

-Save This Page as a PDF-

The Redemption of Isra'el

11: 25-36

The redemption of Isra'el DIG: What is a mystery in the Bible? What mystery is Paul talking about here? In what sense is Isra'el's stoniness only "to a degree?" How would you paraphrase God's purpose in these verses? What is the ultimate hope for Isra'el? For Gentiles? How does this tie in with Paul's teaching in 3:21-24? When Paul says, "For God's free gifts and His calling are irrevocable," what is he talking about? With Isra'el's national regeneration, how will the circle, as it were, be complete?

REFLECT: When someone else receives God's blessing and grace in their lives, does that spur you on to seek God all the more, or does it make you upset? If so, why? How has God blessed you by the fact that Isra'el has rebelled? What should be your response? Do you view Messianic believers as joint heirs to the kingdom, or foreigners in your land? How has ADONAI shown you mercy in your life? How can you respond, and show His mercy to others? What does God's faithfulness to Isra'el have to do with you?

For God's free gifts and His calling [of the Jewish nation] are irrevocable.

ADONAI's setting Isra'el aside is not only partial and passing but also purposeful. YHVH temporarily set aside His chosen people in order to bring salvation to the Gentiles (11:11b), to make Isra'el jealous of them (11:11c) so they would yearn to receive the blessings of the Messiah they had rejected, and thereby be used to bring blessing to the rest of the world (11:12-15). But God's ultimate, overriding purpose is to glorify Himself.³⁰³

The promise of Isra'el's redemption. In 11:25 the word "for" points forward to the reason, given immediately, why Paul has presented the olive tree illustration (to see link [click Cz - The Illustration of Isra'el's Future](#)). Paul uses the word brothers to emphasize that he considers not only Messianic Jews, but also Gentile believers to be his brothers in the faith, because he didn't want any of them to be offended at what he was about to say next.

For, brothers, I don't want you to be ignorant of this mystery (Greek: *musterion*), **which God formerly concealed but has now revealed (11:25a)**. At the end of Paul's letter, **he defines mystery as being a revelation which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is made known, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God (Romans 16:25-26; Ephesians 3:5-7 NASB)**. In this, both the Messianic **Jews** and the **Gentile** believers must grasp the fullness of **their** individual callings by **ADONAI**.

Why was this **secret** truth **kept** hidden for so **long** until **Paul** revealed it? Because one would have expected **Isra'el** to be the first nation to **be saved**. **Isra'el** had all the advantages enjoyed by no other people (see **Cp - The Grief of Isra'el's Past Paradox: Eight advantages that the Jews have**). **The Gospel** itself is **to the Jew especially (1:16)**, and **YHVH** has promised **Jewish** national salvation (**Ezeki'el 36:24-36; Matthew 23:37; Acts 1:6-7**). Why then, is **God** doing the unexpected, making **the Gentiles joint-heirs (Ephesians 3:3-9)** with **the Jews**? In order to give the fullest possible demonstration of **His love** for all humanity and not merely to **the Jews**.

But before **Paul** identifies and explains the particular **mystery** of which **he** is speaking here, **he** once again cautions **the Gentiles** against **their** pride, warning **them** to avoid twisting the truths of **the mystery** as being wise in their own eyes: **So that you won't imagine you know more than you actually do (11:25b)**. **Proverbs 3:7** reminds us: **Don't be conceited about your own wisdom; but fear ADONAI, and turn from evil**.

It is that stoniness, to a degree, that has come upon Isra'el (11:25c) it is a partial **stoniness** of the heart **that has come upon Isra'el (11:25c)**. **The stoniness** is not total, because there has always been a remnant of **Jewish** believers **trusting** in **Yeshua Messiah**, the righteous of the TaNaKh. **All Isra'el**, including Messianic believers, is affected by this partial **stoniness**, for, as we shall see below, it delays **Isra'el's** national salvation. This passage does not say that **God** caused **the stoniness**, as **He** hardened Pharaoh's heart (**Exodus 9:17-18**); but it does imply that **ADONAI** knew it would happen. Nevertheless, it does not provide an excuse for anyone to remain **stone-hearted (10:13)**.³⁰⁴

