

**PAUL'S USE OF THE SEPTUAGINT
IN ROMANS 9-11**

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TIMO LAATO: Paul's Use of the Septuagint in Romans 9-11

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The undertaking of the present study is to examine Paul's use of the Septuagint in Rom. 9-11, especially the guidelines which affect his interpretation of the Old Testament. At the outset, an overview of the content of his Epistle to the Romans is provided. Next, some relevant aspects of Paul's general way of interpreting the Old Testament are presented and expanded. He repeatedly employs the "promise – fulfillment" scheme in his attempt to define more in-depth the relationship between the Old and New Testament. Further, he often draws on typological Bible exposition, rendering the Old Testament accounts and events as a paradigm for the New Testament time span.

The Pauline manner of interpreting the Old Testament achieves more precision and accuracy through a comprehensive exegesis of Rom. 9-11 which particularly relate to Israel and their Holy Scriptures. Here all Old Testament quotations (and many Old Testament allusions) are examined one by one. Where appropriate, the original context of the quotations is also observed. Paul cites recurrently, but not always the Septuagint (or possibly another Greek translation). Sometimes he (or perhaps someone else before him) translates his texts directly from the Hebrew. Occasionally, different passages are joined or mixed together under the impression that they as Holy Scripture speak with one voice for the same truth. Everywhere, a strong theological, i.e. Christological, conviction has an important impact on their real meaning.

Key words: Paul, Romans, Septuagint, Old Testament, New Testament, promise, fulfillment, typology, Christology, Israel.

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1. Introduction

The impact of classical philology (understood as widely as possible) on the New Testament research has been enormous. Not only linguistic, lexical or semantic analyses but also surveys of Greek ideologies, philosophies, religions (including mystery religions and Gnosticism) and world views have outlined the mental or intellectual context in which early Christianity emerged. No doubt, modern interdisciplinary patterns of studies have brought about mutual fresh connections, previously ignored or overlooked in the main stream exegetics. However, in the midst of all those academic projects, the study of the Septuagint (in abbreviated form: LXX),¹ the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible including some other books, originally written in Greek, continues to remain on the margins of New Testament research. The rather bewildering state of affairs is well worth bearing in mind since the evidence for it is available in most every introductory text to the New Testament:

While sections on mystery religions, Greek philosophies, the Essenes, and the Dead Sea Scrolls are plentiful, one looks in vain for a section on the LXX. A search of several NT introductions written since 1985 reveals that none has a section on the LXX. In most cases the LXX receives only a passing reference in one or two sentences!²

¹ As known, the book of Septuaginta goes back to the tradition in the Letter to Aristeas that (seventy-two or) seventy elders (hence the abbreviation LXX) translated the Pentateuch into Greek.

² McLay 2003, 1. However, see Hübner 1990. He speaks much about “die theologische Relevanz der Septuaginta als jüdische Bibel” (p. 57) in his “Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments”.

The Septuagint is one of the largest literary bodies of the whole Hellenistic period. It is absolutely worth reading and studying. As a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scripture, it offers insight into a translation technique of the ancient times. However, different parts are not translated in a homogenous and consistent way. The style and manner vary from a strict literal (and on occasion from an almost incomprehensible) turn of phrase to a more free and broad-minded paraphrase.³

In addition, the Septuagint is the most important religious book in the Hellenistic period. It was destined to become a sacred standard work in Judaism as well as in Christianity later on. In that position, it was not always and no more controlled by the Hebrew original but started to live a life of its own. As a result, the Septuagint does not assert itself as a mere translation. In contrast, it offers a many-faceted collection of books which all have their unique characteristics. Therefore, it deserves a separate and independent investigation.⁴

In one sense, the Septuagint unites Judaism and Christianity. It takes the place of Holy Scripture in both of them. Simply put: they are based on a common shared foundation. On the other hand, we might as well maintain that the Septuagint separates Judaism from Christianity. The respective interpretations or perspectives of both parties differ far and wide. Do they ever converge? The opposite positions pertaining to the understanding of the Old Testament have been and still are a stumbling stone in the dialogue between Synagogue and Church.⁵

Naturally, there is no way to examine the whole complex of problems between the Early Christianity and Judaism in one go. The aim of the study should be limited in a realistic and rational fashion. Less is indeed more! Apparently, the most influential thinker in Early Christianity was Paul, a former Pharisee who converted to the Christian faith. He discusses the Old Testament in his Epistle to the Romans more than anywhere else. Approximately 50 % of all his Old Testament quotations are found in that letter.⁶ In Rom. 9-11 he particularly relates to Israel and their Holy Scripture. Here his Old Testament exposition dominates. Almost 30 % of all his Old Testament quotations occur in those three chapters.⁷ They form a reasonable and meaningful whole within the bounds of what is possible to investigate in the context of a short survey.⁸

The goal of this study is to analyze Paul's use of the Septuagint in Romans 9-11. Apparently, he does not always quote LXX verbatim. So the question arises of

³ Gabel – Wheeler – York 2000, 198-199.

⁴ Gabel – Wheeler – York 2000, 198-199, 269-270.

⁵ Bokedal 2005, 35, 242-244.

⁶ See Longenecker 1999, 92-98. He includes direct quotations, but not allusions. Cf. also Koch 1986, 21-23 and Hübner 1984, 147-160: "Übersicht über die alttestamentlichen Zitate und Anspielungen in Röm 9-11".

⁷ Longenecker 1999, xviii and 92-98

⁸ Cf. Shum 2002, 203: "Rom.9-11 is undoubtedly one of the most important sections in the letter to the Romans and even in the entire Pauline corpus"

whether he quotes another ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament. It may be that he himself translates the quoted text from Hebrew. It is also possible that he quotes by memory. In that case, his quotation does not necessarily turn out to be as precise as usual. Further, his quotations might be adjusted or modified in order to fit the Christian context of his own. On the whole, his use of the Septuagint in Romans 9-11 seems not to be an easy one to investigate.

Figuratively speaking, an analysis of Rom. 9-11 functions as a test drilling in a much larger mining project, where the intention is to dig out the Pauline understanding of the Old Testament in general or the Septuagint in particular. Here and now, it is not yet time to open the mine itself. Initial and extensive excavations are required first. Unsurprisingly, this study should serve that aim.

The progress of the investigation proceeds by consistently zooming in on more and more detail. The Pauline quotations of the Old Testament are guided by a theological perspective which culminates in Christian faith. Rom. 1:16-17, generally known and recognized as the thematic verses in the whole letter, offer a big picture. At the outset, the passage shows an overview of the reading of Holy Scripture with a quotation from Hab. 2:4 (chapter 2 below). Then a more detailed section enlargement follows. As Paul quotes the Old Testament, he pursues some distinctive principles in his expositions. In each case, his interpretations are largely based on them. Hence, there is need for asserting and comprehending them (chapter 3 below). Finally, Rom. 9-11 come into focus. Here all Old Testament quotations are analyzed one by one, formally as well as theologically, to avoid a distortion of the picture (chapter 4 below). In the end, a large panorama of the most significant results is provided together with diverse conclusions (chapter 5 below).

In academic literature LXX may refer to any reading that is found in any Greek manuscript of the Jewish Scriptures, which is not necessarily the original or even a very early reading. Sometimes it more readily refers to the reading in the Greek Jewish Scriptures that has been judged to be most likely the original reading, occasionally the same as “Old Greek”. On that basis, critical editions for many books of the Septuagint are now available and continue to be published in the *Göttingen Septuaginta series*. References below to LXX are taken from it – except where indicated.⁹

Neither is it possible to maintain without further ado that the so-called Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible (MT) is equivalent to the original Hebrew reading. The current system of vocalizing the consonantal Hebrew text was introduced very late by the Masoretes. Their innovation was established and acknowledged in a complete codex from Ben Asher that is dated to 1008 AD. In so doing they were trying to lead the reader to understand the writings in their own special way to the exclusion of alternative insights into the meaning of Holy Scripture. Astonishingly,

⁹ Cf. McLay 2003, 5-7. After all, his own use of language is not the clearest one (see p. 7).

the distinctive and exceptional translation of the Septuagint might at times hint at a diverging sense of the consonantal Hebrew manuscript! Hence, the Hebrew Bible is not necessarily tantamount to the Masoretic text.¹⁰

Tentatively, in order to examine a Pauline quotation, a series of steps for determining the textual basis is envisaged from the start. Methodologically, it appears as follows:¹¹

1. Compare the Pauline quotation to the LXX (the critical edition of the *Göttingen Septuaginta series*).
 - a. Does Paul directly quote LXX (or another Greek translation different from LXX, provided that there are any such texts available)?
 - b. Does LXX differ from the Hebrew original? In that case Paul himself has obviously not translated the text from Hebrew into Greek.
2. If Paul does not quote LXX (or any other Greek translation), then compare his quotation to the Masoretic text. Is it based on that (or maybe on another Hebrew reading)?
3. Finally, determine if Paul has altered or adjusted the Old Testament quotation to his context for lexical or syntactical reasons, by making use of idiomatic expressions or rhetorical devices, through adding or omitting words, by means of inserting further clarifications or emphases as well as due to drawing on his own theological motives.

As easily understood, the methodological sketch of the three steps does not imply a research program or progress to be followed entirely in every single case. For instance, if Paul cites LXX in simple terms (step 1), then naturally he neither translated his text from Hebrew (step 2), nor made any adjustments to it (step 3). To further prolong the discussion in that kind of context would be of no use.

Yet, within the bounds of a short survey it is not possible to follow the methodological sketch of the three steps strictly and pertaining to every detail as well as all textual variations. The intention of the study is not to search the hypothetical *Vorlage* or the original wording of the Old Testament quotations. In contrast, the focus lies on Paul's thought or how his line of reasoning moves on and advances. Otherwise, we run the risk of not seeing the forest for the trees.¹² A more restrictive and limited perspective supposedly allows for a more intrinsic understanding of the progression of the overall argumentation in Rom. 9-11.

¹⁰ Cf. McLay 2003, 7-8. The terminology like Hebrew Bible is misleading given the fact that large portions in the books of Daniel and Esther (and some other short passages) are written in Aramaic.

¹¹ Cf. McLay 2003, 133-134.

¹² For a more detailed analysis, see e.g. the extensive works by Shum 2002, Wagner 2003 and Wilk 1998.

The reading of Paul's texts or the appraisal of his main thoughts is always linked together with the importance of his theological convictions which should neither be undervalued nor underestimated. Therefore, the analysis of Rom. 9-11 has to start with some insights into his Christian persuasions as regards the Jewish Scripture and the general principles for his interpretation of it. Only then, can any extensive conclusions about his use of Old Testament quotations be allowed.

2. The theme of the Romans

The authority of Scripture is the very foundation upon which the argumentation of the Epistle to the Romans begins.¹³ Immediately after Paul introduces himself to the church in Rome as the apostle to the Gentiles (1:1), he talks about the gospel he proclaims, which “[God] promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures” (v. 2). Here presumably all the authors of the Old Testament are counted as prophets. They have spoken of the incarnation of the Son of God, of His death and resurrection (vv. 3-4). The Scriptures are called “holy” since they are by nature totally different from all the other texts. So, Paul does not read the Old Testament as just any other book. There he finds a prophetic route to the New Testament, the foundation for his kerygma, something to which he will later bear witness as well.¹⁴

At the end of the Epistle to the Romans, Paul again sharpens his view on the Old Testament texts. There he praises God who is “able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ [or perhaps ‘Jesus’ proclamation’], according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith.” (16:25-26).¹⁵

The final doxology appears almost incomprehensible: the gospel reveals the secret which was hidden but is already there in the Old Testament! What does Paul mean with such a seemingly contradictory expression? He thinks that the new revelation in and through Christ broadens the perspective and brings out a viewpoint which allows the message of the Scriptures to come out as a

¹³ My argumentation below is largely based on Laato 2006, 47-49, 55-57 and 2015, 721.

¹⁴ See e.g. van der Minde 1976, 39.

¹⁵ I assume that verses 25-26 are from Paul’s pen. Cf. the discussion about text critical problems in various commentaries. See also especially Carson 2004, 422. He accedes to I. H. Marshall.

three-dimensional picture. Hence it is the gospel that opens the locked secrets in the Old Testament. We must therefore not read the Old Testament “between the lines” or “from behind the text” but “literally” and at the same time in faith with regard to the factual content, namely Christ.¹⁶

The distinctive theme of the Epistle to the Romans is presented in 1:16-17. It includes the assertion that the proclamation of justification by faith is in line with the Old Testament: καθὼς γέγραπται (“as it is written,” vv. 16-17). The argumentation from Scripture continues in every chapter hereafter.

Consequently, primary support for the theme of Rom. 1:17 is provided by Hab. 2:4. The phrase Ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται may be translated in two ways, depending on whether the expression “by faith” is combined with the subject “the righteous,” or with the verb “shall live”:

Either

“The righteous by faith shall live”

Or

“The righteous shall live by faith.”¹⁷

In the end, the difference between the two sentences is insignificant, yet the first option corresponds more closely to the assertion which the quote should argue for; namely, that God’s righteousness is revealed in the gospel “from faith for faith” (v.17a). Additionally, at least 3:21-22 and 5:1 refer back to the theme of the epistle, with a clear correlation between “faith” and “righteousness”:

... δικαιοσύνη δὲ Θεοῦ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας

... the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe (3:22)

and

Δικαιωθέντες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως ...

