 2:1-3). Amos also uses it positively when expressing hope in the surviving remnant of Israel (5:4; 9:8). In the book of Amos, God’s people, as a remnant, are those from within the people of Israel who repent and have true faith in God.171

Zephaniah speaks of total destruction with no survivors (1:2–3, 1:18, 3:8), but also the possibility (2:1–3), and even the certainty (2:7, 3:12), of the salvation of a remnant. The remnant is an existing faithful core of the nation, which will survive the coming calamity on Judah.

Throughout the book of Jeremiah there is a development of the remnant motif. Initially, Jeremiah prophesies that there will be no remnant (6:9; 8:3; 15:9), and in fact 24:8-10 speaks of an even more horrible fate for those who remain behind in Jerusalem or who go to Egypt during the exile. However, after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. Jeremiah starts to speak of

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170 Ibid., 218.
the remnant (to which he now belongs) more positively. The remnant is those left in Judah (44:14; 28) whom Jeremiah was summoned to pray for (42:5).

4.3 Conclusion
What we see throughout the Old Testament is the dual sense of the remnant concept. That the remnant at times has a negative meaning when referring to a small number of survivors in the midst of God’s judgment on people through the means of destruction and defeat. And at other times the remnant concept carries a positive and hopeful message, pointing to the fact that God has been merciful in sparing a small number of people with the intention of pointing to a hopeful future for those who remain.

Whilst staying in the Old Testament, I will now focus more specifically on the remnant concept in Isaiah.
Chapter 5: The Remnant Motif in Isaiah

5.1 Introduction

In the Book of Genesis, God made a covenant with Abraham, primarily that he would become the father of a nation as numerous in population as the stars in the sky (Genesis 22:17; 26:4). God would bless this nation of Israel in order that they would be a blessing to the nations around them (Genesis 12:2-3). However, in the opening chapters of Isaiah we see a different story. The book of Isaiah begins with a denunciation from God concerning the nature of Israel’s relationship with himself (Isaiah 1:2-4). Israel has turned to a life of sin, pride and oppression, all of which are contrary to the purposes of God for creation. Because of her actions, God must bring judgment upon the nation of Israel (Isaiah 1:25). This judgment will come in the form of destruction at the hands of enemy nations and will ultimately reduce her to a state of helplessness. But alongside this message of judgment there is a message of hope. God is still faithful to his covenant with Israel. He still has a purpose for this nation and he plans to fulfil his promises (Isaiah 1:26-27). This idea of hope amidst a message of judgment is expressed in the book of Isaiah through the theme of the remnant. The theme of the remnant “serves to resolve very effectively the tension inherent in the belief in Israel’s divine election with the vicissitudes and realities of Israel’s history.”\(^{172}\) The remnant motif plays an important part in the overall message of Isaiah. It is “perhaps the most apt summary of the entire book, since it captures the interwoven themes of redemption and judgment that prevail from beginning to end.”\(^{173}\)

When exploring the various references to the remnant motif in Isaiah, there is always the difficulty of dating the passages where the remnant appears both explicitly and also implicitly, especially in the oracles of Isaiah in 1-39.\(^{174}\) Therefore I will trace the theme of the remnant through Isaiah using a literary approach rather than a historical or sociological approach. I will examine the use of the remnant in each of the three commonly agreed upon sections of


Isaiah. Subsections in First Isaiah will follow the structure adopted by Barry Webb in his article, *Zion in Transformation: A Literary Approach to Isaiah.*

In this section I will also attempt to make clear that as the book of Isaiah develops with the changing of the historical situations at the time, so too does the theme of the remnant. While the general sense of “remnant” as “the remaining part of a whole” does not change in Isaiah, the remnant motif does develop as the relationships with other nations develop. The remnant “is not a static concept with a single stable semantic content throughout the book. It is variously nuanced, and the changes are rung on it as the book progresses through the various sub-units which comprise the whole.” The remnant does not refer to one specific person or group of people in the book of Isaiah. We will see that the remnant refers to a historical people during the Assyrian crisis and a faithful and eschatological people during the Babylonian period.

It is important to note than one cannot simply conduct a word study of “remnant” in Isaiah and then address each occurrence of the word. If that were the case, Third Isaiah would be ignored completely. Whilst there are a number of explicit references to the remnant in First Isaiah and one in Second Isaiah, there are also many implicit references to the remnant as a concept throughout the whole book. As Clements notes, “it is the ‘theme’ or ‘concept’ of a remnant, which is in many respects more important than the particular occurrence of the term.” An example of an implicit reference in Isaiah is 1:9, where it says, “If the Lord of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we would have been like Sodom, and become like Gomorrah.” This implicit reference is important for this thesis as Paul picks up on Isaiah’s use of the remnant motif in Isaiah 1:9 and uses it as part of his argument in Romans 9:29. Whilst every explicit reference to the remnant will be examined, the focus here is primarily on those uses that show the developing nature of the motif, whether explicitly or implicitly. It is the view of this thesis that the developing nature of the remnant motif in Isaiah has an impact on the way we

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175 Chapters 1-39, 40-55, and 56-66.
177 Ibid., 73.
179 The NRSV uses “remnant” 15 times in ch. 1-39 (10:19, 20, 21 (x2), 22; 11:11, 16; 14:22, 30; 15:9; 17:3; 28:5; 37:4; 31, 32) and 1 time in ch. 40-55 (46:3).
understand Paul’s use of the remnant motif in Romans 9-11.

5.2 Isaiah 1-39: The Historical Remnant

5.2.1 Chapters 1-12
The theme of the remnant and its dual nature appear implicitly in the opening chapter of Isaiah. The beginning of the book of Isaiah speaks of the charge against Israel: “She has forsaken the Lord and is, as a result, broken and desolate.”181 As a result of Israel’s unfaithfulness, they have suffered at the hands of a devastating invasion, which had it not been for the grace of God, would have been completely wiped out like the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (1:9). Isaiah opens with the remnant referring to the “few survivors” of Judah who were saved because they repented “by righteousness” (1:27). By contrast, the rebels and the sinners were not left as part of the remnant (1:28). There is a negative element to this passage, in that God has abandoned the larger portion of the people, who were then destroyed or imprisoned. On the other hand, there is a positive element, in which God shows “providential care which prevented complete genocide.”182

God’s punishment will not last forever. The process of “smelting” (1:25) indicates that the purpose of God’s judgment is to purge or refine his people. What will be left over are a people of righteousness. In the initial stages of Isaiah we see “a vital link between judgment and salvation.”183

Hasel sees the idea of a remnant in 4:1. “The ‘one man’ is a representative of the survived remnant which will return from the many men who will go forth in battle against the enemy.”184 From 2:1-4:1 Isaiah announced the destiny of Israel to be the people of God, but their present condition was not reflective of this. Israel, through punishment, is to be significantly reduced in size, initially down to Judah and Jerusalem, but then even Judah was being taught by the world instead of being a light to the world.185 The destruction of the male population (the soldiers) in Jerusalem (3:25) will be so devastating that the women will far outnumber the men. The survival of a remnant gives witness to the enormity and atrocity of the destruction.

181 Oswalt, The Book of Isaiah, 84.
184 Ibid., 262.
185 Oswalt, The Book of Isaiah, 144.
These negative connotations of the survival of a remnant now take a positive turn in 4:2-6. God will in fact leave a remnant of Israel. This remnant, having had their ‘filth’ washed away (4:4), which reminds us of 1:25, will be called holy (4:3). The nation of Israel, God’s people, will not continue beyond the judgment.

Chapter 7 presents a difficult yet important passage for the theme of the remnant. Whilst the term remnant is not found in the text, the theme is brought to the fore in the meaning of the name of Isaiah’s son, Shear-jashub (7:3), which means “a remnant will return.” It is argued by some that 7:3 is the foundation for the entire concept of the remnant in Isaiah (שאר ישב).186

As Hasel comments, “in an attempt to gain a correct understanding of the symbolic name of Isaiah’s son, one must heed the warning…that the term remnant in this name, must not be taken in isolation, but should be seen in connection with the totality of Isaiah’s message.”187 This passage is set while Ahaz was likely to be out checking a possible issue with Jerusalem’s water supply caused by fear of the impending attacks on Jerusalem, and the city’s current inability to have access to water during a siege. Isaiah is sent by God to meet Ahaz and to give him the message, “do not fear” (v4). God instructs Isaiah to take his son along with him. The son himself was part of the message. The son’s name added to Isaiah’s message that what remains of the two enemies is just smouldering firebrands.

Looking at the name of Isaiah’s son and the wider context in which Isaiah’s son accompanied his father, the name is to be understood as a message of doom with a sense of loss and defeat for the enemies of Judah, who in this context were Syria and the Northern Kingdom. Thus, the idea of a remnant was negative for those nations that opposed Judah (but only if Ahaz was to put his trust in God), but it was not negative for Judah. For Judah then, by implication, it can be seen as an indirect allusion to salvation.188

If Ahaz was to put his trust in God, the message of the remnant in 7:3 would have been more positive for Israel, but instead Ahaz does not trust God, and sides with Assyria, and as a result the message of the remnant in 7:3 is adjusted in 10:20-23. Clements notes, “it was not until the political disasters had taken place…that the idea of a remnant began to take on even a

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186 Oswalt, The Book of Isaiah, 199.
187 Hasel, The Remnant, 278.
marginally hopeful connotation.” Here in 10:20-23 we have the clearest example of the dual sense of the remnant in Isaiah. Up until now, the remnant had been seen mostly as negative, but in this passage, we get a strong sense of both positive and negative.

Isaiah 10:19 speaks of the insignificance of the remnant of Assyria; “The remnant of the trees of his forest will be so few that a child can write them down.” A clear and completely negative picture of destruction for Assyria is depicted here. With regard to Assyria, the remnant motif is used by Isaiah to signal their destruction, as they are now considered an enemy of Israel and Judah. But what then does the future hold for Israel/Jerusalem?

Verses 20 and 21 speak of a time in the future when the remnant will no longer lean on “the one who struck them,” which is a reference to their enemies (Assyria) whom Judah, under Ahaz, trusted instead of God. Rather the remnant, those who remain after the defeat at the hands of the enemy, will trust in God. The remnant here implies that a small group of those left over as exiles will finally exercise genuine faith in Yahweh, in contrast to the picture in 9:7-10:4. There is a sense of assurance given here that they are not facing total annihilation, However, that does not mean there is no destruction ahead for the majority. Even though there is an assurance that the people will not be annihilated, there will only be a remnant that remains. The promise to Abraham will not be abolished, it will be fulfilled, but the promise will not protect the people from judgment. Oswalt notes, “the one who is sovereign has decreed their destruction because of their sin, and the number of their population will have nothing to do with the outcome.”

Again, this shows the dual sense of the remnant. It is negative in that for some to remain, many must cease to exist. However, it does give a glimmer of hope that not all will be lost and that God still plans to work through his people.

Amidst all the prophecy of coming judgment, 12:1 suggests a time when God’s people, those that remain, will sing to him. Even in these messages of destruction, then, there is hope of a day when God’s people will worship him because of the salvation he has given them. This

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189 Clements, “Remnant Chosen by Grace,” 111.
eschatological idea of the remnant appears in the songs sung by the remnant throughout Isaiah (chapters 12; 26-27; 35; 51 & 55; 66) and will be fully expounded in Third Isaiah.

5.2.2 Chapters 13-27
In chapters 1-12, Isaiah employs “the remnant” chiefly to address Israel, during which he spoke of “a few survivors.” He spoke of the coming judgment through enemy armies and that only a few would remain. In chapters 13-27 we see a shift in who the remnant is. Isaiah now takes the concept and uses it when speaking about the foreign nations.

In 14:22 remnant language is used when describing the total destruction of the Babylonians. Straight after this passage we come to 14:29-30, where the Philistines are given the same message as the Babylonians; that is, not even a remnant will survive: “And your remnant I will kill” (14:30). A similar message is given for the Moabites in 15:9, for the northern kingdom of Israel in 17:3, and in 21:17 for the surviving archers and warriors of Kedar.

In chapter 24, no longer is it just Babylon or Kedar or the Philistines, but it is now the whole earth: as Oswalt notes, “the whole earth is under a curse because its people have broken God’s laws.” Nobody is exempt from the devastation and only a few, a remnant, will remain. “Therefore the inhabitants of the earth dwindled, and few people are left” (24:6). The purpose of this judgment upon the earth is to establish God’s rule in Jerusalem/Zion (24:23).

5.2.3 Chapters 28-35
The remnant shifts back from the other nations in chapters 13-27, to Judah/Jerusalem in chapters 28-35. Here Israel is relying on Egypt, not God. They are still refusing to trust God, which is a theme that underlines all of chapters 7-39.

In 28:5 we can perceive a link to 4:2-6 in that those who truly have faith and trust in God will escape destruction. Despite the judgment on Israel, God will achieve his purpose. God will punish Israel by allowing the circumstances to reduce the nation down to such a remnant in order that they will be “like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain” (30:17). This is not a cause for rejoicing. The destruction will be so devastating that only a few will remain. However, the imagery of at least a flagstaff remaining, coupled with the hope for those who choose to wait

192 Oswalt, The Book of Isaiah, 443.
upon on the Lord, not Egypt (30:18), is a positive message, a glimmer of hope, amidst a message of judgment and destruction.

The end of this section has a similar conclusion to the first two conclusions of previous sections (chs. 12 and 26-27). In 35:10 we are given yet another picture of those who remain, returning to Zion with singing. Webb notes that “again the consummation is reached in Zion and the ‘ransomed of the Lord’ are the eschatological remnant.”

5.2.4 Chapters 36-39
Not only are these chapters the last of what is considered to be mostly the work of First Isaiah, or of the prophet himself, but these chapters act as a sort of transition from First Isaiah to Second Isaiah.

In Isaiah 37 the remnant theme occurs twice. In 37:4 it is used to speak of the inhabitants of Jerusalem who remained after the Assyrians had captured all of the outlying garrisons and villages (36:1). In the midst of the attack from Assyria, Isaiah offers a similar hope to that which he offered Ahaz (7:4): “do not be afraid” (37:6). The word used for “remnant” in 37:4 is different from that used in 7:3 in the name of Isaiah’s son, but 37:31-32 picks up the language of 7:3 and uses it to describe the remnant. Here the remnant is most likely those remaining in Judah/Jerusalem after the Assyrian conquest. Isaiah is giving hope to the few Judeans who remain, so that they will be the seed with which God will replant the nation of Israel.

Because of the transitional nature of this section, we do not see an eschatological climax resulting in songs being sung on the way to Zion. Webb writes, “there is no finality to the remnant concept here and no move to an eschatological climax.” What we do see as we transition from one section to the next, is a transition in the nature of the theme of the remnant. Up until now, the remnant has been used in terms of a “historical remnant,” referring to a human remainder, or survivors after an attack or devastation. As we move into Second Isaiah, we will see that the remnant will shift more to addressing the faithful or the holy ones who remain during the exile.

194 Ibid., 75.
195 Oswalt, The Book of Isaiah, 647.
196 Ibid., 665.
197 Webb, “Zion in Transformation,” 76.
5.3 Isaiah 40-55: The Faithful Remnant

Umoren writes “although it can be said that the remnant motif runs through the 66 chapters of the book of Isaiah, its explicit usage in chapters 40-55 is very rare.”\(^{198}\) The occurrence of the theme of the remnant in Second Isaiah can be found both explicitly (46:3) and implicitly (44:17; 49:21). The text of 46:3 is significant for the development of the theme of the remnant, and therefore requires extra attention.

In Isaiah 46:3 we see the remnant becoming associated with the exiles. Webb writes, “the remnant idea is sustained...by the transference of the remnant concept to the exiles.”\(^{199}\) No longer is the remnant attached to the other nations and no longer is the remnant speaking specifically about those who remain after a catastrophe or destruction. Rather the remnant is now those from the “house of Israel” who are living in exile. We see here a picture of divine providence: a God who has carried the remnant from birth through to old age. In 48:10 we are reminded of the refining imagery in 1:25. Babylon becomes the furnace in which the refining takes place,\(^{200}\) and the remnant of Israel which emerges is the “purified residue.” God will carry this remnant back to Zion. Anticipating the return from exile, “Deutero-Isaiah sought to explain everything as a re-creative work of God.”\(^{201}\) The message about the remnant is now not so much a message of coming judgment but rather a message of a coming restoration, of salvation, and the fulfilment of God’s promises. Umoren writes, “this change from a negative sense of the remnant to a ‘hopeful estimation’ came about from the time of Deutero-Isaiah towards the end of the exile.”\(^{202}\)

Again, we see the singing of praise to God at the end of the section (51:11; 55:12-13). The remnant is now understood corporately as all of the exiles who returned to Zion/Jerusalem from Babylon. The remnant is viewed eschatologically through their singing songs of praise to God on their return from exile. The whole of creation is described as responding with joy.

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\(^{199}\) Webb, “Zion in Transformation,” 76.
\(^{200}\) Cf. Deuteronomy 4:20; 1 Kings 8:51; Jeremiah 11:4
\(^{202}\) Ibid.
5.4 Isaiah 56-66: The Eschatological Remnant

Just as the theme of the remnant was rare in Second Isaiah, so too is the case in Third Isaiah. But as was the case in Second Isaiah, the rarity of the theme of the remnant does not discount the significance of the theme to this section of the book. In these chapters, the theme of the remnant is more theologically developed than in the previous sections of the book. Umoren writes, “there is the hope, not only that the holy and faithful remnant would take root, but also that the eschatological remnant would emerge from that nucleus.”

Immediately in chapter 56, we have a charge to “maintain justice and do what is right” (56:1). Based on the imperatives being in the plural, the charge goes out to all believers in the restored community, rather than to the individual. The next verse draws a distinction between those who keep justice and do what is right and those who do evil. This distinction is further elaborated in chapter 57. Those who follow God are considered servants of God (63:17; 65:8-9). So what we have in Third Isaiah is a post-exilic community, considered to be a remnant saved by God. However, this remnant is not perfect and so there is still in a sense a process of sifting out those who truly trust God and live his ways. Those who do will be considered servants of God and will make up the eschatological remnant. They will live as a people in Zion, a people who will bring great joy to God. So the remnant moves from being made up of those faithful to God to going through another sifting process, which transforms it into the eschatological remnant, servants of God in the new heavens and the new earth (65:17).

There is another theological development of the remnant in Third Isaiah that is essential to the discussion. In 56:3 we see the extension of God’s covenant and thus the remnant is expanded out beyond God’s people to all the nations. God will gather other nations to himself and make them part of his remnant (56:8). They will be involved in the rebuilding of Jerusalem and will actively worship God (60:7, 10). In 66:19 God declares that he will even send those who returned from exile out into the nations to declare God’s glory.

With the inclusion of foreign nations in the remnant and the sifting of the post-exilic remnant, we see that the remnant is not just a group of leftovers, or just the lucky survivors after some

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203 Ibid., 95-96.
205 Ibid.
sort of devastation. Thus, on the contrary, the remnant “is a faithful group of men and women who deserved to be saved.” The remnant no longer refers to just the historical survivors, or only the faithful ones in exile, but it now carries an eschatological nuance as it points forward to a group of people, Jewish and foreigner, who have come through God’s refining process and have shown themselves to be faithful to him. The remnant, however, is still a remnant.

The book of Isaiah finishes with a picture of perfect worship (66:22-23), which is the opposite of what is described in its opening chapters, where Israel’s worship was detested by God (1:11-15). Each section of Isaiah (apart from the transitional section, chs. 36-39), concluded with an eschatological song, pointing to the day in which the true, faithful remnant will worship God. What we have in 66:22-23 is a picture of the remnant engaged in not just singing, but in full worship of God.

5.5 Conclusion

In Isaiah we see the same dual nature of the remnant concept that we see in the rest of the Old Testament. The remnant in Isaiah is a sign of destruction and defeat as well as a sign of hope for the future. When it comes to the other nations in the earlier parts of Isaiah however, the remnant speaks only of destruction. We see the enemies of Israel such as the Babylonians facing total destruction, no remnant or survivors in the wake defeat (14:22). We see earlier in Isaiah the idea of the remnant as part of God’s “smelting” (1:25). God refines his people, sifting out the righteous and the faithful to be his remnant (28:5) and to carry on as God’s people. Those who are not part of the remnant face destruction.

In second Isaiah, those who are in exile are considered the remnant (46:3). The remnant now begins to move from a more historical perspective, what was the survivors amongst destruction, to now a more eschatological perspective, where the remnant returned from exile and are the sign of a future hope for Israel.

