

In coming to verses 23-26—we in some ways come to the most debated verses within the entire book of Romans—thus before we consider them—I want to quickly remind you of Paul's primary and foremost purpose within these three chapters (9-11)...

I have asserted numerous times—Paul has a single purpose that he pursues throughout these chapters, from various angles—What about the Jews and God's promises to them?—and, as we have seen for several months now, Paul answers this question by asserting—God's word toward His people can never fail (9:6)—and He can never cast away His people (11:1-2)...

But the question then becomes—WHO are in fact God's people?—and His answer is clear for all of those who care to hear—God's true people, His true Israel, does not consist of every Jew, but some Jews, the elect, to whom believing Gentiles are being added—thus elect Jews and Gentiles together, and equally, partake of the promises made to Abraham...

Hendriksen—"If here in Rom.11:26a Paul is speaking about a still-future mass-conversion of Jews, then he is overthrowing the entire carefully built-up argument of Chapters 9-11; for the ONE important point which he is trying to establish constantly is exactly this, that God's promises attain fulfilment NOT in the nation as such but in the remnant according to the election of grace..."

Let me put this as plain as I can—throughout these chapters Paul's single purpose is to REJECT the notion that God's people consists of every physical Jew—that a true Jew is one who has been circumcised inwardly—and this people consists of BOH—Jew and Gentile—furthermore—being a physical Jew in no way brings a privilege with it—for there is neither Jew or Gentile, male or female, slave or free—but we are ALL one in Christ...

- I. What is the basic teaching and timing of this passage?
- II. What is the specific meaning of 'All Israel will be saved'?
- III. What are some general lessons we learn from the whole?

I. What is the basic teaching and timing of this passage?

1. Here I want to state a general premise—and then attempt to prove it by—surveying verses 23 through 32....
2. I want to assert that this passage (along with Rom.9-11) teaches a present, limited, and conditional salvation of physical Jews...
3. This—of course—is in opposition to a future wholesale salvation of physical Jews—as some would teach...
4. But—I want to assert, that throughout this passage—Paul is describing a present and limited salvation of some Jews...
5. But—before I do that—let me point out the obvious—and that is the evident connection between the verses...
6. If you notice, beginning from v11—several of the verses begin with the connecting word "for"—v13, 15, 16, 21, 24, 25, 29, 30, and v32...
7. This simply underscores, what I have mentioned throughout this chapter—this chapter is stressing a single theme...
8. [1] Verses 23-24, v23—"And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again..."
9. This verse—is but reflective of the larger passage—as it speaks about a limited, present, and conditional salvation...
10. The Jews can and will be grafted into the single olive tree—provided they do not continue in their unbelief...

11. That is—individual Jews, and not the nation as a whole, presently and not in the future—will be grafted in...
12. V24—"For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own love tree..."
13. Not in the future in a wholesale conversion—but throughout this PRESENT age—as individual Jews believe...
14. [2] Verse 25, v25—"for I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in..."
15. Now—because great weight has been placed upon this text by some—I want to consider it—in three parts...
16. [a] "For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery"—that is—the mystery mentioned in vv23-24 and elaborated on in v25...
17. A "mystery" according to Scripture, is a truth that would have remained unknown—had God not revealed it...
18. Thus a mystery is something previously unknown but presently known—"lest you should be wise in your own opinion..."
19. That is—the reason the mystery was made known—was so that the Gentiles would not be haughty but fear...
20. Now—let me state very simply—the essence of this mystery—is the present ongoing salvation of some Jews...
21. V23—"And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again..."
22. In other words, he's saying the same thing in v25 as he said in vv23-24—God is presently grafting them back in...
23. Now—this is important to keep in mind—as many commentators want v25 to say something different from vv23-24...
24. But—this mystery mentioned in v25 (the partial blinding of Israel)—is the same as the present engrafting of vv23-24...
25. [b] A partial blindness—"that blindness in part has happened to Israel"—this is the essence of the mystery...
26. Now—keep in mind—whatever Paul means by "blindness in part has happened to Israel—he means the same thing he's just said in vv23-24...
27. Not all Israel has been blinded or hardened—God can and will graft branches back in—providing they do not continue in unbelief...
28. Thus—what Paul says in v25, is the same thing he said in v23 and v24—AND back in verse 7 and verse 11...
29. V7—"What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded..."
30. That is—while the physical nation of Israel was largely blinded—all of TRUE ISRAEL, the elect, were saved...
31. Or—as he put it in v25—"blindness IN PART has happened to Israel"—and NOT to EVERY individual Jew...
32. V11—"I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not"—or—"blindness IN PART has happened to Israel..."
33. That is—God's rejection of a generation of Jews in Jesus' day—does not mean all Jews are beyond salvation...
34. Or—"blindness in part has happened to Israel"—that is—they have not stumbled in such a way—so as to fall...
35. [c] A fullness of Gentiles—this refers to the calling and saving of the completed Gentile elect from the world...
36. Thus—this present and partial salvation—will continue in every generation—until the complete number of elect Gentiles are saved...