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith ... (5:1).¹⁸

It seems that chapters 1-4 provide a detailed explanation of what justification by faith is (the first part of v. 17b: “the righteous by faith”), while chapters 5-8 clarify what the eschatological life is like (the second part of v.17b: “shall live”). Certain lexical data support such a thematic division:

¹⁶ Cf. Carson 2004, 422-423.

¹⁷ LXX reads ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται in reference to God’s faithfulness (and not to man’s faith).

¹⁸ Cf. also for example 4:11, 13; 9:30 and 10:6.

- In 1:18-4:25 the terms πίστις or πιστεύειν are used 29 and 8 times respectively, but in 5:1-8:39 only a few times each,
- In 1:18-4:25 the terms ζωή or ζῆν are used only a few times, but in 5:1-8:39 over 20 times.

As stated earlier, theoretically both translations lead to the same theological goal.¹⁹

The use of Hab. 2:4 as the foundation for defining the theme of Romans works well with the subsequent line of thought. The passage contains two key concepts which reoccur in chapter 4. There Paul similarly quotes an Old Testament passage with the same intent. He refers to Genesis 15:6, which, like Habakkuk 2:4, speaks of both “faith” and “righteous(ness)”. So the argumentation from Scripture in 1:17 leads to the much more thorough exposition of Scripture in 4:1ff. In other words, the definition of the theme and the treatment of the theme correspond exactly.²⁰

Obviously, it was first the prophet Habakkuk (and not Paul or someone else) who assumed that the Jews would follow in their fathers’ footsteps. Considering the oppression and violence of the Babylonians, Hab. 2:4 appears to treat a similar issue as Genesis 15. In both cases the people involved face an impossible situation. In both cases it is about their trusting in God, who, despite challenging circumstances and many severe obstacles, will intervene in a near future. Interestingly, similar language is used in both cases: “faith,” “faithfulness” and “righteous(ness)”. In Hebraic context, there is no clear difference, much less a contradiction, between “faith” and “faithfulness”. The righteous will save himself from the national catastrophe only through his faith and faithfulness (Hab. 2:4). Likewise, Abraham is declared righteous by his faith (Gen. 15:6), and is then willing, in his faithfulness, to sacrifice his own son Isaac (Gen. 22). In the New Testament, James in particular emphasizes that connection (2:21-24). At its most fundamental level, even Paul’s reasoning goes in the same direction. He proclaims justification by faith with the help of Abraham’s story (Rom. 4), and admonishes his listeners to present their *own* bodies as a “living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God” (Rom.12:1).²¹

Thus, Hab. 2:4 is an excellent summary of the arrangement structure and scope of Romans. To be sure, Rom. 1:17 does not misinterpret the purpose and content of the Old Testament quotation. With Israel's ancestor as an example, Habakkuk emphasizes not only faithfulness (obedience toward the law), but also faith. For

¹⁹ Regarding the argumentation for v. 17 see first and foremost Nygren 1979, 87-98. In connection to him, Cranfield 1982, 101-102.

²⁰ Cf. especially Silva 1993, 641.

²¹ Cf. Silva’s in depth discussion (1993, 640-641), and also Schreiner 1998, 74-75. More concerning the relationship between James and Paul, see Laato 2003.

his part, Paul emphasizes Abraham's faith in Romans 4 without turning a blind eye to faithfulness. Further evidence for the close connection between Hab. 2:4 and Rom. 1:17 is found in the contexts of both passages thoroughly discussing God's wrath revealed against the ungodliness of mankind (see especially Hab. 3 and Rom. 1:18ff).

Consequently, the authority of Scripture concerns an essential part of the theology of Romans. The gospel flows from the Old Testament. It is intended for "the Jew first and also to the Greek" (1:16). Next, we proceed further. A more detailed examination of the meaning and use of the arguments from Scripture follows.

3. General Principles for the Pauline interpretation of Scripture

Attention below will be given to two ways Paul interprets the Old Testament: the “promise-fulfillment” scheme and the typological exposition of Scripture.²²

3.1. The “promise-fulfillment” scheme

Rom 15:4 will serve as a starting point for the presentation on the fulfilment of the Old Testament promises within the New Testament time span. It states:

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Obviously, “whatever was written in former days” and “Scriptures” are synonymous. So the Old Testament seems to be in its totality a prophecy that concerns us (cf. 1:2). Therefore it certainly is not even worth our trouble to refute the common misunderstanding that Paul would have only emphasized some significant thoughts in the Old Testament. To read such a modern idea into his texts reveals an anachronistic perspective. Rom 3:2 most emphatically stresses that the greatest privilege of Jews is that God’s word (τά λόγια, in the plural) had been entrusted to them, not merely some major principles.

The general claim of the benefit of the Scriptures and of their prophetic nature in Rom 15:4 stresses the Christological application of Ps 69:10 in the previous verse,

²² My argumentation below is largely based on Laato 2006, 59-64 and 2015, 724-726.

that is, in Rom 15:3:

For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.”

It is a question of the scheme of the “promise-fulfillment,” something that actually has its place in the intrinsic message of the Old Testament. Rom 15:8 specifically speaks of the confirmation of “the promises to the patriarchs”:

For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God’s truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs. (Rom. 15:8)

By the “the patriarchs” Paul here means especially the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but naturally also other great Jewish men. As early as in chapter 4, he takes up the promise that Abraham and his offspring will be “heirs of the world” (vv. 13-21). In chapter 9, the apostle then wrestles with the question of the children of the promise: Isaac and Jacob and in the wake of them ultimately the Christians (vv. 6-13). He thus explains in the course of the Epistle to the Romans what the confirmation of the “the promises to the patriarchs” graphically includes. 2 Cor 1:20 states programmatically that, no matter how many promises God has made, they “find their Yes in him (Christ).”

In line with its theme, the entire Epistle to the Romans deals with one great promise: the revelation of “the righteousness of God, which the Law and the Prophets bear witness” (3:21, cf. Gal 3, where the promise is identified with justification by faith). Romans 4 then combines the treatment of the theme with God’s promise to Abraham, the Patriarch of the Jews (equally in Gal. 3). When the promises made to the patriarchs resurface in Rom 9, the connection with chapter 4 is preserved through similar terminology: As Abraham’s faith once was *counted* (ἐλογίσθη - λογίζεται) as righteousness to him (see 4:3, 5, 23-24), now only the children of the promise are *counted* (λογίζεται) as Abraham’s offspring (9:8).²³ As a result, we have already gone deeper into what is called typological Bible exposition.²⁴

²³ In general regards the “promise-fulfillment” scheme, see Hahn 2002, 116-119 and 814-815 with a list over older and newer secondary literature. Cf. also e.g. Carson 2004, 403-404 and Longenecker 1999, xxvi-xxx.

²⁴ See especially Moo 1986, 196: “[...] we suggest that typology is best viewed as a specific form of the larger ‘promise-fulfillment’ scheme [...]”

3.2. *The typological exposition*

Rom. 4:23-24 reassures as regards the justification of Abraham:

But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord.

Here we are dealing with *typological* Bible exposition (“*typoleges*”) with its three main principles:

1. The account or witness of the Old Testament serves as a prototype (*typos*) of what is going to come in the days of fulfilment (*antitypos*).
2. The later salvation event rises above the previous, that is, the *antitypos* is superior to the *typos*.
3. The deepest content of the Old Testament is understood only through the gospel, in and through faith in Christ, and it specifically deals with the Christians.

Typological Bible exposition always emerges from the clear significance of the Old Testament text and applies it to the real situation in the Church. The thought that God remains the same and acts in the same way underlies such a method. The earlier saving deeds therefore anticipate the ones to come. The Old Testament already uses typological Bible exposition. For instance Isaiah compares Israel’s return from exile with creation or the Exodus (Is. 43:1-7, 14-21).

An equal example appears in Rom. 9, where the typological interpretation is utilized in a passage which again comes out of the account of Abraham. There, the focus lies on his two sons: Just as only Isaac’s descendants were counted as Abraham’s offspring, so now the children of the promise alone are counted as God’s family (vv. 6-9).

This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. (v. 8)

It is not only a similarity but a dissimilarity as well that is explained by *typos*. Rom. 5 talks about Adam as Christ’s prototype (v. 14: τύπος), but later on contrasts existing between them are described (vv. 15-19).

Equally, *typos* can function as a negative prototype. 1 Cor. 10, with a typological intent, tells about Israel’s wandering in the wilderness. The nation’s apostasy and sins of the serve as a warning example (v. 11: τυπικώς) for Christians.

On the contrary, allegorical interpretation seems totally arbitrary. It is seldom employed by the New Testament authors, and even then in combination with typological Bible exposition (see Gal. 4:24-26). Paul's method of arguing can be contrasted with Philo, who most often uses allegory without any consideration to the actual meaning of the text.²⁵

3.3. *A Christological reading of the Old Testament*

So the two main principles for Paul's interpretation of the Old Testament, that is, the "promise-fulfillment" scheme and the typological Bible exposition, appear in his treatment of the Abraham narratives (chapters 4 and 9) which no doubt holds a central position in the Epistle to the Romans. It sounds as if his entire study of the Old Testament is leavened by such a double perspective. Everything revolves around Christ: He fulfils the promises and he unlocks the typological meaning of the Scriptures.

In light of the reality that God is and remains faithful and fulfills all his promises, and in view of the fact that he is the same and acts in the same way both in the old and new covenant, the entire Old Testament emerges as a Christological book with an eschatological message.²⁶ Accordingly, there are not merely some sporadic prophecies about the Messiah, but every single writing turns into a prophetic text about him. Examining the holy revelation in this way does not impose strange and irrelevant categories onto it. On the contrary, history is always to be understood only in hindsight. The unfolding of salvation history reaches its climax in Christ. He articulates how the past draws attention to and finds its conclusion precisely in him. The profound connection between the old and new covenant becomes lucid when it is elucidated through the gospel. In other words: Romans does not advocate an *anachronistic* but a *diachronic* (historic) perspective.²⁷

²⁵ Regarding typological reading in general, especially in contrast to allegorical reading, see e.g. Goppelt 1939. His work is still a classic standard work; in general, all other works follow it. Concerning this see even Koch 1986, 216 n. 1, even if he (in my opinion certainly less than convincingly) on several accounts criticizes Goppelt (p. 216-220, as to allegorical reading see p. 202-216). Hahn, together with his treatment of the characteristics of typology, gives us a list over older and newer secondary literature (2002, 119-123 and 814-815). For a small addition to the general account of New Testament typology, see Laato 2002, 88. Moo (1986, 195) describe the current situation in research as follows: "In the last thirty years, typology has reemerged, after a period of relative neglect, as one of the most popular ways of explaining the relationship between the Testaments." For the later discussion, see Carson 2004, 404-410.

²⁶ It is worth pointing out here that the Old Testament canon within Judaism in reality had been established even long before the New Testament era. See especially Ellis 1991, 3-50. Similarly, Skarsaune 2002, 279-293. Cf. already Michel 1929.

²⁷ Moo 1986, 204-211. Cf. also the demonstrable difference between Pauline and Jewish exegesis: "A vast gulf separates the often fantastic, purely verbal exegeses of the rabbis from the generally sober and clearly contextually oriented interpretations found in the New Testament." (p. 193). See further Carson 2004, 410-412.

With the general principles for a Pauline understanding of Scripture as a starting point, a more in depth study of the argumentation in Rom. 9-11 follows.²⁸ In line with the definition of the task at hand, numerous Old Testament quotes in particular will be given special attention.²⁹

²⁸ My argumentation in the next chapter is a further development of Laato 2006.

²⁹ Evans 1984, 570: “In order to understand Paul’s hermeneutic properly it is necessary to view it against the prophetic hermeneutic of the Old Testament. A study of Romans 9-11 proves to be instructive in this.” Cf. also Hübner 1984.

4. Focus on Rom. 9-11

4.1. Prologue

In chapters 9-11 Paul continues his examination of the epistle's theme (1:16-17): If his gospel is truly meant "to the Jew first and also to the Greek," why did Israel not receive it? His gospel has been "the power of God for salvation" mostly among the Gentiles but not so much among Jews. It sounds strange that God's own people would not care about God's revelation.³⁰ And if that is the case, what has happened to his covenant faithfulness? Has he himself rejected his people and broken his promises? Ultimately, chapters 9-11 deal with God's righteousness (truthfulness or trustworthiness) as much as Israel's righteousness (salvation). The two aspects go together and complete each other, an important fact that should be regarded more seriously when discussing the structure of Romans (see e.g. 1:16-17, 3:3-8, 25-26; cf. my treatment of chapters 9-11 below).³¹

Further, Paul responds to accusations against him. Who knows, if he, the notorious apostle to the Gentiles in his fervor to preach the law-free gospel, is to

³⁰ Among a number of commentaries, see for example Davies 1977-78, 13, Hofius 1989b, 177-178 Rengstorf 1978, 152-153, Rese 1975, 214-215 and Sanger 1986, 102. See further Hahn 1982, 225: "Das 'zuerst den Juden' [...] wird somit im Blick auf die Heilsvollendung zu einem 'zuerst den Heiden'."

