

## The Millennium, Part 4. Who Are the Chosen People of God? Continued

### 1. Introduction

1.1. "Therefore, it is the distinction between Israel and the Church and the purposes God has for each that sets dispensationalism apart from other eschatological systems." (Storms: Kingdom Come, 50-51)

1.2. "What, then, is the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism? The answer is...A *dispensationalist keeps Israel and the church distinct*...This is probably the most basic theological test of whether or not a person is a dispensationalist, and it is undoubtedly the most practical and conclusive. The one who fails to distinguish Israel and the church consistently will inevitably not hold to dispensational distinctions; and one who does will." (C. Ryrie: *Dispensationalism*, 44-45)

1.3. So far, we have expounded Ephesians 2:11-22 and Galatians 1-3 and 6:16.

1.4. Today I want to examine Paul's teaching on this topic in Romans 9-11 because

Romans 11:25-26 are used as a litmus test or "proof" of the dispensational teaching that there are two groups of people that God is dealing with in the world which are both His people, Israel and the Church. Cf. Ryrie Study Bible.

1.5. The theme of Romans 9-11 is in fact that there are two groups of people that God is dealing with in the world, but national/ethnic origin has nothing to do with God's dealings. The two groups are the elect and the reprobate (non-elect).

1.5.1. Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, uses ethnic Israel to prove that God has an eternal plan, that has never faltered or failed, to gather ONE people, His elect, to Himself "from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages" (Revelation 7:9), through faith in the Redemptive work of Christ Jesus, enlivened by the Holy Spirit, and ordained by the Father from before the foundation of the world.

### 2. What does Scripture say? Romans 9-11

2.1. Context: <sup>16</sup>For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup>For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

2.1.1. Romans 1-3 The Great Need for the Gospel. All are condemned. Romans 3:23

2.1.2. Romans 4 The Promise of the Gospel. Abraham

2.1.3. Romans 5-7 The Life of the Gospel. In Christ.

2.1.4. Romans 8 The Life of the Gospel. In Spirit (vv. 1-27). Election (vv. 28-39)

2.2. Content:

2.2.1. Chapter 9

2.2.1.1. An unwritten question: If all that stuff about election is true, what happened to Israel, aren't they elect, they are the "chosen people"?

2.2.1.2. Word of God has not failed. For not all who are descended (ethnically) from Israel belong to Israel and not all are children of Abraham because they are his (ethnic) offspring...not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise...(9:6-8).

2.2.1.3. The children of the promise are the elect (the chosen people). (9:11-13)

2.2.1.4. The reason for election. (9:15-18).

2.2.1.5. The reason for reprobation. (9:22-23). Notice verse 24 very carefully: Paul focuses on the elect, not the ethnic! He includes Jews and Gentiles as the elect and then he uses texts from Hosea and Isaiah to prove that God's only plan was to have a remnant from Israel be included as part of the elect (the chosen people).

2.2.2. This reasoning continues in chapter 10.

- 2.2.2.1. Paul begins with Israel's denial of Christ being the means of righteousness with God (10:1-4).
- 2.2.2.2. Moses preached the Gospel of faith in Christ (10:8)!
- 2.2.2.3. That Gospel is for everyone, there is no ethnic distinction. (10:12-13)
- 2.2.2.4. Israel heard the Gospel and rejected it. (10:18-21)
- 2.2.3. Chapter 11. Has God rejected His people? By no means! (11:1a)
  - 2.2.3.1. Paul is not rejected (11:1b)
  - 2.2.3.2. Elijah + 7000 were not rejected (11:2-4)
  - 2.2.3.3. Remnant now (in the now time) is not rejected (11:5)
  - 2.2.3.4. The elect obtained salvation(11:7a) the hardened did not(11:7b-10)
  - 2.2.3.5. The result of Israel being hardened: Gentile salvation. The result of Gentile salvation: Jewish salvation. (11:11-16)
  - 2.2.3.6. How are elect Israel and elect Gentiles related? Elect Gentiles (wild olive branches) are grafted into elect Israel (the olive tree with the root). (11:17-24)
- 2.2.4. 11:25-26. You have a choice in interpretation. *Historic Salvation* or *Future Salvation*. Reformed theologians are split.
  - 2.2.4.1. *Historic Salvation*: William Hendricksen: "One might have expected God to punish the Jews by wiping them out completely, or by sending upon all of them a hardening. The sin of nailing the Messiah to the cross deserved that much. But the great mystery (see verse 25) is this, that this hardening is never complete. In each generation God gathers out from among the Jews a remnant that will be saved, "branches" that are grafted back into their own olive tree. Note, however: never more than certain branches, never more than a remnant! Now, all these remnants put together constitute ALL ISRAEL. Alongside the process whereby the

fulness (that is, the full number of elect) of the Gentiles is brought in, occurs also the process whereby ALL ISRAEL (all the elect from among the Jews) is saved. SO — that is, remnant-wise, as far as God's saving activity is concerned; faith-wise, as far as man is concerned (see verse 23) - ALL ISRAEL will be saved. SO, and in no other way; hence, not as a nation, but as a collection of remnants throughout the ages; not by continuing in unbelief, but by accepting Christ through living faith. In order to impart that salvation to ALL ISRAEL, Jesus came into the world (see verses 26 and 27).” (Remaining Faithful, 171)

2.2.4.2. *Future Salvation*: Jonathan Edwards: “Nothing is more certainly foretold than this national conversion of the Jews, in Rom. xi...When they shall be called, that ancient people, who alone were God's people for so long a time, shall be his people again, never to be rejected more. They shall then be gathered into one fold together with the Gentiles; and so also shall the remains of the ten tribes, wherever they be, and though they have been rejected much longer than the Jews, be brought in with their brethren. The prophecies of Hosea especially seem to hold this forth, that in the future glorious times of the church, both Judah and Ephraim, or Judah and the ten tribes, shall be brought in together, and shall be united as one people, as they formerly were under David and Solomon; (Hos. 1. 11, &c.) - Though we do not know the time in which this conversion of Israel will come to pass; yet thus much we may determine by Scripture, that it will be before the glory of the Gentile part of the church shall be fully accomplished; because it is said, that their coming in shall be life from the dead to the Gentiles (Rom. xi. 12, 15).

2.2.4.3. Regardless of Historic or Future, there is no ongoing distinction

between Jews and Gentiles who are saved. They are both part of the Church, the Israel of God.

### 2.3. Consequence

2.3.1. Theology leads to doxology (11:33-36)

## 3. Who Are the Chosen People of God?

### 3.1. The elect!