Until the Gentile world enters in its fullness (Romans 11:25d; Proverbs 3:7 and Romans 12:16). The times of **the Gentiles** (see the commentary on **Revelation An - The Times of the Gentiles**) must be distinguished from **the fullness of the Gentiles (Acts 15:14; Ephesians 4:11-13; First Corinthians 12:12-13)**. The former term refers to that time from Nebuchadnezzar's deportation of the dynasty of David to the defeat of the antichrist at Armageddon (see the commentary on **Isaiah Kh - The Eight Stage**

Campaign of Armageddon), during which **the Gentile** rules **the Jew**. However, the latter term speaks of the completion of the Invisible Church, made up of **Jews** and **Gentiles** (**Ephesians 2:14**), saved from Shavu'ot until the Rapture. **The partial stoniness of Isra'el** extends the time when the last **Gentile** sinner dies and is introduced into the Body of **Messiah**, completing that Body. Sometime after this, the Rapture occurs, a covenant is signed between **Isra'el** and the antichrist (see the commentary on **Revelation Bz - The Signing of the Seven-Year Covenant with the Antichrist**), and the Great Tribulation begins.³⁰⁵



During the last **three days** of the Great Tribulation (**Hosea 6:1-2**), **the Jews** will recognize that **Yeshua** was actually **their Messiah**, and **they** cry out to **Him** in repentance (see the commentary on **Revelation Ev - The Basis for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ**). Then **Messiah** will return to **redeem His people**. **And in this way all Isra'el will be saved**. To be clear, this does not mean that every single **Jew** in all of history **will be saved**, but that those **Jews**, surrounded by the armies of the antichrist at the end of the Great Tribulation, will experience a national salvation (see the commentary on **Isaiah Kg - The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to Bozrah**). And to prove that **all Isra'el will be saved**, **Paul** quotes the **TaNaKh**, which says: **Out of Tziyon will come the Redeemer; He will turn away ungodliness from Ya'akov (Jacob) and this will be my covenant with them, . . . when, as a nation, I will take away their sins (Romans 11:26-27; Isaiah 59:20-21 and 27:9a)**. **Paul** combines two passages of **Isaiah** that speak of **Isra'el** in **the far eschatological future**, that is, in **Messianic** times. The passages are appropriate, since the objective in **Chapters 9-11** is to show that despite appearances to the contrary,

God's promises will not fail to be fulfilled.³⁰⁶

Gentiles in the Church should not be jealous at the concept of **Isra'el's** election. As soon as a person put his trust in **God's** Word, the concept of **Isra'el's** election loses its offensiveness and becomes, instead, the means of **blessing** for everyone, **Jew** and **Gentile** alike, according to the promise of **Genesis 12:3**. However, because in most of its history, the Church has sought to replace **Isra'el** as the recipient of **God's** promises, the question of who is **God's people** has become a point of contention and separation between **Judaism** and Christianity. For the Church has historically claimed, over against **Isra'el**, to be the "New Isra'el," the "True Isra'el," the "Isra'el of God," and regarded **the Jewish people** as merely the "Old Isra'el," no longer eligible to receive **God's promises** because of having rejected **Yeshua**. How ironic that the Church claimed to *supplant* **the Jewish people** as **Isra'el** when it behaved like **Isra'el's** old name, **Jacob**, which means *supplanter*. This perverted understanding of election, ignoring everything that **Paul** writes in **Chapters 9-11**, has raised an unnecessary barrier between **Jews** and Christians, which I hope this commentary can help to eliminate.³⁰⁷

On October 23, 2010, the Vatican - in the final statement from a two-week bishops' synod - blamed **Isra'el** for the plight of believers throughout the Middle East, and stated that **Isra'el** cannot use the biblical concept of a Promised Land or a Chosen People to justify territorial claims or new "settlements" in the Golan Heights for their national survival.

The World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Methodist Church, the Lutheran Church (ELCA), the Anglican Church, and the United Church of Christ have publicly condemned Messianic Gentiles through statements or resolutions. They have also called for the boycott of goods made in Judea and Samaria, and divestment in companies that provide equipment for **Isra'el's** protection and economic viability as a productive democracy.

