

### Q17) Has God finished with Israel?

An article in 6 June 2002 issue of *New-Life* paper quite rightly claimed that the Old Testament must be interpreted by the New Testament, but then it proceeded to argue that God is finished with the nation of Israel.

Romans chapter 11 is one of the indisputable passages of Scripture that affirm the place of Israel in the eternal purposes of God, and yet the *New-Life* article attempts to use the same Scripture to prove that God is finished with Israel. This is what is known as “Replacement Theology”.

Such reasoning defies the clear statement at the beginning of Romans chapter 11 where Paul asks, “*Hath God cast away his people*” (Israel)? He immediately answers his own question with a resounding, “*God forbid...God hath **not cast away his people*** (Israel) *which he foreknew*” (Rom.11:1-2).

Again Paul asks, “*Have they (Israel) stumbled that they should fall?*” He answers, in the same emphatic tone, “*God forbid...if the fall of them be the reconciling of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; **how much more their fulness?***” (Rom.11:11-12).

In other words, the putting aside of Israel in this Church Age has allowed Gentiles to be blessed and to carry the torch of divine Truth. How much more will the Gentiles be blessed in a future day when Israel reaches her full potential in the Millennial Kingdom?

Paul reasons: “*If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the RECEIVING OF THEM be, but life from the dead?*” (Rom.11:15). Obviously he believed that there would be a future day when Israel will be again received by God. God has a future for Israel!

Then Paul draws the analogy of “natural” olive branches broken off the olive tree and “wild” olive branches grafted into their place; the “natural” branches are Israel, and the “wild” branches are the Gentiles. When Israel rejected Christ, the “natural” branches were broken off and the Gentile Church, the “wild” olive branches, were grafted in.

However, Paul makes it clear that God is able to graft the natural branches back into “*their own olive tree*” (Rom.11:24). “*For God is able to graff them in AGAIN*” (Rom.11:23). He concludes his reasoning by saying that “*blindness in PART is happened to Israel, **UNTIL** the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And **so ALL Israel shall be saved***” (Rom.11:25-26). Then God will make a New Covenant with Israel and will “*take away their sins*” (Rom.11:27).

How, then, could any Amillennialist even think of using this passage of Scripture to prove that God has abandoned Israel for ever? The method is quite ingenious, though utterly wrong.

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# HERALD OF HOPE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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## Q17) Has God finished with Israel? (continued)

The method adopted attempts to prove from Romans 11 that INDIVIDUAL Jews who are saved in this Church Age and who therefore become part of the Body of Christ, represent the grafting in again of the “natural” olive branches, which of course contradicts the theme of the chapter.

What Amillennialists failed to distinguish in Romans chapter 11, is the **national** and **individual** character of Jews referred to by Paul. Of course individual Jews can be saved in this present age, and that is clearly stated by Paul. He states: *“Even so then AT THIS PRESENT TIME also there is **a remnant** according to the election of grace...and the rest were blinded”* (Rom.11:5, 7).

However, it is national Israel that is cut off, and it is national Israel that will be grafted in again. We have no right to change the subject of the chapter mid-stream.

The receiving of Jews again, who have been “broken off”, has nothing whatsoever to do with the conversion of individual Jews in this age. If it did, then every time an individual Jew was saved we would have to see the blessing of Gentiles like *“life from the dead”*, which we know simply does not happen.

Jews who are saved in this present Church Age are baptized by the Spirit into the Body of Christ in the same way as Gentiles. Only a remnant are saved now through the gospel, but when the fulness of the Gentiles comes in *“**ALL Israel shall be saved**”* (Rom.11:26). That simply doesn't fit the theory that the grafting in AGAIN of the natural branches refers to the conversion of individual Jews in this Church Age. It is an elementary observation that a remnant now does not equal ALL in a future day AFTER the fulness of the Gentiles comes in.

The conversion of all Israel AFTER the fulness of the Gentiles comes in is clearly linked to the prophecy of a New Covenant by Jeremiah. The prophet states: *“The days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah”* (Jer.31:31).

Under the New Covenant **Israel and Judah's** sins would be forgiven and the ENTIRE nation will be saved.

*“They shall no more teach every man his neighbour...saying, Know the LORD: for **they shall ALL know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them**”* (Jer.31:34).

That certainly does not sound like a remnant of individual Jews being saved in this Church Age. Through the centuries of the Church Age very few Jews have responded to the Gospel of Christ.

Surely, any Amillennialist who believes the Scripture literally, as some say they do, must see a difference between a REMNANT and ALL Israel. The grafting in again of the natural branches is a NATIONAL event, and not an individual event as has been suggested. God has declared He has

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established the ordinances of the sun, moon and stars, and that *“IF those ordinances depart from before me...then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a **NATION** before me for ever... IF heaven above can be measured...I will also cast off ALL the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD”* (Jer.31:36-36).

The **nation** of Israel will never cease to be a **nation** before the Lord!

We certainly agree that the New Testament interprets the Old Testament, but it **never contradicts the Old Testament**, and it would be a contradiction of God’s promise to the literal nation of Israel if she ever ceased to be a **nation before God**. Paul was clearly aware of this when he described literal Israel as having a veil *“upon their heart”*.

*“Nevertheless when it (Israel) shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away”* (2 Cor.3:16).

So there must be a future day when God makes a new covenant with the house of Judah and the house of Israel, and at that time the whole nation will turn to the Lord. The veil of unbelief will be removed.

After all, how can we explain the welcome Christ will receive at His second coming from those who *“pierced him”* (Rev.1:7) if Israel is not saved during the Tribulation and therefore waiting for her Messiah? Zechariah’s prophecy states that in the Last Days, Israel will *“look upon me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him...”* - at the same time as God will destroy *“all the nations that come against Jerusalem”* (Zech.12:9-10).

Isaiah even goes so far as to prophesy that this national conversion of Israel will occur in **one day**. He says:

*“Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth **in one day?** or shall a nation be born **at once?** for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth...”* (Isa.66:8).

Israel will be saved in the first half of the Tribulation, when she is brought to her knees at the prospect of the Russian/Muslim invasion described in Ezekiel chapter 38 & 39. We read:

*“Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from **that day and forward**”* (Ezek.39:22).

If the conversion of Israel is not national, then these Scriptures are meaningless. If we spiritualize Israel and say it is the Church, then we have to say that the Church crucified Christ, which is absurd. It was Israel that pierced His hands and feet.

*“Hath God cast away his people (Israel)? God forbid...**God hath NOT cast away his people** which he foreknew”* (Rom.11:1-2).

*“When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory”* (Ps 102:16).