37. That is—throughout this entire age—until the last Gentile is saved—"blindness in part has happened to Israel..."
38. Or—another way of putting it would be—there will always be a remnant of ethnic Jews trickling into the kingdom...
39. Let me illustrate—think of a water faucet with two knobs—one represents the Jews and the other the Gentiles...
40. Now—let's say there's a single bucket placed before the faucet which represents God's single and true people...
41. Throughout the OC the knob that represented the Jews was LARGELY opened and the other BARELY opened...
42. That is—throughout the OC dispensation—the true people of God consisted of many Jews and few Gentiles...
43. The Jews, we could say, flowed in—while the Gentiles merely trickled in—together they constituted one people...
44. This is reversed in the NT—the Gentile knob is LARGELY opened and the Jewish knob is PARTIALLY opened...
45. Thus—what the apostle is teaching is THIS—until the last Gentile flows in—Jews will ALWAYS trickle in...
46. Put another way—throughout this age—the Jewish knob will remain open—until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in...
47. That is—these two—the pouring in of the Gentiles and trickling in of the Jews—happen at the SAME time...
48. Thus the "untill" does not mean—that after the last Gentile is converted—the partial blindness of Israel will cease...
49. That is—Paul is NOT saying—that only a trickle of Jews will be saved UNTILL the elect Gentiles are saved...
50. But he is saying—that throughout this age, until the last Gentile is saved—physical or ethnic Jews will be saved...
51. Thus again—the emphasis of v25—is not on what will happen to Israel after the Gentiles are saved—but while the Gentiles are being saved...
52. Now—I can forever prove this—but it will necessitate that you give me your careful and undivided attention...
53. Some understand v25 as follows—after the fullness of the Gentiles—there will be a revival among the Jews...
54. After this revival (and because of it)—there will be a great revival among the Gentiles—this is how they interpret v12...
55. V12—"Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness..."
56. But here is the problem—if revival happens to Israel after the fullness of the Gentiles—how can more Gentiles be saved...
57. That is—"the fullness of the Gentiles" refers to the salvation of the complete number of elect taken from the nations...
58. Thus—if v25 is teaching a future Jewish revival AFTER the fullness of the Gentiles come in—then this can have no effect upon the Gentiles—because they fullness of them has come in...
59. Thus it's best to interpret v12 as follows—"if their fall is riches for the Gentiles...how much more their ongoing salvation..."
60. Thus—the full number of the elect Jews (v12) and Gentiles (v25), are brought in at the same time—the end of the age...
61. [3] Verses 28-29, v28—"concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers..."
62. This verse again—stresses the PRESENT aspect of the entire passage—and says NOTHING about the future...
63. Simply put—while many of the Jews opposed the gospel—a remnant of them were elect and would be saved...