In third Isaiah the remnant expands beyond just Israel to include faithful converts from other nations (56:3, 8). Other nations will join the remnant of God’s people and will partner together and worship God together as they rebuild their nation (60:7, 10).

A strong characteristic of the remnant concept in Isaiah is that the remnant are those who are seen to be righteous and have faith in God. Those who are not, face destruction and do not remain. This is an important aspect of the remnant that will shape how we interpret the remnant concept in Romans. In the following chapters I turn to the text of Romans and exegete the remnant passages in Romans.
Chapter 6: Exegesis of Romans 9:24-29

6.1 Introduction
We first read the word “λείμμα” (“remnant”) in Romans when we get to Romans 9:27 (“ὑπόλειμμα”). This use of the term “λείμμα” occurs as part of a smaller section within the larger section of chapters 9-11. It is in Romans 9:24-29 that we find Paul building on the theme of the remnant from the Old Testament prophets to strengthen his argument. In this section, 9:24-29, Paul weaves together quotations from Hosea and Isaiah in order to support his claim that in Christ, God has called Jews and Gentiles together to be his people.\(^\text{207}\) In order to fully understand Paul’s use of the remnant theme from the Old Testament scriptures, we need to look at the whole passage in which we find it used.

This passage, beginning in v24, continues on from v23 as part of the same sentence. The relative clause, οὖς (‘who, which, what’\(^\text{208}\)), opens v24 and connects it with v23 syntactically and links it back to σκεύη ἐλέους (“objects of mercy”) in verse 23.\(^\text{209}\) The challenge here is to know a) whether v24 is a continuation from v23; b) if v24 should be seen as a new sentence; c) or if v24 is the beginning of a new section which continues on into v25 and up until v29. At first sight it seems odd that some might see v24 as the beginning of a new section, since between v23 and v24 there is a seemingly seamless transition.

Romans 9:23-24

Rom 9:23-24 23 καὶ ἵνα γνωρίσῃ τὸν πλοῦτον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ σκεύη ἐλέους ἃ προητόμασεν εἰς δόξαν; 24 Οὖς καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς οὐ μόνον εἰς Ἰουδαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς ἑθνῶν,

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\(^{209}\) Schreiner, *Romans*, 525.
23 and what if he has done so in order to make known the riches of his glory for the objects of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory 24 including us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?

Some scholars read these verses as though Paul’s argument in v19-23 continues beyond v23 and is completed in v24. However, there does seem to be “a pause for breath” that is being indicated between v23 and v24. Clearly this should indicate a new sentence and it is likely that this is best signaled by a new paragraph in the translation. Jewett also notes that this pause for breath between v23 and v24 gives more force to the words “whom he also called” in v24. And so what we have in the transition between v23 and v24 is more than just an obvious pause for breath. There is a noticeable change in direction as we move into v24 from v23. Paul is highlighting the objects of God’s mercy as the reason for God’s actions in v19-23 as well as establishing God’s sovereignty and freedom to choose whomever he wills. In v24 Paul is laying the foundations for his argument in which he will demonstrate the identity of the “objects of mercy,” (v23) the “us,” who will consist of those who follow Christ, both Jews and Gentiles alike. Paul is ultimately moving away from an Israel-centred worldview, whilst still affirming the continuation of the call to his own people, but also indicating that those God is calling to be his people now include some from among the Gentiles. Moo notes that Paul’s focus here in v24 is on the scope of God’s calling, rather than on the nature of God’s calling.

Therefore, in this section in Romans 9, we begin in v24 with Paul’s somewhat scandalous inclusion of the Gentiles into the people of God. Verses 25-29 then support his claim. Verses 25-26 address Gentile inclusion and verses 27-29 address Israelite inclusion and/or the lack thereof. Moo finds a chiastic structure in this passage, with the quotations in v25 and v26 related to the final words of v24 chiastically.

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211 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 610.

212 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 570. See also Schreiner, Romans, 525.

213 Jewett, Romans, 598.

214 Schreiner, Romans, 525.

215 Bird, Romans, 335.

216 Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 70.

217 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 611.

218 Ibid.
A – God called Jews (v24)

B – God calls Gentiles (v24)

B’ – OT confirmation of God’s call of Gentiles (v25-26)

A’ – OT confirmation of God’s call of Jews (v27-29)219

Paul uses texts from Hosea and Isaiah to support his claim and to unpack what he is saying theologically. But Paul does more than just offer supportive texts. It is more complex than this. Paul has intertwined these prophetic oracles to help shape his argument.

6.2 Romans 9:24

Rom 9:24  Οὐς καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς οὐ μόνον ἐξ Ἰουδαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ἑθνῶν,

including us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?

The wider section of Romans 9:6-29 begins with Paul using the key thematic word καλέω (“call, call by name,” v7, 12)220 and then the focus moves in v14-23 to “mercy.” When we reach v24 we see a re-emergence in this section of the key thematic word καλέω (v24 - ἐκάλεσεν). Here, as Dunn writes, “the predetermined election is enacted in the reality of the present calling.”221 Paul is showing that those who are “called,” are called “not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles.” This is in line with what Paul has already said in Rom 1:16.222 Paul now needs to use scripture to back up his arguments that Jewish ethnicity does not guarantee salvation for the Jews and that a lack of this ethnicity does not mean damnation for Gentiles.223 Romans 9:24 sets up this claim and v25-29 back up that claim using scripture.

Dunn notes the awkwardness at the beginning of v24 with the phrasing, “Ὁ ὡς καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς,” and that this wording is almost certainly deliberate.224 Paul would have been conscious

219 Ibid.
221 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 570.
222 Romans 1:16 – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” (NRSV)
223 Craig S. Keener, Romans, New Covenant Commentary Series 6 (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009), 121.
224 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 570.
that this letter was to be read aloud, and therefore would have required it to be delivered slowly and with added emphasis, especially when the awkward ἡμᾶς (‘us’)225 was read out.226 Thus, Dunn is suggesting that Paul is setting up the reader of the letter to pause after v23, leaving the audience hanging momentarily. Then he catches their attention with οὖς, which then leads into ἡμᾶς and then to move onto the question he proposes as to whom the “vessels of God’s mercy” are, or who constitutes the people of God.

The ἡμᾶς stands in apposition to οὖς, which results in those who are being called in v23 being identified as fellow believers with Paul.227 This is further restating what Paul has said in Romans 1:16, 3:29 and 4:11-16. “Gentiles” are now associated with “Isaac,” “Jacob,” “those on whom God shows mercy,” “the honourable vessel,” “vessel of mercy,” and “seed.” Jewett writes “The ‘not only…but also’ formula, prohibits any foreshortening of the scope of God’s inclusive call.”228

There is a sense of separation, a sense of being called “out of” something larger that is implied through the use of ἐκ (“from”).229 Additionally, Paul’s use of Ἰουδαῖοι instead of Ἰσραήλ creates the same message.230 There is the potential for this to be read in a sort of “us” verses “them” tone, with “us” being the smaller group of Jewish and Gentile followers of Christ and the “them” being the larger group of Jews who are not followers of Christ. This is of course a major part of Paul’s argument in Romans 9-11, which he is beginning to unpack, and which he will fully explain over the coming chapters.231

By quoting Hosea and Isaiah, Paul taps into Israel’s story, especially the times when Israel lacked belief in God and the prophetic times post-exile. Paul does this in order to draw on

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225 BDAG, 275.
226 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 570.
227 Jewett, Romans, 598.
228 Ibid., 599.
229 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 570. BDAG, 295.
230 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 533. Dunn’s comments on Paul’s choice of language to describe the Israelites in 9:4 are helpful here: “Who are Israelites.” The choice of title is obviously deliberate, ‘Israelite’ being preferred to ‘Jew’ (contrast 2:17, 28-29; 3:29). ‘Israel’ was clearly established in scriptural thought as the name equally of the covenant people and of the covenanted land. So when Paul uses it he is not thinking of his fellow countrymen and blood relations as such, but of them as the people of the covenant, first made with Abraham and renewed with Jacob (Gen 35:10-12). ‘Israelite’ then is the larger title, able to embrace all who inherit the promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Paul uses it even when speaking of the Israel which has not responded to the gospel, for his thought is primarily of the covenant people to whom God will remain faithful (even as he remained faithful to deceitful Jacob).”
231 Ibid., 570.
God’s promise of salvation of only a remnant. Paul then makes a provocative point in regard to the remnant, and that is that God’s remnant is made up of Christ-believing Jews and Gentiles. Paul makes this shocking statement by the simple use of the pronoun ἡμᾶς (‘us’). In Romans 9:24, “us,” refers to the body of united Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ as the “objects of mercy” (9:23), “children of the promise,” and “Abraham’s offspring” (9:8). These people are the same as those referenced by the “us” taken into God’s unfailing and unbreakable love in the Messiah (8:31-39).232

6.3 Romans 9:25-26

Rom 9:25 ὡς καὶ ἐν τῷ Ὑσηὲ λέγει· καλέσω τὸν οὐ λαόν μου λαόν μου καὶ τὴν οὐκ ἡγασμένην ἡγασμένην" 

As indeed he says in Hosea, “Those who were not my people I will call “my people,” and her who was not beloved I will call ‘beloved.’”

Rom 9:26 καὶ ἔσται ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ ἔρρεθη αὐτῶι· οὐ λαός μου ἡμεῖς, ἐκεῖ κληθὼνται γιοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος.

“And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they shall be called children of the living God.”233

Romans 9:25

In Romans 9:25 Paul quotes Hosea 2:23 and in 9:26 he quotes Hosea 1:10. The purpose of making these quotations is to support his claim in v24 that Gentiles are included in those whom God has called to be his people (v24 - “not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?”). The context of these two texts from Hosea are that Hosea is speaking of God renewing his mercy towards the rebellious northern tribes of Israel, whom God had rejected because of their sin. But now God is going to show a renewed mercy and readopt them as his people. God is casting off Israel because of her unfaithfulness, but then takes her back to the wilderness for a new betrothal in a new covenant for a new people.234 The original context of Hosea 1:10 and

232 Bird, Romans, 335.
233 Harvey, Romans, 242; Jewett, Romans, 601.
234 Bird, Romans, 335.
2:23 is not talking about Gentile inclusion.\textsuperscript{235} So why and how does Paul use these two texts as a justification for God calling the Gentiles to be a part of his people?

Paul treats these two quotations from Hosea differently. In v26 Paul quotes verbatim from LXX Hosea 1:10a (MT and LXX 2:1b). However, in v25 Paul quotes freely from Hosea 2:23 (MT and LXX 2:25)\textsuperscript{236} and combines Hosea 2:23 LXX and Hosea 1:10b LXX (2:16b MT).\textsuperscript{237} Paul makes some crucial alterations to these verses in order to support his argument being made in chapter 9. Paul’s free use of Hosea 2:23 is evident in the fact that he “changes the sequence of the verses, reverses the order of the two clauses he cites from 2:23, and uses wording different from both the LXX and MT.”\textsuperscript{238} Paul effectively weaves together the two verses (Hosea 2:23 and 1:10b) to help show his understanding of Hosea’s words as being not only a call to Jews but also to Gentiles.\textsuperscript{239}

Changing the sequence of the clauses in Romans 9:25 from the original sequence in Hosea 2:23 is done in order to emphasise “the people of God.” The reversal of these clauses would no doubt have forced a rereading or re-interpretation of Israel’s foundational scriptures which speak about election. Paul is flipping Hosea’s words that described God’s deep level of commitment and passion for Israel and now speak these words over the Gentiles. He does this by turning these words which were a “prophecy of the riches of God’s glory” for Israel, and now showering these riches upon the Gentiles as “vessels of mercy.”\textsuperscript{240} So the Gentiles who were not part of God’s original chosen people are now seen as objects of God’s choice and loving affection.\textsuperscript{241}

The beginning of v25 connects itself with v24 through Paul’s use of ὡς καί, which Jewett describes as a loose connection.\textsuperscript{242} Dunn suggests a stronger connection with καί, essentially adding a further development to v24, with the sense of “furthermore, moreover.”\textsuperscript{243} Glenny agrees with Dunn and suggests five reasons why ὡς καί is alluding to more than just a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{235} Kruse, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 388; Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 613.
\item \textsuperscript{236} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 612.
\item \textsuperscript{237} Wagner, \textit{Heralds of the Good News}, 79.
\item \textsuperscript{238} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 612.
\item \textsuperscript{239} Wagner, \textit{Heralds of the Good News}, 79.
\item \textsuperscript{240} Ibid., 83.
\item \textsuperscript{241} Fitzmyer, \textit{Romans}, 573.
\item \textsuperscript{242} Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 599.
\item \textsuperscript{243} Dunn, \textit{Romans 9-16}, 571.
\end{itemize}
comparison or analogy but is rather an application and development.\footnote{W. Edward Glenny, ‘The “People of God” in Romans 9:25-26’, \textit{Bibliotheca Sacra} 152, no. 1995 (1995): 49.} Firstly, these words are used in other parts of the New Testament to introduce Old Testament quotations that are more than just examples being used to support a point being made (Mark 7:6; Luke 3:4; Acts 13:33). In such occurrences in the New Testament ὡς introduces Old Testament texts which prove events that happened are a fulfilment of prophecy. Paul here is using the message Hosea gave to Israel as proof of his claim about Gentiles in the present. Secondly, Paul would normally quote a non-predictive portion of the Old Testament as an analogy when teaching a moral truth.\footnote{Examples of this as noted by Battle, Ps 19:4 in Rom 10:18, or Deut 25:4 in 1 Tim 5:18. John A. Battle, Jr, ‘Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9:25-26’, \textit{Grace Theological Journal} 2.1 (1981): 121.} But in this case, the purpose of the Old Testament quotations is to show the eschatological blessing marked by large numbers of Gentile converts. Thirdly, the following verses in 9:27-29, where Paul is quoting from Isaiah, are used as more than just an analogy but rather are teaching that only a remnant of the Jews will be saved. And so the context of Romans 9 which is one of showing promise and fulfilment and not just illustrations, suggests that these verses are contributing to a larger goal. Fourthly, in v24 Paul is making a theological truth claim that in himself and his generation (“us”), the prophecies from Hosea and Isaiah are being fulfilled and therefore the verses that follow should be understood as application, not comparison. And fifithly, Paul normally uses καθῶς (“just as”),\footnote{BDAG, 493.} which we see in v29. It is likely that ὡς in v25 is just a variation of καθῶς and therefore should also be seen here as referring to more than just analogy.\footnote{Glenny, ‘The “People of God” in Romans 9:25-26’, 49.}

The verb λέγει· could be translated as “it says” or “he says.”\footnote{BDAG, 588.} The NEB (New English Bible), for example, chooses “it says,” but Jewett notes that “he says” is preferable as it corresponds to “he calls” in v24.\footnote{Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 571. Dunn has no problem with “it says” being used and notes that using “it says” would not reduce “the force of the scriptural authority cited.” Dunn, \textit{Romans 9-16}, 571.}

When we come to Paul’s first quotation, immediately we see Paul using a different word from the LXX. At the start of v25, Paul replaces ἔρῳ (“to say”),\footnote{BDAG, 286.} which is used in the LXX (Hosea 2:25 LXX) with καλέσω (“I will call”).\footnote{Ibid., 502.} Using καλέσω instead of ἔρῳ allows Paul to recall
the context of his argument in v24 (Οὗς καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς – “us whom he has called”), and even earlier in Romans 9, where the verb is also used when Paul is speaking about divine election (9:7, 12).²⁵² By placing the verb καλέσω at the beginning of the quote (and also at the end), the verb is stressed, which helps Paul to make his point that Gentiles are called to be God’s people.²⁵³ Additionally, καλέσω helps Paul link together his composite quotation from Hosea in v26 with his use of κληθήσονται (“they will be called”), as καλέσω is a predictive future that forms an inclusio with κληθήσονται at the end of verse 26.²⁵⁴ And so the result is that both halves of Romans 9:25 are governed by a single verb, καλέσω.²⁵⁵

Paul then further develops his point in the next few words of his quotation by reversing the original order of the clauses from the way they are found in LXX Hosea 2:25b-c (“my people” now comes before “beloved”). The original text in Hosea was a hopeful message directed to people in exile, which spoke of a future restoration of Israel. By changing the order, Paul now directs the application of that passage onto the Gentiles and shows that they are being embraced as God’s own people. Gentiles were seen by many as “not my people.” However, Paul is claiming that the Gentiles are now called “my people” (λαόν μου) by God.²⁵⁶ By reversing the original order of the clauses, Paul is moving people’s understanding of who “not my people” refers to, which would have traditionally been covenant-breaking Israelites, and is extending the scope to now include Gentiles, who were once excluded from God’s covenant altogether.²⁵⁷ However, it is important to note that we should not limit God’s people to just Gentile Christians. Jewett points out that based on the context of the preceding verses and also with “the framework of the midrashic argument starting in 9:6,” we should understand “my people” to be a reference to the mixed community of the church.²⁵⁸ Glenny also notes that the phrase “people of God” in the New Testament is commonly used to describe the community of believers, both Jewish and Gentile.²⁵⁹

²⁵² Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 80. See also Jewett, Romans, 600.
²⁵³ Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 613.
²⁵⁴ Harvey, Romans, 241.
²⁵⁵ Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 81.
²⁵⁶ Jewett, Romans, 600.
²⁵⁷ Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 81.
²⁵⁸ Jewett, Romans, 600.
Alongside these clauses referencing God’s people, Paul uses the catchword from 9:13 (ἀγαπάω, “to love”), which allows him to correlate this new Christian community with Jacob/Israel as recipients of God’s love and favour even though they were not initially considered part of the “beloved.” As Jewett notes, “the reversal of favour implicit in the belief of the Christian community, the unbelief of the fleshly descendants of Abraham and Jacob, and the ultimate hope of the redemption of all are thus seen to be consistent with God’s love toward the northern kingdom during Hosea’s time.”

**Romans 9:26**

Verse 26 is a continuation of verse 25 (καί). As noted above, in v25 Paul quotes from LXX Hosea 2:25 but with some significant adjustments. In v26, however, Paul quotes from Hosea 2:1 LXX (MT 1:10) and sticks quite closely to the exact wording of the original citation. As was the case with the quotation of Hosea 2:25 (LXX) in v25, here too the original context refers to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, not the Gentiles. This text in v26 adds further weight to the point Paul is trying to make, which is that those who have been called “not my people” can have a new status as “God’s people” – sons of the living God. Osborne says, “God’s effectual call has resulted in a radical new birthright and status as a member of God’s family…God’s call has become worldwide, and all peoples are included.” Osborne is right to note that what is happening here is not just simply an expansion of the salvation process, with Gentiles now being allowed to participate in God’s salvation, as that was already allowed by Jews. But now, both Gentiles and Jews (those faithful to Christ) together form one single community in Christ, the church.

The verse begins with a geographical reference, “καὶ ἐσται ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ” (“in the very place where”). In the context of Hosea 1:10 this reference would have likely referred to Jerusalem or the land of Israel, but here, whilst Paul’s use of Hosea carries the spatial element of “place” (τόπῳ) from the original text, his intention is not to suggest in any way that Israel or Jerusalem

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260 *BDAG*, 5.
261 Jewett, *Romans*, 600.
264 Ibid.
is the goal for Gentiles. On the contrary, Paul here is quoting from Hosea to support his theological argument, not a spatial one.  

In Romans 9:6 Paul states that “not all Israelites truly belong to Israel.” Now in 9:26, with 9:6 in the background, Paul paints a picture of Gentiles as now considered by God to be his beloved people. Paul describes the Gentiles here in 9:26 as “sons of the living God.” Commonly in the Old Testament, Israel was referred to as Yahweh’s offspring, his sons and daughters. Paul picks up on this language in chapter 8 (v14, 19) as he builds his case for the people of God, God’s children, consisting of all who are “led by the Spirit of God” (v14). Jewett notes that “true Israel consists of those now being called from both Jews and Gentiles to participate in the new community of faith.” As was the case with τόπος, (“place”)  is a theological reference to ‘place’ rather than a geographical reference.

