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From Election to Reception: Toward a Dispensational Israelology from Romans 9–11

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Introduction

This paper builds on Arnold Fruchtenbaum's claim that Israel's pervasive biblical presence warrants a distinct doctrinal locus in systematic theology. As such, it advances a dispensational doctrine of Israel ("Israelology") by offering a close exegetical reading of Romans 9–11 as Paul's programmatic response to the "Jewish question" concerning God's faithfulness to his promises for the nation.

By employing a consistently literal hermeneutic, the paper traces Paul's argument through the triadic pattern of Israel's past election (Romans 9), present rejection (Romans 10), and future reception (Romans 11). It argues that Paul's understanding of "Israel" is national, territorial, and ethnic in scope, and that he anticipated a mass conversion and geo-political restoration under the Messiah. With special attention paid to the concepts of "partial hardening," "remnant," and the promise that "all Israel will be saved"—supported by the incorporation of Old Testament prophecies of national restoration—the study concludes that Paul's Israelology is grounded in the irrevocability of God's covenant gifts and calling.

Ultimately, the paper defends the faithfulness and righteousness of God by showing that Israel's current stumbling is a temporary mystery serving Gentile inclusion, thereby assuring the church that God's promises to it are likewise unalterable. Because Paul expected nothing less than a full, future restoration for the Jewish nation, Romans 9–11 secures both Israel's eschatological future and God's unwavering fidelity and offers a compelling Israelology according to dispensational thought.[1]

2,570 Reasons for a Doctrine of Israel

Messianic-Jewish scholar and dispensationalist Arnold Fruchtenbaum was the first to present "Israelology" as a "missing link" in systematic theology.[2] Fruchtenbaum pointed out that dispensationalists, who maintain differences between Israel and the church, have failed to offer a systematized doctrine of Israel, integrating it instead into ecclesiology and eschatology.[3] Because Israel plays a dominant role in the panoply of Scripture, he argued, it is worthy of its own distinct doctrine.

[1] Parts of this paper are adapted from Cory M. Marsh and Mark S. Snoeberger, *40 Questions about Dispensationalism* (Kregel Academic, 2027).

[2] Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology,* rev ed. (Ariel Ministries, 2001).

[3] Ibid., 559–560.

A simple search of "Israel" in the Bible yields surprising results. Of words with six or more characters, Israel appears more than any—2,570 times![4] Adding all the symbols, metaphors, and rhetorical devices that allude to Israel and the Jewish people makes the count virtually endless. While references to the church occupy only the latter 20 percent of the Bible, themes of Israel are ubiquitous. This is ironic since, "*The church has never operated apart from the Scriptures of Israel as a governing body of authoritative Scriptures*."[5] The Old Testament served as God's inerrant, sufficient revelation for 1,500 years prior to the New Testament.

Rather than God's "pausing" his dealing with Israel until the church is raptured, nothing in dispensational thought prohibits God's programs for Israel and the church from operating at the same time, while also being distinct.[6] Jewish people today, and particularly Jewish Christians, are unique as they have an ancient lineage in the Bible with eternal covenant guarantees while also relating to modern Israel—even in her spiritual blindness.[7] Nowhere is the "Jewish question" better explained than within Paul's *magnum opus*, Romans 9–11. The remainder of this paper will develop a dispensational Israelology using that passage, which directly addresses the past, present, and future of Israel. According to a consistently literal reading, Paul expected nothing less than a full, future restoration for the nation.

Paul's Israelology in Romans 9–11

Romans 9–11 is often described as a "parenthesis" within the letter, primarily because it interrupts the thematic flow between eternal security and assurance found in Romans 8 and the resumption of ethical instruction in Romans 12. Though somewhat helpful, the section should not be considered a disruption or afterthought.