64. The reason is given in v29—"For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable"—they are final and certain...
65. In other words—the reason a remnant of physical Jews are being saved is because—God's word can not fail...
66. God has not, and can not, cast away His people whom He foreknew—WHY—His promises are irrevocable...
67. Stuart Olyott—"The nation as a whole is against you, on account of the gospel. But within that nation is an election, a chosen number. They are very close to you. They are the very descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, into whom you are now grafted, to whom God promised just such a seed as this – he cannot go back on his gifts and calling..."
68. [4] Verses 30-32, v30—"for as you were once disobedient to God, yet have NOW obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also have NOW been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may NOW obtain mercy..."
69. This passage again teaches—the present and limited salvation of some Jews—and NOT—the future salvation of all Jews...
70. Thus—the entirety of this eleventh chapter, as we've seen—says NOTHING of a future national salvation of Jews...
71. Every phrase within it—speaks consistently—of a present and limited salvation—of individual believing Jews...
72. Now brethren—certainly—this fact—has to weigh heavily—upon our specific interpretation of verse 26a...
73. If the entirety of chapter eleven says one thing—why, I ask you, would verse 26a say something different...
74. Let me put this another way—however we understand v26a—it can not contradict everything else Paul said...
75. Or—put another way—while the phrase "all Israel will be saved" is debated—the remaining chapter is clear...

II. What is the specific meaning of 'All Israel will be saved'?

1. Here I want to briefly consider—the three most common views of the phrase—"And so all Israel will be saved..."
2. [1] The whole of physical Israel view—that is—there will be—in the future—a large-scale salvation of ethnic Jews...
3. Now, to begin with—there are various versions of this view that I am not here referring to—for example, the dispensational view...
4. This view, which was popularized in the last 100 years—views Israel and the church as two distinct groups...
5. Thus—they understand Romans 11 in general, and v26a in particular, as fulfilled in a 1000 year millennial age...
6. The physical nation of Israel, as a whole, is returned to the land of Canaan, which rebuilds the temple worship...
7. This view brethren, is NOT what I am here referring to—that view isn't worth the time to explain and refute it...
8. But—the view I am here referring to—is a common reformed view—held to by John Murray and many others...
9. Now—the main difference between this and the view I personally hold to is—it puts the focus on the future...
10. It agrees that the church is the present continuation of Israel—and it also agrees, there is nothing in the future for physical Israel apart from the church...
11. Whatever this future revival among ethnic Israel entails—they are saved by Christ and grafted into the one olive tree...
12. Let me simply say—I personally do NOT hold to this view—and that for several reasons—let me suggest one...

13. It runs absolutely contrary to the overall teaching of Romans—and specifically and particularly Romans 9-11...
14. What has Paul been saying throughout these three chapters—God never intended to save every physical Jew...
15. God's true people—His true Israel—consists of a remnant of physical Jews to whom are added—elect Gentiles...
16. Now—most commentators agree, regardless of their views, that vv25-27—form a climax to the entire chapter...
17. Thus—my point—would Paul say one thing throughout the chapter—only to say something else in climax...
18. [2] The whole of spiritual Israel view—that is—by "all Israel" is meant—the entire spiritual Israel of God—or the elect...
19. Let me simply say—that this is a very common view—one that was believed by Calvin and many of the reformers...
20. Furthermore—it is the view held to by such contemporaries as—Sam Waldron, O.P Robinson, and Stuart Olyott...
21. The one single problem with it for me is—if in v25 Israel refers to physical Jews—it seems likely it would mean the same in v26...
22. [3] The remnant of physical Israel view—this is, as I presently understand it, the most likely or probable view...
23. Hendriksen—"All Israel refers to the full number of elect Jews whom it pleases God to bring into the kingdom throughout the ages until the very day when also the full number of the Gentiles shall have been brought in..."
24. [a] The phrase—"and so"—"and so all Israel will be saved"—the verse does not say—"and THEN all Israel will be saved..."
25. This is how many people want to read it—but this is not what the Gk text says—nor the English translations...
26. The ESV renders it—"and in this way all Israel will be saved"—that is—throughout every generation a remnant will be saved...
27. Or—let me read it in relation to v25—"For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved..."
28. [b] The word "all"—"and in this way [or manner] ALL Israel will be saved"—that is—without a single exception...
29. Those who believe Paul is here teaching a future wholesale salvation of physical Jews—have a problem here...
30. For nobody within that view teaches—that every Jew of all time—or even—every Jew of any generation will be saved...
31. By "all Israel" they understand—a large majority of physical Jews—living in some privileged future generation...
32. But—brethren—this is not what Paul says—"all Israel will be saved"—that is—without a single exception...
33. Thus—whatever is meant by "all Israel"—it either means EVERY physical Israelite or every elect Israelite...
34. Hendriksen—"This 'all' clearly indicates the total number of elect Jews, without a single exception: all the elect. In Elijah's day there was a remnant. In Paul's day there was a remnant. In the years to come there would be a remnant. These remnants of all the ages, taken together, constitute 'all Israel'..."
35. Rom.9:27—"Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, The remnant will be saved..."
36. The "remnant will be saved"—that is—all of TRUE Israel within Israel will be saved—without exception...
37. Furthermore—if by "all Israel" is meant "all physical Jews of some future generation"—how would this be determined...