6.5 Romans 9:27

Rom 9:27 Ἡσαίας δὲ κραξεὶ ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ· ἐὰν ἢ ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν οὐκ Ἰσραὴλ ως ἢ ἀμμὸς τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σωθήσεται·

And Isaiah cries out on behalf of Israel, “Though the number of the children of Israel were like the sand of the sea a remnant of them will be saved;”  Paul mentions Gentiles and Jews in v24 as both being “objects of his (God’s) mercy.” In verses 25 and 26, Paul quotes from Hosea to further expand on the place of the Gentiles as not only objects of God’s mercy, but also to confirm their place within the people of God. In verses 27-28, Paul turns his attention to Jewish believers and draws on Hosea and Isaiah in order to confirm their place within the people of God alongside the Gentiles. There is still a small portion of the now mostly excluded nation of Israel that remains faithful to Christ, and it is

265 Fitzmyer, Romans, 573; Dunn, Romans 9-16, 572; Jewett, Romans, 601.
267 Jewett, Romans, 601.
268 BDAG, 1011.
269 ἐκεῖ ‘there, in that place,’ BDAG, 301.
270 I have used my own translation of the Greek text here as it differs from the NRSV and other translations. I use “on behalf of” instead of “concerning” and I remove “only.” I will argue for these changes in the text in the following paragraphs. The NRSV translation is as follows: “And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, “Though the number of the children of Israel were like the sand of the sea only a remnant of them will be saved.”
these Jewish believers who Paul suggests are a part of God’s people and that this is entirely in keeping with Old Testament prophecy.\textsuperscript{271}

In v25, Paul names Hosea, whom he quotes. Here in v27 Paul makes it clear that he is drawing from the text of Isaiah, as he explicitly references the prophet in his opening words. Whilst Paul is quoting from Isaiah 10:22 (LXX), he replaces a phrase in the text from Isaiah with a phrase from Hosea 1:10 (LXX 2:1). Whilst in v25-29 Paul names both of the prophets he is quoting from, in v27 Paul actually conflates their words, which suggests that Paul read both of these prophetic texts in light of each other.\textsuperscript{272} Paul could have made these changes either consciously or unconsciously.\textsuperscript{273} But the way the changes are made feeds into Paul’s theological argument about the people of God, which points towards a conscious amalgamation of the two texts. Paul exchanges ὁ λαός Ἰσραήλ (“people of Israel”) in Isaiah 10:22 with ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ (“the number of the sons of Israel”), which he takes from Hosea 1:10 (LXX). This verse from Hosea is the same verse Paul quoted from in v26. The reason Paul makes this change is that in this instance he is trying to avoid designating Israel with the word λαός, as he has just applied this term to the Gentiles in v25-26. Paul is attempting to emphasise the distinction here between the Gentiles in v25-26 and the Jews in v27-29.\textsuperscript{274} In v27b we see Isaiah 10:22a and Hosea 2:1a brought together or linked together for mutual interpretation by the simile “as the sand of the sea” (ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θάλασσης), which is a phrase both texts share.\textsuperscript{275} The original audience would likely have perceived the significance of these analogies.

The shift of focus from the Gentiles to Israel is achieved by the use of the adversative particle δέ (“but,” “and,” “now”).\textsuperscript{276} Heil suggests that Paul here is “expressing a contrast rather than a simple connective” with the previous verses.\textsuperscript{277} Wagner asks the question as to whether or not this is indeed a “strong disjunction” (“but in contrast”) or if it should be interpreted as a weaker adversative that is simply just signaling a change of focus (“now, as for Israel…”).

\textsuperscript{271} Osborne, Romans, 258.
\textsuperscript{272} Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 78–79.
\textsuperscript{273} Dunn, Romans 9-16, 573.
\textsuperscript{276} BDAG, 213.
Clearly, the focus is shifting from the Old Testament support of the Gentiles to a focus on Israel. However, Paul’s purpose is not to contrast the positive message he had just given about the Gentiles with a negative message. Rather Paul’s message now is to be read as one of good news for Israel and to raise a sense of hope.\textsuperscript{278} Harvey points out, however, that Paul’s use of κραζει adds a sense of urgency to this message of hope.\textsuperscript{279}

Paul’s purpose here in citing Isaiah (“cries out concerning Israel”) is to further develop his argument as to who the ‘vessels of mercy’ are. In v24, Paul’s thesis statement claims that God has called vessels of mercy from among the Gentiles and the Jews. In v25-26, these vessels of mercy are faithful Gentiles. In v27-28, Paul further develops his argument which began in 9:6-13, that only some from among Israel are the true spiritual Israel. Paul uses the Old Testament to make his case in v6-13, and is again making his case here using the Old Testament. As Moo notes, “it is in this way that Paul reconciles the promises of God to Israel and the small number of Jewish Christians. To establish the truth of God’s selectivity from within Israel, Paul cites texts from Isaiah that describe the important OT concept of the remnant.”\textsuperscript{280}

Many English translations of the text translate ὑπέρ\textsuperscript{281} as “concerning” (NRSV, NAS, KJV, ESV, NIV). A classic instance of this usage is the quotation “Isaiah cries out concerning Israel.” There are a few places in Paul’s writings where ὑπέρ is translated the same as περί,\textsuperscript{282} and one might even assume here in 9:27 when reading the English that the Greek used was περί.\textsuperscript{283} But it is not uncommon in the New Testament for ὑπέρ to be translated as “on behalf of, for the sake of.”\textsuperscript{284} Stowers and Heil note that the Greek Paul uses here when introducing people, (ὑπέρ with the genitive case), suggests that “on behalf of, for the sake of,” is a better translation.\textsuperscript{285} Additionally, Stowers, Wagner and Heil all suggest that the context of Romans 9:27 adds weight to a different translation of ὑπέρ than that which is commonly used.\textsuperscript{286}

\textsuperscript{278} Jewett, Romans, 601.
\textsuperscript{279} Harvey, Romans, 242.
\textsuperscript{280} Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 615.
\textsuperscript{281} BDAG, 1030–31. ‘for; in behalf of; for the sake of someone; because of; about; concerning.’
\textsuperscript{282} Dunn, Romans 9-16, 572–73. BDAG 797, ‘about; concerning.’
\textsuperscript{283} Stowers, A Rereading of Romans, 302.
\textsuperscript{284} Richard B. Hays, Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 68.
The reason that so many translations choose to translate ὑπέρ as “concerning” is likely because Rom 9:27b is being read as a negative statement about judgment or condemnation “concerning” or “about” Israel.287 However, if κράζει ὑπέρ is interpreted as “cry out on behalf of,” then Paul’s audience would have heard his introduction positively and expected that Isaiah’s message would proclaim good news for Israel, just as the previous words from Hosea had just positively stated the inclusion of Gentiles in God’s people.288

As we move through the text and onto the actual quote from Isaiah, we see that neither Hosea 2:1 nor Isaiah 10:22 begin the way that Paul needs them to. Paul is wanting to show a contrast between the large size of the people of Israel and the small size of the “remnant.” To achieve this contrast, Paul inserts ἐὰν ἢ (“though, if”)289 at the start of the question in order to bring out the contrast.290

In a number of translations, we see the insertion of “only” before τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σωθήσεται (NRSV, NIV, ESV, NET; “only a remnant of them will be saved.”). But a number of scholars are right to point out that “only” should not in fact be inserted into the text.291 The KJV translates this as “a remnant” and the NAS and ASV choose “the remnant.” Hays suggests that “only a remnant will be saved” is “an interpretive paraphrase with no textual basis in any Greek manuscript.”292 Witherington points out that the point of the remnant is to be a message of hope.293 By inserting “only” into the text, the message of hope is lost and the message becomes negative. The idea that “only a remnant” of the Jews will be saved is different from the idea that “a remnant” or “the remnant” will be saved. With the insertion of “only” into the text, the remnant comes to represent a destructive judgment on Israel rather than a hopeful opportunity of salvation for Israel, as is the original message in Isaiah 10:22, and as Paul clearly intends here as we see from the wider context.294 As Hays notes, “the quotation from Hosea proves

288 Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 93. See also Jewett, Romans, 601.
289 BDAG, 267.
290 Jewett, Romans, 602.
292 Hays, Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul, 68.
that God calls Gentiles, and the quotation from Isaiah proves that he calls Jews.\textsuperscript{295} Heil offers a translation of the text that reflects the hopeful element of the remnant: “But Isaiah cries out on behalf of Israel: ‘If the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, (surely, at least) a remnant will be saved!’\textsuperscript{296}

Throughout Israel’s history there has always remained the hope that, no matter what, the Lord will preserve a remnant of his people. These words from Isaiah used by Paul in Rom 9:27 originally spoke of a remnant who were the Israelite survivors of Assyrian captivity in the days of Isaiah. After just showing that Gentile believers are included in God’s people, Paul here chooses the language of the remnant to describe the small number of Israel who are still included in God’s people. The word Paul uses, ὑπόλειμμα, describes a relatively small surviving group.\textsuperscript{297} But the original word for “the remnant” in the LXX was κατάλειμμα.\textsuperscript{298} These words are synonyms but it is not clear why Paul chose to change them.\textsuperscript{299} Steyn suggests that by using ὑπόλειμμα, Paul adds more intensity to the text.\textsuperscript{300} Jewett attempts to explain Paul’s use of ὑπόλειμμα instead of κατάλειμμα by looking at the prefixes. With the prefix κατά meaning “down from or against”\textsuperscript{301} and ὑπό meaning “by” or “under,”\textsuperscript{302} it perhaps suggests that ὑπόλειμμα “may have lacked the antithetical, judgmental quality of the remnant idea.”\textsuperscript{303} Ultimately though we are not exactly sure why Paul chose ὑπόλειμμα over κατάλειμμα.\textsuperscript{304}

What is most important in this passage is who the remnant is and what the message of the remnant would have meant to Paul’s audience. With v24 in the background, Paul is using the remnant here to describe Jews like himself; Jews who are followers of Christ.\textsuperscript{305} Longenecker notes, “undoubtedly his reference to ‘those from the Jews’ (ἐξ Ἰουδαίων) has in mind Jewish believers in Jesus during Paul’s day. Such an identification may legitimately be assumed from

\textsuperscript{295} Hays, \textit{Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul}, 68.
\textsuperscript{296} Heil, ‘From Remnant to Seed of Hope for Israel: Romans 9:27-29’, 705.
\textsuperscript{297} BDAG, 1038.
\textsuperscript{298} Ibid., 520.
\textsuperscript{299} Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 602.
\textsuperscript{301} BDAG, 511.
\textsuperscript{302} Ibid., 1035.
\textsuperscript{303} Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 602.
\textsuperscript{304} Stanley E. Porter and Christopher D. Stanley, eds., \textit{As It Is Written: Studying Paul’s Use of Scripture} (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 116.
\textsuperscript{305} Witherington III, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary}, 252.
what he said earlier in 9:6b-9 about ‘the true seed of Abraham’ and from what he will say later in 11:1-7a about ‘a righteous remnant’ within Israel.”

Paul here is taking the message of the remnant as understood by Israel in the time of Isaiah, and applying it to Jews in his day who have accepted the call to follow Christ, just as he himself has.

While the doctrine of the remnant carries both a word of judgment and a word of hope, especially in the prophets, here the emphasis is on the word of hope. Of course, the message that the number of the Israelites (which are likened to that of the “sands of the sea”), are not at that time a part of God’s people in that same number is a negative message. But during the Second Temple period the remnant was often viewed as a sign of hope for the future restoration of Israel. The emphasis here in 9:27 is on the remnant, and placed alongside the calling of the Gentiles is therefore a positive and hopeful message for Paul’s audience.

### 6.6 Romans 9:28

**Rom 9:28**  
λόγον γὰρ συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων ποιήσει κύριος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

*For the Lord will carry out his sentence on earth with speed and finality."

Paul here in v28 continues the quotation from Isaiah 10:22-23 (LXX). Paul does omit a few words in his quotation from the LXX text. It is possible that Paul’s Greek text simply did not have these words, or perhaps they were not essential to the point Paul was trying to make.

It is also likely that Paul may have loosely combined Isaiah 10:23 with Isaiah 28:22b, with the result being that Paul’s quotation does not match either the MT or the LXX. The challenge of this verse is trying to understand what Paul meant when he used the word λόγον and the pair of participles, συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων (“quickly and decisively”).

This verse begins in the Greek text with λόγον (λόγος, “word”) which is often translated as “sentence” (NRSV, NIV, ESC, NET). This translation suggests a negative message of...
judgment over Israel. Heil notes that λόγον in the MT is עון, which means destruction. However, a few translations also translate λόγον here in v28 as “word” (ASV, NAS). Verse 28 is connected with v27 through γάρ (“for”) and one’s understanding of v27 will affect one’s interpretation of v28. If one reads v27 as having a negative message, then one is likely to translate λόγον in v28 negatively, and as a result a number of texts use “sentence” for λόγον. However, if one’s understanding of v27 is that it has a positive message, then one is likely to use “word” when translating λόγον. As mentioned already, the remnant in v27 has a positive message of hope for Israel, and therefore the best way to translate λόγον here is by using “word.” Additionally, we see Paul using λόγον in Romans 9:6 when speaking about the “word of God,” and in Romans 9:9 when speaking about the word of God’s promise to Abraham and Sarah. As Heil notes, “clearly then, λόγον in 9:28 means ‘word’ and is not referring to a sentence of judgment, but rather to God’s word of promise, as quoted by the prophet Isaiah.”

When it comes to the phrase “συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων,” scholars are not in agreement as to what the implied object is that connects these verbs. The actual meaning of the words is not difficult and not disputed. The verb συντελῶν means “bring to an end, complete, finish, close” and it carries the idea of completion, accomplishment and carrying out. This verb in itself is not difficult to understand, and it is used six more times in the New Testament. In the context of v28 (λόγον…συντελῶν…ποιήσει κύριος), it adds to the idea of the Lord carrying out his word that he will bring it to fulfilment. The verb συντέμνων occurs in the New Testament only here in Rom 9:28. It means “to cut short,” “cut down” or “to shorten.”

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314 BDAG, 189.
316 Ibid.
318 BDAG, 975.
321 BDAG, 975.
we see συντέμνων used with συντελῶν in the LXX we see either both being threatening in their message (Isa 28:22 and Dan 5:28) or more hopeful (Dan 9:24).322

The challenge then in Romans 9:28 seems to be determining what the object of the shortening or limiting action of the verbs.323 Most scholars opt for one of three different ways of reading “συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων” in its context. Firstly, some scholars see the two participles referring to “time” – that God will accomplish his word “quickly,”324 (NRSV, RNAB) or “with speed” (NIV).325 Add this to an interpretation of “λόγον” as meaning “sentence,” and one arrives at the idea of the text speaking about a “swift judgment.” Secondly, some scholars understand λόγον as the object of the participles, with the idea that God fulfils and curtails his word. In other words, that the scope of the promise is limited. Thirdly, other scholars such as Dunn see the participles as referring to the remnant of Israel, a smaller, more limited Israel who will receive God’s promises. As Dunn notes, “however the phrase is rendered, it must have in view God accomplishing his purpose in a (temporarily) diminished Israel.”326

6.7 Romans 9:29

It is just as Isaiah said previously: “Unless the Lord Almighty had left us descendants, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah.”

Paul now cites exactly from Isaiah 1:9 LXX. In the context of Isaiah, the Lord had pronounced judgment upon the nation of Israel which was to come in the form of the Assyrian army. Isaiah’s message spoke of a possible total annihilation, just as was the case with Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24–25). However, in the same way the text from Isaiah spoke of a remnant from Israel that was spared by the Lord, Paul now regarded the relatively small number of Jews who had responded to his gospel as a remnant preserved by God. The word of God had not

322 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 573.
324 Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 372. Osborne, Romans, 259.
326 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 573.
failed, but Paul still mourned over the rest of Israel.\textsuperscript{327} As Bird writes, “the remnant is an important element as it shows that judgment has not overtaken Israel and there is an embryonic hope for the future of the rest of Israel.”\textsuperscript{328}

Paul’s introductory words in v29 leading into this citation imply that what he has just described about Israel is not a surprising development, both their lack of response to and their inclusion in God’s plan, but is actually a fulfilment of God’s plan. Paul’s use of καθὼς makes it clear that Paul intends for his second quotation from Isaiah to support the first. Therefore, σπέρμα (“seed”)\textsuperscript{329} also refers to the same group of people, “the remnant,” of the previous quotation.\textsuperscript{330} In Romans 9:7-9, σπέρμα was mainly negative, but here a “seed” of hope is planted and this σπέρμα paves the way for hope still to come in chapter 11.\textsuperscript{331} Heil suggests that the hope represented by a “remnant” of Israel in v27 progresses to a “seed” of hope in v29, which then continues to grow through chapters 9-11 and reaches its ultimate climax in 11:26, where “all Israel will be saved.”\textsuperscript{332}

Thus, in v29 we see the completion of Romans 9:24-29 and with it the completion of the larger section it fits into, Romans 9:6-29. Paul uses an inclusio to connect the beginning and end of Romans 9:6-29. This inclusio is formed by the word σπέρμα, which we see in v7 and here in v29. We also see a link in the vocabulary. In 9:6a, Paul says that God’s word has not failed - the propositio for the passage - and then in 9:28, Paul says that God will accomplish his word, making v7-29 the probatio. Therefore vv7-29 is Paul’s evidence backing up his propositio.\textsuperscript{333}

6.8 Conclusion

We see a shift in focus from Gentiles to Jews in Romans 9:27-29 through Paul’s use of the two texts from Isaiah. These scriptures are not used to simply balance out the Gentile focused quotations from Hosea in Romans 9:25-26 to now focus more on Israel. Rather Paul used these texts because of the theological implications he was able to draw on, which came as a result of

\textsuperscript{327} Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 391.
\textsuperscript{328} Bird, Romans, 336.
\textsuperscript{329} BDAG, 937.
\textsuperscript{330} Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 110.
\textsuperscript{331} Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 616.
\textsuperscript{332} Heil, ‘From Remnant to Seed of Hope for Israel: Romans 9:27-29’, 703.
the way κατάλειμμα ("remnant") and σπέρμα ("seed" or "surviving descendants") were used in Isaiah. These terms are important to Paul as each in its own way encapsulates what Paul said in 9:6-13 with regard to God’s promises for his people and who his people actually are. Longenecker adds that these terms also sum up what Paul had just said with regard to God’s election in 9:14-24.\textsuperscript{334} Israel is redefined by Paul to include believing Gentiles rather than simply exclude unbelieving Israel.\textsuperscript{335} Paul then develops his argument beyond the claim that God has called both Jews and Gentiles to be his people by suggesting that also from within the people of Israel, a remnant will be saved.\textsuperscript{336}

The context of the Isaiah passages Paul uses in Romans 9:27-29 is one where Israel was experiencing God’s judgment. Paul uses these passages when speaking to the Jewish people in his own day whom he sees as currently experiencing a similar judgment as that of his people in the time of Isaiah. In both situations, the echo of the promise to Abraham of descendants like the sand of the sea emphasises the difference between the “sons of Israel” and the remnant that is saved. Paul is speaking the same message of hope in Romans 9 as Isaiah previously did. This is a message of hope in the midst of disaster and a promise to Israel that amidst the judgment God still has a future for Israel.\textsuperscript{337} The message of the remnant gives hope by suggesting that despite the disobedience of Israel, God will remain faithful to his people, and a remnant will be saved. God continues his faithfulness to his people, regardless of their own unfaithfulness to him.\textsuperscript{338}

In Romans 9:24-29, then, Paul is using the Old Testament Prophets to make his case that both the Gentiles and the Jews make up the church. However, just as in the Old Testament, it is not all Jews who are automatically God’s people, it is the faithful remnant. It is those who have not apostatised like the rest of the Jews who are included in the people of God.\textsuperscript{339} The centrality of faith was an integral part of the remnant in Isaiah (Isa. 7:3-9). It is likely that Paul would have had this text and other texts on his mind when writing Romans and applying the remnant concept.\textsuperscript{340} Paul carries on with this line of thinking and applies it to his own people in his day.

\textsuperscript{335} Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 599.
\textsuperscript{337} Wagner, \textit{Heralds of the Good News}, 107.
\textsuperscript{338} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 616.
\textsuperscript{339} Osborne, \textit{Romans}, 258.
\textsuperscript{340} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 615.
Although many apostatized, a remnant still remained, and so God would keep his promises to his people.341

Within Romans 9:6-29, Paul’s focus is on God’s promises that are only for those who are considered to be the “righteous remnant,” who initially were from within Israel but are also found outside of Israel.342 Paul surveys Israel’s history to show that there had always been an Israel-within-Israel made up of those who are faithful to God, that those people had always been the remnant and that now this term referred to the Jewish Christians of his day. The people of God are described by Paul as the remnant of Israel, Jewish Christians, along with the Gentile Christians.343 Paul’s desire is that all followers of Christ incorporate this view of themselves and their fellow believers into their theology, and that their thinking and actions as followers of Christ are shaped by remnant theology.344

The remnant in Romans 9:24-29 shows how God is faithfully upholding his covenant with his people and begins to move Paul’s message towards the salvation of “all Israel” (11:26). As Wagner writes, “the hopeful conclusion with which Paul’s argument ends in Romans 11 is thus already foreshadowed in his appropriation of Isaiah’s promise of a remnant in Romans 9.”345 As we move towards Romans 11:26, we will see in Romans 10:12-13 a reaffirmation that God chooses both Jews and Gentiles. In addition, in Romans 11:1-7 the fact that God is saving a remnant from Israel is reaffirmed.346 It is to Romans 9:30-10:21 that we now turn our attention.