³¹ Cf. already Rese 1975, 215: "Fur Paulus steht mehr auf dem Spiel: Durch den Unglauben der Mehrheit der Juden wird die Frage der Besonderheit der Juden verscharft zur Frage nach der Wahrheit Gottes; es geht um Gott selbst und seine Treue zu seinem Wort." Later also Wright 1993. He states on p. 235: "Modern scholarship has rightly focused on the main subject: the Jews' failure to believe the gospel. But it has not so often been noticed that the reason Paul is discussing this, and the terms in which he is discussing it, have to do not merely with Israel but with God." After this, the question regarding God's *own* righteousness is thoroughly discussed on p. 235-236. See especially Piper 1993, 19: "What is at stake *ultimately* in these chapters is not the fate of Israel; that is penultimate. Ultimately *God's own* trustworthiness is at stake."

be blamed for failed mission to the Jews! In addition, some members of the church in Rome are showing contempt toward the Jewish people and pride in themselves (11:13-32), which creates even more disunion and confusion.³²

Hence, chapters 9-11 have a direct connection to the main argumentation throughout Romans. They do not deviate from the context or form an excursus. The main question is whether Israel, because of her stubbornness, has completely lost her position as God's chosen people and been replaced by the Gentile Christians. Although Paul wrestles with the questions of theodicy, predestination, free will, or salvation history, none of those issues should be seen as an all-encompassing subject matter of the text. They and other secondary investigations, relevant as they may be, necessarily lead to the conclusion that his treatise in chapters 9-11 forms an excursus in Romans.³³

In view of due consideration given to the position of Israel, it appears fully understandable that the apostle quotes the Old Testament frequently in Rom. 9-11. Almost one third of all his quotations are found in those three chapters. His entire argument hinges on showing the intimate connection between the gospel and Holy Scriptures. By and large, even Israel's current stubbornness had been foretold by the prophets, who foresaw her unbelief in the coming Messiah. Thus, the apostle stands on the biblical basis. He is not like the later heretic Marcion, who dared to completely reject the earlier revelation.³⁴

The somewhat hard criticism of Israel's impenitence, which Rom 9-11 (as well as the interpretation below) exposes, is not to be labeled as "antisemitism." That concept presupposes a race ideology which is completely foreign to the New Testament (and equally to the Old Testament). Furthermore, it seems hardly fair to view the Pauline presentation as an anti-Jewish contribution to the discussion. At that time, Judaism was not yet one fixed "normative religion." There were several variations, of which the Christian movement was an important one. Paul never truly abandoned his mother religion. He was and remained a Jew among Jews. It

³² Cf. Räisänen 1987, 2914: "Ein apologetischer Unterton ist unüberhörbar; man kann an Kritiker denken, die Paulus vorgeworfen haben, seine liberale Stellung zum Gesetz [z. B. der Galaterbrief], die mit seiner Missionstätigkeit unter den Heiden zusammenhängt, diene doch nur zur immer größeren Abneigung Israels gegen den Glauben an Christus (vgl. Apg 21,21.28)." See further p. 2936. So also Johnson 1984, 94.

³³ Räisänen 1987, 2893: "Während alle diese Themen [klassische dogmengeschichtliche Probleme] wenigstens in Ansätzen in den betreffenden Kapiteln vorhanden sind, herrscht heute große Einmütigkeit darüber, daß die Behandlung des Problems der *Treue Gottes* in bezug auf seine Verheißungen an Israel das eigentliche Anliegen des Apostels ist." Cf. Rengstorf 1978, 152 and Walter 1984, 172-173.

³⁴ Cf. Seifrid 1985, 5-6. In his analysis of chapters 9-11 he also refers to the Apostolic exposition of scripture in entire letter as follows: "Throughout the epistle, the question of the relationship of Paul's gospel to the revelation already given to Jewish nation receives attention." (p. 4). Similarly, Brandenburger 1985, 1-2. For statistics regarding the occurrence of Old Testament quotes in Rom. 9-11, see Longenecker 1999., xviii and 92-98. Cf. further Hübner 1984, 147-160: "Übersicht über die alttestamentlichen Zitate und Anspielungen in Röm 9-11".

is also worth noting that the argumentation in chapters 9-11 culminates in 11:25-27, a prophecy about a marvelous future for *all* of Israel, their coming glorious salvation. Besides, the passage is preceded by vv. 17-24, where some Gentile Christians are admonished for their pride toward the Israelites (see below).³⁵

Rom. 9-11 has a quite simple and clear structure. The framework is a lament over Israel in the beginning (9:1-5) and a doxology to God in the end (11:33-36).³⁶ 9:6 begins with the main statement: “But it is not as though the word of God has failed.” Next, the demonstration of reasons for that continues through v. 29 (or maybe even to the last verses of chapter 11).³⁷ Then subsequently, every pericope begins with a rhetorical question (9:30, 11:1, 11:11) and ends with several Old Testament quotes (10:18-21, 11:8-10, 11:26b-27; see also 9:25-29). Accordingly, the other units are 9:30-10:21, 11:1-10 and 11:11-32.³⁸

Below, all the passages are studied one by one.

³⁵ See especially Davies 1977-78, 19-39 and also Moo 1996, 710 and n. 71. Against e.g. Ruether 1974, 95-107. In the dialog between Church and Synagogue, I personally agree with the following overall assessment: “Wer immer zu Abraham gehört, hat also auch an seiner einzigartigen Würde Anteil, und sie geht ihm niemals und unter gar keinen Umständen verloren, selbst dann nicht, wenn der Zustand des Abgetrenntseins von Gott für ihn eintreten sollte. Insofern schuldet die nichtjüdische Christenheit der Judenschaft auch dann Respekt, wenn sie auf ihrer Ablehnung Jesu besteht und in ihr und durch sie sich religiös oder gesellschaftlich oder so und so isoliert.” (Rengstorf 1978, 162). The same idea is also presented by Walter 1984, 193: “Es wäre absurd, diesem Paulus, dem Autor von Röm 9-11, so etwas wie ‘Antijudaismus’ zu unterschieben - ohnehin natürlich nicht einen bewußten, gezielten Antijudaismus (das wirft wohl niemand dem Paulus vor), aber auch keinen tendenziellen, impliziten, zwar unbeabsichtigten, aber in der Konsequenz doch unausweichlichen Antijudaismus; ich sehe keinerlei Anlaß dafür.” In addition, Davies writes (1977-78, 37-38) regarding “the bitter irony of history that this colossus of a man [= Paul], who had he been heeded might have created a climate of mutual respect and even affection between Jews and Christians, was misinterpreted by both and his theology often used as part of the very scheme of salvation to justify the infliction of suffering on Jews, so that until very recently Paul has been regarded as unspeakable among his own people.” See further the interesting contribution to the discussion by Wright (1993, 253): “The irony [...] is that the late twentieth century, in order to avoid antisemitism, has advocated a position (the non-evangelization of Jews) *which Paul regards precisely as antisemitic* [Wright's emphasis]. The two-covenant position says precisely what Paul here forbids the church to say, namely that Christianity is for non-Jews. To this extent, it actually agrees in form with the German Christian theology of the 1930s [...]” On the other hand, it is completely exaggerated to imply that “rabbinic training” (“rabbinische Schulung”) is not relevant for understanding of Paul’s letters. Against Siegert 1985, 157-164. Cf. my reasoning below.

³⁶ See e.g. Moo 1996, 553. Cf. 11:28 which speaks about the Israelites as enemies “as far as the gospel is concerned” (9:1-3) and as loved “as far as election is concerned” (9:4-5).

³⁷ See Cranfield 1981, 473: “This half-verse is the sign under which the whole section 9.6-29 stands - in fact, the sign and theme of the whole of chapters 9-11.”

³⁸ Cf. e.g. Aageson 1986, 267-268 and Ellis 1978, 218-220. See also Moo 1996, 553-554.

4.2. 9:1-5

To begin with, Paul emphasizes his strong solidarity with the people of Israel and his great faithfulness toward its holy traditions.³⁹ His gospel does not cause the “word of God,” that is, the Old Testament, to fail (see v. 6). Such a thought is far from him.

The apostle’s wish for himself to be accursed in the place of his brothers (v. 3) corresponds to Moses’ desire to be blotted out of the book of life together with his countrymen (Ex. 32:30-32).⁴⁰ His assurance to speak the truth and not lie (v. 1)⁴¹ functions as a solemn oath, which – according to ancient custom – is reinforced by the promise to bring death down upon oneself. It could be that the reference to Christ and the Holy Spirit (v. 1) in that case conforms to the requirement of “two or three witnesses” (see e.g. Deut. 17:6, 19:15).⁴² It is not difficult to find parallels in the life of Moses to the sorrow and agony constantly afflicting Paul in his heart (v. 2). They both suffered much because of their divine calling.⁴³

From the outset, Paul acts as a true prophet, who reproaches Israel for transgressions and apostasy, yet gives hope for the future if they repent (cf. the many critical statements in chapters 9-11 with “revealing of the mystery of God” in 11:25ff.).⁴⁴ He represents, as it were, the messengers of the old covenant, but his message is far greater: it is the fulfillment of all of their writings.

Hence, Paul himself exemplifies the leading principle in the Jewish interpretation of Scripture that the Law of Moses is to be explained with help of the prophets, a method he uses e.g. in 9:12-13 and 10:19-21 (see below). He embodies some characteristics of the spiritual calling of Moses and the prophets.⁴⁵

³⁹ For the link between chapters 8 and 9, see Rese 1988, 208-209: “‘Weg von Christus’, das ist das genaue Gegenteil dessen, was in Röm 8 der Grund der Siegesgewißheit war, nämlich, daß nichts Paulus und die Christen scheiden könne von der Liebe Gottes in Christus Jesus.” Also Piper 1993, 45: “Therefore, Paul’s statement in 9:3 must be taken to mean that he ‘could wish’ to experience what 8:35-39 said the Christian never would experience: to be separated from the love of God in Christ and left under his eternal (2 Thess 1:9) wrath (Rom 5:9).” Similarly, Räisänen 1987, 2895: “Die Behandlung der Heilsgewißheit in Röm 8 scheint die Frage nach dem Schicksal Israels hervorzurufen.” See further Wagner 2003, 45.

⁴⁰ Cf. Theißen 2002, 312. Cf. further Rom. 9:15 with an explicit quotation from Ex. 33.

⁴¹ Paul first expresses himself positively (‘speak the truth’) and thereafter in the negative (‘do not lie’). Then he testifies to his honesty in v. 2. Thereby he emphasizes the very serious nature of his surprising desire. Cf. Brandenburger’s comment (1985, 6): “Auffallend ist, wie breit und intensiv die Beteuerung in V. 1 ausfällt. Erst nach drei Ansätzen scheint Paulus der Sache das genügende Gewicht gegeben zu haben [...]”

⁴² Moo 1996, 556 n. 7. A very peculiar situation arises here: Christ and the Spirit who are to witness *for* Paul actually speak *against* him and insist on his death sentence.

⁴³ Cf. Thurén 1994, 167, 209.

⁴⁴ See e.g. Amos who first takes up the judgement of God in chapters 1-9 but then finally in 9:11-25 the promise concerning restoration. In particular, Evans has developed a fundamental comparison between Paul’s understanding of Scripture and the hermeneutic of the prophets in the Old Testament (1984, 560-570). He is close to the research of particularly J. A. Sanders.

⁴⁵ Cf. Evans 1984, 569: “Of special importance to Paul are Torah, by which he establishes the

Next, Paul begins enumerating the indisputable privileges of Israel compared to other people of the world (vv. 4-5) with the Holy Scripture as his starting point. Here he actually continues the enumeration he interrupted in chapter 3. Already there, it was his intention to point out the advantages of the Jews (v. 1), but he settles for only *πρώτον* (“first”) affirming that they “were entrusted with the very words of God” (v. 2). In that context, there is no further account. The reader must wait until chapter 9 in order to learn more. At long last, he is told.⁴⁶

Interestingly, *τά λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ* (“the very words of God”) mentioned in 3:2 are missing in 9:4-5. It appears as if Paul now enumerates the privileges which the Holy Scripture testifies about (see below). He then develops his reasoning in the beginning of the following section and underscores that *ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ* (“the word of God”) cannot fail (v. 6), a thesis which refers back in particular to the privileges just enumerated (vv. 4-5). Consequently, chapters 3 and 9 have a deep foundational connection to each other.⁴⁷

What are the privileges asserted in vv. 4-5 that Israel owns according to the Old Testament? The first sentence, *οἵτινές εἰσιν Ἰσραηλεῖται* (“they are Israelites” in v. 4), functions as a heading. It is important to note that in chapters 9-11 Paul no longer speaks about the Jews, but about Israelites. So, his unbelieving countrymen still bear that honorary name. God has not rejected his people, even if most of them have forsaken the gospel (11:1, see also v. 28). His word has not lost its validity for them, constituting what is demonstrably a central thought to the whole argument.⁴⁸

The following account of Israel’s privileges (vv. 4-5) consists of three parts:

- a) “Theirs is (*ᾧν*) ...” (two feminine singular nouns + one feminine plural noun, twice)
- b) “Theirs are (*ᾧν*) ...” (only one masculine plural noun, which is therefore separated from the previous) and
- c) “From them (*ἐξ ᾧν*) ...”⁴⁹

The structure is framed by reference to the natural lineage (v. 3: “my kinsmen according to the flesh” and v. 5: their Messiah “according to the flesh”).⁵⁰

principles of God’s sovereign election, and the prophets, by which he is able to clarify his history.”

⁴⁶ E.g. Räisänen 1987, 2895. See also Piper 1993, 125.