In addition to linguistic connections between Romand 9–12,[8] there is a significant thematic connection as well, stretching earlier to Romans 3. There, Paul identifies the "first" (πρῶτος) advantage of Jewish people as being "entrusted with the oracles of God" (Rom 3:2). Though he never explicitly identifies a "second" advantage, Paul appears to resume that list of gains in Romans 9:4, that to Israelites "belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises" (Rom 9:4). Accordingly, explicit conjunctions are unnecessary to initiate chapter nine in order to understand Paul's flow of thought, which always had Israel's special status and her relationship to the gospel in its purview.[9]

Nevertheless, if one jumps from the end of Romans 8 to Romans 12:1, the text reads smoothly. Doing so results in the loss of a critical section detailing God's plan for national Israel, including two-thirds

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[4] These totals come from a search I performed of "Israel" in the Legacy Standard Bible, using Accordance Bible Software. These numbers do not include related terms, "Israelite," "Israelites," and the possessive "Israel's" (an additional 26 occurrences cumulatively). Including the various cognates related to "Jew" extends the number close to 3,000.

[5] Mark S. Gignilliat, "Old Testament: How Did the New Testament Use Tanak?" in *Understanding the Jewish Roots of Christianity: Biblical, Theological, and Historical Essays on the Relationship between Christianity and Judaism*, ed. Gerald R. McDermott (Lexham Academic, 2021), 6, emphasis in original.

[6] See Fruchtenbaum, *Israelology*, 563.

[7] See Michael Rydelnick, *How Should Christians Think About Israel? A Quick Guide to God's Covenants, Biblical Prophecy, and the Jewish People* (Moody, 2025), 13–53.

[8] There are linguistic ties bridging Romans 9 to 12 that interpreters often overlook, particularly the interchangeable word group ἐλεάω ("mercy") / οἰκτείρω ("compassion"): 9:15 (4x), v. 16, v. 18, v. 23; 11:30, v. 31, v. 32 (2x); 12:1. This "mercy / compassion" bridge strongly suggests the appeal in Romans 12:1—"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the *mercies* [οἰκτειρμῶν] of God"—builds closely on God's grace and mercy in Romans 9–11, which is itself an outworking of Paul's gospel in Romans 1:16.

[9] I would like to thank George Gunn for offering this insightful connection during the Q&A portion of my paper reading at CDH in Westville, NJ, 2026.

of Paul's Old Testament quotations within Romans! Romans 9:1 begins with an abrupt shift, lacking a connecting word like "therefore" or "and" as Paul offers a personal address to what is often called "the Jewish question." He will eventually tie chapters 9 and 11, arguing for the future of ethnic and territorial Israel.[10]

The section unfolds God's plan for the Jewish people and examines its relation to Gentile believers. It draws out the implications of Paul's theme verse in Romans 1:16, that the gospel is power of salvation "for the Jew first and also for the Greek," thereby revealing the righteousness of God (v. 17). The present tense of the verb "is" (ἐστιν)—for it *is* the power of God—governs the clauses, signaling that the gospel is always intended for Jewish people first.[11] The order is consistent in Scripture. The Messiah remains purely Jewish[12] and was sent to the "lost sheep of Israel" before including Gentiles (Matt. 15:24; cf. 10:6). Addressing men of Israel, Peter declared, "God, having raised up his servant, sent him to *you first*, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness" (Acts 3:26, emphasis added). The order remains even today.[13]

Paul uses the same construction, "Jew first and also the Greek" (Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἕλληνι), in Romans 2:9–10 regarding tribulation and distress for every evil person, and glory, honor, and peace for those who live rightly. Cranfield observed that the conjunction τε ("and," "both/and") signals the fundamental equality of Jews and Gentiles in the face of the gospel, while the adverb πρῶτον ("first") indicates "there is a certain undeniable priority of the Jew" within the framework of this basic equality.[14] In view of chapters nine through eleven, Cranfield believed that it was inadmissible to explain this πρῶτον as referring merely to the historical fact that the gospel was preached to the Jews before it was preached to the Gentiles, since Romans 11:29 confirms God's calling and gifts to Israel are irrevocable.[15] Connecting Romans 1:16 to chapters 9–11, he argued: "The gospel cannot be properly understood except in relation to Israel, God's special people."[16] Confirming continuance of Israel was part of Paul's plan in Romans all along.