341 Osborne, Romans, 258.
343 Bird, Romans, 336.
Chapter 7: In Between the Two Remnant Passages

Romans 9:30-10:21

In between our two remnant passages in Romans 9-11 (9:27-29; 11:3-5), Paul seeks to make the case that Israel has both contracted and expanded on the basis of Jesus the Messiah.\(^\text{347}\) In 9:24-29 Paul has just described the remnant and the inclusion of Gentiles into the people of God through their faith in Christ. Alongside this, Paul has described the current status of Israel as standing outside “the remnant” because they have “stumbled over the stumbling stone.” But Paul is not content with only a remnant finding salvation. Even though Paul is now a Christ follower, he remains a Jew; he always has been and always will be.\(^\text{348}\) In 10:1, Paul shares his “heart’s desire” to see his Jewish brothers and sisters obtain salvation. But despite their zeal, his people are ignorant of the climactic events in their covenantal history through Christ the Messiah.\(^\text{349}\) Paul goes on in 10:5-8 to explain the redundancy of obedience to the law in terms of righteousness. He then follows that up with an explanation of how righteousness is now given to both Gentiles and Jews through belief in Christ as Lord (10:9). Paul then explains how the message of the gospel has gone out to all the world but has been met with a mixed response. And whilst the picture painted of Israel’s response is one of disobedience and obstinance (10:21), Paul’s use of the jealousy motif in 10:19 lays the foundation for a message of hope for Israel that will “flicker across 11:1-32.”\(^\text{350}\)

\(^{347}\) Bird, *Romans*, 346.

\(^{348}\) Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 576.

\(^{349}\) Bird, *Romans*, 347.

\(^{350}\) Ibid., 346.
Chapter 8: Exegesis of Romans 11:1-7

8.1 Introduction: Romans 11:1-32
Paul concludes Romans 9:30-10:21 by quoting Isaiah 65:2 where God describes himself as holding out his hands “all day long” to a “disobedient and contrary people” who constantly refuse him (10:21). This brings us to Romans 11:1-32, the third major part of Paul’s argument in Romans 9-11.\(^\text{351}\) Paul wants to make it clear to his audience that God has not rejected Israel and to describe the hope for his “kinsfolk of the flesh” that they too can find salvation through faith in Christ. Just as he did earlier in Romans 3:3, Paul will insist that Israel’s unfaithfulness to God will be overcome by God’s own faithfulness to his people.\(^\text{352}\) This theme of God’s faithfulness to his people, that “God has not rejected his people, whom he foreknew” (v2a), can be traced throughout 11:1-32.\(^\text{353}\)

Romans 11:1-32 is undoubtedly a literary unit\(^\text{354}\) but can be broken down further into smaller subunits. Romans 11:1-10 and 11:11-32 are clearly two sections within the wider literary unit. Both sections begin with Λέγω οὖν (“I ask then”), followed by a rhetorical question presuming a negative answer and then followed up with Old Testament texts used to further unpack Paul’s argument.\(^\text{355}\) Gadenz points out that 11:1-32 is governed by the propositio found in verse 1a-2a: God did not reject his people.\(^\text{356}\) What follows then from v1b-32 is the probatio that explains the initial propositio and the following propositio in v11.\(^\text{357}\) Moo titles each of the two subunits as: 1) 11:1-10 – “Can any Jews be saved?” 2) 11:11-32 – “Can any more Jews be saved?”\(^\text{358}\) And whilst these two subunits clearly exist within this section, there are also clear lines of thought or argument that occur within each of these subunits. After the opening thesis statement declaring that God has not rejected his people, Paul develops his argument as follows:

\(^{352}\) Bird, Romans, 378.
\(^{353}\) Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 689.
\(^{354}\) Bird, Romans, 379.
\(^{355}\) Ibid.
\(^{356}\) Pablo T. Gadenz, Called From the Jews and From the Gentiles (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 224.
\(^{357}\) Ibid.
\(^{358}\) Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 689.
- 11:1-6 - The possibility of Israel’s salvation is established through the presence of a remnant.
- 11:7-10 - Israel’s failure to obtain righteousness through works.
- 11:11-15 - Israel’s failure or falling is described as not the final conclusion, but in the present leads to Gentile salvation, which may in turn arouse jealousy amongst Israel.
- 11:16-24 - The olive tree metaphor is used to describe election and the relationship between Jews and Gentiles.
- 11:25-32 - The mysterious hope of salvation for all of Israel is laid out.359

The relevant remnant passage to this thesis within 11:1-32 sits in the first subunit of 11:1-10. As Bird has done, this section is itself often broken down even further by scholars into two parts; 11:1-6 and 11:7-10.360 Romans 11:1-6 deals with the continued presence of a remnant within Israel as proof that God has not rejected his people. Following on from these verses, 11:7-10 addresses those who have failed to obtain righteousness. The rhetorical questions that Paul uses move into the next stage of his argument and pick up on important themes from 9:6-29. As he did in those verses, Paul here is describing Israel as two groups of people: the “remnant,” chosen by grace and enjoying the blessings of salvation, and “the rest,” those who are not following Christ and have been hardened. As noted previously, there are different views as to whether the “remnant” in 9:25-29 should be read positively or negatively,361 although I have argued that it should be read positively. In 11:1-10 the debate is settled, and Paul is completing his use of the remnant in Romans 9-11 to move his audience’s understanding of Israel’s situation from a potentially negative perspective to a positive, hopeful one. Thus the first subunit, 11:1-10, is something of a transition between Paul’s discussion about Israel’s past (9:6-10:21) to now discussing her future (11:11-32).362

Most of this exegesis will look at 11:1-6, with a particular focus on Paul’s use of “remnant.” A briefer summary of what Paul is doing in 11:7-10 will follow. It is also important to note that here in 11:1-6, Paul’s use of “remnant” and his Old Testament citations are not directly from Isaiah. It is not until we reach 11:8 that Paul then returns to Isaiah in support of his argument. However, it is important to note that much of Paul’s use of Isaiah in Romans 9 and 10 has helped shape his argument as he continues throughout Romans 11. Previously, Paul had been

360 Longenecker, Introducing Romans: Critical Issues in Paul’s Most Famous Letter, 877; Schreiner, Romans, 577; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 690; Osborne, Romans, 283; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans.
361 See previous section in this thesis on 9:24-29.
362 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 690.
using citations from Isaiah, which originally spoke of a promise for the restoration of Israel. Paul used these citations to show God’s redemptive plan for the Gentiles. Here in Romans 11, we see Paul address the question that is naturally raised, As Wagner writes, “if God has extended his grace to those ‘not his people,’ how much more will he remain faithful to his promises to redeem the people he has chosen as his very own inheritance.”

The concept of the remnant as developed by Paul from the text of Isaiah in 9:27-29 is the foundation for this passage and for Paul’s argument. Specifically, in 11:3-5, the citation used to unpack the remnant is from 1 Kings 19, not Isaiah, but this is simply because the narrative of 1 Kings 19 suits Paul’s argument well. It would be a mistake however, to disregard the influence of Isaiah’s remnant passages as formative on Paul’s concept of the remnant here in 11:3-5. The scriptures from Isaiah have informed Paul’s use of the remnant in 9:27-29 and have flowed right through chapters 9-11. Romans 11:1-7 reveals Paul’s theological convictions that shape the way he uses the Isaiah passage in 11:8, which speaks of spiritual blindness for Israel, as well as expressing Paul’s confidence that ultimately through God’s actions, “all Israel will be saved” (11:26-27).

### 8.2 Romans 11:1-2

**Rom. 11:1** 請問，如果神棄絕了他的子民？絕非如此！我自己也是以色列的子民，是亞伯拉罕的後裔，基甸的家族，以色列的支派。  

*I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.*

**Rom. 11:2** οὐκ ἀπώσατο ὁ θεὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ; ἢ οὐκ οἴδατε ἢ Ἡλία τί λέγει ἢ γραφή, ὡς ἐντυγχάνει τῷ θεῷ κατὰ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ;
God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?

Paul concludes in chapter 10 that Israel’s disobedience and obstinacy (ἀπειθοῦντα καὶ ἀντιλέγοντα, 10:21) are the major reasons for their rejection of the gospel. A natural response to this situation is to ask if Israel has rejected God, has God then rejected Israel?\textsuperscript{366} Chapter 11 begins with Paul first asking the question he knows his audience is likely thinking. Paul begins his rhetorical question with the verb λέγω (“I say”). This phrasing forges a link with 10:14-21 where Paul had previously used the same verb in 10:18 and 10:19. By adding οὖν (therefore, then) after the verb λέγω, Paul shows that he is now responding to what may have been implied previously in 10:14-21.\textsuperscript{367} Morris suggests that Paul’s use of οὖν does not have to connect 11:1 to anywhere else in Romans specifically (he lists the reprobation of the Jews in 9:6; 10:14-21; and 10:21 specifically, all as possibilities),\textsuperscript{368} but I agree with the majority of scholars who see ‘λέγω οὖν’ in 11:1 as a natural response to what Paul has just finished saying in 10:14-21.\textsuperscript{369} I would also agree with Schreiner who suggests that 11:1 is “harking back” to all of 9:30-10:21 where Paul “demonstrated that Israel has pursued the law by works instead of faith, sought to establish their own righteousness, and refused to believe in Jesus Christ even though the message has been preached to them and God has graciously invited them to believe and be saved.”\textsuperscript{370} Additionally, it is helpful to note that 11:1a does not just point back to what precedes this verse, but rather forwards to what will follow in Paul’s argument in the rest of this section. Gadenz notes that as 11:1a is the propositio of the section, it indicates what the main issues of this subunit will be about and also therefore what all of chapters 9-11 have been building towards until now: and that is the salvation of God’s people, Israel.\textsuperscript{371}

It is important to note that most scholars interpret λαός (“people”) in 11:1-2 to be referring to Israel as a whole, not just the elect.\textsuperscript{372} Paul then answers his own question as to whether or not

\textsuperscript{366} Kruse, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 442.
\textsuperscript{367} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 690.
\textsuperscript{368} Morris, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 398.
\textsuperscript{369} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 690; Longenecker, \textit{Introducing Romans: Critical Issues in Paul’s Most Famous Letter}, 878; Dunn, \textit{Romans 9-16}, 644; Bird, \textit{Romans}, 381.
\textsuperscript{370} Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 577.
\textsuperscript{371} Gadenz, \textit{Called From the Jews and From the Gentiles}, 227.
\textsuperscript{372} Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 578.
God has rejected his people, ethnic Israel, with an emphatic response, “by no means!” The verses that follow demonstrate how it is that God has not fully rejected his people.

Throughout Romans, Paul has redefined what the markers are for those who are considered to be part of the people of God, markers which are no longer related to physical descent but are now understood in terms of faith in Christ (3:28-4:25) and by the work and presence of the Holy Spirit (7:6, 8:1-16). Paul emphasises the fact that his Jewish heritage does not guarantee him righteousness, but nevertheless holds onto it as the inherited privileges are a “conduit for the revelation of God’s righteousness.” In 11:1b, we read Paul’s initial answer as to why God has not rejected his people. Here he gives a list of his own Jewish heritage: “I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.” Paul’s answer reads at first as if Paul, being someone who is a follower of Christ, is suggesting that he is a representative of all of the people of Israel or that perhaps he is the originator of a new reconstructed people. But what Paul is actually doing here is identifying himself as someone who is speaking as one from within the covenant people of God, not as an outsider. As Dunn writes, “it is not because he is a Christian that Paul can dismiss the suggestion that God has repudiated his people...it is precisely as a Jew that Paul reaffirms God’s faithfulness to the Jews.” We should not conclude from this verse, however, that Paul is implying salvation for all ethnic Israelites throughout history. Paul is about to unpack how God’s salvific promises to Israel are to be fulfilled. But for now, Paul is simply using himself as an ethnic Israelite as support for God’s faithfulness to his people.

In Romans 11:1-2 Paul draws either on Psalm 94:14 or 1 Samuel 12:22, or perhaps on both, to frame his question and answer. These two passages speak of a God who, despite the unfaithfulness of his people, will remain faithful to them. Paul’s use of these scriptures at the beginning of this subunit in Romans 11 would have made it easy for the Jews to understand and accept Paul’s argument that God has not rejected his people. The wording Paul uses

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373 See also Phil 3:5-9
375 Bird, *Romans*, 381.
376 Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 644.
377 Ibid.
378 Schreiner, *Romans*, 578.
379 Schreiner notes that it is unnecessary to decide which, if either, is the primary text. Ibid., 579.
closely reflects the wording of the text in the LXX except for a few changes, as shown in the table on the following page:\footnote{381}{Gadenz, ‘The Lord Will Accomplish His Word: Paul’s Argumentation and Use of Scripture in Romans 9:24–29’, 227.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Original Text (LXX)</th>
<th>Greek Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 Sam 12:22 | οὐκ ἀπόσεται κύριος τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ | 1 | 381
| Ps 93:14 | οὐκ ἀπόσεται κύριος τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ | 1 | 381
| Romans 11:1a | μὴ ἀπόσατο ὁ θεὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ; | 2 | 382
| Romans 11:2a | οὐκ ἀπόσατο ὁ θεὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ὅν προέγνω | 2 | 382

Paul changes the future verb ἀπόσεται (“push aside,” “reject")\footnote{382}{BDAG, 126.} to the aorist ἀπόσατο and he changes κύριος (“Lord")\footnote{383}{Ibid., 577.} to ὁ θεὸς (“God”).\footnote{384}{Ibid., 450.} The latter change is likely due to Paul trying to make clear that it was God (not Christ, the Lord) who has refused to abandon his people.\footnote{385}{Schreiner, Romans, 579.} Paul adds προέγνω (‘foreknew’)\footnote{386}{BDAG, 866.} and by doing so connects the theology of election from 8:28-30 to this passage. There is no consensus amongst scholars as to whether or not “God’s people whom he foreknew” refers to the special election of a smaller portion of Israel\footnote{387}{Schreiner, Romans, 579.} or the general election of the whole nation of Israel.\footnote{388}{Dunn, Romans 9-16, 645; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 692; Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 399. Du Toit, God’s Saved Israel, 263.} However, when read in light of the Old Testament citations being used in this passage, it is more likely that Paul is referring here to the nation of Israel as a whole.\footnote{389}{Osborne, Romans, 284.} By adding προέγνω to the description of Israel, Paul makes clear that Israel was and is part of God’s plan and that it was God’s choice to make it so. Thus, the Israelisites’ rejection of God at the current time makes no difference to God’s commitment to them. If it were to be an issue, God would never have chosen them from the outset. As Dunn notes, “Paul’s confidence is twofold: that Israel is not acting in any unforeseen way by God; and that consequently God remains faithful to Israel notwithstanding Israel’s failure.”\footnote{390}{Dunn, Romans 9-16, 645.}
By drawing on Psalm 93:14 LXX, Paul connects the reader to the verb found in that text, ἐγκαταλείπω (“to leave,” “forsake”). This verb also occurs in Isaiah 1:9 LXX, which Paul has cited earlier in 9:29 and is a cognate of the verb καταλείπω (“to leave behind” - 11:4) and the noun λείμμα (“remnant” - 11:5). Clearly when we look at the text here from the LXX and place it into the larger context of Romans 9-11, this text from Psalm 93:14 LXX foreshadows the remnant theme which is about to be taken up in the following verses. As Hays writes, “Paul’s allusion in Rom. 11:2a to Psalm 94 adumbrates the remnant theme that appears in the following sentences…an unvoiced element of the explicitly cited text subliminally generates the next movement of the discourse.”

8.3 Romans 11:3-4

Rom. 11:3 κύριε, τούς προφήτας σου ὑπέκτειναν, τὰ θυσιαστήρια σου κατέσκαψαν, κἀγὼ ὑπελείφθην μόνος καὶ ζητοῦσιν τὴν ψυχήν μου.

“Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars; I alone am left, and they are seeking my life.”

Rom. 11:4 ἀλλὰ τί λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ χρηματισμός; κατέληπτον ἑμαυτῷ ἐπτακισχύσας ἄνδρας, σετίνες σὺν ἔκαψαν γόνυ τῇ Βαάλ.

But what is the divine reply to him? “I have kept for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal.”

Looking back at 11:2, Paul says, “Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah…?” Here in 11:3 Paul cites two passages about Elijah from 1 Kings. When Paul asks his audience the rhetorical question “Do you not know?” he is assuming that his readers are familiar with this story. This story in 1 Kings 19 is one of the seminal remnant texts in the Old Testament. The text contains two key “remnant” terms meaning “those who are left remaining” (ὑπολείπω, ὑπολείπον...)}
v3)\textsuperscript{397} and “those who are left over” (καταλείπω, v4).\textsuperscript{398} Additionally, Paul used ὑπόλειμμα in 9:27 and will use λείμμα in 11:5.\textsuperscript{399} And so the language points the reader to the remnant concept which he established from the text of Isaiah and is part of his teaching on the people of God throughout Romans 9-11. This story from 1 Kings 19 is about King Ahab’s attack on God’s prophets. After King Ahab kills the prophets, Jezebel threatens to kill Elijah and so Elijah flees into the wilderness. Elijah expresses his anguish to God who then comforts Elijah and assures him that he is indeed working out his plan for Israel and the surrounding nations.

Paul uses and retells this story in quite a selective way. Much of the original content is disregarded and instead Paul focusses on Elijah’s exchange with the divine voice. Paul jumps into the story with Elijah’s accusatory words against Israel, “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars; I alone am left.” The implication here is that Elijah sees himself as the only remaining faithful remnant. Wagner notes that it could be easy for readers to apply a sort of “Elijah complex” to Paul, suggesting perhaps that Paul is likening himself to Elijah, the ‘only’ remaining faithful remnant. But doing this would be a mistake. Paul is not identifying at all with Elijah’s view of the remnant. In fact, Paul rejects Elijah’s view of the remnant.\textsuperscript{400} As Wagner notes, “Paul uses the text from Kings in 11:4 in order to show that he is not himself the only Israelite who has believed the gospel and remained faithful to God and that by God’s grace there is now an even larger remnant of Israel.”\textsuperscript{401}

Paul uses the “remnant” here because it suits his purpose in contrasting the seemingly hopeless state of Israel with God’s promise of a future for Israel, achieved by the preservation of a remnant.\textsuperscript{402} Paul does not bring the remnant back into the conversation because the concept of the remnant itself completely explains Israel’s apparent rejection of God, but because it plays an important part within the whole answer. Paul has already shown from Isaiah in 9:27-29, that through the remnant, God maintained and fulfilled his purpose for his people during the time of destruction of the Northern Kingdom.\textsuperscript{403} In Romans 11:3-4 Paul cites this remnant passage

\textsuperscript{397} BDAG, 1039.
\textsuperscript{398} Du Toit, God’s Saved Israel, 264.
\textsuperscript{399} Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 694.
\textsuperscript{400} Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 234.
\textsuperscript{401} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{402} Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 694–95.
\textsuperscript{403} Dunn, Romans 9-16, 645.
from 1 Kings 19 as not only evidence of God’s present faithfulness to Israel, but also as a foundation of his argument in Romans 11 for the future salvation of God’s people.

The point of similarity between the time of Paul and the time of Elijah, is that during their lifetimes the majority of Israel refused to be faithful to God. Paul compares Israel’s refusal to accept Christ as Lord in his day to that of Israel devoting themselves to Baal in the time of Elijah. Elijah’s interpretation of events in his time was that he was the only one faithful to God, and that God had therefore abandoned the rest of Israel. But this was not the case. The Lord had preserved for himself a remnant of faithful followers that numbered seven thousand. The size of the remnant in 1 Kings 19 is significant. Whilst Elijah could not see anyone else who had remained faithful beyond himself, and Paul in a similar situation is not seeing many of his fellow Jews following Christ, the point that Paul is making is that the remnant in his present time, just as it was with Elijah, is larger than he himself knows. Schreiner writes, “Paul fears that one might draw the similar conclusion that God has abandoned Israel since they have not confessed Jesus Christ as Lord.” In order to make the point that this is not the case, Paul makes a significant modification to the text of 1 Kings 19 (see text below). In 11:4, Paul adds ἐμαυτῷ (“of myself,” “my own”) into the text to make clear the idea that Israel signifies God’s own people whom he foreknew (11:2). The emphasis here, as it was in 9:6-29, is on the divine initiative. It was not the persuasion from Elijah that made the Lord preserve a remnant, but rather that God himself preserved a faithful remnant on his own initiative. And so too for Paul in his day, it is God who sustains and carries out his covenant purpose through the faithful remnant.