⁴⁷ See Rese 1988, 111-112. He points out another similarity between chapter 3 and 9: “Wie in Röm 3. 4 verbindet sich in Röm 9 mit dem Unglauben Israels die Frage nach der Wahrheit Gottes. Doch in Röm 3 wurde diese Frage zugespitzt auf die Frage nach der Gerechtigkeit Gottes, eine Frage, die Paulus vorläufig in Röm 3. 4, endgültig in Röm 3. 21-6 beantwortet. In Röm 9 tritt hingegen die Frage nach der Wahrheit Gottes als Frage nach der Gültigkeit des Wortes Gottes in Erscheinung.”

⁴⁸ E.g. Piper 1993, 21, 23-24. See also Moo 1996, 560-561.

⁴⁹ Piper 1993, 21-23. See further e.g. Moo 1996, 560 and 562 n. 35. Theißen (2002, 313) sees points b and c as one. Therefore, he only talks about two “corresponding” parts.

⁵⁰ Theißen 2002, 313: “Umrahmt wird diese Aufzählung durch den Hinweis auf die Verwandten

In consideration of the whole structure, first the “*Israelites*” (heading) are mentioned and a number of their various privileges are accounted (point a). Then follows *the patriarchs*, central figures in salvation history (point b). Finally, the focus rests on *the Messiah*, “who is over all”⁵¹ (point c). Evidently, the direction is from a multitude to a single one (or the only one).⁵² Further, the account of Israel’s privileges contains only evidence of grace given. None of them results from gaining exceptional merits or earning a special status. What do they stand for?

Point a above (v. 4) recounts most of the privileges⁵³:

υιοθεσία (*adoption*): Israel is God’s son,

δόξα (*glory*): God’s presence (the Old Testament: *kabod*, rabbinism: *shekina*) first and foremost in the temple,

διαθηκαι (*the covenants*): God’s covenants with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and so on,

νομοθεσία (*the law*): as it was given by God, but not its negative consequences because of sin’s dominion (see e.g. chapter 7),

λατρεία (*the worship*): worship in the temple, and

ἐπαγγελίαι (*the promises*): especially the promises to the patriarchs (see already chapter 4).⁵⁴

Point b (v. 5a) above adds only one privilege:

πατέρες (*the patriarchs*): not only Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but also other forefathers.⁵⁵

Points a and b (together with 3:2) include as good as all of Israel’s privileges, except two: the Messiah and God. They are mentioned in point c (v. 5b):

The change in the wording (“from them ...” instead of “theirs ...”) reveals that the Israelites, despite all their privileges, do not live in a close saving relationship with their Messiah or God. On the contrary, they have rejected him.⁵⁶

For certain, a close connection between the Messiah and God prevails in v. 5, but how do they relate to each other? There are at least three main alternatives to

des Paulus κατὰ σάρκα und den Messias τὸ κατὰ σάρκα.”

⁵¹ Concerning different ways to translate and interpret v. 5, see below.

⁵² Michel 1978, 295 n. 18.

⁵³ The account of Israel’s privileges begins with “Stichworten aus Kapitel 8” (Räisänen 1987, 2896), that is, the keywords in chapter 8: ‘adoption’ and ‘glory’.

⁵⁴ Cf. Piper 1993, 31-40 Theißen allows both of the “corresponding” parts (see above) interpret each other (2002, 313): In that case ‘adoption,’ and ‘law,’ ‘glory’ and ‘temple worship’ as well as further ‘covenants’ and ‘promises’ correspond to each other (cf. similar endings in the Greek words!).

⁵⁵ Thurén 1994, 169.

⁵⁶ Kuss 1978, 677. Similarly Piper 1993, 42: “Since he [= Paul] did not want merely to coordinate ‘the fathers’ and ‘the Christ’ (‘whose are the fathers and whose is Christ’) but rather wanted to highlight the climactic character of Christ’s coming, he employed a grammatical construction which indeed does have a climactic ring to it (‘and from whom’).”

translate the last sentence ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων Θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας:

- a) "...the Christ according to the flesh, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen." or
- b) "...the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all. God, be blessed forever. Amen." or
- c) "...the Christ according to the flesh. God, who is over all, be blessed forever. amen."⁵⁷

The main question is whether or not Christ is called "God".

Without a shred of doubt, it seems most natural to understand the doxology in v. 5 as an apposition to Christ (that is, option a above) for the following reasons:

- a) in other contexts the relative clause "who is ..." also refers back to the previous subject,
- b) doxologies in the Pauline epistles are directly connected to the previous clause,
- c) the Jewish expression "blessed be ..." occurs in the beginning of a clause (an exception is Ps 67:19 LXX: κύριος ὁ θεὸς εὐλογητός), not in the middle of the sentence as it is here, and
- d) the expression τὸ κατὰ σάρκα ("according to the flesh") implies an antithesis (cf. 1:3-4) and presupposes "something more."⁵⁸

In addition to the former mainly structural reasons, the theological argument might prove most convincing:

- e) Consistent with a good literary style the greatest privilege was to be mentioned last as a climax, in this case Israel's God. Thus, it does not seem likely that the long list would be interrupted after mentioning the Christ (Messiah). No, God is in fact the God of the *Jews* (cf. e.g. 3:29 or the well-known introductory clause in Jewish doxologies: "Blessed are You, Lord *our*, God...") and he has revealed himself in Jesus of Nazareth. It follows that the Jews who reject their Messiah then reject their own God. Consequently, there is a serious threat hidden behind vv. 4-5, which sheds more light on the grief in v. 2 also.⁵⁹

In view of vv. 1-5 Paul strives for showing from the outset that his gospel

⁵⁷ See commentaries.

⁵⁸ Moo 1996, 567.

⁵⁹ Thurén 1994, 170. Rom. 9:5 can be compared with Phil. 2:9 which cites an ancient hymn: God has "given him [Christ] the name that is above all names" (Kyrios or Jahweh). See also Tit. 2:11-14

conforms to Israel's unique status and special revelation. He does not abolish Jewish tradition in so far as it originates from the Old Testament and brings glory to the Messiah viz. Yahweh.⁶⁰

4.3. 9:6-29

The whole passage deals with and defends the following thesis in v. 6a:

Οὐχ οἶον δὲ ὅτι ἐκπέπτωκεν ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ.

But it is not as though the word of God has failed.⁶¹

On account of the connection between the Messiah and God (v. 5, see above), such a programmatic sentence means that the Scriptures speak about Jesus Christ or, perhaps better, that Christ has spoken and still speaks in the Scriptures. In that case, Paul means that the Christological interpretation of the Old Testament is the hermeneutical key to his understanding of revelation, which, indeed, is what he points out in the following verses.⁶²

The thesis in v. 6a demands an illustrative overview of biblical history or at least some definite pieces of evidence which show that God's word has not in fact failed.⁶³ That explains the extensive use of various Old Testament passages in the following survey.⁶⁴ The thorough argumentation follows the canonical order quite well: Genesis is referred to first, then Exodus, and finally (and also in between) the

⁶⁰ See Rese 1988, 212: "Dieser Sachverhalt wird verdeckt, wo man meint, in Röm 9.6 werde zwischen einem empirisch-historischen Israel und einem eschatologischen Israel unterschieden, das eschatologische Israel sei identisch mit der Kirche und ihr gälten jetzt die in Röm 9. 4, 5 aufgeführten Privilegien." Cf. also p.213. Similarly e.g. Moo 1996, 574. Additionally, Johnson is completely right to warn (1984, 100) against the rather common "replacement theology," namely that the church completely and wholly should have taken the place of Israel: "From Paul's time until the present, the church has tended to view its existence independently of Israel. Whether they be exegetes such as Marcion, Harnack, or Bultmann who think the church should rid itself of the Hebrew Scriptures, or any number of pastors in the local church who see the church as the new Israel, whoever they may be, they have violated the clear claims of Paul's exposition." He later adds: "In Paul's view any church which exists independently of Israel ceases therein to be the church as a part of God's salvation plan and becomes simply another religious society." See further Jewett 1985, 345. First of all, he refers to Beker 1984, 332: "The Church of the Gentiles is an extension of the promises of God to Israel and not Israel's displacement."

⁶¹ Piper 1993, 48-50. See also Aageson 1986, 268, Grindheim 2005, 141, Rese 1975, 209 and 212. Similarly Barrett 1977, 100. Against *opinio communis* Brandenburger 1985, 10 and 16-17.

⁶² Commentaries usually overlook the fact that the thesis in v. 6a obviously links to the Christological image of God in v. 5. God's word (the Old Testament) has a messianic content from beginning to end. Against Rese 1988, 209: "Zwischen Röm 9. 1-5 und Röm 9. 6 ist wieder (wie schon in Röm 9. 1) 'kein unmittelbarer Übergang zu erkennen'." He refers here to Michel 1978, 298.

⁶³ Cf. Aageson's summary: "The reliability of *God's word* to Israel was at stake; and it was to *God's word*, the Scriptures, that Paul turned to argue that it had not failed." (1986, 286).

⁶⁴ For the stylization, if not the reformulation of the Old Testament quotations in Rom. 9-11, see Koch 1986. Cf. the more in-depth analysis below.

prophets.⁶⁵ By and large, the rationale draws upon the Old Testament view of Yahweh as *Israel's* God. But if he no longer wants to be Israel's God, he has broken his promises and forsaken his word – a looming problem for the Early Church, which originates from Judaism. Does the gospel proclaim another God, who cannot be identified with Israel's God? The answer lies in vv. 6b-29.⁶⁶

A key word which unites the argumentation in the passage and serves as a link between several Old Testament references is the verb κάλειν (to “call” or “count” in vv. 7, 12, 24-26). It does not denote a general invitation but expresses the initiative and active intervention by the Creator, who cares for his people. Salvation is not based on their merits, but on his grace alone. Moreover, in most of the quotations the divine “I” occurs (ἐγώ and verbs only in first person singular), which puts more emphasis on God's free and sovereign choice of grace.⁶⁷ Considering vv. 6-29 a calling from him is needed – a Jewish lineage does not guarantee that an Israelite belongs to the true Israel!⁶⁸

Paul begins his brief overview of biblical history with two similar examples in vv. 7-9 and 10-13. In both cases he quotes the Old Testament twice and pits two brothers against each other (Isaac – Ismael, Jacob – Esau). Further, both cases concern Jewish patriarchs and their birth narratives. Vv. 10-13 go a bit further than vv. 7-9 by drawing attention to the difference that Isaac (Sarah's son) and Ismael (Hagar's son) were not born of the same mother, while Jacob and Esau as twin brothers did have Rebecca as their mother.⁶⁹

Based on the argumentation of vv. 7-9, it seems as if the promise definitely is for Isaac and all his descendants, but in line with vv. 10-13 another surprising limitation occurs already in the next generation when the blessing is confined to Jacob and his descendants. A very similar development has taken place and continues to do so over time. V. 29 then foresees further limitations, and refers to Is. 1:9, which predicts:

Εἰ μὴ Κύριος Σαβαώθ ἐγκατέλιπεν ἡμῖν σπέρμα, ὡς Σόδομα ἃν ἐγενήθημεν
καὶ ὡς Γόμορρα ἃν ὠμοιώθημεν.

If the Lord of hosts had not left us a seed (descendants), we should have

⁶⁵ Moo 1996, 610. Brandenburg (1985, 15-16) has a different view.

⁶⁶ Hübner 1984, 16: “Wenn es geschehen konnte, daß Israel das verheißene Heil verspielt hat, hat dann nicht auch Gott sein Gottsein verspielt? Wenn Gott der Gott Israels ist, wie doch das ganze Alte Testament erweisen will, ist dann nicht gerade Gott als dieser Gott Israels und somit in seinem eigentlichen Tun gescheitert? Ein gescheiterter Gott ist aber kein Gott!”

⁶⁷ Hübner 1984, 24 (*et passim*): “Gott sagt ‘ich’ und konstituiert so Israel.” Similarly Aageson 1986, 269-273. See further Wagner 2003, 78, 84-85. Cf. already Ex. 3:13-14 and Piper's analysis of God's name (1993, 75-89)! The line of thought in Rom. 9-11 is to be understood against that background.

⁶⁸ See further Grindheim 2005, 142-145.

⁶⁹ Moo 1996, 571. Cf. the expression οὐ μόνον δέ (v. 10) which brings the argumentation forward.

been like Sodom, and become like Gomorrah.

The quotation follows LXX verbatim without any changes.

By and large, the entire Old Testament aims at telling how Yahweh gradually particularizes his promise regarding “the seed of the woman” (Gen. 3:15), and how he constantly guards and fulfills his word by rejecting those who do not submit to him in faith and faithfulness. Thus, Paul develops his thoughts in vv. 6-29 from a main plot firmly consistent with the Old Testament. His overview of biblical history cuts directly to the red thread in Holy Scripture (cf. also 11:1ff. below).⁷⁰

Without doubt, the argumentation in vv. 7-13 uses a typological exposition of Scripture with an application to the New Testament context.⁷¹ The notion of being born fits well with the question about salvation, since neither presupposes a person’s own merits. This becomes especially clear in the narrative of Isaac’s conception and birth:

Τοῦτ’ ἔστιν, οὐ τὰ τέκνα τῆς σαρκός, ταῦτα τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ· ἀλλὰ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας λογίζεται εἰς σπέρμα.