These Catholic and Protestant leaders condemn Messianic Gentiles, saying that they place an emphasis on apocalyptic events leading to the end of history, rather than living out **Christ's** love and social justice. They say that Messianic Gentiles are more concerned with the Second Coming than with **the Jewish People**. They even say that Messianic Gentiles are a cult, and that their beliefs amount to heresy. And finally, they say that Messianic Gentiles have enabled the unjust treatment of Palestinians by **Isra'el**.

Paul analyzes the truth of what he has said so far: With respect to the Good News, Isra'el is hated for your sake. Hated by whom? Enemies of whom? Clearly, **ADONAI** - by whom also **they are loved**. It is very interesting that Replacement theologians, who say that

“Isra’el” today means the Church, do not apply their theology to the first clause in this verse! If they did, they would have to conclude that **God hates** the Church! Again, clearly it is **the Jews** who, **with respect to the Good News . . .** are temporarily **hated by God for the sake** of the **Gentiles, so that the Good News** can come to them. But **with respect to being** permanently **chosen** as **God’s people . . . they are** permanently **loved by God (11:28)**.

Moreover, if **11:28** speaks of **the Jews**, then **11:29** also speaks of **the Jews. For God’s free gifts and his calling of [the Jewish nation] are irrevocable (11:29)**. No matter how much Replacement Theology theologians sputter over it. Why are **God’s people** permanently **loved**? Without thinking, a Christian might answer, “Because **God is love (First John 4:8)**, it simply flows out of **God’s** essential nature to **love His people. Paul’s** answer may come as a surprise to many and seem “unspiritual” - **for the sake of the Patriarchs. YHVH** made promises to **the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, which **He** is honor-bound to keep. Protecting **His** honor is also an essential attribute of **God**.

*Dear Holy Heavenly **Father**, I **love** to meditate on how wonderful and faithful **You** are! **ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot, who is like You, mighty ADONAI, with Your faithfulness all around You (Psalms 89:9)? But the mercy of ADONAI is from everlasting to everlasting on those who revere Him, His righteousness to children’s children, to those who keep His covenant, who remember to observe His instructions (Psalms 103:17). You** always keep every promise **You** make. **As surely as God is faithful. . . For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ (Second Corinthians 1:18a and 20a). Praise you that your love for Isra’el, Your first-born (Exodus 4:22), never ceases but continually seeks to draw her back to Yourself in a loving relationship. You** even set aside the last seven years of life on this earth as a time to bring **Isra’el** to welcome **You** as **their Messiah**, before **You** return to set up **Your** Millennial Kingdom.*

Your love is unceasing! Even when **You** had to discipline **Your firstborn (Exodus 4:22) Isra’el** as in the seventy year Babylonian captivity, **You** did it out of **love** planning to rid **her** of idol worship and to bring **her** back to **You** in a closer relationship. **This is what the LORD says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11-12).**

Your faithful love is a breath of refreshment compared to today’s “love” that is so selfish.

*How gracious **You** are to include in **Your olive tree** both believing **Gentiles (Romans 11:17)** and also any of **the Jews of the natural branches** who now **trust in You as their Messiah (Romans 11:24)**. How wonderful **Your love!** In **Yeshua's** holy name and power of resurrection. Amen*

For the sake of the Patriarchs does not express the rabbinic notion of Z'khut-avot, or "the merit of the Fathers." The rabbinic idea is that the good deeds of the ancestors add to the welfare of their descendants. The expression, "zokher chasdei-avot" ("You remember the good deeds of the Patriarchs") appears in the first blessing of the 'Amidah. The concept draws on the fact the Torah, in the second of the Ten Commandments, indicates that the benefits of a person's good deeds extend into the indefinite future.