This is the text of 1 Kings 19:18 and the form it is quoted in in Romans 11:4:

1 Kings 19:18 LXX καὶ καταλείψεις ἐν Ἰσραήλ ἐπτὰ χιλιάδας ἄνδρῶν, πάντα γόνατα, ἀ οὐκ ὀκλασαν γόνυ τῷ Βααλ…

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405 Schreiner, Romans, 581–82.
406 BDAG, 320.
408 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 645.
Romans 11:4 κατέλιπον ἐμαυτῷ ἐπτακισχιλίους ἀνδρας, οἵτινες οὐκ ἔκαμψαν γόνυ τῇ Βάαλ.

Here we see that Paul has added ἐμαυτῷ to make clear that the remnant was God’s divine initiative. Thus, through God’s preservation of a remnant of faithful Jewish believers, his faithfulness to Israel is proven, but additionally the remnant is the seed from which God will grow the renewed people of God.\footnote{Bird, Romans, 382.}

8.4 Romans 11:5-6

Rom 11:5 οὕτως οὖν καὶ ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ λείμμα κατ’ ἐκλογὴν χάριτος γέγονεν.

So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.

Rom 11:6 εἰ δὲ χάριτι, οὐκέτι ἐξ ἐργῶν, ἐπει η χάρις οὐκέτι γίνεται χάρις.

But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

Bird notes that these two verses act as a summary of chapters 9-10. In 9:6-29 Paul describes the existence of a remnant as a result of God’s choosing (11:5), and then in 9:11-12 and 9:30-10:4, Paul excludes any claim of salvation or acceptance into the people of God based on works (11:6).\footnote{Ibid.} As well as a summary of chapters 9-10, in these verses we have simple summaries of the aforementioned Elijah story and of God’s dealings with his people. Paul achieves these summaries through his use of the word “remnant.”\footnote{Dunn, Romans 9-16, 646.} No doubt when Paul uses the language of remnant here in 11:5, he is intending to remind his audience of the passage from Isaiah he has previously quoted in 9:27 (Isaiah 10:22).\footnote{Ibid.} As Jewett writes, “picking up the cognate expression ὑπόλειμμα (“remnant”) from the Isaiah 10:22 passage…Paul refers here to this group as a λείμμα (“remnant”).”\footnote{Jewett, Romans, 659.}
That Paul is claiming that only a remnant in his day have shown themselves to be faithful to God is completely in line with the entire history of Israel since the days of Abraham. Since their beginning, the faithful people within Israel have always partaken of the nature of the remnant.\footnote{Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 695. Ronald E. Clements, ‘A Remnant Chosen By Grace’, in *Pauline Studies: Essays Presented to F.F. Bruce on His 70th Birthday* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 106.} What Paul has just made clear in 11:3-4 about the nature of the remnant in the time of Elijah, he now makes clear about the remnant “at the present time,” and that is that the remnant exists as the result of God’s gracious election, “chosen by grace.” Paul manages to carefully maintain a balance throughout Romans, where on the one hand, he affirms Israel’s ongoing place and importance within salvation history, the current stage that the gospel has inaugurated. But on the other hand, he makes it clear that Israel’s continued significance has nothing to do with their obedience to the law or any achievements on their behalf. In Paul’s day, Jews are no different to Gentiles and both are included within the people of God through God’s gracious intervention.

And so, in 11:5-6 Paul contrasts grace and works. Typically, Paul would be contrasting faith and works as he addresses covenantal practices by Israel that would have excluded Gentiles from a full sense of belonging in the people of God (Rom 3:28).\footnote{Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 236.} In Galatians 3:7-10, Paul places faith, which is received as an act of grace, above works of the law, in order to show that both Jew and Gentile are included in the people of God on the basis of their faith, not their works.\footnote{Wagner, 236; Bird, *Romans*, 382.} But in Romans 11:5-6, Paul is clearly bringing these two concepts together, “election” (ἐκλογήν – “chosen”)\footnote{BDAG, 306.} and “grace” (χάρις).\footnote{Ibid., 1079.} These two concepts are basically a summary of his whole argument in Romans 9-11 and that is as Dunn notes, “‘election’ which quintessentially expresses Israel’s self-understanding as the chosen people of God; ‘grace’ which so richly expresses Paul’s understanding of his experience of the gracious power of God through faith in Christ.”\footnote{Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 646.}

Paul here affirms the idea that works of any kind do not serve as the basis for election. The story of Elijah contains 7000 faithful men who did not bow the knee to Baal and therefore were
saved by God. This remnant of 7000 did not earn their salvation but received it as a gracious gift from God. As I have noted above, Paul makes this clear by adding into the text of 1 Kings 19:18 in Rom 11:4 the word ἐμαυτῷ (“of myself,” “my own”). 421 Wagner interprets this as Paul suggesting that the grace shown to the remnant of Israel “depends on nothing but God’s own pleasure,” just as it was for Israel’s election in the first place. 422 Bird agrees with Wagner’s interpretation, but goes further and adds that Paul’s contrast between grace and works shows us that Israel receives no nationalistic privileges because of their ethnicity when it comes to salvation. He adds that grace is God’s unmerited favour and if at any moment someone claims to have merited or earned God’s grace, then it ceases to be grace. 423

Du Toit comes to a different understanding of these verses. He rightly argues that whilst Paul is contrasting grace with works, he is referring to the way in which someone achieves membership in the elect remnant. 424 Paul has been closely connecting grace to faith (3:22-24; 4:16; 5:2) and so Du Toit argues that it seems reasonable to imply that faith in Christ is part of God’s grace, especially in opposition to works. 425 In verse 11:1 Paul refers to his own ethnic descent in answering his own question, “has God rejected his people?” But in highlighting his ethnicity, his answer does not go as far as to identify his ethnicity as the basis for his place within “true, inner Israel.” 426 Du Toit goes so far as to say that Paul in fact does not relieve much of the underlying tension regarding historical Israel and their current ambivalence towards the gospel. Paul is pointing back to Romans 9:27-33 to illustrate what Du Toit describes as the “crossover in salvation-history.” By pointing in these verses to the remnant chosen by grace, Paul is saying that those within ethnic Israel who do not believe in Christ have been rejected from the people of God. 427 Du Toit rightly acknowledges that those Israelites who do believe in Christ (the remnant) are in continuity with historical Israel and “those who were born under the Old Covenant as part of historical Israel and accepted their Messiah in faith, did in fact fully experience God’s uninterrupted faithfulness and grace.” 428

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421 Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 236.
422 Ibid., 237.
423 Bird, Romans, 382.
424 Du Toit, God’s Saved Israel, 265.
425 Ibid.
426 Ibid., 264.
428 Du Toit, God’s Saved Israel, 264.
Wagner also sees Paul’s remnant language in 11:3-5 as pointing back to 9:27-29 and his citations from Isaiah about the remnant, and argues that Paul understood this as referring to the present time when “a remnant will be saved.” Wagner does not see the remnant as signaling the rejection of the rest of the Israelite nation who are not following Christ. Instead, Wagner suggests that in 11:1-7 it is not clear whether the remnant is a temporary or permanent group. Paul makes this clearer as we move through chapter 11 towards 11:26, where the link between the “remnant” and “all Israel” will be revealed. What Wagner does note is Paul’s use of “seed” in 9:27-29 and how the remnant, composed of faithful Jewish followers of Christ, acts as a seed, and so therefore the remnant points to a growth in the number of Israelites who follow Christ. This is perhaps a more hopeful reading of the text for the wider Jewish population. Similar to Wagner’s understanding of the remnant in 11:1-7, Longenecker understands the remnant “at this present time” to be the true Israel that exists within the corporate body of national Israel. This remnant is made up of those who acknowledge Jesus as God’s promised Messiah, and through God’s grace have been included in the remnant. Longenecker expects that this remnant will expand in number in the future with those Jews who will come to know Christ at some point.

What all scholars agree on is that the existence of a remnant proves that God has not completely rejected his people. But Paul’s argument does not finish here, and he now turns his attention to the other group within ethnic Israel: those outside the remnant, the hardened.

8.5 Romans 11:7

Rom 11:7  Τί οὖν; ὃ ἐπιζητεῖ Ἰσραήλ, τοῦτο οὐκ ἐπέτυχεν, ἢ δὲ ἐκλογῇ ἐπέτυχεν· οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ ἐπωρώθησαν,

What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened,
This last section (11:7-10) of the first subunit of chapter 11 (11:1-10) begins with the rhetorical question, “What then?” This is Paul responding to his own teaching in 11:2-6 about the existence of the remnant, Jewish Christians, who sit within the larger group of ethnic Israel that does not follow the gospel. The remnant show that God has not abandoned his people. As Moo writes, “the very notion of a remnant who are receiving the blessings of God’s election implies that many other Israelites are not.” What then are we to make of those from within Israel who are not part of the remnant? Paul now focusses his attention on this issue.

Here in Romans 11:7 we see Paul connecting back to what he had said in 11:5 and 9:30 (“The elect obtained it”), and now establishing a platform to discuss those outside the elect. Paul begins to make his case by intentionally paralleling 9:30-31 and picking up on 10:3, except now the focus is solely on Israel and no longer on both some of the Gentiles and some of the Israelites. Paul can see that the fact that only some from Israel have obtained righteousness will be an issue for his Jewish audience. However, Paul has already stated in Romans 9:6 that “not all Israelites truly belong to Israel.” So the election of Israel as God’s chosen people never actually gave ethnic Israel an automatic guarantee of salvation. Yet Paul did drop hints in 9:22-23 and 9:33 that God not only foresaw Israel’s failure, but also brought it about. Paul is explaining that the natural corollary of the election of some (the remnant) is the hardening of the others, and therefore this explains Israel’s current resistance to the gospel. And so the unbelief of most of Paul’s fellow Jews is no accident, rather it is the obverse of God extending his grace to Gentiles as well as to Jews, just as Paul had already shown that the rejection of Esau and the hardening of Pharaoh were the obverse of the election of Israel.

In contrast to the elect remnant receiving God’s grace, “the rest were hardened.” The Greek ἐπωρώθησαν (“hardened”) is in the passive and can be read as ascribing the act of hardening to God. But whilst here in 11:7 it is God who is doing the hardening, in 11:11 we read that

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433 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 696.
434 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 648.
435 Witherington III, Paul’s Letter to the Romans. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary, 266.
436 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 648.
437 Ibid.
438 Ibid.
439 BDAG, 900.
440 Morris notes that using the passive was often a reverent way of avoiding having to use the name of God. Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 403.
it is the people who do the stumbling. Those in Israel outside of the elect remnant have been hardened because they have failed to recognise Christ as Messiah. Morris states it clearly when he says, “we must remember that those who failed God did not do so because they had been hardened, but they were hardened because they failed him.”441

It is important to note here that Paul is not suggesting that all of those who are currently hardened are locked into some sort of “eternal reprobation unto damnation.”442 We see in 11:11 that God is working this situation into his plan so that Israel’s hardening may in fact lead to more Jews coming to know Christ (11:11: “So I ask, have they stumbled so as to fall? By no means! But through their stumbling salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous”). Further, when we get to 11:25, Paul reveals that additional people from Israel, or potentially “all” Israel, will be saved.

Paul, having here in 11:1-7 laid out a summary on his teaching on the elect “remnant” and the hardened “others,” now moves on in 11:8-10 to defend his response to his own rhetorical question in 11:7, “What then?...but the rest were hardened.” Paul does this using his regular practice of citing passages from the Old Testament to support his claims. Here in 11:8-10 Paul cites passages from “the Law” (Deut 29:4), from the Prophets (Isaiah 29:10), and from the Writings (Psalm 69:22-23). By using passages found across the Jewish Scriptures, he is showing his audience that the whole of the Old Testament is consistent regarding those within Israel, the hardened “others,” who have failed to respond to God and join the faithful, elect “remnant.”443

8.6 Conclusion
Previously in Romans 9:24-29, Paul had redefined Israel to be inclusive of Gentiles who have faith in Christ. But at the same time those who had rejected Christ, especially Jews in the context of Romans, were not completely cut off from the people of God. The remnant of faithful believers was a sign of hope for the salvation of more Jews. Here in Romans 11:1-7,

441 Ibid.
442 Bird, Romans, 383.
the focus has shifted from the inclusion of faithful Gentiles in the people of God to now answering the natural question that the Gentile inclusion raises: what about the rest of the Jews?

Paul shows through his own faith in Christ as a Jew that God has not abandoned his people. Paul also shows that this was how it was even in the days of Elijah. Faithfulness to God, shown by not bowing the knee to Baal (1 Kings 19:18), was the means by which God’s grace was received. Paul is emphasising the necessity of faith in Christ as the means by which one can accept God’s grace and join the remnant. Ethnicity and works cannot and do not bring people into the true Israel. The message of hope that Paul brings through the concept of the remnant is that the hardened do not need to remain hardened.

The reality on the ground, however, was that Gentiles were responding to the gospel more than the Jews. This would have been a shock to the Jews, who would have been expecting the salvation of the Gentiles to come after the Jews. Paul now continues to unpack God’s plan for his people and the mystery of how true Israel is being formed.

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Chapter 9: Exegesis of Romans 11:25-27

9.1 Introduction

Throughout the salvation history of the Old Testament, Israel was the main focus. However, as a result of the universal call of the gospel Paul stresses the role of the Gentiles. In Romans 11:1-10 Paul explains that there is a remnant of faithful Israelites, chosen by grace. This however leaves us with the obvious question, “what about the rest?” Has God abandoned the Israelites outside of the remnant? Paul explains that the Israelites who do not have faith in Christ have experienced a hardening. This then raises another question, that is, “will the hardened Israelites remain in this hardened state forever?” The following section, chapter 11:11-24, seeks to confirm that God has not completely rejected Israel. Paul asks a rhetorical question in 11:11, “μὴ ἔπταισαν ἵνα πέσωσιν;” (“Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery?” NIV). He answers this question with an emphatic “Not at all!” Paul then begins to make sense of the remnant and the hardened. First, Paul needs to address a developing Gentile arrogance stemming from the fact that the Gentiles are increasing numerically within God’s people whilst the Israelites are not. Paul then uses the olive tree metaphor in 11:17-21 to show the nature of God’s inclusion of faithful Gentiles into the people of God, and also the exclusion of non-faithful Israelites from it. Paul concludes the preceding paragraph with a warning to the Gentiles that they will be cut off from the olive tree if they forsake their faith. Conversely, Jews who embrace faith will see themselves grafted back into the olive tree.445

The climactic verse of Romans 9-11, and the cause of so much debate and discussion amongst the scholarly world, is Romans 11:26a. To best unpack this piece of scripture, we need to analyse it in light of the overall text in which it appears. In Romans 11 most commentators and scholars separate verses 17-24 from verses 25-32 as two different units, but Schreiner argues that a good case can be made for starting a new paragraph at the beginning of 11:23. He bases this on 11:23, beginning with κάκεινοι δὲ (“And even those”), and argues that a new theme predominates in this section.446 Romans 11:23-24 speaks about the Israelites being grafted back onto the olive tree alongside the Gentiles, through faith in Christ. Following on from these verses, 11:25-32 expands on the olive tree metaphor and deals with the mystery that is the salvation of Israel. In this section, we will look at verses 23 and 24 briefly, in order to provide

445 Schreiner, Romans, 612.
446 Ibid., 611.
the textual context for the key text of Romans 11:26a. As previously mentioned, 11:25-32 is often considered a literary unit. However for the sake of space, and because of this thesis’s particular focus on “the remnant” and its implications for understanding “all Israel” (11:26a), I will limit the majority of this exegetical section to 11:25-27. This limited scope naturally fits into the framework for the unit provided by Jewett, who breaks 11:25-32 into two parts:

- 11:25-27: “a disclosure of the mystery with scriptural support”
- 11:28-32: “a theological explanation of its significance for salvation history”

9.1.1 Romans 11:23-24

Rom 11:23 κάκεινοι δέ, ἐὰν μὴ ἐπιμένωσιν τῇ ἁπιστίᾳ, ἐγκεντρισθῆσονται· δυνατὸς γὰρ ἔστιν ὁ θεὸς πάλιν ἐγκεντρίσαι αὐτούς.

And even those of Israel, if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again.

Rom 11:24 εἰ γὰρ σὺ ἐκ τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἐξεκόπης ἀγριελαίου καὶ παρὰ φύσιν ἐνεκεντρίσθης εἰς καλλελαίου, πόσῳ μᾶλλον οὕτωι οἱ κατὰ φύσιν ἐγκεντρισθῆσονται τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐλαιᾷ.

For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree.

The olive tree metaphor paints a picture of the people of God as the branches connected to an olive tree. The stem of the olive tree is Christ. The branches represent the people of God or the “true Israel.” The branches of the olive tree, the “true Israel,” include both the original branches, the Jews and wild branches, the Gentiles. Since the coming of Christ, it has been made clear that it is one’s faith that grafts one into the olive tree, and as a result, the makeup of the people of God has become much more diverse. But Paul’s warning is for the church in Rome to not see this as a transition from an old version of the people of God into a newer

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447 Jewett, Romans, 695.
448 Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 438.
version. Instead, we should see faithful Gentiles and faithful Jews joining the people of God that was originally founded on God’s promises to the patriarchs. As Kruse writes, “Paul’s olive tree analogy suggests that the apostle believed in only one true olive tree, one true people of God, made up of both Jewish and Gentile believers, but that he still distinguished between its natural branches, believing Jews, and unnatural branches, believing Gentiles.”

Paul then makes a short summary of the preceding verses in 11:23 avowing the possibility that some Israelites will continue to disbelieve in Christ. He also argues that those who do believe can be grafted back into the people of God. There were some Jews who were already believers and Paul was under the assumption that more Jews would become believers. Paul has stressed in Romans that God’s offer of salvation is given equally to both Jews and Gentiles. Equally, both Jews who do not believe and Gentiles who no longer continue to believe, will each be “cut off” (11:17, 20). Here in 11:23-24, Paul uses the same principle of equal treatment and applies it to Jews as a message of hope for the spiritual renewal of Jews who have been “cut off.” The natural branches (Jews), who have been removed from the olive tree because of their unbelief, can find themselves grafted back into the olive tree “if they do not persist in unbelief” (11:23). If God is willing to graft in Gentile Christians onto the olive tree, “how much more” will God be willing to graft the Jews back onto their “own tree.” By no means is Paul suggesting that it is any easier for a Jew to find salvation than it is for a Gentile, as that would only contradict what Paul has attempted to make clear throughout Romans, that every person, Jew or Gentile, stands under sin’s power (3:9) and can only be saved through the grace of God. Both Jews and Gentiles are saved if they are grafted by God into the olive tree. In this way, Paul counters any Gentile arrogance over Jews by making clear that believing Jews have no less access to divine grace than believing Gentiles.

Paul is not suggesting that there is now a new people of God being formed, but rather he is making clear that the people of God has been misunderstood by Israel and is now being discovered afresh through the gospel and its saving impact on the Gentiles. This will in turn see the gospel find a place in the rest of Israel as well. Paul then looks to unpack the future

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449 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 726.
450 Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 439.
451 Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 417.
452 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 724–25.
453 Ibid., 726.
454 Dunn, Romans 1-8, 675.
salvific implications for Israel as a result of the influx of Gentiles into the olive tree in 11:25-32. It is to these verses we turn now.