This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. (v. 8)

In accordance with the Old Testament events foreshadowing the future, the Gentile Christians viz. the Christian Church in general, represented by “the younger brother,” now have priority over Israel, represented by “the older brother.” The Christians alone are counted as heirs of all the promises in the past. Their new, special position is not based on any kind of unfairness. The Israelites themselves had been favored previously (albeit “according to the flesh”), “the younger brother” (Isaac and Jacob) over “the older brother” (Ismael and Esau). Their privileges and unique status have derived from God’s wise counsel and guidance regarding salvation history. He still remains free to act in as sovereign a way as before (see primarily vv. 11-12).⁷² Therefore, from the perspective of the New Testament, the typological reading of the Old Testament surprisingly enough

⁷⁰ For the meaning of the remnant idea in the Old Testament, see Johnson 1984, 93-94 and 96. He speaks of the remnant “as a sign of judgment and as a sign of hope and grace” (p. 96) and continues: “Paul had employed it in the former sense in chap. 9, but that is not his intention here [sc. in 11:6] as evidenced by the juxtaposition of the notion of grace.” Also Theißen (2002, 321) affirms: “In 11,1ff. wird der Rest-Gedanke aus Röm 9 neu bewertet: Aus dem Überrest einer Katastrophe wird die Vorhut der Rettung von ganz Israel.” Properly speaking, however, the hope for the future emerges already in chapter 9. See Clements 1980, 106-121.

⁷¹ For the typological exposition of Scripture, see chapter 3.2.

⁷² See especially Piper 1993, 51-53, 56-58 and 67-71. V. 11 clarifies what the expression οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων in v. 12 involves. God’s grace precedes all works and is not based on present or future merits.

reveals that the Israelites are now identified as the descendants of Ismael and Esau. It must have sounded very harsh to them.⁷³

As a result, υιοθεσία (“the adoption”) in v. 4 should not be understood as an *ethnic* privilege or a *birthright*. The Greek term assumes that someone is explicitly counted (λογίζεται) as Abraham’s and God’s child (vv. 7-8), just as the godless man in chapter 4 is counted as righteous by faith. Therefore, also the Jews, who are Abraham’s children “according to the flesh,” must be adopted in order to become children of God “in the Spirit.”⁷⁴ “What counts [...] is grace, not race.”⁷⁵

To confirm God’s sovereign counsel and guidance in salvation history, an embarrassing text from Mal. 1:2-3 is quoted in v. 13. It serves to interpret one passage in the Torah, “The older will serve the younger” (Gen. 25:23, which is quoted in v. 12), with the help of the prophets, in accordance with Jewish custom (see above).⁷⁶ The quotation both ends the previous and begins the next pericope:

Τὸν Ἰακώβ ἠγάπησα, τὸν δὲ Ἡσαῦ ἐμίσησα.

Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.

LXX: καὶ ἠγάπησα τὸν Ἰακώβ, τὸν δὲ Ἡσαῦ ἐμίσησα.

The verb “hate” is in the aorist form (ἐμίσησα) and in Greek may express a one-time event. Hence, to “hate Esau” does not necessarily indicate a perpetual status (however, cf. Heb. 12:16-17).⁷⁷ On the other hand, the verb “hate” is the opposite of “love” (ἠγάπησα, also aorist), which is further parallel with “choose” (κάλειν in v. 12). Thus, it seems slightly more likely that the quotation in v. 13 testifies to a clear-cut distinction between Jacob and Esau, which has its deepest foundation in God’s merciful election. Besides, later in Mal. 1:4, Edom (= Esau) is called “the people with whom the Lord is angry forever.”⁷⁸ Instead of being offended by the almost fatalistic thought and anxiously asking why God hated Esau (who, however, in several instances showed his weak character and corruption), one may just as well marvel at the abundant grace and with astonishment ask why God loved Jacob (who was not in any way better than his brother, and supposedly an even greater sinner). To consider along those lines helps to avoid the dangers of a false doctrine

⁷³ Theißen 2002, 322 *et passim*. Cf. Hübner 1984, 45

⁷⁴ Here, in general the commentators usually point out that a similar use of language appears in both chapters 4 and 9: λογίζεται, ἐπαγγελία, σπέρμα, ἐξ ἔργων. Cf. Aageson 1986, 269. Piper also compares 9:6b-8 with 2:25-29 together with Gal. 3:26-29 and 4:21-31 (1993, 68-71).

⁷⁵ Wright 1993, 238. Cf. the Pauline thought with the idea of rebirth in Corpus Johanneum!

⁷⁶ Dunn 1988, 520-521, 544.

⁷⁷ Cf. Thurén 1994, 173. This is the only place in the New Testament where it says that God hates someone! See Moo 1996, 587 n. 79.

⁷⁸ Thus argues e.g. Hofius 1989b, 179-180 n. 16. In that case, the aorist in v. 13 may be interpreted as ingressive aorist. Cf. further Wagner 2003, 82.

of predestination.⁷⁹

As a result, the question in v. 14 easily arises:

Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν; μὴ ἀδικία παρὰ τῷ θεῷ;

What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part?

For certain, the question is answered with a resounding μὴ γένοιτο ("By no means!"). The following verses give the motivation for the answer in two identical arrangements:

No,

v. 15: for Scripture says ... (quotation from Ex. 33:19),

v. 16: so ... (the conclusion drawn from the quotation).⁸⁰

No,

v. 17: for Scripture says ... (quotation from Ex. 9:16),

v. 18: so ... (the conclusion drawn from the quotation).⁸¹

Not only that, but the argumentation in vv. 15-16 explains the first part of the quotation in v. 13 ("Jacob I loved"), while the argumentation in vv. 17-18 explains the second part of the quotation in v. 13 ("Esau I hated").⁸²

Even if the limits of the current work prohibit a deeper look into the church's (or churches') doctrines of predestination,⁸³ it is worth noting the apostolic way of arguing: Scripture is carefully explained with Scripture. What is more, the biblical narrative about pharaoh's hardness of heart (vv. 17-18) shows that even negative events in salvation history, at least at times, have positive consequences – in this case that God's name "might be proclaimed in all the earth" (v. 17). Consequently, Israel's current hardness of heart has caused the gospel to be proclaimed for all Gentiles throughout the world (11:11-15).⁸⁴ By such a typological exposition, her

⁷⁹ Furthermore, Theißen maintains on account of the quotation from Hosea in vv. 25-26: "Aber aus von Gott nichtgeliebten Menschen können geliebte Menschen werden. Daher zitiert Paulus Hos 2,25: 'Ich will nennen ... meine Geliebte, die nicht meine Geliebte war.'" (Röm 9,25) Ist es ganz ausgeschlossen, dass auch Esau, der Nicht-Geliebte, zum 'Geliebten' wird?" (2002, 323).

⁸⁰ The expression ἄρα οὖν means: "Also ist es unbestreitbar so, daß ..." (see Hübner 1984, 39).

⁸¹ Aageson 1986, 270-271. See also Moo 1996, 594.

⁸² Moo 1996, 593. Cf. Aageson 1986, 271. Moreover, he maintains that the contrast "between the God who loves and the God who hates in 9:13 is thematically parallel to the God who shows mercy and the God who hardens in 9:18" (ibid.). See further Hübner 1984, 40 and also Piper 1993, 158-159.

⁸³ Here, I only refer to M. Luther's classic work *De servo arbitrio* (in English 2012: *The Bondage of the Will*). Even now, it is surprisingly fresh or up-to-date from an exegetical, dogmatic, and philosophical perspective. Cf. e.g. Siegert (1985, 144-148) who attempts to defend the position of Erasmus! In contrast, see already Maier 1971, 351-400. Cf. Müller 1964, 75-89.

⁸⁴ Johnson 1984, 96: "In the OT the hardening motif normally has a redemptive function. This is true in the most classic case of hardening in the OT: the hardening of Pharaoh's heart." See further

own fate is – somewhat surprisingly – likened to the destiny of Egypt, in accordance with the earlier accounts of Ismael (vv. 6-9) and Esau (vv. 10-13).⁸⁵

V. 19 continues the line of thought with a new objection:

Ἐρεῖς μοι οὖν τί ἔτι μέμφεται; τῷ γὰρ βουλήματι αὐτοῦ τίς ἀνθέστηκεν;
You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?”⁸⁶

The questions are not answered instantly. Instead, v. 20 asks a counter question beginning with the contrast between man (the first word in the clause) and God (the last word in the clause): ὃ ἄνθρωπε, μενοῦνγε σὺ τίς εἶ ὁ ἀνταποκρινόμενος τῷ Θεῷ; (“Who are you, O man, to talk back to God?”)⁸⁷ Then the focus lies on the example of the potter who forms the clay into a pot – without a word of explanation (vv. 20b-23). The metaphor obviously refers to God as the Creator. He has created man from the dust of the earth (Gen. 2:7). The Old Testament often uses that kind of imagery (see especially Is. 29:16 and 45:9; cf. furthermore 64:8, Jer. 18:1-6 and Wisdom 15:7). With such a theological perspective as a starting point, the Creator cannot be held accountable for anything before the world. Indeed, he has the right of “self-realization,” so to speak. No one should make claims to him (see more closely the book of Job).⁸⁸ Still, the truth of God’s sovereignty does not mean that he acts arbitrarily. Paul formulates his text with judgment. He writes of σκεύη ὀργῆς (the “vessels of wrath”) that they are κατηρτισμένα (“prepared for destruction” in v. 22), in other words, that their possible devastation is not explicitly connected to God’s predestination. But of σκεύη ἐλέους (the “vessels of mercy”) he writes that God has prepared them in advance for glory (ἃ προητοίμασεν εἰς δόξαν in v. 23), in other words, that their coming glory is based only on God’s gracious election (however cf. v. 18).⁸⁹ At large, there is no necessity of continuing to discuss predestination further here. The

especially Piper 1993, 159-181.

⁸⁵ See above. Theißen: “Bei dieser ‘Spaltung’ Israels fällt auf, dass Ismael, Esau und Pharao Israel repräsentieren [...]. Paulus redet von seinem Volk, als sei es ein fremdes Volk.” (2002, 322 *et passim*). Similarly, Grindheim 2005, 147 and Hübner 1984, 45.

⁸⁶ Regarding the similarities between v. 19 and Wisdom 12:12 see Hübner 1984, 46-47.

⁸⁷ Cf. Wisdom 12:12.

⁸⁸ Hübner 1984, 46-48. See also Piper 1993, 185-189 (for the Old Testament and Jewish view of the Creator as a potter, see further pp. 194-199).

⁸⁹ The section is very thoroughly discussed e.g. by Hübner 1984, 49-55. Cf. later even 11:7 with thought of *Israel's* hardening: “... the others were hardened” or v. 17 which speaks about the branches that “have been broken off” or v. 25 where a similarly careful formulation appears: “...hardening has come [from whom?] over a portion of Israel...” See Harrington 1992, 59. Otherwise, Piper 1993, 211-214 without paying close attention to the caution that the apostle uses when it comes to establishing a doctrine of predestination concerning the individual’s eternal and irreversible lot in damnation or Israel’s horrible fate as God’s hardened people.

difference between passive and active voice in vv. 22-23 must suffice.⁹⁰

In consequence, Paul treats the issue of theodicy (v. 14) not with the help of rationalism or logic, but according to the testimony of Scripture (vv. 15-18) and the reality of creation (vv. 20-23). Surely, he is no philosopher, but a serious theologian! God's actions are in line with his revelation and own essence as the origin of the universe. Only at that rate faith in his absolute goodness holds even in the midst of chaos which is characterized by a completely incomprehensible course of events.⁹¹

In direct connection to v. 23, v. 24 emphasizes that God has called the "vessels of mercy" (v. 23) "not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles" (v. 24).⁹² As expounded by the standard Jewish view all Gentiles should remain "vessels of wrath" forever. Yet, now they have become part of salvation through the gospel. They have been granted entrance into God's own people. Most Jews, though, have been excluded. Because of their unbelief, they no longer have the right to count themselves as "vessels of mercy." On the contrary, in the context, it turns out that to a great extent the "vessels of wrath" coincide with Israel "according to the flesh." Salvation history has again been turned upside down, as has been shown in the narratives of Ismael, Esau, and Pharaoh (see above)!⁹³

The next series of quotes in vv. 25-29 explain more in-depth the sentence "not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles" in the form a chiasm (A-B-B-A):⁹⁴

A God has called the Jews (v. 24),

B God has called the Gentiles (v. 24),

B' The Old Testament confirms point B (vv. 25-26),

A' The Old Testament confirms point A (vv. 27-29).

Here Hosea 2:23 and 1:10 are quoted in vv. 25-26, and Isaiah 10:22-23 and 1:9 in vv. 27-29.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ See also Räisänen's appealing contribution: "Die Diskrepanz zwischen göttlicher Vorherbestimmung und menschlicher Verantwortlichkeit ist allerdings keine paulinische Eigentümlichkeit. Sie kommt im AT, in Qumran und in den Evangelien (vor allem bei Markus und Johannes) vor. Später ist sie auf unzähligen Seiten im Koran anzutreffen." (1987, 2910)

⁹¹ First and foremost Piper 1993, 151-216. See further Moo 1996, 590-591. Cf. Brandenburger 1985, 41: "Daraus ergibt sich: Konstitutiv für die inhaltliche Verwendung der Schrift in Röm 9 ist die im Sinne der paulinischen Rechtfertigungsbotschaft interpretierte Schöpfungstheologie."

⁹² Grammatically v. 24 is a relative clause to v. 23. Cf. Schlier 1977, 303: "Sachlich wird der Relativsatz zu einem Hauptsatz." See further Piper 1993, 184-185.

⁹³ Cf. further Grindheim 2005, 147, 150 and Hays 1989, 67.

