

INTRODUCTION

1. The argument of Romans 9-11 is clear. God has not given up on Israel as a nation. However, their fall in unbelief has opened the door of salvation for the Gentiles.
2. Now the Gentiles as a national entity are warned against boasting, pride, and presumption (vv. 16-22). Moreover, God is able to graft in again the Jews (natural branches) to "their own olive tree" (vv. 23, 24).
3. Now the issue rises--how and when will this be? Will God actually put Israel back into the place of fruitfulness? When? Study the Word:-

1. IMPORTANCE OF ISSUE v. 25

"I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant" The word "brethren" adds something impressive. He is addressing believers. They are saints. Would or the Greek "wish" expressing a movement of the "will". The verb for "ignorant" means agnostic. It is used to emphasize something of special importance.

2. CHARACTER OF ISSUE v. 25

"This mystery" *not 13 - (a mystery is for unbelievers)*
The word mystery is not used of something which is concealed, but revealed. The word is used of the incarnation (1 Tim. 3:16), crucifixion (1 Cor. 2:1, 7), summation (Eph. 1:9), body of Christ (Eph. 3:3, 4), rapture (1 Cor. 15:51), revelation of evil (2 Thess. 2:7). Obviously, the blindness of the nation Israel is a mystery i.e. something God has revealed. It is out in the open.

3. INTENTION OF ISSUE v. 25

"Lest ye should be wise in your own conceits" The knowledge provided by this mystery will prevent self-sufficiency, vanity, pride. It will abolish all false conceit. Having accepted what others refused is all a part of God's eternal purpose.

4. AIM OF ISSUE v. 25

"That blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in"

a. It is partial

The word "blindness" means "hardening" (cf. v. 7), not "hardness" for a process and not a state is in view. But Paul insists this hardening is partial, not complete (cf. vv. 5, 7, 17).

b. It is limited

The "untils" of Scripture should be carefully studied. God has clear parameters (cf. Gen. 49:10; Ruth 3:18; 2 Chron. 36:21; Psa. 110:1; 1 Cor. 15:25; Phil. 1:10, etc.). The "fullness of the Gentiles" is a specific technical phrase. It refers to the present time in which God's primary purpose in the Church are Gentile-ward. When these have reached their "fulness," then God will return with covenant faithfulness to Israel. Make certain a distinction is made with the political term "times of the Gentiles" (Lk 21:24). Some day the Jews will "come in" i.e. enter the fulness of God's blessing.

5. OBJECT OF ISSUE v. 26

The "and so" should be considered (as in KJV) a new sentence. It is not that Israel will be saved because it is hardened. When the partial hardness is removed, then "all Israel shall be saved." This does not mean every individual Israelite, but the whole nation i.e. a future national conversion as distinct from the present conversion of individuals. It will be at the end of the tribulation period. In fact, the concomitant event is mentioned here as something which stands written in Holy Scripture. Four specific items are recorded:

- a. Deliverer will come out of Zion.
- b. Deliverer will turn away ungodliness from Jacob
- c. God will fulfill His covenant
- d. Covenant will take away Israel's sins

The above is a free (Holy Spirit!) quotation from Isaiah 59:20; 27:9. The most meaningful commentary on this section is given by James after the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15:14-17). Thus, both O.T. and N.T. agree that what Paul provides here by inspiration is true.

CONCLUSION Judicial national hardening for Israel is partial (vv. 7-10), beneficial (vv. 11, 11), but assuredly not final (vv. 13-24). Their time is coming (vv. 25, 26). Hallelujah!