9.1.2 Romans 11:25-27

11:25-27

Luther writes, “This text is the basis of the common opinion that, at the end of the world, the Jews will return to the faith. However, it is so obscure that, unless one is willing to accept the judgment of the fathers who expound the apostle in this way, no one can, so it would seem, obtain a clear conviction from this text.”455

As Martin Luther noted in his commentary on Romans, the meaning of this passage is often overshadowed by its obscurities. In this passage there is a diverse set of opinions and understandings for every significant term or phrase. This has produced a range of understandings and perceptions of how the Jews of the past, present and future are to be understood within Christian theology.456

This is a challenging passage to understand at the best of times. For the purpose of this thesis, however, the crucial question is how the “remnant” spoken of in Romans 9:27 and 11:5 relates to and informs Paul’s theology in these verses? Is there a qualitative difference between “the remnant” and the “rest”? Does the salvation of a remnant, as prophesied in Isaiah, pertain to past or future events such as the first or the second coming of Christ? And if the latter is true, what then distinguishes the salvation of the remnant from the salvation of all of Israel as mentioned in 11:26?457

Understanding the meaning of this passage is vitally important. Moo describes 11:25-32 as not only the climax of 11:11-32, but also as the climax of all Romans 9-11.458 Longenecker summarises 11:25-27 as containing three apostolic pronouncements which in the text are given in the following order and with these purposes: 1) to rebuke any Gentile Christians who perhaps see themselves as God’s main focus throughout the course of salvation history; 2) to encourage the faithful followers of Christ, both the remnant within the Jews and the remnant among the Gentiles, to have a bigger perspective and understanding of God’s redemptive outreach and

457 Ibid., 253.
458 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 728.
salvific working; 3) to provide assurance on the fact that Israel remains a part of God’s future plans. And so, Longenecker states that in these verses Paul is affirming that “the gathering of the remnant (whether ‘the remnant of Israel’ or ‘the remnant from among the Gentiles,’ or both) is not the final goal of God; rather, God’s final goal is the readoption and salvation of ‘all Israel.’” But this summary is not a satisfactory solution to the challenges that are faced when attempting to understand this passage. For in order to properly understand this passage, we need to answer three interpretive questions: 1) How does Paul define “all Israel?”; 2) What does Paul mean when he says “τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν” (“the fullness of the nations?” 11:25); 3) What is the relationship between the ingathering of “τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν” and the salvation of “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ”?\footnote{Staples, ‘What Do the Gentiles Have to Do with “All Israel”? A Fresh Look at Romans 11:25–27’, 374.}

9.2 Romans 11:25

Rom 11:25 Ὁ γὰρ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἄγνοεῖν, ἀδέλφοι, τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο, ἵνα μὴ ἔτε [παρ'] ἐαντοῖς φρόνιμοι, ὧτι πώροσις ἀπὸ μέρους τοῦ Ἰσραήλ γέγονεν ἄχρι οὗ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ

So that you may not claim to be wiser than you are, brothers and sisters, I want you to understand this mystery: a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.

The possibility that Paul has just entertained in 11:23-24, that the severed branches can be grafted back into the olive tree, is now depicted in 11:25-27 as a certain future reality. Paul reminds the Gentiles that they were once disobedient to God, as most of Israel is as he writes, and just as they have received God’s mercy, so too will Israel experience it.\footnote{Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 276.} Paul lets the Gentiles know that their salvation is only a part of God’s larger story which reaches its climax with the salvation of “all Israel” Thus, with this knowledge, the Gentiles cannot become arrogant.\footnote{Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 276.}
In the previous verses, Paul was speaking more directly to the Gentiles, but he now turns back to the whole community to address both Jews and Gentiles. Since 11:23-24 were bringing the focus of Paul’s argument back to the point he had made in v12 and v15, γάρ (“for”) in v25 picks up not only what Paul was saying in v24, but also his wider argument in 11:11-24. Verse 25 is important, and this is signaled to the audience by Οὐ γὰρ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνωστοὺς (“I do not want you to be ignorant,” NIV), which is the same phrase Paul has used elsewhere in Romans and in his other letters (Rom 1:13; 1 Cor 10:1; 12:1; 2 Cor 1:8; 1 Thess 4:13) when he wants to add emphasis. Add to this the direct address that follows, ἀδελφοὶ (‘brothers and sisters’), and it is clear that Paul is about to say something very significant.

What Paul is now drawing his reader’s attention to, is something that has up until now been a “mystery.” The word “μυστήριον” (“secret”) here refers to something that Paul’s audience could not have possibly known on their own, but that is now being revealed to them. The precise meaning of the word is debated amongst scholars. It is an important issue, for how we understand the word “μυστήριον” in this passage influences the way in which we interpret 11:26a. Schreiner notes that Paul uses this word often in his writings (Rom. 16:25; 1 Cor. 2:1, 7; 4:1; 13:2; 14:2; 15:51; Eph. 1:9; 3:3, 4, 9; 5:32; 6:19; Col. 1:26, 27; 2:2; 4:3; 2 Thess. 2:7; 1 Tim. 3:9, 16) Some scholars note that “μυστήριον” has a technical theological meaning that has its origins in Jewish apocalyptic literature. Moo applies this understanding to his interpretation of what Paul is referring to when he speaks of “this mystery,” which is then an “event of the end times that has already been determined by God – and so, in that sense, exists already in heaven – but which is first revealed to the apocalyptic seer for the comfort and encouragement of the people of Israel.” Schreiner notes that this mystery is not just about Israel’s future salvation, as he claims that is quite obviously stated in the Old Testament, but...
rather that Israel’s salvation will only occur after the full number of Gentiles have come into the people of God.\textsuperscript{474}

However, other scholars note that Paul also used the word “mystery” in his writings when speaking about something that is mysterious or hard to understand (1 Cor. 13:2; 14:2; 15:51; Eph 5:32; 2 Thess. 2:7).\textsuperscript{475} In the context in Romans 11:26, therefore, this mystery to which Paul refers is the divine intention to always include Gentiles within God’s people (Rom 16:25-26; Col 1:26-27; 2:2; 4:3; Eph 1:9-10; 3:3-6).\textsuperscript{476} Included in this mystery is also the hardening that has come upon Israel,\textsuperscript{477} which when understood, as Morris notes, “counteracts any arrogance on the Gentiles’ behalf who may have thought they had figured out God’s plan for the Jews, given that the Gentiles were turning to Christ and the Jews not so much.”\textsuperscript{478} “So that you may not be conceited” (NIV), is the reason why Paul wants the Gentiles in his audience to understand this mystery.

Paul then in 11:25b-11:26a, outlines this mystery through the sequence of three events: 1) Israel’s disobedience and hardening; 2) the fullness of the Gentiles becomes manifest; 3) all Israel is saved.\textsuperscript{479} Kruse suggests that none of these three aspects of the “mystery” stand out above the rest, but rather what is most important is the “whole sequence of these interdependent events.”\textsuperscript{480} The surprising element in this mystery is that it is a complete reversal of Jewish expectations and beliefs about the salvation of Israel. These Jewish expectations were that the Gentiles would join Israel as the people of God and worship the Lord on the last day. Some Jewish texts also suggest that it would be the glory of the Lord revealed in a restored and rejuvenated Israel that would draw the Gentiles to God.\textsuperscript{481} And so the mystery is not that “All Israel will be saved,” but rather that the “full redemption of Israel \textit{awaits the completion of the}

\textsuperscript{474} Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 621.
\textsuperscript{475} Kruse, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 442; Dunn, \textit{Romans 9-16}, 690.
\textsuperscript{476} Dunn, \textit{Romans 9-16}, 678.
\textsuperscript{477} Kruse, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 442.
\textsuperscript{478} Morris, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 419.
\textsuperscript{479} Bird, \textit{Romans}, 391; Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 731; Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 699.
\textsuperscript{480} Kruse, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 442.
\textsuperscript{481} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 732. Moo notes that Paul’s quotation of Isa. 59:20–21 in Romans 11:26b-27 comes from the immediate context of one of the most important the texts in relation to the salvation of the Gentiles coming as a result of a restored and rejuvenated Israel (Isa. 60:1–7; “Nations will come to your light…”).
Gentile mission." The salvation of the Gentiles will now lead to the salvation of more Israelites, instead of the other way around.

The NIV interprets the “πόρωσις” (“dullness, insensibility, obstinacy”) that Israel has experienced as a “hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in,” whereas the NRSV interprets this “hardening” as “a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.” Should the “hardening” be understood as “a partial hardening that Israel has experienced” or that “a portion of the people of Israel have been hardened?” Dunn suggests that the “hardening” itself is a partial hardening. He suggests that there is a biblical precedent (Mark 3:5, Eph 4:18), which would explain “hardening.” It is the “metaphorical application of the process by which the extremities of fractured bones are reunited by a callus which is biblical, denoting dullness, insensibility, (and) obstinacy.”

However, other scholars differ from Dunn and interpret “hardening” as referring to a portion of the people of Israel. Bird draws on what Paul has already said in Romans 9:6 and 11:7, where Paul sees those that are not the remnant as those who have been hardened. Likewise, Batey also interprets the “hardening” to be over a portion of the people of Israel. Batey looks to Paul’s own experience which Paul observed as he himself being one of the righteous remnant and so it was “the rest” who were hardened. This is most convincing, since otherwise we cannot understand the experience of Paul and other Jewish Christians who have come to faith.

Included in the mystery that Paul wants his listeners to understand is the idea that the hardening is not permanent. It is widely agreed that the “hardening” that has come upon part of Israel is temporary. This is indicated by ἄχρι οὗ (“until”). which points to a fixed point in time when “the full number of the Gentiles has come in.” The full number of the Gentiles refers to

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482 Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 277. See also Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 442; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 732.
483 BDAG, 900.
484 Emphasis mine.
485 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 679.
486 Bird, Romans, 391. See also Batey, “So All Israel Will Be Saved.” An Interpretation of Romans 11:25-32’, 224; Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 420.
488 Witherington III, Paul’s Letter to the Romans. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary, 272; Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 420; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 732; Dunn, Romans 9-16, 680.
489 BDAG, 160.
all of the elect from among the Gentiles called by God (9:22-24) and is likely to refer to a specific number of Gentiles.

Paul saw himself as a direct contributor in realising the “fullness of the Gentiles” by means of his mission to non-Jews. He hoped that indirectly through his Gentile mission, the Jews would be provoked to jealousy by the sight of the Gentiles enjoying the blessings from God that were initially promised to them. This is made clear in 11:13-14, where Paul states that “Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry in order to make my own people jealous, and thus save some of them.”

9.3 Romans 11:26a

Rom 11:26a καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται,

And so all Israel will be saved;

When we come to Romans 11:26, we find that the first clause of the verse is the “storm center” when it comes to the interpretation of Romans 9-11 and the wider New Testament’s teaching about the Jews and their future. There are three issues that need to be settled: 1) the meaning and reference of οὕτως (“and so,” “in this way”); 2) the meaning of the phrase πᾶς Ἰσραήλ (“all Israel”); 3) and the time and manner of Israel’s salvation (σωθήσεται).

The verse begins with καὶ οὕτως, which is commonly translated as “And so” (NRSV, ASV, KJV, NET, NLT, WEB), or in some instances is translated as “and in this way” (NIV, ESV). Some scholars have understood καὶ οὕτως to be temporal. The hardening of Israel will take place until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in “and then” all Israel will be saved.

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490 Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 442-43.
491 Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 420; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 732.
492 Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 444.
493 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 734.
494 Ibid.
495 BDAG, 741.
However, the majority of scholars interpret καὶ οὗτος as denoting manner.497 Thus, these scholars translate καὶ οὗτος as “and in this way,” which refers to what has just preceded and indicates the way in which “all Israel” will be saved. In consequence, translating καὶ οὗτος as “and in this way” in order to denote manner is convincing as it is consistent with the way in which Israel’s salvation is outlined in 11:11-24. Effectively 11:25b becomes a summary of 11:11-24.

9.3.1 Who, When and How?

Following on from καὶ οὗτος, we read πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται (“all Israel will be saved”). The meanings of both “πᾶς” and “Ἰσραήλ” are widely debated and depend on each other. Firstly, the meaning for πᾶς (“all”) in BDAG is “any and every entity out of a totality.”498 Therefore, Jewett understands “all” to mean all with no exceptions. He sees nothing in the context of this passage that supports the idea of ‘all’ meaning “most, but with a few exceptions.”499 However, Käsemann pushes back against this view and states that “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” should be understood as a fixed Jewish formula that often does not refer to the sum of individuals, but rather to the people which establishes the individuality of its members…as the fellowship of the elect,” and therefore it is not unlikely that there would be individual exceptions from the “all.”500 We see πᾶς Ἰσραήλ used in 1 Sam 25:1; 1 Kgs 12:1; 2 Chron 12:1; Dan 9:11; Isa 45:25, where it is always referring to the whole nation of Israel. However, it is important to note that in these contexts, the corporate identity and wholeness would not be lost in any way if there were some or many individual exceptions.501 Dunn also notes that “all” in 11:26 clearly functions in contrast to the “remnant” in 11:5 (λείμμα), “some” in 11:17 (τινες)502 and “in part” in 11:25 (ἀπὸ μέρους),503 as well as paralleling “full inclusion” in 11:12 (πληρωμα).504 And so Dunn

497 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 681; Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 2 (IX-XVI):576; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 735; Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 420; Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 443; Du Toit, God’s Saved Israel, 431.
498 BDAG, 783.
499 Jewett, Romans, 702.
500 Käsemann, Commentary on Romans, 313.
501 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 681.
502 BDAG, 1006.
503 Ibid., 633.
504 BDAG, 829. Dunn, Romans 9-16, 681.
interprets “all Israel” in v26 as more of a broad characterisation rather than a specific enumeration.505

When we read on from πᾶς, we come to our next interpretive challenge, Ἰσραήλ. The word Ἰσραήλ itself in the context of 11:26 has various interpretations, and when combined with πᾶς before it and σωθήσεται (“saved, preserve”)506 after it (πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται), we find ourselves deep in scholarly debate as to what the correct interpretation should be. Bird frames the challenge of the phrase “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται” in a similar way to Moo, who, as I have shown earlier, framed the whole passage as consisting of three main issues. But Bird, who in this context is more focused specifically on interpreting “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται,” lays out the interpretive challenge as three sets of questions:

1. Who is All Israel?
2. When Does Israel Get Saved?
3. How Does Israel Get Saved?507

I will use these three questions as a framework not only to survey the various conclusions different scholars come to, but also to begin to add Paul’s remnant theology to this passage as an interpretive lens.

Consequently, if πᾶς in πᾶς Ἰσραήλ is considered to be referring to the whole of Israel, but likely with a few exceptions, “who then (and what) is Ἰσραήλ referring to?” Who is included in the Ἰσραήλ that will be saved and who is not? To begin to answer the question, who is Ἰσραήλ in the context of 11:26a, we need to first look at the different ways Ἰσραήλ, Ἰσραήλιτης (Israelites) and οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι (the Jews) are used in scripture and outside of scripture in Paul’s day.

When it comes to the term Ἰσραήλ, it is often assumed that Ἰσραήλ is always referring to ethnic Jews. However, that is not always the case.508 It was commonly understood amongst Paul’s Jewish contemporaries that Ἰσραήλ consisted of the physical descendants of Jacob and thus

505 Dunn, 681.
506 BDAG, 982.
507 Bird, Romans, 391.
Abraham and Isaac too. However, according to the New Testament lexicon by Louw and Nida, there are three different uses of the term Ἰσραήλ in the New Testament:

1. The patriarch Jacob (Rom 9:6)
2. The nation of Israel (Matt 2:6)
3. A figurative reference to Christians as the true Israel (Gal 6:16).

Additionally, Louw and Nida defines Ἰσραήλίτης and Ἰουδαίος as follows: Ἰσραήλίτης: “the ethnic name of a person belonging to the nation of Israel (Acts 2:22)”; Ἰουδαίος: “the ethnic name of a person who belongs to the Jewish nation (Mark 7:3).”

In New Testament times, when Paul uses Ἰουδαίος, it generally has a strong ethnic connotation. But when Paul uses Ἰσραήλ, it has a strong religious connotation. Although ethnicity and religion are interconnected, they can be discussed separately. Interestingly, Du Toit notes that in Romans 1-8, Paul uses Ἰουδαίος exclusively, but in Romans chs 9-11, Ἰσραήλ is predominantly used. And so it seems as that when Paul wants to stress ethnic affiliation (chs 1-8), he uses the term Ἰουδαίος, but when Paul wants to speak to the spiritual heritage of his people (chs 9-11), he uses the terms Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραήλίτης.

Staples provides a simple diagram which further highlights that there are different ways in which Ἰσραήλ and Ἰουδαίος can be understood. He illustrates this in the following diagram:

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509 Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 593.
511 Nida and Louw, 93.183.
512 Ibid., 93.172.
513 Du Toit, *God’s Saved Israel*, 38.
514 Ibid. Whilst Ἰσραήλ is almost always used by Paul in Romans 9-11, he does use Ἰουδαίος in 9:24 and 10:12.
517 Ibid.
The three different possibilities for how Ἰσραήλ correlates to οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι as outlined in this diagram are:

1. Ἰσραήλ as synonymous with ethnic Jews.

2. Ἰσραήλ refers to the larger body of Israelites, of which all οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι are a part.

3. Ἰσραήλ refers to the body of Israelites, but only a portion of οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι are a part of Israel, and only a part of Ἰσραήλ is a part of οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι.

What is clear then from the work of Staples and Louw and Nida, is the possibility that for Paul and those alive in the time of the apostolic era, the term Ἰσραήλ could have had a more limited meaning, referring to a select group rather than every ethnic Jew.

There is however a fourth possibility that Staples does not include in his diagram. This fourth possibility places Ἰσραήλ as a smaller portion within the whole of οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι. This is consistent with the concept of the remnant in Romans 11:1-6. It is also consistent with the previously mentioned use of Ἰσραήλ as having a strongly religious meaning and Ἰουδαῖοι having a strongly ethnic meaning in Romans. In this fourth option, the Ἰσραήλ within the larger group, οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, are considered to be the “true Israel” or the “spiritual Israel.”

An example of thinking that there is a subgroup within Ἰσραήλ, or an Ἰσραήλ within the wider ethnic Jewish community, is the Qumran community. The community at Qumran understood and referred to themselves as a faithful subset within Ἰσραήλ and would have considered themselves to be the “forerunners of the true Israel.” It is unlikely that they would simply have identified themselves as Ἰσραήλ or Ἰσραηλίτης. Rather, as Sanders notes, phrases such as

“captives of Israel,” “house in Israel,” and “repentant of Israel” were all used, but the Qumran community also identified themselves by the phrase “the remnant of Israel.”\(^{519}\) The Qumran community believed they were the “faithful remnant of the southern tribes awaiting the return and restoration of Israel.”\(^{520}\)

When we look at Romans, we see a similar understanding of Ἰσραήλ given by Paul in Romans 9:6b, where he says “οὐ γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἔξ Ἰσραήλ οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ.” (“It is not as though the word of God had failed. For not all Israelites truly belong to Israel”).\(^{521}\) Paul makes it very clear in this verse that when he says Ἰσραήλ, he is not restricted to understanding Ἰσραήλ as just being synonymous with ethnic Jews or that all who are born Jews are automatically considered to be part of Ἰσραήλ.\(^{522}\) And so Paul describes God’s election as not an immediate guarantee of salvation to all Israelites, but rather salvation is given to selected persons who are part of an Ἰσραήλ within Ἰσραήλ, or as some describe it, a “true Israel” within ethnic Israel.\(^{523}\) It is important to note here that Paul is not completely denying that Ἰσραήλ remain God’s people in some sense, as he outlines in 9:4-5. But what Paul is denying is the belief that there is some sort of corporate election for Ἰσραήλ based on ethnic descent.\(^{524}\) Paul is making the point that as Moo writes, that “all those who belong to Israel (in a physical sense) do not belong to Israel (in a spiritual sense).”\(^{525}\)

What then does Paul mean when he speaks of “spiritual Israel”\(^{526}\)? The two main understandings of “spiritual Israel” are that it refers to either the “new Israel” or the “remnant.”\(^{527}\) The “new Israel” are the people of God in the era of the New Covenant. Early on in Romans 4:1-16, Paul explains that Abraham’s true descendants are composed of all who believe. This is in line with other comments Paul has made in other New Testament writings, such as that Christians are “children of the promise, like Isaac” (Gal 4:28); are “the circumcision” (Phil 3:3); and as the church, are called “Israel” (Gal 6:16). And so, Moo argues

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521 Emphasis mine.
522 Ibid., 594.
524 Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 593.
525 Ibid., 594.
526 Whilst some scholars, such as Bird, use the language of “true Israel,” Moo prefers to use the phrase “God’s true spiritual people.” Bird, *Romans*, 325; Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 568–69.
527 Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 594.
that in these texts we see that Paul intentionally transferred language and titles that were traditionally applied to God’s Old Covenant people Israel to the New Covenant people, the church. Therefore, “it is not all biological Israel that constitutes true spiritual Israel, and it is not only biological Israel that constitutes true spiritual Israel.”

