

### The Deliverer

#### Romans 11:25—27

Israel is said to be blinded after her fall. The fall occurred with the stoning of Stephen, which was their rejection of the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Before this, they rejected the testimony of the Father through John the Baptist, and the testimony of the Son, Jesus Christ. There was no longer any forgiveness for their blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.

With their fall came spiritual blindness. Israel was once the favored nation through which God chose to reveal Himself to the world. They had every advantage by having this close relationship with God. The Gentiles, on the other hand, were far from God being strangers to all the covenants and promises given to Israel. They were without God and therefore without hope (Ephesians 2:12). The advantages given to the nation of Israel ceased once they fell from their position of honor. Their removal from the olive tree meant that they were no longer the favored nation with all the spiritual advantages and, as a natural result, they became blinded, or hardened.

In spite of their fall, the nation of Israel has a future in God's prophetic program. The promises given to Israel will come to pass. As Peter says, writing to the Little Flock of remnant believers within Israel, the Lord is not slow in fulfilling what He promised (2 Peter 3:9). God did not transfer Israel's physical promises to the Gentiles in a spiritual manner, but will do exactly as he promised. However, Israel will have to wait for God to finish out His plans with the Church, the Body of Christ. Following the Rapture, Israel's program will begin just where it left off with the stoning of Stephen, at the beginning of the seven-year Tribulation.

#### **Israel's salvation**

Just how will Israel be saved? Paul quotes Isaiah 59:20 to show how God will do what he says. A Deliverer (Redeemer) will come out of Zion and shall remove ungodliness from Jacob. God will come to Jerusalem and take away the sins of the nation of Israel. This is an unconditional covenant that He made with Israel (Jeremiah 31:33—34). Many people apply this verse to the Church, the Body of Christ. This is a complete twisting of Scripture, for it is absolutely clear that these verses are written as covenants to the nation of Israel, not the Church. Hebrew 8:12 quotes Jeremiah 31:34 and makes it clear that their sins will be taken care of at the Second Coming. This is such an important event for Israel that it is repeated in Hebrews 10:16—17. As Hebrews 10:12—13 says, Jesus Christ is sitting at the right hand of God waiting for a future time when His enemies become His footstool. Again, these verses have absolutely nothing to do with the Church, the Body of Christ, but are written to the nation of Israel, and will be fulfilled after the Rapture of the Church. This was not written about this Dispensation of Grace, but written concerning the resumption of the preaching of the Kingdom. It will pick up with the Last Days that Peter spoke about in Acts 2:17 by quoting Joel 2:28. These are the same last days that are mentioned in Hebrews 1:2 and 2 Peter 3:3. These prophetic Last Days (Micah 4:1; Hosea 3:5; Ezekiel 38:16; Isaiah 2:2) are not to be confused with the last days that Paul mentions in 2 Timothy 3:1. Our Last Days show general trends of the end times of this Dispensation of Grace. Israel's Last Days are specific prophetic events with a specific time of fulfillment.

Israel's salvation is connected to the Deliverer of Romans 11:26. This Deliverer is called the Redeemer in Isaiah 59:20. The word used in Isaiah is Kinsman-Redeemer: a male able to pay off the debts of a close relative. In the case of Ruth and Boaz, He "delivered" the family by becoming one of them and purchasing back (redeeming) land once belonging to the family (Leviticus 25:25). Israel is looking forward to their redemption so that they can enjoy their promised inheritance. This Redeemer is also called

their Deliverer because He will save them from their enemies (Luke 1:74), a theme repeated often throughout the Old Testament (Psalm 31:15; 59:1; 143:9; Micah 4:10). Israel's salvation will be at the hands of their Redeemer, and will be bestowed upon the entire remaining nation of Israel at the Second Coming. They will be delivered from their enemies and from their sins. This promise was preached to the nation of Israel by Peter in Acts 3:19—21 where he tells them to repent (change their minds) about who Jesus Christ is so that their sins may be blotted out. This blotting out of sins will happen at the Second Coming when Jesus Christ comes and restores the greatness of Israel.

### **Dispensational overview (verses 30—32)**

Since Paul is speaking to the Gentiles, he gives a quick overview of their position in past dispensations and compares it with where they currently stand. Much of this has already been pictured using the olive tree in verses 17—24. However, Paul goes back before the formation of Israel. At the beginning, there was no Israel and therefore there were only Gentiles.

Paul compares Israel's disobedience with the disobedience of the Gentiles in the past. The Gentiles were no better than Israel in obeying God. The Gentiles continually disobeyed God by following their own desires. We see this led up to the flood, where only eight people were saved, and at the Tower of Babel, where they refused to populate the earth and instead built a tower to worship their own man-made gods. It was at that point that God turned away from the Gentiles and began to form the nation of Israel. Israel was put into their special place of honor, raised above the Gentile world, so that they would eventually be used to reveal God to the world.

Unfortunately, Israel failed in their appointed task and were demoted in their position of service. Both the Gentiles and Israel failed as faithful servants of God, which demonstrated that all people, Jews and Gentiles, needed God's mercy and grace. We have all been locked up in the jail of disobedience. As Paul puts it, we are all shut up in disobedience. It was proven, through disobedience, that mankind could not be faithful to God, which proved that all men were in need of a Savior. It was not God that made us disobedient, mankind was disobedient and proved unworthy of serving Him. Our confinement and hopelessness was done by mankind, but was remediated by Jesus Christ.

### **Paul marvels**

Paul steps back from teaching us doctrine about our justification, our sanctification, and our dispensation and stands in awe over how magnificent and great God is in His plan of redemption, planned from before creation. On a personal level, he could have been thinking about how God reached down to save him and brought him into the heavenly places. He went from killing believers to God demonstrating His mercy and grace in an unexpected and overwhelming display of love. Paul's experience of God's immeasurable and unbounded grace drove him to write about the riches of God's grace (Ephesians 1:7) and the exceeding riches of His grace (Ephesians 2:7). We are so limited that it is impossible for us to comprehend with our finite minds what God did for us.

He was so struck by God's surpassing grace that he used the word grace 85 times in his 13 books. Although he wrote less than 6% of the Bible, he used the word grace more often than was used in the rest of the Bible. If the other writers used the word grace as often as Paul did, the word would have been used over 1,500 additional times. No wonder this church age is called the Dispensation of Grace (Ephesians 3:2).

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