The central question Paul addresses in Romans 9–11 anticipates a critic. The interlocuter might wonder if God has forsaken the Jewish people, particularly since they were responsible for handing Christ over to be crucified (see Matt 27:24–25). The core issue to address is whether Israel has forfeited their covenant promises and election status as ultimately, God's faithfulness hangs in the balance (9:6). Paul

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[10] Stanley E. Porter, *The Letter to the Romans: A Linguistic and Literary Commentary* (Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2015), 180, describing this portion as the "nagging question" of the future of Israel, states: "Paul addresses this issue in light of what he has said about the possible continuing role of his very own people, the Jews, of whom he had at one time been a devout follower of its religious precepts (cf. Phil 3:4–7)."

[11] See Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Book of Romans* (Ariel Ministries, 2022), 37.

[12] William Varner, *Jesus the Jewish Messiah: Foretold and Fulfilled* (Three Sixteen Publishing, 2026) is the most current and comprehensive work detailing Jesus's thoroughly Jewish Messianic credentials.

[13] Admittedly, the verb's mood in Romans 1:16 is indicative and thus, grammatically speaking, *describing* (not prescribing) an evangelistic order. With a majority of Greek scholars, I believe Paul's choice of indicative verbs is predominately *aspectual*, not tense-time-based, with the imperfective aspect in Romans 1:16 viewed in close proximity to the action, such as viewing an on-going parade. In this case, Paul views the "is" of the gospel's power in close proximately (or "on-going") to the action being described: on-going Jew *then* Gentile salvation. Paul's own evangelistic *modus operandi* throughout Acts bears this out as he consistently entered synagogues and/or evangelized Jews before Gentiles.

[14] C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, ICC, 2 vols. (T&T Clark International, 2004), 1:91.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., 2:445–446. See also R. Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 8, who makes similar comments.

answers this emphatically in Romans 11:1, "by no means!" (μὴ γένοιτο) and immediately validates his connection to the nation: "For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin." Paul then confirms God's continued plan for Israel, declaring in 11:29 that God's gifts and callings regarding Israel are unalterable. The reason is stated earlier in that they are the inheritors of "the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises," and from their race came the Christ (9:4–5).

Ultimately, Paul uses God's plan concerning Israel to encourage the church. The argument is that if God has proven trustworthy in upholding his promises to Israel, then Christians can be assured that God is equally trustworthy regarding his promises to them.

Israel's Election, Rejection, Reception

Using three key words, Alva McClain offers a helpful outline for Romans 9–11: *election*, *rejection*, *reception*.[17] Cumulatively, these ideas support the vindication of God's wisdom through his plans concerning Israel—their past, present, and future.

- Romans 9: Focuses on the absolute sovereignty of God, demonstrated in Israel's *election* (Israel's past).
- Romans 10: Details the moral responsibility of man, captured in Israel's *rejection* of God in Christ (Israel's present).
- Romans 11: Concerns the final purpose of God, demonstrated in Israel's *reception* as a nation (national / territorial restoration) (Israel's future).

This structure reflects broader biblical patterns: Israel was elected as a nation (Deut 14:2; Isa 41:8), they rejected their Messiah (Matt 27:25; Acts 13:46), and they will one day receive their Messiah and be received by God as a nation (Zech 12:10; Amos 9:14–15).

Understanding Israel's Current Stumbling

In light of Israel's current rejection of Christ detailed in Romans 10, Paul anticipates the objection that Israel has forfeited its covenants and is lost forever. In response, Paul uses his strongest possible negation, μὴ γένοιτο ("By no means!") to rebut this in 11:1.

