

## Turning away ungodliness from Jacob

The apostle Paul speaks about turning away ungodliness out of Jacob when the deliverer comes to Zion. This is often understood as the nation of Israel repenting after the Messiah returns; however that can only be maintained if the OT context of Paul's citation is ignored along with the wider inter-textual NT implications.

And so<sup>1</sup> all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this *is* my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. (Rom 11.26-27)

This reads as if the messiah will appear to an unrepentant nation and only then (when they see him) will they repent. In other words we are to believe that they will cry to God in unbelief (still rejecting Jesus as the messiah) and he will return and save them! Only once they have been saved will they repent? This runs counter to everything scripture teaches. God always sends his prophets first with a warning. A faithful remnant is prepared and then judgement comes. In the first century the prophet was John the Baptist modelled on Elijah because he came before the messiah to prepare a repentant remnant. Just like Elijah of old he ran before to announce the coming of the king. And he preached repentance to Jacob.

As to the apostles citation he is conflating a number of OT passages (Isa 59.20-21, Isa 27.9, Jer 31, 33-34):

"The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins," declares the LORD. "As for me, this is my covenant with them," says the LORD. "My Spirit, who is on you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouths of your children, or from the mouths of their descendants from this time on and forever," says the LORD" (Isa 59.20-21 NIV).

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<sup>1</sup> It is not clear whether the phrase καὶ οὕτως (*kai houtōs*, "and so") is to be understood in a modal sense ("and in this way") or in a temporal sense ("and in the end"). Neither interpretation is conclusive from a grammatical standpoint, and in fact the two may not be mutually exclusive. Some, like H. Hübner, who argue strongly against the temporal reading, nevertheless continue to give the phrase a temporal significance, saying that God will save all Israel in the end (*Gottes Ich und Israel* [FRLANT], 118).

“By this, then, will Jacob's guilt be atoned for, and this will be the full fruitage of the removal of his sin: When he makes all the altar stones to be like chalk stones crushed to pieces, no Asherah poles or incense altars will be left standing” (Isa 27.9).

"This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. no longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more" (Jer 31.33-34).

The OT context states clearly that the redeemer will come to those to those in Jacob who repent of their sins demonstrating that **repentance comes first**. The second citation relates to Jacob demonstrating his repentance by crushing the altar stones. This is a reference to the prophetic announcement in 1 Kgs 13.2 concerning the future reforms of Josiah (=Yahweh heals). Of course, Israel has had no temple or altar for the thousands of years but they have recently constructed all the temple instruments and have practiced sacrifice on a temporary altar. Reinstitution of Mosaic sacrifice is akin to idolatry especially when taken together with Jewish use of the Talmud which has replaced the Torah. This will need to be renounced as an outward demonstration of acceptance of the messiah because his New Covenant is written on the heart and accepting his sacrifice will ensure that he will remember their sins no more. In the previous chapter Paul says:

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” (Rom 10.13-15).

Paul describes a process – preaching comes first, then repentance, then deliverance. Deliverance does not come before repentance.....**that is counter to all scriptural teaching**. Moreover Romans 10 and 11 are inter-textually linked with Revelation 11 that describes patterns of events that will be repeated

Theme	Romans 11	Revelation 11
Punishment	Hath God cast away his people?" (v.1)	...for it is given unto the Gentiles (v.2)
Elijah	Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah (v.2)	Elijah...have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy (v.6)
Two witnesses	And how shall they preach, except they be sent? (Rom 10.15)	And I will give <i>power</i> unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy (v.3)
7,000	Seven thousand faithful in the time of Elijah (v.4)	slain of men seven thousand (v.13)
Mystery	...this mystery....until the times of the gentiles fulfilled (V25).	...the mystery of God should be finished (Rev 10.7)
Remnant	...there is a remnant according to the election of grace (v.15)	...and the remnant were affrighted (v.13c)
Repentance	and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:	and gave glory to the God of heaven (v.13c)
Deliverance	There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer(v.26a)	....because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned (v.17)
Reward	For this <i>is</i> my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. (v.26b)	....that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints (v.18)
Resurrection	...what shall the receiving of them (Israel) be, but life from the dead?" (v.15)	....and the time of the dead, that they should be judged" (v.18).

Two things become clear (1) Preaching and repentance occurs **before the return** of messiah  
(2) The apostle Paul was aware of the Apocalypse **before AD 70**.