Answer: Let’s carefully examine the Scripture.

Romans 11:25-26 (ESV) says:
“Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob.’”

At first glance, this verse seems to promise that all Israel will be saved at the end times. Indeed, the Bible prophesies a time when the gospel will return to the nation of Israel after the fullness of the Gentiles has come in—that is, after the church age or the era of the Gentile believers. At that future time, two prophetic witnesses (described in Revelation 11) will preach powerfully in Israel, performing miracles reminiscent of Moses and Elijah. Through their ministry, many Israelites will accept Jesus as the Messiah.

But Does This Mean Every Ethnic Israelite Will Be Saved?

The short answer is no. Not every ethnic Israelite will be saved, regardless of their heritage or birthright.

Paul clarifies this in Romans 9:6-7 (ESV):
“It is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but ‘Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.’”

This means that being an ethnic descendant of Israel does not guarantee salvation. Salvation is not about physical lineage alone, but about faith and being part of the spiritual Israel—those who truly believe and follow God.

Similarly, just as not all who call themselves Christians truly belong to Christ (cf. Matthew 7:21-23), not all who are ethnic Israelites are spiritually saved. There are those among the Israelites who reject Jesus as Messiah, follow false teachers, or live in rebellion against God (for example, Elymas the sorcerer in Acts 13:6-12).

Who, Then, Does “All Israel” Refer To?

The phrase “all Israel” in Romans 11:26 refers to all true believers among Israel—the genuine spiritual Israel, those whose hearts have been changed by God’s grace.

Jesus praised Nathanael as “an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit” (John 1:47, ESV). This points to true spiritual identity, not mere ethnic background.

Paul also highlights that true children of God are not those who are only physically descended from Abraham but those who have faith, just as Isaac was the child of promise over Ishmael (Romans 9:7-8).

Therefore, “all Israel” means all who belong to God by faith—true believers—will be saved.

Key Theological Points:

- Salvation is by faith, not ethnicity. Physical descent from Israel

is not a guarantee of salvation (Romans 9:6-8).

- God’s promises remain sure, but spiritual Israel consists of those with faith. (Galatians 3:7-9)

- Partial hardening of Israel has occurred until the full number of Gentiles comes in, then God will turn again to Israel (Romans 11:25).

- True faith will result in repentance and acceptance of Jesus as Messiah.

- There remain false Israelites and false believers who will not inherit eternal life unless they repent.

Are You a True Christian or a Nominal One?

This teaching challenges all believers to examine themselves.

True Christians:

- Deny the world and take up their cross daily to follow Jesus (Luke 9:23).

- Live in obedience to God’s commandments (John 14:15).

- Repent from sin and live transformed lives.

Nominal Christians, like nominal Israelites, may claim the name but do not bear the fruit of true faith (Matthew 7:22-23). Such a profession alone is not enough for salvation.

Conclusion:

- Romans 11:26 does promise a great salvation for “all Israel,” but this refers to all true believers within Israel—those who genuinely accept the Messiah.

- Not every ethnic Israelite will be saved, just as not every person who claims to be a Christian is truly saved.

- Salvation is always by faith, grace, and repentance.

May God help us all to be true followers of Christ, living by faith and obedience!

Maranatha!

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