The other way of understanding “spiritual Israel” is that it is a smaller group of people within the larger body of ethnic Israel, consisting of Jews who are faithful followers of Christ and identified as the “remnant.” The argument for this view suggests that there is an “Israel within Israel.” Paul makes clear in Romans 9:6-13 that God has made a selection of his people from within ethnic Israel. This is followed up by 9:27-29, which as shown earlier, focusses on the remnant as a faithful group of believers that exists within ethnic Israel. Therefore, this view of “spiritual Israel” being made up of the remnant suggests Paul is saying that it is not all of ethnic Israel that makes up the true “spiritual Israel.”

Paul’s earlier statements in Romans 11:7, that a hardening has come upon “the rest” of Ἰσραήλ who are not part of the remnant, makes a clear picture of the bifurcation of Israel. These statements also form an inclusio around this section, framing the conversation about two different groups within Israel. Moo acknowledges that the challenge is in determining whether “spiritual Israel” is the “new Israel” or “the remnant,” and offers a third alternative to help make the decision easier. He suggests that in 9:6b, Paul might be using Ἰσραήλ to describe a category of people that has not yet been defined. Moo suggests the point Paul is trying to make is simply that spiritual Israel is not the same as ethnic Israel.

If there is a difference then between “spiritual Israel,” otherwise known as “the remnant,” and the rest of ethnic Israel, those who are hardened, what then are the implications for interpreting πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται (11:26)? In looking at these implications, we will return to the four main interpretations of Romans 11:26, as outlined earlier in this thesis, and assess the validity of each view based on how they address the questions outlined earlier; “who, when, and how” in regards to 11:26. For each view, we will apply our analysis of Paul’s use of the remnant and

528 Ibid.
529 Ibid., 595.
530 Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 278.
531 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 595.
how that either adds weight to, or reduces the validity of, each of the four main interpretations of 11:26.

9.3.2 Two-Covenant Theology

Two-Covenant Theology believes that the salvation of Israel is obtained through their covenant with God made at Sinai and that salvation for the Gentiles is obtained through Christ. However, the point Paul is making about “spiritual Israel” and “the remnant” within Israel leaves no room to interpret his words in 11:26 as pointing towards a Sonderweg. A Two-Covenant Theology which affirms one means of salvation for Jews and another for Gentiles is simply not compatible with the way in which Paul understands and speaks of Ἰσραήλ. Two-Covenant Theology could only be a possibility if there were two distinct groups of people, Jews and Gentiles. But as shown here, Paul maintains that there is an Ἰσραήλ within Ἰσραήλ, that the path for salvation is the same for ethnic Israel and Gentiles and that such salvation is achieved through faith in Christ (Romans 3:22). Just as Paul himself came to faith in Christ and joined the remnant of faithful believers through a personal encounter with Christ, so too is membership in God’s people available to the rest of ethnic Ἰσραήλ and to the Gentiles through faith in Christ. This does not close the door however, on the Eschatological Miracle understanding of 11:26, which anticipates “all” of Ἰσραήλ experiencing a “Damascus Road” encounter like Paul. And of course, the Total National Elect view and the Ecclesiological view are also relevant with the idea of an Ἰσραήλ within Ἰσραήλ.

9.3.3 The Eschatological Miracle View

Those who hold to the most common interpretation of “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται” (11:26), the Eschatological Miracle view, understand Paul to be speaking of the historical nation of Israel, ethnic Jews, coming to Christ after the ingathering of all of the Gentiles and likely through some sort of large salvific event at the Parousia. Significant features of this view are that it believes Paul to be speaking at least of a very large number of Jews coming to faith in the future and the fullness of Jewish converts culminating in the second coming of Christ.

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532 Gaston, Paul and the Torah, 143.
533 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 683.
534 Zoccali, “‘And so All Israel Will Be Saved’: Competing Interpretations of Romans 11:26 in Pauline Scholarship’, 290.
535 Bird, Romans, 392.
Wagner suggests that “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” be interpreted in light of Paul’s earlier divisions of “Ἰσραήλ,” that is “the elect” and “the rest,” “who have been rendered insensible” (11:7). Leading up to this passage, “the rest” were the primary object of Paul’s concern, but Wagner notes that Paul does not use the term “Ἰσραήλ” as a name for either “the elect” or “the rest” in Romans 11:8-24. Thus, in 11:25-26, “Ἰσραήλ” includes both “‘the elect,’ who have already obtained what Israel sought, and ‘the rest,’ who have been temporarily rendered insensible but whose future ‘fullness’ and ‘acceptance’ Paul can anticipate with confidence.”

Additionally, those who hold to the Eschatological Miracle view argue that it makes no sense for “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” not to include the whole nation of Israel, or at the very least the “hardened” Israelis. They argue that, unless this were true, the salvation of “all” Israel would not point towards the great mystery about which Paul speaks so passionately. The salvation of the remnant or the elect could hardly be described as a great mystery. Morris adds that even if the faithful Gentiles are included in the salvation of “all Israel” alongside the Jewish elect, it would still not point towards the mystery spoken of in 11:25.

The Eschatological Miracle view of πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται is consistent with Paul’s use of the remnant concept in that it points towards a greater number of ethnic Jews finding salvation. Paul in Romans 9:27 makes clear that the remnant is not just good news for Gentiles, but is good news for Jews too, as the remnant is the sign of hope for Israel. The remnant is shown by Paul to be an embryonic hope for Israel, a seed of faithful followers of Christ, which Paul expected to grow into a larger, hopefully much larger, body of believers, both Gentiles and Jews. And so the Eschatological Miracle sees the culmination of God’s salvific work being achieved through the remnant, which suggests that God has not abandoned his people. Then through the ingrafting of the Gentiles into the people of God, the hardened Israelis will be moved to jealousy, and at a point in time when the full number of Gentiles have entered into God’s people, the hardness over Israel will disappear, the eschatological miracle will occur, and πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται. It was likely that Paul anticipated that this event would happen.

536 Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 278.
537 Ibid., 279.
538 Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 421.
539 Hays, Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul, 68.
540 Bird, Romans, 336.
541 Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 444.
in a relatively short period of time.\textsuperscript{542} Israel then, after seeing the Gentiles enjoying the privileges originally promised to them (9:4-5), would be provoked into abandoning their unbelief, will turn to Christ and accept the gospel (1:16).\textsuperscript{543}

This view understands the salvation of the Jews at the \textit{Parousia} as distinct to them. As a result, some scholars criticise the Eschatological Miracle view as implying the existence of a privileged way of salvation for the Jews - a \textit{Sonderweg} of sorts.\textsuperscript{544} Dunn is quick to point out, however, that the final salvation of all the Jews alive when Christ returns, should be understood not as a special way of salvation for the Jews, but rather as a salvation obtained in a similar matter to Paul himself, “through a personal encounter with the exalted Christ.”\textsuperscript{545} Paul never envisioned Israel being saved without faith in Jesus as Messiah.\textsuperscript{546}

As previously discussed, πᾶς in “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” is generally considered to mean “all,” but not every single individual in a strictly literal 100% meaning of “all,” but “all” with the possibility of a few exceptions. However, within the Eschatological Miracle view there are some who take a diachronic interpretation of πᾶς Ἰσραήλ, suggesting that every single Jew from across time will come to follow Christ at the \textit{Parousia} when they hear the gospel from Christ himself.\textsuperscript{547} However as discussed earlier in this thesis, the concept of the remnant as used in Isaiah and the wider Old Testament spoke of a purging and a refining of God’s people (Isaiah 1:25). Hasel described God as taking Israel through a process of smelting, leaving behind only a remnant.\textsuperscript{548} Isaiah 4:4 speaks of washing the filth of Israel away, and then in Isaiah 20:20-21 we read of the destruction of all Israel, except for the remnant. The remnant in Isaiah was simply all that remained after God allowed the rest of Israel to suffer defeat and destruction at the hands of their enemies. It was also shown earlier in this thesis that Paul in Romans 11:3-4 cites 1 Kings 19 to show that it was the faithful 7000 who did not bow the knee to Baal that constitute God’s elect. The biblical concept of the remnant demonstrates that membership in God’s chosen

\textsuperscript{542} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 738.
\textsuperscript{543} Dunn, \textit{Romans 9-16}, 691.
\textsuperscript{544} Gaston, \textit{Paul and the Torah}, 148.
\textsuperscript{545} Dunn, \textit{Romans 9-16}, 683.
\textsuperscript{546} Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 616. See also Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 739.
\textsuperscript{547} Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 702; Bell, \textit{Provoked to Jealousy: The Origin and Purpose of the Jealousy Motif in Romans 9-11}, 139.
\textsuperscript{548} Hasel, \textit{The Remnant: The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah.}, 253.
people has always been based on faith. Thus, it is dubious to say that all Jews throughout history will find salvation at the *Parousia*.

If not all ethnic Israel throughout history, what about just all of ethnic Israel alive at the return of Christ? Most scholars who hold to the Eschatological Miracle view have a synchronic understanding of πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται (11:26), suggesting that πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται refers to “the salvation of Jewish people who will be alive when the course of God’s salvation history is brought by God himself to its culmination.”\(^{549}\) Witherington describes this event as a “mass-conversion of Israel at a future time.”\(^{550}\) As pointed out already, the phrase “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” never has a strictly diachronic meaning in the scriptures.\(^{551}\) Dunn also supports this position and suggests that there is a strong consensus amongst scholars that πᾶς Ἰσραήλ must mean Israel as a whole at the time of the *Parousia* (even if there are a few exceptions).\(^{552}\) Paul is not teaching that every Israelite throughout history will be saved, but rather that there will be a great ingathering of Jews near the end of history, after the fullness of the Gentiles have entered into the people of God.\(^{553}\) Within this Eschatological Miracle view (both the diachronic and synchronic versions), any internal division within Israel ceases to exist. Israel no longer consists of the remnant and the rest, but can be referred to as “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ.”\(^{554}\)

Moo notes, however, that the view of Romans 11:26, which understands “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” to be referring to the elect among Israel throughout time, the Total National Elect view, is worthy of serious consideration.\(^{555}\) This view we turn to now.

### 9.3.4 Total National Elect View

Whilst the majority of scholars endorse the Eschatological Miracle view, there are still a few other views that are worthy of consideration. The Total National Elect view is a good example, albeit an unfashionable one. This view is often simply dismissed without too much serious consideration or rebuttal.\(^{556}\) The Total National Elect view sees no mass salvation of Jews at


\(^{551}\) “The term Ἰσραήλ is used to refer to the nation of Israel as a whole, but not every single individual member.”

\(^{552}\) Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 691. Section 3.3 The Eschatological Miracle.

\(^{553}\) Schreiner, *Romans*, 618–19.


\(^{555}\) Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 738.

the Parousia (9:1-6; 10:1). Instead, πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται (11:26) is understood as a present-day action (11:5), with the hope that more Jews will be added to the faithful remnant. In part, the Total National Elect view is a response to the Eschatological Miracle view, as that interpretation can be seen to lead to a sort of Sonderweg for the Jews. The Total National Elect view prefers to see Jews and Gentiles on a level playing field when it comes to obtaining salvation. As Merkle writes, “if God has a separate plan for saving Israel in the future, this view would seem to go contrary to Paul’s statement in verse 10:12-13. Nowhere in chapters 9 or 10 do we anticipate Paul speaking of a mass end-time conversion of Jews.” Thus, “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” in Romans 11:26 as interpreted within the Total National Elect view as referring to all the elect from within Israel, from all time.

The Total National Elect view does not interpret πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται (11:26) to be referring to both elect Jews and elect Gentiles, rather only elect Jews throughout history. Bird, who holds to the Total National Elect view, admits that it can be tempting to want to see “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ,” as a combined cohort of both Jews and Gentiles. However he does not believe the text points the reader to that conclusion. He acknowledges that Romans 9:6 reveals that not everyone from ethnic Israel belongs to elect Israel, and that 9:24-29 speaks of God’s people as being comprised of both Jews and Gentiles. However, contrary to Du Toit, who believes “Ἰσραήλ” in Romans 9-11 refers to “spiritual Israel” and sees Gentiles as therefore part of Ἰσραήλ, Bird suggests that “Ἰσραήλ” in chapters 9-11 consistently refers to only those from within “ethnic Israel.”

In chapters 9 and 10, Paul demonstrates that God is indeed faithful to his promises to Israel, even though many from Israel have rejected God. Romans 9:6 confirms the difference between true Israel and ethnic Israel. Therefore, the true Israel is comprised of those who are considered to be children of the promise, rather than children of the flesh. Additionally, Zoccali, arguing for the Total National Elect view, notes that a large salvific event at the Parousia for all Jews, as per the Eschatological Miracle view, is inconsistent with Paul’s sorrow and anguish for his fellow Jewish brothers, as expressed in 9:1-5 and 10:1. If Paul is

559 Bird, Romans, 392.
560 Ibid.
aware that Christ will reveal himself to all Jews upon his return, and that they will all turn to him and receive salvation, then “9:1-5 is a sham and 10:1 a mere formality.”

Those who hold to the Total National Elect view are consistent with most scholars who disagree with the Sonderweg proposed by the Two-Covenant Theology interpretation of 11:26. Additionally, they do not see in the text any indication of a large-scale conversion event at the Parousia. Lastly, they do not interpret “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” in 11:26 to include Gentiles. Therefore, “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται” is pointing to the salvation of faithful ethnic Jews over time. The remnant (11:5) and those hardened but moved to jealousy through seeing the salvation of the Gentiles, point simply to the process of how “all” Israel will find salvation. Paul’s anguish, alongside the reality of the remnant, point to both the fact that “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” is not every single Jew, and the manner in which those who are included within the elect, within “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ,” is through faith in Christ, as demonstrated by the remnant.

Therefore, the Total National Elect view is consistent with the concept of the remnant in Romans 11. The remnant, consisting of faithful (elect) Jews, points as a sign of hope towards the salvation of a greater number of Jews. All of Romans 9-11 is building towards the salvation of all God’s people. However, if one believes there will be an eschatological miracle upon the return of Christ, the Total National Elect view falls short of expectations. Cranfield suggests that the Total National Elect interpretation renders 11:26 anti-climactic, or as Moo describes it, “it would turn Paul’s prediction into a purposeless truism: after all, by definition, those who are elect will be saved.” What we have seen from our survey of the remnant throughout Isaiah and parts of the Old Testament, however, is that God has always maintained a remnant of faithful followers from within Israel throughout the nation’s existence. The Total National Elect view argues that 11:26 does not point so much towards an epic salvific event upon Christ’s return as to the great mystery about the salvation of “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ.” In other words, it speaks to the manner (“and in this manner” or “in this way,” 11:26a) in which God, through the inclusion of the Gentiles, is accomplishing the salvation of the elect from within Israel. As Ridderbos writes, “in the strange interdependence of the salvation of Israel and that of the

562 Zoccali, “‘And so All Israel Will Be Saved’: Competing Interpretations of Romans 11:26 in Pauline Scholarship”, 304.
563 Gadenz, Called From the Jews and From the Gentiles, 227.
564 Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 2 (IX-XVI):576–77. See also Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 722.
565 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 737.
gentiles...God grants no mercy to Israel without the gentiles, but neither does he do so to the gentiles without Israel.”

Regardless of one’s view of the salvation of “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ,” whether one conceives of it as a mass conversion at the Parousia or the saving work of God throughout history, the remnant in Romans 11:5 clearly lays out Paul’s belief that more Jews will turn to Christ. What these two views, as well as the Two-Covenant Theology view, seem to be less influenced by is Paul’s message of the remnant in Romans 9:27-29. The Ecclesiological view, however, is shaped somewhat by the remnant in Romans 9:27-29, and so we will now look at this view of Romans 11:26 and how it is shaped by the concept of the remnant.

9.3.5 The Ecclesiological View

This understanding of Romans 11:26 interprets “Ἰσραήλ” to be the whole church made up of faithful Jews and faithful Gentiles. Romans 11:26b-27 represents the inauguration of the new covenant, which has already taken place through Christ’s death and resurrection, and as a result both Jew and Gentile receive salvation. There is one significant difference between the Ecclesiological View of Romans 11:26 when compared to each of the other views already outlined in this thesis, and that is the inclusion of the Gentiles within the scope of “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται.” None of the three previously mentioned interpretations of 11:26 suggest that “Ἰσραήλ” consists of both Jews and Gentiles. The major difference between each of the other three views is who from within ethnic Israel will be saved and by what means. But the Ecclesiological View differs from the Total National Elect view, the Eschatological Miracle view, and Two-Covenant Theology, in that it understands “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” to be made up of both faithful Jews and faithful Gentiles.

The concept of the remnant is a significant factor in the Ecclesiological View’s interpretation of Romans 11:26. Paul writes these words with both the remnant and his mission to the Gentiles on his mind. As we have seen, Paul has explained that the remnant consists of both Jews and Gentiles (9:27-29; 11:1-7) and that whilst Gentiles will continue to “come in” and join the remnant until they ultimately reaching their “fullness,” the number of Jews joining the remnant

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568 Ibid., 95.
will also continue to grow until eventually they reach their “fullness” in the people of God (11:12).\(^{569}\)

Wright acknowledges that the majority of scholars interpret “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” as referring only to Jews. However, Wright argues that Paul uses “Ἰσραήλ” in Romans 9-11 differently.\(^ {570}\) In 9:6, Paul sets up the reader to ask, “who then are Israel?” (“For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel” NIV). Looking beyond just Romans 9:6, we see in 9:6-13 that Paul states that there is a select group of people within Abraham’s family. Then in 9:24, Paul states that Gentiles are also included alongside Jews amongst God’s people. Additionally, Wright notes that the verb for “called” (καλέω) in 9:24 is the same as that used in 9:7 and 9:12.\(^ {571}\) Even though Wright points out that Paul’s use of the term “Ἰσραήλ” in Romans 9-11, apart from 9:6, usually means “all, most or at least some Jews” (9:27, 31; 10:19, 21; 11:2, 7), Paul’s line of thought throughout Romans however, points towards a possible redefinition. “The phrase ‘all Israel,’ then, is best taken as a polemical redefinition, in line with Paul’s redefinition of ‘Jew’ in 2:29, of ‘circumcision’ in 2:29 and Phil 3:3, and of ‘seed of Abraham’ in Romans 4, Galatians 3, and Rom 9:6-9. It belongs with what seems indubitably the correct reading of ‘the Israel of God’ in Gal 6:16.”\(^ {572}\)

When we look back to the exegetical work on Romans 9:24-29 in this thesis, it was clear that the faithful Gentiles were included alongside the remnant of Israel. God’s people are to be a mixed community, consisting not only of ethnic Jews, but of Gentiles too. However, most scholars would agree on this, as shown earlier. Jewett, for example, who believes 11:26 to be referring to a future salvific event at the Parousia, paralleling Paul’s conversion experience, and an event which only Jews will participate in, also acknowledges the inclusion of Gentiles in the people of God, as per Romans 9:24-29. He notes that “true Israel consists of those now being called from both Jews and Gentiles to participate in the new community of faith.”\(^ {573}\) Augustine also summed up what he called the “truer Israel of God” as consisting of those who are elect from both the Jews and the Gentiles.\(^ {574}\) However, Jewett, along with all those in the

\(^{569}\) N. T Wright, Paul and the Faithfulness of God (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 1239.

\(^{570}\) Ibid., 1251.

\(^{571}\) Ibid., 1241.

\(^{572}\) Wright, ‘The Letter to the Romans’, 689–90.

\(^{573}\) Jewett, Romans, 601.

\(^{574}\) Gerald L. Bray, Romans: Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, NT, 2nd ed., vol. 6 (IVP Academic, 2005), 6:298.
Eschatological Miracle, Total National Elect, and Two-Covenant Theology groups, whilst acknowledging the place of the Gentiles in the people of God, do not interpret 11:26 to be speaking of Gentiles.

What then is the basis for scholars such as Wright, Barth and Calvin to interpret “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” (11:26) as consisting of faithful Jews and faithful Gentiles? Hays summarises Wright’s position on Romans 11:26 in six points, which I briefly outline below. These six points provide the basis for the Ecclesiological View.

1. Paul is writing an “apostolic pastoral letter,” and within the letter, chapters 9-11 are aimed at the Gentile Christians in Rome so they do not assume superior status over Jews in the church.

2. Romans 11:25-27 is not a sudden revelation of a new mystery that contradicts what Paul has said in earlier parts of the letter. Paul has built upon and continued his argument throughout Romans, and essentially, 11:25-27 summarises 11:11-24. For Hays, this is the strongest argument Wright makes.