Paul expresses absolute abhorrence with this phrase eleven times in Romans.[18] Clearly, God has *not* forsaken Israel. He inquires in 11:11, "Did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means [μὴ γένοιτο]!" Israel's "stumbling" (πταίω) is their temporary rejection of the gospel, not a permanent fall. Adding the synonymous term "trespass" or "violation" (παράπτωμα), Paul argues their temporary gospel-rejection served a purpose. He goes on in the same verse: "Through their trespass [παράπτωμα] salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous." The order mirrors Paul's first missionary journey where he and Barnabas turned to minister to the Gentiles following rejection from the Jews (see Acts 13:46). But he confirms the future nature of Israel's restoration by use of a lesser-to-the-greater argument in 11:12: "Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, *how much more* will their full inclusion mean!" Likewise, 11:15 states that if their rejection means world

[17] Alva J. McClain, *Romans: The Gospel of God's Grace* (BMH, 1989), 175.

[18] See Romans 3:4, 6, 31: 6:2, 6:15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11. The eleventh and final appearance of μὴ γένοιτο is in 12:16, but not in response to an imagined question.

reconciliation, "what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead." Hence, Israel's rejection of Christ is not final. Their reception as a nation awaits a glorious future.

In God's plan, he uses both Israel and the church to ignite one another for his glory. The church's existence does not negate the fact that God has a distinct future plan for national Israel. God's purpose for Israel is bound up with the total course of the kingdom of God, and neither the cross nor Israel's present hardness to the gospel ends those purposes.[19] Israel stumbled but will be restored to glory under the Messiah's reign in the "regeneration" (παλιγγενεσία) as Jesus promised (Matt. 19:28).

The Mystery and Partial Hardening of Israel

A biblical "mystery" refers to truths kept secret in previous ages that are subsequently revealed in Scripture. Examples include the revelation that believing Gentiles and Jews are fellow members in the same body, the church (Eph 3:4–6). Also, the preaching of the gospel to all nations is identified as a "mystery" (Rom 16:25). In Romans 11:25, the "mystery" (μυστήριον) revealed is that Israel's national rejection of Christ is temporary. This "partial hardening" lasts "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in," after which the nation will be "saved" (v. 26).

The duration of this period is debated, pointing either to the rapture of the church or the end of the tribulation. Both options are possible, but the latter is more likely. Luke 21:24 confirms: "Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until *the times of the Gentiles* are fulfilled"—beginning with the Israel's Babylonian captivity and extending through the tribulation, encompassing the Gentile nations portrayed in Daniel's prophecies.[20] Israel will largely remain blinded until Christ returns to establish his kingdom. *Then* "all Israel will be" totally restored.

"All [ethnic and national] Israel" in Romans 11:26

The understanding of Romans 9–11 as addressing the past, present, and future of ethnic Israel directly impacts the interpretation of "all Israel" in 11:26. Paul clearly establishes the identity of Israel at the start of the discussion by referring to his "brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh," who are "Israelites" in 9:3–4. All succeeding references are governed by this ethnic understanding.

The terms "Israel" and "Israelite" appear fourteen times throughout chapters 9–11 and nowhere else in the letter.[21] With the final usage in 11:26, referring to the nation's salvation, Paul has clearly established that he has been addressing his kinsmen. Dispensationalists insist that "Israel" in 11:26 must mean the same thing it means throughout the section: *the Jewish nation*. The reason is not theological nor political; rather, the logic is *hermeneutical*. Reading all uses of Israel contextually requires that "all Israel" in 11:26 refers to ethnic, national, or territorial, that is, literal Israel.

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[19] See Bernard Ramm, "A Review of "*Antisemitismus und Eschatologie*, by Rudolph Pfisterer," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 118.469 (Jan 1961): 23.