While it is true that good deeds yield ongoing consequences, nevertheless, **Paul** is not saying that **the Patriarchs** earned **God's** favor by **their** good deeds, neither for **themselves** nor for **their** descendants. Rather, **he** is speaking of **the Patriarchs** as receivers of **God's** gracious promises. **YHVH** made wonderful promises to **them** concerning **their** descendants, **the people of Isra'el**; and **He** must keep those promises in order to vindicate **His** own **righteousness (3:25-26)** and **faithfulness (3:3)**. **For**, given that **ADONAI** is forever **righteous** and **faithful**, **God's free gifts**, those promises and indeed **the gifts** mentioned in **9:4-5**, and **His calling to the Jewish people** to be dedicated to **Himself, a holy nation (Exodus 19:6)**, **a light to the Gentiles (Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6)**, are **irrevocable**, because **YHVH** cannot deny **His** own eternal nature as a **Promise Keeper**.

In light, then, of **Chapters 9-11** in general, and these verses in particular, any Christian theology which teaches that **ADONAI** no longer **loves the Jews**, or that **the Jewish people** will not receive all the good things **God** has promised **them**, contradicts the express teaching of the B'rit Chadashah. Furthermore, such teaching, by necessity, portrays **God** as unfaithful and thus less than **God**, unworthy of being trusted by anyone, **Jew** or **Christian**, or "other."³⁰⁸

Jewish unbelief has given God a chance to reveal His mercy. **Paul** makes a final restatement of **his** theme, **Isra'el's** salvation in history, this time in terms of **God's mercy**. These verses look back to **9:15-18**, where **God's mercy** was presented as an aspect of **His** sovereignty; and forward to **12:1**, where **His mercies** (plural to **the Jews** and to **the Gentiles**) are made the basis and motivation for right action (see [Db](#) - **The Mercies of ADONAI**).

YHVH Himself does not withhold **His mercy**, and anyone who has truly received **God's mercy** cannot help but communicate that same **mercy** from **God** to others. **Just as you yourselves were disobedient to God before but have received mercy now because of Isra'el's disobedience; so also, Isra'el has been disobedient now, so that by [you Gentiles] showing [Isra'el, the Jews] the same mercy that God has shown you, they too may now receive God's mercy (11:30-31).** God used **Jewish** disobedience for **His** own purposes. But, in contrast with that, **Gentiles** now have the opportunity to be the conscious and intentional means of **blessing** to **Isra'el**. **ADONAI** has **blessed the Gentiles** by choosing **them** as **His** instrument for willingly **blessing Isra'el and the Jews**.

If anyone is saved at all, it is only because of **God's mercy**. **For God has shut up all mankind, Jew and Gentile together in disobedience, in order that He might show mercy to all (11:32).** All have sinned and come short of earning the glory of **God's praise (3:23)**. The **Jewish** "good person" (see **Ao - The "Good Person"**) and **pagan Gentiles** alike (see **Ak - The Pagan Gentile**), are controlled by **sin (3:9)**, so that there is **no difference whether one is a Jew or a Gentile (3:22b)**. When the **Gentiles** rejected **God** and **disobeyed Him** (see **Al - The Evidence Against the Pagan Gentile**), **God** selected **Abraham** and **his descendants** as **His chosen people**. Now the disobedience of **the Jews** enables **God** to **show mercy to the Gentiles**. Then, when that purpose is achieved, **He** will again **show mercy to the nation of Isra'el** by **her redemption**, and the circle will be complete.³⁰⁹

The greatness of **God's** sovereignty, mercy, faithfulness and ordering of history, so that not one of **His** promises will go unfulfilled, causes **Paul** to burst into song. **He** - and we - have caught a glimpse of the working of **God's** mind and are overwhelmed. Only a hymn of praise to **YHVH** can escape our lips. It is a fitting climax to **Chapters 9-11** in particular and to the first eleven chapters in general. **O the depth of the riches and the wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments! How unsearchable are His ways! For, "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Who has been His counselor?" Or, "Who has given Him anything and made Him pay it back?" For from Him (creation) and through Him (revelation) and to Him (redemption) are all things. To Him be the glory forever!** After the congregation in Rome heard this letter read aloud, they would say **Amen**, in response and agreement with **Paul's** praise of **God (11:33-36)**. Because **God's** promises to **Isra'el** have and will be kept, we can have confidence that **nothing can separate us from the love of God (8:38-39)**.