38. That is—how much Jewish blood would a person need to qualify as a Jew—100%?—or would 50% be sufficient...
39. [c] The phrase "as it is written"—here I refer to Paul's quotation of Isaiah 59—as explanatory of the phrase—"all Israel will be saved..."
40. [i] WHEN He comes—"The Deliverer will come out of Zion"—which is a reference—not to His first but second coming...
41. [ii] WHY He comes—He comes to turn away ungodliness from Jacob (to take away their sins)—or—to save all Israel...
42. William Hendriksen—"The very fact that this deliverer comes 'out of Zion' and not 'out of heaven' indicates that the apostle is thinking of the first and not of the second coming. It is as the result of this first coming that 'all Israel' is saved. Paul is peaking throughout these chapters of that which is NOW (in his own day) going on and will continue to take place throughout this dispensation until 'all Israel' shall have been gathered in..."
43. Isa.59:20-21—"The Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," Says the LORD. 21 'As for Me,' says the LORD, 'this *is* My covenant with them: My Spirit who *is* upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants' descendants,' says the LORD, 'from this time and forevermore..."
44. Jer.23:5-6—"Behold, *the* days are coming, says the LORD, that I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 6 In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this *is* His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS..."

III. What are some general lessons we learn from the whole?

1. [1] Let us hold our views in humility and meekness—that is—our specific views on eschatology or end times...
2. Here I'm specially thinking of myself—and thus want to address this application, if you permit me, to myself...
3. Thus—if you want to believe that this passage foretells a future revival of religion among ethnic Israel—fine, you are in good company...
4. John Murray, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Charles Hodge, Matthew Poole, John Gill, and Matthew Henry—all agree...
5. [2] Let us foremostly, take our views from Scripture—here I want to offset or temper my first lesson slightly...
6. Let us never believe things because of tradition—but let us ground all of our beliefs upon the word of God...
7. Now—notice I said—"let us foremostly, take our views from Scripture", meaning that man's teaching has a place...
8. Christ has given to the church teachers and we should not despise them—there is a place for man's assistance...
9. But what I'm really here referring to is—the mindset that refuses to change simply because of mere tradition...
10. Now—let me make a pastoral appeal to you—some of you came to this church unclear on issues such as sovereignty and sabbath...
11. That is—you came to this church, either unconvinced of these things—or else—you simply never considered them...
12. Since then—you've come to embrace them as truths found in your Bible—even though most Christians haven't...
13. Now—I am fully aware that what I've taught you from Romans 11 is new and in many ways—contrary to the masses...
14. [3] Let us confidently seek the salvation of all sinners—God has a people—taken from both the Jews and Gentiles...