[20] Some might argue that Luke's "times of the Gentiles" and Paul's "fullness of the Gentiles" are different events in that the former (Luke, recording Jesus's words) is emphasizing antisemitic dominance (Gentiles trampling upon Jerusalem) while the latter (Paul) is emphasizing soteriology viz., fullness of *Gentile conversion to Christ.* The merits of such a reading notwithstanding, it is worth pointing out that Gentiles converting to Christ does not end at the rapture of the church, but continues on throughout the tribulation period (Rev 7:9–14). Thus, both Luke and Paul may be describing the same event from different angles.

[21] Although "Jew/s" are referenced multiple times preceding the section, only in Romans 9–11 Paul references the nation "Israel" as a whole.

The simplest reason for this reading is that Paul uses "Israel" in a national sense in the preceding verse, stating that "partial hardening" has come upon Israel (11:25). It is universally understood that "Israel" in 11:25 means ethnic Israel; interpreting it as the church, symbolic Israel (Jesus), or a remnant of faithful Jews is illogical. According to Cranfield, such views should "surely be rejected; for it is not feasible to understand Ἰσραήλ in v. 26 in a different sense from that which it has in v. 25."[22]

The dispensational position diverges from views arguing that "all Israel" in 11:26 means spiritual Israel (all believers) or the elect remnant currently being saved.[23] If "all Israel" referred only to that remnant, Paul would not have needed to reveal it as a "mystery" in v. 25. The preservation of a faithful remnant was always evident in Scripture, even referenced in vv. 4–5: "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.' So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace." Therefore, if 11:25 means literal Israel, the simplest reading dictates that 11:26 must also mean that.

Romans 11:12–15 provides persuasive evidence for a future mass conversion of the Jewish people. The dispensational view embraces this, but extends it to include a subsequent *national restoration*—a future geo-political and territorial reestablishment of Israel under the reign of Christ, guaranteed by unconditional covenant promises, such as those given to Abraham, Phineas, David, and Jeremiah (see Rom. 9:4).[24] It maintains that the intended meaning of Paul's closing argument in 11:26 is a massive salvation of Jews *and* a full restoration of the nation of Israel.

Individual Jewish people are coming to Christ today and will continue to do so even during the tribulation (e.g., the 144,000 Jewish people in Rev 7:4–8). This mass conversion will lead to the national restoration at Christ's second coming when every living Jew trusts in him "whom they pierced" (Zech 12:10), and Christ establishes his kingdom in a restored Israel.

This was anticipated by Jesus's disciples in Acts 1:6 when they asked if he will "restore" (ἀποκαθίστημι) the kingdom to Israel at that time. Jesus's response was that it was not for them to know when Israel will be restored, as only the Father knows by his own authority (v. 7). The nation is currently awaiting that restoration.

A Dispensational Understanding of "Remnant Theology"

Paul's prediction, "And in this way all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26), requires defining both "all Israel" and "and in this way" (καὶ οὕτως). Dispensationalists view all references to "Israel" in Romans 9–11 as literal Israel. The context was laid at the start with Paul identifying Israelites as his "kinsmen according to the flesh" (9:3–4). Vlach argues, "Paul's understanding of Israel is continuous with expectation of the OT prophets that Israel is an ethnic and national entity with a role to the world."[25] The last reference—"all Israel"—in 11:26 identifies every living Jewish person at the time of the restoration. Each one will believe in Messiah when he returns.[26]

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[22] C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:576.

[23] For variations of these views, see Jared Compton and Andrew David Naselli, eds. *Three Views on Israel and the Church: Perspectives on Romans 9–11* (Kregel Academic, 2019).

[24] I would also include the "Deuteronomic" / "Land Covenant" in Deuteronomy 29–30 given through Moses as eternally unconditional. For more, see Cory M. Marsh, "Beyond the Mosaic: Deuteronomy 29, Jeremiah 31, and the Covenant Connection of a Restored and Repentant Nation," *Journal for Faith and Ministry* 1.1 (Fall 2026): 93–114.

