

ROMANS 11 AND 'ALL' ISRAEL

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Frequently questions are given to preterists concerning Romans 11. This is a brief article concerning who is 'all Israel' in Romans 11.

First, I would immediately say that Paul was definitely addressing the Israelites. But remember how he said in chapter nine that not all Israel was of Israel? That is, not all national Israelites are of the true Israel. So we can at least clear it up that only the elect national Israelites would be saved. Paul said "Even so at this present time." I.e. at the time Paul was writing there was a remnant of the national Israelites who had not yet believed in Christ, thus they were still enemies of those Israelites who had been converted. That is why Paul identified himself prior to his conversion:

Acts 22:4 And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

Acts 26:11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.

1 Corinthians 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

But because he was one of the elect national Israelites, God converted him. And so Romans 11: Romans 11:4-5 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. {5} Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

The last of the national Israelites who were elect had not yet come to faith in Christ, but that remnant would come before He would destroy Jerusalem.

Romans 11:11-12 I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. {12} Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness?

They were enemies of converted Jews and Gentiles, and they were elect and national Israelites. But they had not yet been converted. But the promise was sure.

Romans 11:14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.

Even Paul recognized that some of them would be saved. Not all the national Israelites would be saved. Just the elect:

Romans 11:6-9 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. {7} What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded {8} (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they

should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. {9} And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them:

So we have Paul contrasting the elect unbelieving national Israelites versus the non-elect national Israelites. Therefore, here Paul is referring to the elect, yet unbelieving national Israelites:

Romans 11:25-26 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. {26} And so all Israel will be saved; as it is written, "Out of Zion will come the Deliverer; he will banish ungodliness from Jacob."

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Paul says:

Romans 11:28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. "As touching the election...(i.e. the yet unconverted elect national Israelites)..." That is the same group as Paul mentioned earlier:

Romans 11:5-7 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. {6} And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. {7} What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. There were the national Israelites who were not elect, and there were the national Israelites who were elect. Only those would be saved, and they are part of the true Israel of God. Paul saw a definite future for the remnant of national Israel who had not yet been converted but who were elect. And they were finally converted before God destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70.

So then, they were enemies while yet in an unconverted state, nevertheless they were elect and would be saved. They were the "all Israel" of which Paul spoke. They were the remnant, the elect, the beloved for the fathers' sakes.