⁹⁴ Regarding the subsequent structure see Brandenburger 1985, 13 and Koch 1986, 279-280

⁹⁵ In vv. 25-26 the apostle replaces the verb 'to say' in Hosea 1:1-10 and 2:23 with 'to call' because he wants to emphasize the connection with v. 23 in particular and with the preceding reasoning in general (concerning the meaning and importance of the verb 'to call' see above). In order to be able to begin with a statement about the call he even changes the sequence of the sentences. So the quotation is adapted to the context. Though the content remains the same. See especially Hübner 1984, 56 and Koch 1986, 105, 167, 173. Cf. Aageson 1986, 272.

To begin with the quotation from Hosea in vv. 25-26 (for the combination of the original texts of LXX, see the discussion below):

Καλέσω τὸν οὐ λαόν μου λαόν μου καὶ τὴν οὐκ ἠγαπημένην ἠγαπημένην·
Καὶ ἔσται, ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ ἐρρήθη αὐτοῖς, Οὐ λαός μου ὑμεῖς, ἐκεῖ κληθή-
σονται υἱοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος.

Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people,’ and her who was not beloved I will call ‘beloved.’

And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’

In its original context, Hosea speaks about *Israel's* future lot, but now his prophecy is overtly applied to the *Gentiles'* situation (cf. further 1 Pet 2:10). What lies behind such a radical change of perspective? Many different explanations have been presented within New Testament research and they are not to be dealt with here.⁹⁶ The following is the author's own view.

Chapter 11 demonstrates that the apostle does keep in mind the original sense and content of the prophetic accounts: Israel, who is now Lo-Ammi (“not my people”), will in the future again be called Ammi (“my people”). This eschatological aspect appears especially clearly in vv. 25-26 (cf. also vv. 11-16, 23-24 and 30-32).⁹⁷ In the same chapter, Israel is likened to the true olive tree (vv. 17-24), metaphorical language which has its origin not least in Hosea (14:7). Unhappily, a large amount of the branches have been cut off because of unbelief (cf. Jer. 11:16 which instead speaks about burning the branches).⁹⁸ No doubt, they refer to Jews who have rejected their Messiah. In their place, branches of a wild olive tree, against their nature, have been grafted and they share the true olive tree's nutritious root. The description fits the Gentiles well. They now have the right to join Israel. The privileges of the chosen people belong to them in faith. Therefore,

⁹⁶ See various commentaries. Brandenburger (1985, 41-42) gives expression to the common or only prevailing view concerning the relevance of the cited scripture in Rom. 9:25-26: “Wie auch teilweise in Röm 9 beobachtet werden konnte, entnimmt Paulus der Schrift häufig, was sie, historisch beurteilt, nicht enthält.” Immediately thereafter he refers in note 65 to the evidence in Rom. 9:25-26. Cf. however Thießen's reservation: “Meist bezieht man das Hoseazitat nur auf die Heiden. Nur sie wären dann das Nicht-Volk, das zum Volk Gottes wurde. Theoretisch aber könnte man es *auch* auf die Juden beziehen, dann wären Juden eingeschlossen, die Paulus zuvor mit Ismael, Esau und Mose [lies: Pharao?] wie heidnische Völker [...] angesprochen hatte.” (2002, 331 n. 31). Differently, Grindheim 2005, 149.

⁹⁷ Thurén 1994, 177. Cf. below.

⁹⁸ Regarding Jer. 11:16 see Rengstorff 1978, 154. Cf. Walter 1984, 179. He adds in n. 19: “Merkwürdigerweise wird die Anknüpfung von Röm 11,17 ff an Jer 11,16 f in der Exegese relativ wenig bedacht, sondern nur eben notiert.” Perhaps the answer lies at least partially in the fact that Jer. 11:16f. does not use the same language as Rom. 11:17ff. In place of the branches being broken off it says that they have been burnt.

Hosea's prophecies speak to them and about them too. His visions are actualized in a surprising way in different circumstances, which Paul strives to come to grips with from his New Testament perspective. Ultimately, his exposition of Scripture is not at variance with the meaning that is initially included in the Old Testament text.⁹⁹

Moreover, Hosea 1:10 (LXX 2:1) begins with a conventional prophecy that ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης, ἣ οὐκ ἐκμετρηθήσεται οὐδὲ ἐξαριθμηθήσεται (“the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or counted”). The prediction about an incalculable amount of Israelites unequivocally refers back to the promise to Abraham: In the future his descendants will be like “the sand of the sea” which cannot be counted (Gen 22:17, 32:12, cf. also 13:16, 15:5, Ex. 32:13, 1. Kings 4:20 and Heb. 11:12), and he himself will be a “father of many nations” (Gen. 17:5). According to Romans 4, all of this has really been fulfilled through the gospel, which is not only directed to the Jews but also to Gentiles (especially vv. 16-18, where the preceding promises in Genesis are explicitly quoted). Hence, Hos. 1:10 must refer to Gentiles as well. The broader “canonical” context logically leads to that conclusion. For sure, Paul has noted the first sentence of Hos. 1:10 since he reads the expression “the number of the children of Israel” into his next quote, Is. 10:22 (v. 27, see below).¹⁰⁰

Paul then proceeds and addresses Israel's spiritual state in vv. 27-28 with the help of Is. 10:22-23 (for the modification of the original text of LXX, see the discussion below):

Ἐὰν ἦ ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σωθήσεται· λόγον γὰρ συντελῶν καὶ συντέμων ποιήσει Κύριος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved, for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay (vv. 27b-28).¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ In addition the apostolic reasoning lies in line with certain historical facts: Hosea was of course a prophet in the northern kingdom of Israel that was totally destroyed by the Assyrians in the year 722 B.C. The people as such (barring particular individuals) never came back to their land. There was never any rehabilitation of the national unity (the Israel of today is another matter). Of the twelve tribes only three remained: Judah, Benjamin and Levi. Together they formed the southern kingdom of Judah, which was taken in the year 587 B.C. A portion of them came back after captivity in Babylon. If the prophecies in Hosea 1:10 and 2:23 should have any meaning whatsoever beyond the eschatological perspective, then their application to the engrafted Gentiles – in accord with Paul's argumentation above – would be a resolution to consider.

¹⁰⁰ See especially Moo's clarifying exegesis (2004, 204 n. 62). Earlier in his magnificent commentary (1996) he had still not arrived at this important aspect.

¹⁰¹ For the shortening of the Old Testament quotation in vv. 27b-28, see Koch 1986, 82-83.

The quotation is drawn upon in a very unusual way. It says that Ἡσαΐας δὲ κράζει ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ (“Isaiah cries out concerning Israel”) in v. 27a. The conspicuous language seems to assume that God’s Spirit is at work in his prophet. Rom. 8:15 and Gal. 4:6 mention how Christians in the Spirit cry out (or the Spirit in the Christians cries out) “Abba! Father!” The similarity is obvious.¹⁰² Furthermore, the language certainly expresses anguish and sorrow connected to Israel’s spiritual state also. Most of her children will perish. What a catastrophe!¹⁰³

Moreover, Paul combines the quotation from Isaiah with the previous quotation from Hosea in a masterful way. He substitutes ὁ λαὸς Ἰσραήλ (“your people, Israel”) in Is. 10:22 with another formulation ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ (“the number of the children of Israel”), stemming from Hos. 1:10, which is precisely the text quoted in v. 26! Besides, it is worth observing that both Is. 10:22 and Hos. 1:10 liken the Israelites to ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης (“the sand of the sea”), which provides yet one more connection between the two. With such linguistic means in his reasoning, Paul suggests that his sources truly speak about the same state of affairs in concert, thus demonstrating the unity of the Old Testament witnesses.¹⁰⁴

Even though Is. 22b-23 is paraphrased quite a lot in v. 28, its main content is nevertheless preserved. It speaks of the definiteness and finality in God’s judgment (cf. the later historical development up until 70 AD). The two participles συντελών and συντέμνων together make up an idiomatic expression which is not possible to translate literally. The ESV renders it “fully and without delay,” interpreting it to refer to God’s “sentence upon the earth.”¹⁰⁵ To be precise, the Greek text, however, is speaking of λόγος (“the word”), not “sentence.” In that case, v. 28 refers back to v. 6, which initiates the whole section with the main thesis, that ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ (“God’s word”) cannot fail. As determined by ancient style and rhetoric, after the treatment of the theme, a summary generally follows just as it has here. V. 28 ends the long line of reasoning with repetition and clarification of the subject matter (*inclusio*).¹⁰⁶ For that reason, the Greek could be translated literally: “The Lord will carry out his word (of promise) fulfilling and shortening on earth.” The first participle, “fulfilling,” underlines that the Lord performs his promises. His word

¹⁰² Thurén 1994, 178.

¹⁰³ Perhaps the prophet’s distress and angst is connected to the fear that the promise to Abraham and his seed would come to nothing: even if his children and descendants would be “as numerous as the sands of the sea, only a remnant shall be saved” (see the argumentation above). Has God then betrayed his people? Has he broken his oath? The gospel gives a final answer with its joyous message that the Gentiles too shall be counted as children of Abraham by faith.

¹⁰⁴ Aageson 1986, 273. He attaches his attention to a similar use of language in verses 26 and 27 (“the children of the living God” and “the children of Israel”). Besides, Is. 10:22 speaks about the *people of Israel*, which expression eventually does not quite fit in the context of Romans where the Gentiles are addressed as “my people” (cf. 9:25-26 and 27-28)! See further Grindheim 2005, 151, Koch 1986, 167-168 and Shum 2002, 206-207.

¹⁰⁵ NIV translates v. 28 that “the Lord will carry out his sentence on earth with speed and finality.”

¹⁰⁶ Grindheim 2005, 141-142.

never fails (v. 6a). The second participle, “shortening,” underscores that the Lord will still judge those who do not trust in him. His word stands firm despite their stubbornness (especially vv. 6b-13), which inevitably causes the number saved to be considerably reduced (see v. 27). Put it differently: God’s word continually prevails (v. 6a, the “qualitative” aspect), but “not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel” (v. 6b, the “quantitative” aspect).¹⁰⁷

In agreement with vv. 27-28, v. 29 emphasizes the main point using another passage from Isaiah (1:9):

Εἰ μὴ Κύριος Σαβαὼθ ἐγκατέλιπεν ἡμῖν σπέρμα, ὡς Σόδομα ἂν ἐγενήθημεν
καὶ ὡς Γόμορρα ἂν ὁμοιώθημεν.

Unless the Lord Almighty had left us descendants, we would have been like
Sodom and become like Gomorrah.

LXX: Καὶ εἰ μὴ κύριος σαβαωθ ἐγκατέλιπεν ἡμῖν σπέρμα, ὡς Σοδομα ἂν
ἐγενήθημεν καὶ ὡς Γομορρα ἂν ὁμοιώθημεν.

Once more, the key argument of the chapter is confirmed, namely, that God only chooses a part of Israel as his spiritual people. Yet, he does leave “us descendants.” V. 29 returns to the question of a remnant discussed already in vv. 6b-9 and summarizes the whole study.¹⁰⁸

Finally, it may be added that the Pauline idea of a remnant gains weighty support in Isaiah’s prophetic proclamation. In his time, the worldwide political situation was very tense. Assyria threatened all of the Middle East. Slowly, nation after nation was conquered, and soon it was Judah’s turn. Isaiah prophesies that “the waters of the River, mighty and many,” in other words, the king of Assyria, will “sweep on into Judah, it will overflow and pass on, reaching even up to the neck” (8:7-8). Only the head, that is, the capital Jerusalem, will be spared (see 7:8-9 for a similar language). Yet, in a decisive moment the Lord intervenes. He saves Zion through a great miracle (see especially chapter 37), because a righteous king, Immanuel, rules there (Is. 7:14). It seems that the prophecy refers to Hezekiah as a type for the Messiah (cf. 8:8 against the historical background in chapter 37 and quite unmistakable allusions to the meaning of Immanuel in 2 Chron. 32:7-8). Regarding that critical time, 1:8, among other passages, prophesies as follows:

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Schlier’s interpretation: “Jedenfalls wird in V 28 zum Ausdruck gebracht, daß ‘der Herr’, selbst seine Verheißung verkürzend, nur einen ‘Rest’ retten wollte. Das ist in Erfüllung gegangen, indem Gott tatsächlich sein Wort (sein Heilsgeschehen) eingeschränkt erfüllt hat und so nur ein ‘Rest’ von Israel seinem letzten Ruf folgte [...]” (1977, 304-305). See further the discussion in Koch 1986, 148-149.

¹⁰⁸ Aageson 1986, 273, and Koch 1986, 280.

Ἐγκαταλειφθήσεται ἡ θυγάτηρ Σιων ὡς σκηνὴ ἐν ἀμπελῶνι καὶ ὡς ὄπωρο-
φυλάκιον ἐν σικυηράτῳ, ὡς πόλις πολιορκουμένη·

And the daughter of Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard, like a lodge in a
cucumber field, like a besieged city.

Then, the following verse is quoted in Romans 9:29.¹⁰⁹ Apparently, Paul assumes that Israel lives again in the middle of a serious crisis which threatens her existence. Only a small remnant will be saved, yet in the end “all of Israel” thanks to the righteous King (Savior), who comes “from Zion” (11:26, see below).¹¹⁰

In summary, the theological interpretation in 9:6-29 is based on a typological reading of Scripture and includes two specific biblical motifs: the prophecies about the “seed” (offspring) and the imagery about the Creator as the Potter. Both are very prominent theological aspects of the Old Testament. Hence, it is not about a few loose details or subtleties but the core message of Scripture.