[25] Michael J. Vlach, "A Non-Typological Future-Mass-Conversion View," in *Three Views on Israel and the Church in Romans 9–11*, 21.

[26] Cranfield presents this reading as one held by thinkers such as Aquinas, but prefers to understand "all Israel" in 11:26 as pertaining to "the nation Israel as a whole, but not necessarily including every individual member." C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:576.

This constitutes an accurate "remnant theology," in the sense that the remnant is all that exists of the Israelites after surviving the tribulation; it is composed of *only* believing Jewish people. This "remnant" is juxtaposed with the Israel that existed up to that time, which included *both* believers and unbelievers. In other words, future "national Israel" and the "remnant of Israel" are the same group, as all non-remnant Israelites will perish before the return of Christ. Quoting Isaiah earlier in 9:27, Paul notes that though Israel's numbers are vast, "only a *remnant* of them will be saved" after the Lord carries out his sentence at his coming. Israel's present blindness but future comprehensive salvation is a mystery that needed to be revealed. The covenant in Deuteronomy 29–30 guarantees that every Jewish person at that time will repent and be gathered into the promised land (see Deut 30:1–5).

The Greek phrase καὶ οὕτως is translated either modally ("in this way") or temporally ("and then"). Both are legitimate options. Regardless, the context of Romans 9–11 remains fixed: God has not forsaken literal Israel but will save and restore her fully at the end of history.[27]

Prophecy and Contextual Support for Israel's Restoration

Paul combines several prophecies from the Hebrew Scriptures about Israel at the close of his argument in Romans 11:26–27 (see Isa 59:20–21, 27:9; Jer 31:33–34; and Psalm 14:7). Contextually, the timing of their fulfillment must refer to Christ's *second* coming.

For example, "Jacob" (Israel) has not widely turned from transgression as predicted in Isaiah 59:20. The New Covenant promised in Jeremiah 31:31–34, explicitly intended for the "house of Israel and the house of Judah" (as repeated in Hebrews 8), has not yet resulted in every person knowing Yahweh and receiving forgiveness (see v. 34). Moreover, the immediate context of vv. 35–36 powerfully enforces the idea of both Jewish salvation and national restoration: "if the fixed order of the sun and moon ever departs, then the *offspring* (זֶרַע) of Israel shall cease from being a *nation* (גּוֹי) before God." Israel's future is secure.

Finally, Psalm 14:7, concerning salvation coming "out of / from" (אֶת) Zion when the LORD restores the fortunes of his people, is future-focused. This event, aligned with the Deuteronomic Covenant will be fulfilled when Jesus reigns from Jerusalem (Deut 30:5; Zech 14:4, 9; Matt 19:28). This parallels the question the apostles posed at Jesus's ascension concerning the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, and the angels' promise of Jesus returning to the same place (Acts 1:6. 11). Thus, in Romans 11:26–27, Paul refers to events at the *return* of Christ, not his first advent.

Analyzing the Olive Tree Metaphor

The olive tree illustration (Rom 11:17–24) must be interpreted in light of 11:15–16, which establishes that Israel, pictured as the "dough," "root," and "branches," is holy (ἅγιος)—consecrated and set apart for God's purposes.

The "natural branches" broken off represent ethnic, unbelieving Jews. The "wild olive shoots" grafted-in represent believing Gentiles. Gentiles are cautioned against spiritual arrogance because the root supports them, not the reverse. Using the same type of logic he used in 11:12, arguing for future Isarelite restoration, Paul again uses a lesser-to-the-greater (or "the light and the heavy"[28]) argument in 11:24: if

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[27] See C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:577.