3. If the olive tree, in the metaphor found in 11:17-24, is referring to Israel, what then is Paul saying that the Gentiles “come into” before the salvation of all Israel? Clearly, the Gentiles are included within Ἰσραήλ before “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται” (11:26). Wagner also indicates that the olive tree metaphor may point towards Gentile inclusion in “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ.”

4. The Jews can only find salvation through confessing Jesus as Lord. There are no special dispensations for the Jews. Romans 1-4 argues that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles, as does 10:9-13. Therefore, there is definitely no such Sonderweg for the Jews or any such special salvific event for only the Jews at the Parousia.

5. We should interpret “καὶ οὕτως” (11:26a) as “and thus” (manner) and not as “and then” (temporal sequence). Therefore, as 11:26a points back to 11:25, and given that 11:11-

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576 Ibid., 548.
577 Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 278.
24 is summed up in 11:25, being grafted into the olive tree through faith (and as a result of jealousy towards the Jews) is how all Israel will find salvation.

6. Therefore, based on the previous five points, a sixth point emerges. Hays summarises Wright’s view on 11:26, the Ecclesiological View, as “all Israel’ means the one people of God, composed of Jews and Gentiles who have come to place their trust in Jesus the Messiah.”

Karl Barth similarly understands “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ” in 11:26 to be:

“the community of those elected by God in and with Jesus Christ both from the Jews and also from the Gentiles, the whole church...in the totality constituted by the remnant continuing in and with the original stem Jesus Christ, by the wild shoots added later from the Gentiles, and by the branches which were and are finally grafted in again.”

If the challenge or criticism of the other views is that they can look too much like a Sonderweg for Israel, then the challenge or criticism of the Ecclesiological View is that it has the potential to head towards supersessionism. For some, the Ecclesiological View downplays the important place that Israel has as the people of God and the concern that Paul has about “his kinspeople according to the flesh.” Staples though, who is in favour of the Ecclesiological View, argues that the church is in full continuity with Israel as it is the righteous remnant of Israel, containing both Jews and Gentiles (9:27-29; 11:5). He notes that Jews who have not yet joined the remnant are still Israelites and can at any time join the righteous remnant and find salvation.

Paul is in no way advocating that the “true Israel” is to be a primarily Gentile church that replaces the Jews. Rather Paul is advocating that the people of God, being made up of faithful Jews and Gentiles, is in direct continuity with ancient Israel. Faithful Gentiles being grafted into the body of Christ do not replace Jews, but rather are restorations and additions to the faithful Jews already in the people of God. Faithful Gentiles joining God’s people is the means by which hopefully more Jews will enter into the body of Christ. This is a key defining feature of the Ecclesiological View. The other interpretations of 11:26 understand that the salvation of Israel in 11:26 will take place after the fullness of the Gentiles has been realised.

578 Hays, ‘Hope for What We Do Not Yet See: The Salvation of All Israel in Romans 11.25–27’, 551.
579 Barth, The Epistle to The Romans, 300.
582 Ibid.
583 Ibid., 389.
However, the Ecclesiological View believes that not only will faithful Gentiles continue to be grafted into the people of God alongside Jews, but the remnant of faithful Jews will continue to grow in size alongside the incoming Gentiles, until the emergence of an eventual fullness. Thus, the Ecclesiological view does not regard 11:26 as speaking of a fixed eschatological endpoint, but rather an indefinite period in which Jews gradually enter the church “by grace, through faith.”

How then does Paul’s use of the concept of the remnant weigh in on the debate over how to interpret Romans 11:26a? Clearly, the remnant concept is at odds with Two-Covenant Theology. When it comes to the Eschatological Miracle view, the purpose of the remnant supports the understanding of a larger number of Jews turning to Christ. In consequence, the remnant adds weight to this view. The remnant concept also supports the Total National Elect view for the same reason. However, understood alongside the remnant, the Total National Elect view appears to be a stronger interpretation than the Eschatological Miracle view as salvation is only obtained through faith in Christ, not ethnicity, which is consistent with the remnant.

However, the remnant in Romans 9-11 is not just about the Jews. The remnant in Romans 9 is also connected to the Gentiles. Typically, the Ecclesiological View is the minority view compared to the majority acceptance of the Eschatological Miracle View and the Total National Elect View. However, Paul’s use of the remnant actually helps make a stronger case for the Ecclesiological View. Clearly, Paul sees faithful Gentiles as being included in the remnant and being grafted into the people of God. If the remnant is to be understood as a seed of hope that grows into a larger group of believers, then we should take seriously the inclusion of the Gentiles alongside Jews in God’s chosen people, Israel.

9.4 Romans 11:26b-27

Rom 11:26b καθὼς γέγραπται· ἥξει ἐκ Σιὼν ὁ ρυάμενος, ἀποστρέψει ἁσβείας ἀπὸ Ἰακὼβ.

as it is written, “Out of Zion will come the Deliverer; he will banish ungodliness from Jacob.”

584 Hays, ‘Hope for What We Do Not Yet See: The Salvation of All Israel in Romans 11.25–27’, 555.
And this is my covenant with them, when I take away their sins.”

As was the case in Romans 9:24-29, 10:18 and 11:1-10, in 11:26b-27 Paul carries on his practice in Romans 9-11 of reinforcing his teaching with a composite quotation from the Old Testament. Here he is quoting from Isaiah 59:20-21a (LXX) and Isaiah 27:9 (LXX). Both of Paul’s quotations from the LXX follow the original text closely, except for one distinct variation. In the LXX, Isaiah 59:20 says, “καὶ ἥξει ἐκ Σιὼν ὁ ῥύμουνος” (“And the one who delivers will come for Sion’s sake.” NETS). However, Paul says in Romans 11:26, “ἥξει ἐκ Σιὼν ὁ ῥύμουνος” (“Out of Zion will come the Deliverer”). In the LXX, the “deliver” is coming “for” Zion, however Paul changes this to read as the deliverer is coming “out of” Zion. Who then is the deliverer and where does the deliverer come from? There are some who understand “ὁ ῥύμουνος” (“deliverer”)585 to be referring to God in general,586 but it is more likely and more commonly understood as a reference to Christ.587

Moo notes that Paul’s use of the text differs not only from the LXX but also from the Hebrew text and from all known pre-Pauline texts and versions.588 He suggests that it is likely that Paul made this change to the LXX deliberately in order to make the text of Isaiah suit the new situation in salvation history that is occurring which Paul has been reflecting on throughout Romans 9-11.589 This quotation by Paul then, “would certainly be understood to refer to the new age introduced by Israel’s rescue and restoration to divine favour.”590 This is the likely interpretation for those who interpret 11:26 as referring to a coming event in the future where

585 BDAG, 908.
587 Morris, The Epistle to the Romans, 421; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 728; Jewett, Romans, 704; Wright, ‘The Letter to the Romans’, 692; Käsemann, Commentary on Romans, 314; Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 2 (IX-XVI):578.
588 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 742.
589 Ibid. Moo lists other possible, less likely scenarios, such as: “Paul may have inadvertently assimilated this text to others in the OT that speak of the Lord’s coming from Zion (Deut. 33:2) or Israel’s deliverance as coming ‘from Zion’ (Pss. 14:7; 53:7; 110:2). He may have deliberately changed the wording to make a point: to show that Christ, ‘the redeemer,’ originates from the Jewish people (9:5); to show that the final ‘missionary’ to the Gentiles, Christ, comes, like the present missionaries to the Gentiles, from Jerusalem (see 15:19); or to show that Christ will save Israel by coming from the ‘heavenly’ Zion at his parousia. Or Paul may, in fact, be faithfully quoting from a form of the LXX text that we no longer have.” Ibid.
590 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 692.
all the Jews, or all of the elect Jews, will find salvation. These interpretations understand ‘ἡξεῖ ἐκ Σιὼν’ (“Out of Zion”) to be referring to Christ returning from the “heavenly Jerusalem” rather than Christ’s place of origin, ancestral descent from David, or from Jesus’ death and resurrection in Jerusalem.\(^{591}\)

Interestingly, Stanley suggests that Paul may simply have been quoting what was already a conflated and adapted text in Jewish oral tradition (Isaiah 59:20 and Isaiah 27:9), which was done to proclaim the belief that God was to come and intervene on behalf of his oppressed people, Israel.\(^{592}\) Both passages from Isaiah portray God as a military hero coming to rescue his people from “darkness” and “captivity,” as well as referencing the forgiveness of sins, judgement and subjection upon Israel’s enemies, and the return of the Israelites from the surrounding nations.\(^{593}\) Paul would have used these texts from Isaiah, then, to simply reinforce the point that God, through Christ, is fulfilling his promise to save Israel.\(^{594}\) In arguing against the view of the deliverer coming from “heavenly Jerusalem” at the Parousia, Wright goes further, and adds that the coming of the deliverer is not just to save Israel, but also to proclaim the gospel to all of the nations. “The Redeemer now comes with the gospel, from Zion to the world, and as a reflex (exactly as in 11:11-15) will ‘banish ungodliness from Jacob.’”\(^{595}\) And so Wright and others, interpret “ἡξεῖ ἐκ Σιὼν” as referring to the deliverer coming out of earthly Jerusalem. Thus, Paul’s use of scripture in 11:26b-27 is related to Christ’s first advent and not to the Parousia.\(^{596}\)

If one interprets Romans 11:26a as less likely to be referring to a salvific event at the Parousia, as this thesis has suggested, then it is more plausible to interpret Romans 11:26b-27 in line with Wright, who argues that Christ has come from the earthly Jerusalem in order to bring the gospel to all people. The remnant in Romans 9-11 confirms that those from all the nations that

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591 Schreiner, Romans, 691; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 728; Jewett, Romans, 704.
593 Ibid., 120.
594 Zoccali, “‘And so All Israel Will Be Saved’: Competing Interpretations of Romans 11:26 in Pauline Scholarship’, 312.
595 Wright, Paul and the Faithfulness of God, 1250.
receive the gospel are grafted into the people of God and those that reject the gospel are banished and tossed away.

9.5 Conclusion
I have shown in this section that “true Israel” are all those who are grafted into the olive tree. They are grafted in through faith in Christ, and not because of ethnicity or any deeds. True Israel is not a replacement of Israel, but simply an expansion or a redefinition. Jews are the natural branches and the Gentiles are the wild branches. Once grafted in, they are both part of the same people, Israel.

Paul makes it clear that hardened Jews can still be grafted back in through faith in Christ. He has made this point clear throughout Romans 11. At the beginning of Romans 11, as well as in chapter 9, the remnant was shown to be a sign of hope for Israel that God has not abandoned the natural branches in favour of the wild branches. Hardened Jews can still join the remnant through faith, just as Paul did.

The Jews expected a twofold process of salvation. Firstly, their nation would be restored. After this, the salvation of the Gentiles would follow. However, the mystery that Paul reveals is that the salvation of the Gentiles will largely come before the salvation of the Jews. It is the salvation of the Gentiles that will cause the remnant of faithful Jews to grow in size.

It was shown that “Ἰσραήλ” can and does mean more than just ethnic Jews. Paul makes it clear that there is an Ἰσραήλ within Ἰσραήλ. The remnant is this inner Ἰσραήλ, the true Ἰσραήλ. When placed alongside the olive-tree metaphor, there is a strong argument to include Gentiles in the “true Israel.”

It was shown that Two-Covenant Theology is not a viable interpretation of Romans 11:26 as it requires a different path to salvation for Jews and Gentiles, which is simply not consistent with Romans 9-11.

The Eschatological Miracle view points towards a large salvific event, that would explain part of the mystery that Paul is revealing. However, the salvation of all Jews is not consistent with the anguish Paul has over his people that some might not come to Christ. Additionally, the remnant are grafted into the olive tree because of faith in Christ, as is the case for the Gentiles.
For the Jews to experience a large-scale conversion experience at the Parousia apart from the Gentiles sounds more like Two-Covenant Theology than some scholars would like to admit.

The Total National Elect view does not require a large-scale salvific event at the Parousia. On the contrary, the salvation of all elect Jews happens over time and will increase now that the Gentiles are turning to Christ. This view is consistent with the remnant in terms of the requirement for faithfulness in Christ for salvation. If Ἰσραήλ in 11:26 is taken not to include Gentiles, then the Total National Elect view is a stronger view than the Eschatological Miracle view.

Whilst the Eschatological view has the most support amongst scholars, the Ecclesiological View, when viewed with the concept of the remnant in mind, is a much stronger option than is often acknowledged. Romans 11:26 speaks of an Ἰσραήλ that is defined after the inauguration of the new covenant as the people of God consisting of both Jew and Gentile. The ‘true Israel’ are the faithful remnant of the Jews and the wild branches of the Gentiles that have both been grafted into the olive tree. This view is made stronger by the concept of the remnant as it highlights the mixed community within the people of God that Romans 9:24-29 spoke of, as well as the exclusion of those outside of the remnant that 11:1-7 highlighted. Additionally, the Ecclesiological view accommodates the embryonic nature of the remnant in that it believes the people of God to grow, both Jews and Gentiles.
10. Conclusion

In this thesis I have joined in the debate surrounding Romans 11:26 and what Paul means when he says “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται.” I have used the concept of the remnant as an interpretive lens to see what, if any, new perspective(s) it might bring to the debate.

Initially I set the scene for the church in Rome and the reasons Paul wrote to the church in Rome. I showed that that context of the church in Rome was one of tension. The original congregation in Rome consisted predominantly of Jews but it then shifted to a mostly Gentile congregation as a result of the Claudius Edict, and then returned to a mixed congregation with the return of the Jews with the lapse of the Claudius Edict. This resulted in a changing of the dominant culture of the church and tensions arose as a result. It is this context of a mixed church experiencing tension between cultures to which Paul writes his letter to the Romans.

I then surveyed the different opinions on the place and status of chapters 9-11 in the overall letter of Romans. I showed that chapters 9-11 are at the very least an integral part of the letter and perhaps even the climax of the letter. Following on from this survey of the different perspectives on chapters 9-11, I surveyed the different interpretations of Romans 11:26. I looked specifically at the four main views on this verse and outlined the major differences between each view. It was highlighted that a key difference between these views is whether or not the salvation that 11:26 is speaking of only relates to ethnic Jews, whether all or a select group, or if 11:26 includes the Gentiles in its description of “Israel.”

Next I turned to the concept of the remnant as it appears in the Old Testament, with a particular focus on the book of Isaiah. I showed that in Isaiah the remnant was a message of hope for God’s people experiencing judgment. In First and Second Isaiah the remnant was the remainder of Israel who did not experience judgement and destruction (Isaiah 20:20-21). Israel was experiencing a smelting and a refining (Isaiah 1:25; 4:4) with the remnant being the purified residue (Isaiah 48:10). As the text moves into Third Isaiah, we saw an expansion in the concept of the remnant from not just concerning the survivors amongst Israel, but now including those from other nations (Isaiah 56:3, 8). This idea of the remnant being the way in which God

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597 Fitzmyer, Romans, 33.
598 Schreiner, Romans, 469; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, 551.
maintains his covenantal promises to Israel and also the way in which he expands his people to include more Gentiles, is the backdrop for Paul’s use of the remnant in Romans.

I then moved on to the text of Romans where the remnant concept explicitly appears, firstly in Romans 9:24-29 where we see Paul redefine God’s people as a mixed community. Faithful Gentiles, objects of God’s mercy (9:23), are included alongside faithful Israelites in the remnant of the people of God. It was shown that true Israel consists of those now being called from both Jews and Gentiles to participate in the new community of faith. The hopeful characteristic of the remnant in Isaiah is maintained in Paul’s thinking in Romans 9:24-29 where the good news for Israel is that not “only” a remnant will be saved but “at least” a remnant will be saved, and thus the remnant maintains its embryonic hopeful purpose for Israel and the people of God.

Secondly, I looked at Romans 11:1-7. Whereas 9:24-29 demonstrated the inclusion of the Gentiles in the people of God, 11:1-7 focuses largely on those within Israel who currently are not included. Paul refers to these people as “the hardened.” The hardened are those who have not found faith in Christ and these people are set in contrast to the remnant of Israel who have found faith in Christ. By addressing the current context where many Gentiles are turning to Christ whilst many Jews are not, Paul explains the means by which someone enters into the people of God, and that ultimately this is only a possibility because of the grace of God. In this section I show that neither works nor ethnicity are what is required to be considered part of God’s people. Only faith in Christ allows someone to receive God’s grace. The remnant, of which Paul is a member, are those who are faithful to Christ. Paul illustrates this by using the story of a faithful remnant of 7000 Israelites in 1 Kings 19. Additionally, this remnant carries the embryonic hope that more Jews will turn to faith in Christ out of jealousy over the Gentiles who are turning to Christ right before their eyes. The necessity of faith required to be part of the remnant and the impact of the jealousy falling upon the hardened Jews of Israel, sets Paul up for Romans 11:26.

Lastly then, through exegeting Romans 11:26, I address what Paul means when he says “πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται.” By applying the concept of the remnant to 11:26, immediately the Two Covenant Theology view is shown to not be a viable option. The existence of a remnant consisting of both Jews and Gentiles, with membership based on faith in Christ, shuts down

600 Jewett, Romans, 601.
the idea of Israel having a separate path to salvation. The more popular Eschatological view is shown to be consistent with the concept of the remnant in the fact that it points to a growing number of Israelites coming to faith in Christ. However, this view is not consistent with the destruction and refining aspect of the remnant in the Old Testament. I argue also that this view ends up looking a lot like it is pointing towards a separate path to salvation for the Jews, via a large salvific event at the Parousia. This is inconsistent with Paul’s use of the remnant in my opinion.

It was shown that the Total National Elect view stayed clear of any special privileges for Israel in regards to a Jewish individual’s salvation. This view does not point to a special event for the Jews upon the return of Christ. Rather it interprets Romans 11:26 as speaking of the salvation of all of the elect from within Israel. Faith in Christ is what matters, not ethnicity. I showed that if “Ἰσραήλ” in 11:26 is taken to not include Gentiles, then the Total National Elect view seems to be the most likely option. However the remnant concept seems to allow a greater possibility than is normally allowed, that the Gentiles are considered to be part of the true Israel.

I argue then that the Ecclesiological view lines up more with the remnant concept in that it is not only consistent with the hopeful embryonic nature of the remnant (albeit throughout time and not relying on an end-times salvific event) but that it also points to the inclusion of the Gentiles in the people of God. This view takes seriously the need for faith in Christ as the means of accepting God’s grace and finding inclusion in the people of God, not solely relying on ethnic privileges. I lean on the work of N.T. Wright who interprets πᾶς Ἰσραήλ as including both Jews and Gentiles and Barth, who describes Ἰσραήλ in 11:26 as the whole church, “constituted by the remnant.”

I hope to have shown then that the concept of the remnant does add to the debate on Romans 11:26. Paul’s use of the remnant I believe adds weight to the less popular Total National Elect and Ecclesiological views. The remnant points us away from the idea of a large salvific event at the Parousia for the Jews after the fulness of the Gentiles have come in. We should take more seriously the question of whether or not Paul has Gentiles in mind when using the term

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601 Barth, The Epistle to The Romans, 300.
Ἰσραήλ in 11:26. I believe Paul’s use of the remnant at least adds weight to the possibility that he does.

Further research that is beyond the scope of this thesis could look into the concept of the remnant as a sign of hope for those who face suffering and persecution. Clearly in this thesis the remnant was shown to be a sign of hope in both the Old Testament and in the New Testament, but further work could be done to explore the remnant concept as a sign of hope for God’s people throughout the history of the church. Throughout the church’s history there have been times when the church has faced persecution and hardship and God has raised up faithful remnants. It would be research that might help sustain and grow the church today in times of hardship. As Umoren writes, the remnant “confirms that God is still God. It vindicates His righteousness, His faithfulness, and His sovereignty.”

This research could speak into the theological conversation around theodicy and God’s activity in the world.

Another area of further research that has come to my attention is the concept of the remnant and what it means for the people of God in the Old Testament. Returning to the root of my curiosity in the remnant of Israel, which was the work of Steven Sizer, and seeing how his arguments about the inclusive nature of the people of God in the Old Testament may or may not be supported by the concept of the remnant. I would expect the Ecclesiological view would provide further support for his argument.

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603 Steven Sizer wrote “Zion’s Christian Soldiers?: The Bible, Israel and the Church,” (IVP Books, 2008) and in this book he looks at the inclusive nature of Israel as the people of God in the Old Testament and carries that line of thinking through into the New Testament where he suggests Israel consists of Jew and Gentiles.
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