Still, how did this come about that Israel “according to the flesh” represents Ismael, Esau, Pharaoh, or “vessels of wrath” (9:6-29)? This rather shocking turning point in the history of salvation is more thoroughly explained in 9:30-10:21.

¹⁰⁹ For the significance of the notion of a remnant in Is. 1:8-9, cf. Clements 1980, 114: “What we have with this development of the remnant theme is not so much a fully rounded ‘concept’, or ‘idea’, of a remnant, but rather a prophetic catchphrase, or seminal prophecy. Although the original phrase [a reference to Isaiah’s son Sear-Jasub, see 7:3] goes back to Isaiah, the roots of the idea which it was used to develop are more loosely to be found in the passage Isa. 1:4-9, where the word ‘remnant’ is not itself used.”

¹¹⁰ As to political situation in the world during Isaiah's time, see e.g. Clements 1980, 108-115.

4.4. 9:30-10:21

The pericope begins with further accounts of various perspectives on the salvation of the Gentiles and Jews. The former have obtained righteousness by faith (9:30). The latter, however, imagine that they attain righteousness on account of their works, and have therefore completely missed their goal. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, which is the Messiah (9:31-33). The argumentation continues in chapter 10 with the same intent, and ends in a similarly way to the beginning, that is, with a critique of Israel's fall (*inclusio*: cf. 9:31-33 and 10:19-21 to each other).¹¹¹

The phrase to διώκων νόμον δικαιοσύνης (“pursue a *law of righteousness*” in 9:31), should not be thoughtlessly translated or understood as if the Jews simply pursued the *righteousness of the law*. Rather, it suggests that they were interested in the right interpretation of the law, which alone guarantees complete righteousness before God. Therefore, they had very complicated *halakic* discussions on many subjects (explanations of the Mosaic instructions).¹¹² The right practice (*orthopraxis*) assumes right knowledge (*orthodoxy*). Even the rich man in Mark 10:17 (par.) wants to *ask* and *know* what he needs to *do* “to inherit eternal life.” His fervor and enthusiasm truly illustrates what “pursuing a law of righteousness” means.¹¹³

Despite a sincere goal, the Jewish zeal for the law falls short. It is a failure from the beginning. Righteousness cannot be attained by works. It does not exist anywhere else but in the Messiah, Christ. He is called “the Lord, our righteousness” (Jer. 23:6 and 33:16). In agreement with this, two Messianic prophecies from Isaiah (28:16 and 8:14) are quoted and combined in v. 33. They both mention “the stone”.¹¹⁴

Ἴδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ καταισχνυθήσεται.

Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.¹¹⁵

The same combination appears in 1 Pet. 2:6-8 and is assumed in Luke 2:34. Thus, it represents an original Christian scriptural argument directed at false expectations

¹¹¹ Wright 1993, 245.

¹¹² Thurén 1994, 179.

¹¹³ Cf. also the discussion in Mark 12:28-34 (par.).

¹¹⁴ Aageson 1986, 274. However, cf. Barrett 1977, 111.

¹¹⁵ Evans explains the combination of the Old Testament quotations well: “Paul’s quotation consists of the opening line of Isa 28,16, a fragment of Isa 8,14, and the last line of 28,16.” (1984, 565). Cf. also Koch 1986, 59.

for the Messiah.¹¹⁶

The quote or quotes in v. 33 should not be misinterpreted so that they would direct attention *exclusively* towards a Christological misjudgment.¹¹⁷ Especially in light of the context, the emphasis lies also on an anthropological mistake. Both aspects are closely connected. In other words, Paul does not criticize the Jews simply because they do not believe in Christ, but rather, because they do not believe in Christ due to their trust in their own righteousness. Yet, since this issue has already received sufficient attention in other contexts, it will not be explored further here.¹¹⁸

Moreover, v. 33 confirms that the gospel is not at odds with the Old Testament or the promise to Abraham (see above). On the contrary, the prediction about Israel's religious fall and current stubbornness demonstrates *her* fault. Additionally, Paul is preparing for the argumentation in chapter 10. He repeats the passage, "whoever believes in him will not be put to shame" (Is. 28:16) again in v. 11 (see below). As a whole, 9:30-33 prepares for the next argumentation in 10:1-3, as is seen in the following similarities:

- pursuing νόμον δικαιοσύνης ("the law of righteousness" in 9:31) designates ζήλος (a "zeal" for God, 10:2),
- the phrase ὡς ἐξ ἔργων ("as if it were based on works" in 9:32) denotes establishing "their own righteousness" (10:3), and
- to stumble on ὁ λίθος τοῦ προσκόμματος ("the stumbling stone" in 9:32), namely on Christ (9:33), coincides with not submitting to "God's righteousness" (10:3), viz. Christ (10:4), who in his own person is and has brought about righteousness (10:5ff.).¹¹⁹

Paul's argumentation culminates in v. 4, where he puts forth a thesis explaining his view of the relationship between the law and gospel:

Τέλος γὰρ νόμου χριστὸς εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι.

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

The Greek word τέλος can either designate "end" or "goal" (other connotations which it may at times have are not discussed here). The latter, *teleological* meaning often appears in ancient secular literature, whereas the former, *temporal* meaning

¹¹⁶ Thurén 1994, 180. Cf. further Barrett 1977, 111, Evans 1984, 563, Hübner 1984, 66, Koch 1986, 69 and 161, Müller 1964, 33-38.

¹¹⁷ Against proponents for the so called New Perspective.

¹¹⁸ See especially Laato 1991, 249-254 (in English: 1995, 197-201). Similarly, Shum 2002, 217-218 and 230 (in reference to Laato).

¹¹⁹ Schreiner 1998, 542 and Wagner 2003, 155-157. See further Laato 2015, 722.

mainly occurs in the Septuagint and in the New Testament.¹²⁰ There is hardly a sharp contrast between the two nuances in v. 4. Rather, they complement each other at least to some degree.¹²¹

Yet, given the argumentation in Romans, it seems best to translate the Greek text “Christ is the end of the law,” as the ESV and others do, even if the other aspect, “Christ is the goal of the law,” should likewise be remembered. The following weighty reasons speak strongly for the first alternative:¹²²

- a) The most common meaning of the word τέλος in the Septuagint and the New Testament is “end.”¹²³
- b) The context clearly puts the Mosaic Law and Christ against each other (see 9:31-33 and 10:5ff.) The latter excludes the previous.¹²⁴
- c) It is always “the law and the prophets” (all of the Old Testament), which witness to Christ, but not the law as such (see 3:21 which differentiates between “the law” and “the law and the prophets”).¹²⁵
- d) Christ would be the goal (or fulfillment) of the law even without faith. Still, v. 4 emphasizes that he is “the end of the law for righteousness (read: *only*) to everyone who believes.”¹²⁶
- e) Christ is the subject in v. 4. It is first and foremost a statement which refers to *his* relationship to the law. Thus: “Christ is the end of the law.” Paul would have used the article τό before τέλος, if he had intended that word to be the subject. In Greek the word order is reversed for the sake of emphasis (cf. e.g. Phil. 2:11; 1 These. 4:6).¹²⁷ Provided that one interprets τέλος as goal or fulfillment, the

¹²⁰ For the discussion, see e.g. Jewett 1985, 349-354.

¹²¹ See Flückiger 1955, 154: “Grundsätzlich ist jedenfalls zu sagen, daß im biblischen Griechisch an jenen Stellen, wo τέλος mit ‘Ende’ übersetzt werden kann, die Grundbedeutung ‘Ziel’ noch mitklingt.” Similarly Moo 1996, 641 n. 44: “But I am not arguing for a ‘double meaning’ for the word [= τέλος i v. 4]; I am arguing that the *single* meaning of the Greek word here combines nuances of the English words ‘end’ and ‘goal’.” Also Barrett 1977, 115: “It must be recognized that these terms [different alternatives to translate v. 4] are by no means mutually exclusive. When an instrument has been used to achieve its intended goal it may well, without disparagement, be discarded as no longer useful; and with God object and result are bound to be ultimately identical, since it is unthinkable that he should fail to achieve his goal.” See further Seifrid 1985, 7-10. Cf. Theißen 2002, 316. He speaks about “eine gewisse Doppeldeutigkeit” and translates τέλος with ‘Endpunkt’. Mot Jewett 1985, 353-354.

¹²² Especially Badenas (1985) strongly argues for the meaning “goal.” Without delving further into his argumentation here, I will only refer to some critical viewpoints e.g. in Schreiner 1998, 544-546 (cf. also below). See further Hofius 1989a, 110-111 n. 217. Pace Wagner 2003, 157-165.

¹²³ Regarding statistics see Moo 1996, 639 n. 41. Cf. Flückiger 1955, 153-154.

¹²⁴ Murray 1982, II 50. See further Walter 1984, 178 n. 16 and Watson 2004, 332-333.

¹²⁵ Moo 1996, 640 and already 623 n. 33.

¹²⁶ Murray 1982, II 50. See further Nygren 1979, 382: “Ordet om lagens ‘telos’ gäller endast för dem som genom tron på Kristus fått del av gudsrättfärdigheten. Eljest och utanför trons område härskar lagen.”

¹²⁷ See already Sanday - Headlam 1920, 265. In reference to him Cranfield 1981, 515. Similarly Murray 1982, II 49-50. Cf. Seifrid 1985, 8.

sentence rather tells of the *law's* relationship to Christ: “The goal/fulfillment of the law is Christ.” To be sure, the difference is not monumental, but also not insignificant.¹²⁸

It is also important to take notice of the parallel structure between 3:20-22 and 10:3-4 which looks like as follows:

- the law cannot declare anyone righteous before God (3:20) and the Jews cannot establish their own righteousness (10:3),
- God’s righteousness (or righteousness from God) has been revealed apart from the law (3:21) and Christ is the end of the law (10:4a),¹²⁹
- God’s righteousness is for everyone who believes (both 3:22 and 10:4b).¹³⁰

Even the phrase “a righteousness μαρτυρουμένη ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν” (“which the Law and the Prophets bear witness to” in 3:21) corresponds to the argumentation from Scripture in chapter 10, where first a reference to the law (vv. 6-8), then few quotations from the prophets (vv. 11ff) prevail.¹³¹

To sum up the previous discussion: Christ is the end of the law by being its final goal (cf. both aspects of the Greek word *τέλος* above). He fulfills the whole law with the purpose of dispensing with it in connection to righteousness.¹³² Thus, the investigation in 9:30-10:3 culminates in v. 4, which leads into the next section. The thesis regarding the relationship between the Torah and the Messiah is central for the discussion in 10:5-13 (see below).¹³³

Vv. 5-13 give the motivation for v. 4 (see the little particle “for”) by accounting for how one may establish righteousness, which the Jews pursued, but could not

¹²⁸ Murray 1982, II 49-50. See further Sanday-Headlam 1920, 265 and Seifrid 1985, 8.

¹²⁹ The phrases “without the law” (3:21) and “the end of the law” (10:4) clearly makes a pair of terms. Similarly, “God’s righteousness” (3:21) and “Christ” (10:4) seem to be in a relationship to each other, which further confirms the earlier conclusion that Christ in his own person represents God’s righteousness.

¹³⁰ Especially Moo (1996, 640 n. 42) has in brief drawn attention to a comparison between 3:20-22 and 10:3-4. See also e.g. Nygren 1979, 381.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Cf. Berger 1990, 204-205: “Als Luther Röm 10,4a im Deutschen mit ‘Ende des Gesetzes’ wiedergab, hatte das Wort ‘Ende’ noch bemerkenswert andere Bedeutungsinhalte als jetzt. So fragte man früher: ‘Zu welchem Ende tust du das?’ und meinte damit: Mit welchem Ziel, mit welcher Absicht, welches ist das, was am Ende stehen soll?” A real relevant comment indeed! Cf. the language in 9:30-32 which has some resemblances to the ancient genre of sport (athletics). Moo 1996, 641: “a race course (which many scholars think *telos* is meant to convey)”. See further already Barrett 1977, 106, Flückiger 1955, 154-155 and Theißen 2002, 317 n. 9 point 2 (with reference also to 9:16 and 11:11). The completion is ended when the goal has been reached!

¹³³ Laato 2008, 51-52. According to Moo (1996, 642) v. 4 functions as if it were “the hinge on which the entire section 9:30-10:13 turns”. Cf. further Seifrid 1985, 15: “The rejection of the pursuit of the law by works is precisely the issue dealt with in 9:30-33. Rom 10:4-10 is basically a restatement and expansion of Paul’s earlier proposition.”

attain (9:31-32). First, a *negative* Scripture argument (v. 5), then a *positive* argument (vv. 6-8), followed by further discussion (vv. 9-13).¹³⁴ Here, the Reformation's distinction between "law and gospel" especially stands out.¹³⁵

The quotation in v. 5 begins with the phrase: Μωϋσῆς γράφει ("Moses writes"). It is unusual that the verb is in the present tense here, when otherwise it is found in perfect (γέγραπται). No other Old Testament passage is rendered in a similar way in the Pauline epistles (an anomaly which will be examined more closely in connection with v. 6).¹³⁶ V. 5 concerns "the righteousness that is based on the law":

Ὁ ποιήσας [αὐτὰ] ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτῇ [αὐτοῖς].

"The person who does the commandments shall live by them." (Lev. 18:5)

LXX: (ποιήσετε αὐτά,) ἃ ποιήσας ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς.