[28] For a helpful discussion on the ancient Jewish argumentative method *kal v'chomer* ("the light and the heavy") developed by Rabbi Hillel the Elder, see Tim M. Sigler, "Israel and the Church in God's Program: The Purpose and Argument of Romans 9–11 Regarding God's Plan for Israel and the Church," in *Abounding Grace: Theological Essays of Paul and Romans in Honor of Myron J. Houghton*, ed. Douglas E. Brown and Ken Rathburn (Faith Publications, 2026), 185–86.

Gentiles were grafted in contrary to nature, "how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree," clearly implying a future restoration of ethnic and covenanted Israel into God's eternal purposes.

Regarding the "root" (ῥίζα) there is no single definitive dispensational perspective. Some suggest it is the nation of Israel, others the divine covenants or even the Old Testament. It may be the root refers more specifically to the *promises* or *blessings* of the covenants, particularly those of the Abrahamic Covenant that guarantee Israel's permanent status as God's chosen nation and the foundation for worldwide blessing to every family (Gen 12:2–3). No partisan to dispensationalism, Kendall Soulen nevertheless observed a biblical reality: "God draws near as the God of Abraham who took the people out of the land of Egypt *and who remains this nation's God to the end of time*."[29] Gentiles remain gentiles who share in these unconditional blessings through the Jewish Messiah of Isarel. The olive tree analogy illustrates that while Israel and the church are related holy vessels, they are nevertheless kept distinct in God's purposes.

The Irrevocability of God's Promises

Romans 11:28–32 secures Israel's future. Paul states that regarding the gospel, they are enemies, but regarding election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers, "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (11:29). Brent Belford suggests the description of the "calling" and "gifts" of God in v. 29 are intended to remind readers of earlier sections of Romans 9, forming an *inclusio* around Romans 9–11.[30] The "gifts" of Israel are all explained as in 9:4–5 (adoption, glory, covenants, law, etc.) and his mention of "calling" relates to God's call of Israel in Romans 9:6–29 (e.g., the five uses of the word in vv. 7, 12, 24, 25, 26).

Paul advances prophecies promising that God will redeem Israel and gather their offspring (e.g., Isa 43:1, 3-5). This complete restoration will occur in the millennial kingdom (Revelation 20), following a final tribulation period intended to purify Israel and the world (see Ezek 20:33–49). Israel's nation and land are preserved *par excellence* based on God's never-failing covenant-loyalty.

Conclusion

The dispensational perspective of Israelology emphasizes the distinct and continuing role of the Jewish nation in God's plan. Its contribution is fundamentally a defense of God's faithfulness. If God remains faithful to his promises to Israel, Christians can rest assured that he remains faithful to his promises to them. Romans 9–11 is central to the argument.

Employing a consistently literal hermeneutic, this paper traced Paul's argument through the triadic pattern of Israel's past election (Romans 9), present rejection (Romans 10), and future reception (Romans 11), arguing that his conception of "Israel" is national, territorial, and ethnic in scope. Moreover, the paper demonstrated that through the motifs of "partial hardening," "remnant," and the promise that "all Israel will be saved," reinforced by Old Testament prophecies of national restoration, Paul anticipated a mass conversion and geo-political restoration under the Messiah grounded in the irrevocability of God's covenant gifts and calling.

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[29] R. Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and. Christian Theolgy,* 8.

[30] Brent A. Belford, *Paul's Fusion of Scripture: Analyzing Pauline Literary Techniques, Hermeneutics, and Theology in Composite Quotations*, Studies in Judeo-Christian Thought Monograph Series 1 (SCS Press, 2025), 132.

Read in such light, Romans 9–11 defends the faithfulness and righteousness of God by presenting current Jewish stumbling as a temporary mystery serving Gentile inclusion, thereby assuring the church of the unalterable character of the divine promises and securing, on dispensational premises, both Israel's eschatological future and a compelling Israelology. As such, a dispensational Israelology views Romans 9–11 as a litmus test: if it fails to inspire amazement at God's wisdom, glory and righteousness toward Israel and the church, it is misunderstood.