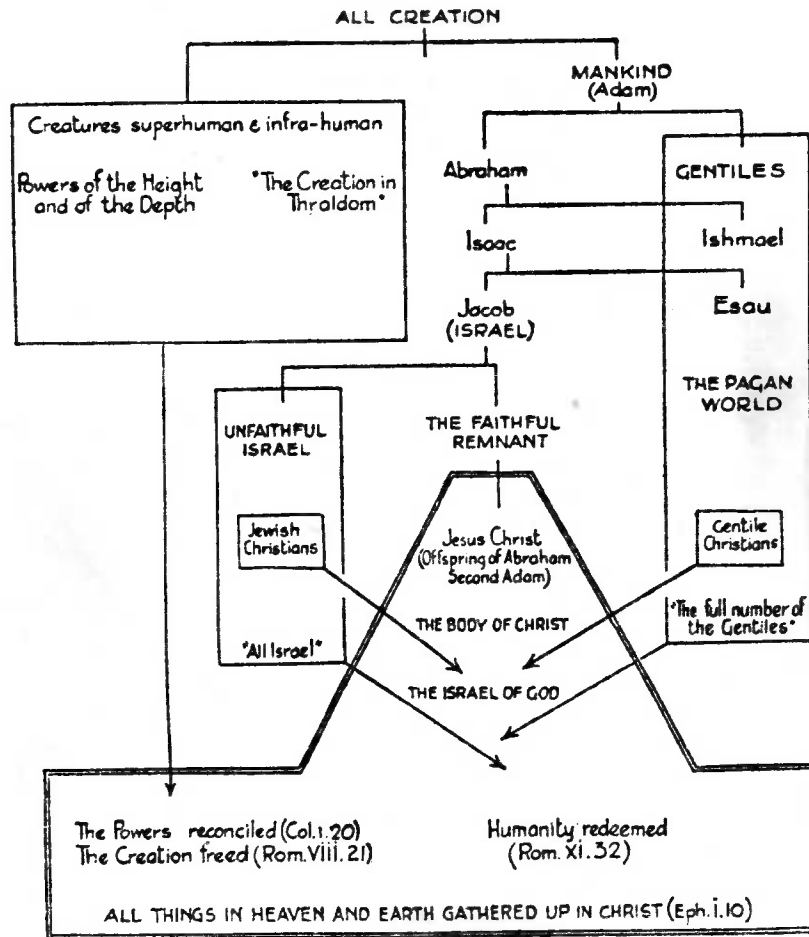


Books have a way of wandering home, and after more than forty years here is back to me C.H.Dodds' THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS (Harper/35). As I just finished teaching a course in the feel of history and am now into one in philosophy of religion, I reread this book with both those eyes. Ro.9-11 is, for NT, the locus classicus on philosophy of history; here's Dodds' visual on it (esp.11.1-32; p.187):



This diagram hit me especially hard because the mailperson delivered the book only an hour after I'd had, in our home, a conversation with a rabbi on this very passage!

NOTES:

1. Note the ref. to the great chapter just before the mystery-of-Israel section (9-11). The unity of history joins with the yearning-unity of "nature" and of our hearts, in which the Spirit prays with "groanings"-conjoint-with-nature's too deep for words.
2. The only other reff. on the diagram are from what we sometimes call the "cosmic-Christianity" pieces in NT, viz. Col.-Eph. I agree with Dibelius that Eph. is deutero-Pauline (a later development of the Paul school in the Church; perhaps, with Goodspeed, an "Introduction to Paul's Letters," written on the occasion of their gathering and being published as an anthology ca. AD90)...For Paul, Salvation is future-cosmic [the deliverance of the whole creation] but also both present-cosmic [our release from invisible oppressing evil spirits, now] and present-relational ["the sinner's justification through grace," p.5]. The central problem to be decided in Paul's doctrine of salvation is which is central: deliverance from sin or from spirits?