The quotation must first and foremost be interpreted against the backdrop of v. 3. There the focus lies on "righteousness from *God*" (God's righteousness). Here, on the contrary, the concern is the righteousness which *man* should reach by his own effort. Salvation depends to a high degree, if not completely, on his ability. The contrast between the two is obvious.¹³⁷

From the beginning to the end, chapter 18 in Leviticus treats many "unlawful sexual relations." Israel is warned that the land will "vomit them out," if they are found guilty of such gross sins (v. 28). Therefore, the promise "to live" (v. 5) originally meant an assurance to live in the Promised Land. Yet, a spiritual perspective was easily combined with it, and "life" was explained to refer primarily to eternal life in heaven. Paul seems to understand the text this way as well. Similarly, he understands the promise to Abraham to "inherit the world" in Rom. 4:13 in equal terms (cf. Gen. 12:2-3, 13:15-17).¹³⁸

Lev. 18 does not actually allow for any means of atonement for the sins enumerated in vv. 6-23. Exile is the only punishment prescribed for them (see especially vv. 24-30, cf. also 26:31-33).¹³⁹ Furthermore, it is of great interest that Lev. 18 is quoted many times already in the Old Testament to confirm the fair *judgment* over Israel as a result of their religious decay (see Neh. 9:29 and Ez.

¹³⁴ Schreiner 1998, 550-551.

¹³⁵ See Moo 1996, 644: "This theological 'law'/'gospel' antithesis is at the heart of this paragraph [...]. Significantly, Paul finds this distinction in OT itself." Cf. further the contrast between "to do" and "to believe" in the whole pericope.

¹³⁶ Moo 1996, 645 n. 5.

¹³⁷ Thurén 1994, 185. Van der Minde (1976, 109) discusses the modification of the Old Testament quotation in Rom. 10:5, but on the basis of an outdated edition of Nestle-Aland. Cf. also Hübner 1984, 79-80 and 94. For textcritical remarks on v. 5 see Lindemann 1982, 232-237.

¹³⁸ Seifrid 1985, 11-12. Cf. also Jub. 22:14, 32:19. Otherwise Lindemann 1982, 241-242.

¹³⁹ Seifrid 1985, 12: "Since Leviticus does not envision the sacrifices as absolutely efficacious, it is unlikely that Lev 18:5 refers to making sacrifice as a means of maintaining life."

20:11, 13, 21).¹⁴⁰ All this works well with the intention of the apostle. In his critique of justification by works, he overlooks various Jewish means of atonement. One who wants to win righteousness of the law has to attain complete fulfillment of the law. Anything less is insufficient (see the argumentation in Romans on the whole and especially Gal. 3:10 and 5:3).¹⁴¹ In addition, the development of salvation history in Scripture definitely shows that (eternal) life cannot be connected to any human merits. They always and only lead to judgment and (eternal) condemnation – in unison with a similar conclusion in Romans (see e.g. chapters 1-3).¹⁴²

Paul deliberately begins the new quotation in vv. 6-8 differently than in v. 5. Instead of the rare phrase γράφει (“writes”) he now uses λέγει (“says”). His language probably points to the distinct difference between the killing *letter* of the Mosaic Law and the living *voice* of the gospel (cf. 2:27-29, 7:6, 2 Cor. 3:6). V. 5 relates to the former, vv. 6-8 to the latter.¹⁴³

Actually, the one who speaks in vv. 6-8 surprisingly turns out to be ἡ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη (“the righteousness by faith”). Paul again personifies his salvation terminology. He seems to identify it with Christ himself (cf. the Christological interpretation in vv. 6-8, see also above). Incidentally, a similar connection is made in Gal. 3:23-25 as well, where the faith which comes and the Christ who comes are synonymous expressions.¹⁴⁴

The first sentence in the quotation, “do not say in your heart,” originates from Deut. 9:4. The verse and its context speak strongly against the self-righteousness of the Israelites:

Do not say in your heart, after the Lord your God has thrust them out before you, “It is because of my righteousness that the Lord has brought me in to possess this land,” whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is driving them out before you. (See also vv. 5-6, cf. e.g. 8:17)

To begin with, Paul draws on that kind of thought, and then moves on to his Christological application. He has the same intent as Deuteronomy (see below).

¹⁴⁰ Seifrid 1985, 11 n. 41.

¹⁴¹ See further Laato 2004, 353-359. In addition, Leviticus prophecies that on account of Israel’s grave sins God will no longer smell the aroma of their sacrifices “with delight.” In that case, the temple cult will cease to have any meaning at all.

¹⁴² Cf. Schreiner 1998, 555-556.

¹⁴³ Especially Käsemann 1980, 274-275. In reference to him Lübking 1986, 209 and n. 532. See further e.g. Thurén 1994, 185. Cf. also Koch 1986, 131 n. 50. *Pace* Theißen 2002, 325.

¹⁴⁴ See also Laato 2008, 57. Cf. Moo 1996, 650: “By attributing to the righteousness based on faith the ability to ‘speak,’ Paul follows the biblical pattern of personifying activities and concepts that are closely related to God.” In footnote 24 he refers in particular to the concepts of “Wisdom” and “Word.”

Indeed, his whole argumentation in 9:30-10:3 has the same intent (see above). In addition, it should be taken into account that the term “heart” is found in the Old Testament quotation, which will become relevant in chapter 10 (see vv. 8-11, 14, 16-17).¹⁴⁵

The second quotation in vv. 6-8 is from Deuteronomy as well (30:12-14). The text, together with some Pauline explanations, reads:

Μὴ εἴπῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου Τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν καταγαγεῖν·

ἢ Τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν.

ἀλλὰ τί λέγει; Ἐγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμά ἐστιν, ἐν τῷ στόματί σου καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου· τοῦτ' ἔστιν τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ὃ κηρύσσομεν.

“Who will ascend into heaven?” (that is, to bring Christ down)

or “Who will descend into the abyss?” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim). (vv. 6b-8)

Interpretation of this text has proven to be problematic. The question is whether Paul is quoting the Old Testament at all, or only using its language for his own purposes.¹⁴⁶ Although he adds short explanations “between the lines,” the text itself obviously has to be understood as his quotation from Scripture. In Romans, the verb “say” (v. 6) often introduces a scriptural passage: (see e.g. 9:15, 17, 25; 10:11, 16, 19, 20, 21; 11:2, 4, 9). Moreover, the contrast between v. 5 and vv. 6-8 presupposes that an Old Testament quotation stands out in both cases.¹⁴⁷

A much more comprehensive problem concerns the understanding of Scripture that Paul reads into his text. Is his Christological application an arbitrary distortion of the original meaning? Or is there perhaps an underlying cause to his line of thought? Indeed, it does not make it easier to deal with the problem on account of the fact that Lev. 18:5 and Deut. 30:12-14, different parts of the *same* Torah, are

¹⁴⁵ Hays 1989, 81, Koch 1986, 185-186 and footnote 78, Seifrid 1985, 36.

¹⁴⁶ See e.g. Longenecker 1999, 104-106 (partly in reference to Sanday-Headlam 1920, 289). Cf. further Hübner 1984, 86-90.

¹⁴⁷ Schreiner 1998, 556. It is with undoubted intention that Paul reproduces Deut. 30:12-14 in shortened form. He leaves out the sentences “so that we can follow it” (vv. 12-13) and “so that you can follow it” (v.14) which certainly do not quite fit together with a Christological interpretation. Cf. Wilckens 1980, 225. See further Koch 1986, 130-132, 185, 295, van der Minde 1976, 111-112, Theißen 2002, 333. Cf. also Seifrid 1985, 18: “[...] the alteration that Paul makes to the text of Deut 30:11-14 has been overstated.” The Israelites themselves (to say nothing of the Gentiles) have not been able to keep the law. So someone else must keep it for them as well as acquire what they lack for their disobedience. Christ has done this. He perfectly fulfills the admonition in Deut. 30:12-14. (see my interpretation below)

put in sharp contrast to each other in vv. 5-8. Do we face a deadlock which is not to be broken here? For this reason, it is absolutely necessary to take a closer look at the theological perspective in Deuteronomy.¹⁴⁸

In his farewell speech in Deuteronomy, Moses harshly reproaches the Israelites for their disobedience and stubbornness. He stresses to them that, “to this day the Lord has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear” (29:4). The people in general, with only a few exceptions, have been stiff-necked during the journey in the wilderness and will continue the same lifestyle in the future as well (see 31:27-29). Therefore, God has definitely not chosen Israel based on their merits. Behind his election lies only grace and love for them (9:4-6 which is alluded to in Rom. 10:6a). Moreover, to say the obvious already beforehand: Israel will be driven out of their country. At long last, they have to bear the curse that falls on them (28:15ff. and 31:16-18). Yet, in the Lord’s vision of the future there is the promise that he will finally end their exile and circumcise their hearts. A new and bright future will begin for his chosen people (30:1-10).¹⁴⁹ Hence, Deut. 30:11-14 (or vv. 12-14 as quoted in Rom. 10:6-8) is framed by such an eschatological context. Against that kind of background the Israelites are apparently not able to keep the commandments. The Mosaic exhortations do not have much effect on them.

Likewise, in Romans Paul reproaches the Jews of his time in general for having uncircumcised hearts (2:28-29). His view of them and the whole mankind culminates in the insight of a deep corruption (3:9-18). He explicitly refers to Lev. 18:5, which is related to the curse of the law especially in the prophetic proclamation (10:5, see above). Promptly thereafter, he introduces his proof from Deut. 30:12-14 with a short phrase from Deut. 9:4, which in its context renounces human self-righteousness (10:6a, see above). The Christological application of the scriptural exhortation to keep the law (10:6b-8) means, under such circumstances, that Christ has done what no one else has been able to. He has truly kept all the Old Testament commands. He alone! Since the Israelites fell short in their attempt to keep the law, Deut. 30:12-14 has never become a reality in their own life, but is in the deepest sense fulfilled first in Christ. He has accomplished everything that is written.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ See Hübner 1984, 87: “Das eigentliche Problem ist vielmehr, daß Paulus Worte des Mose gegen das Mose-Zitat in V. 5 stellt und dies ausgerechnet Worte sind, deren Subjekt in Dt das Gebot des Gesetzes ist [...]” See also p. 85. Barrett 1977, 117. He maintains that the argumentation in Rom. 10:5-8 “is at best paradoxical, and may well be thought unjustifiable”. Then he asks: “In other words, Deut. 30 is saying the same as Lev. 18. Is Paul’s exegesis honest? Is it sensible?”

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Seifrid 1985, 35-36. See also Schreiner 1998, 557-558.

¹⁵⁰ Hence, Paul is not actually “rewriting Deuteronomy” (*pace* Watson 2004, 340). Cf. Wright 1993, 245: “The ‘doing of Torah’, spoken of by Leviticus, is actually fulfilled, according to Deuteronomy, when anyone, be they Jew or Gentile, hears the gospel of Christ and believes it.

Accordingly, 10:6-8 gives a concrete example of how Christ is the end of the law by fulfilling it (see v. 4 above). He has earned salvation for everyone who believes. The contrast between righteousness by the law and righteousness by faith simply coincides with the principal question of who should and is able to keep the law. There are two entirely opposite answers: either the Jew and man in general or Christ himself. The different responses lead to two differing ways of reading the Old Testament. The inventive reorientation in the Pauline exposition of Scripture bears heavily upon the spiritual and, at the same time, literal meaning of the texts. Without a doubt, they markedly testify about Christ, but he only appears to the eyes of faith.

What then has Christ done to win that righteousness toward which Deut. 30:12-14 points? The apostolic exposition in Romans 10 speaks about his incarnation and resurrection (vv. 6-7). The phrase “ascend into heaven” (v. 6) corresponds to the idea of “bringing Christ down,” figurative language which depicts something impossible. It implies that he became man (the beginning of his work of salvation).¹⁵¹ The other phrase to “descend into the abyss” (v. 7) corresponds to the idea of “bringing Christ up from the dead,” figurative language which depicts something equally impossible. Here the word of the original text “sea” (Deut. 30:13) is substituted with “abyss.” They are occasionally identical terms (see e.g. Jonah 2:3-10, cf. Targum Neofiti), but the latter evidently fits the spiritual application better. Christ is risen from his grave (the end of his work of salvation).¹⁵² As a result, the temporal frames for the preparation of righteousness by faith have been precisely defined. They extend from the holy moment of conception to the exuberant joy of Easter morning. Everything that Christ did during that period constitutes the foundation for salvation. Or expressed in dogmatic terms: both his active and passive obedience are part of the atonement at Golgotha.

The righteousness that Christ earned is passed on through the word (= the gospel), which “is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (v. 8), a statement which reminds of Isaiah’s proclamation with regard to the “righteousness that draws near” (e.g. 46:13; 51:5; 56:1).¹⁵³ With such a prophetic background, it is

Each of the three verses in Deuteronomy quoted here [sc. Rom. 10:6-8] end with the phrase ‘so that you may do it’; *this*, Paul is asserting, is the true ‘doing’ of the Torah, of which Leviticus speaks.”

¹⁵¹ In v. 6 it is not about the Ascension of Christ. Cf. Seifrid 1985, 26: “[...] the pattern of incarnation-resurrection is followed elsewhere in the NT (e. g. Phil 2:6-11; 1 Tim 3:16; perhaps 2 Cor 8:9).”

¹⁵² The Pauline phrase “that is” (vv. 6-7) hardly corresponds to *peshet* in Qumran. Moo 1996, 654 n. 40: “The Greek phrase τοῦτ’ ἔστιν is widely used in the LXX, Philo, and the NT to introduce an explanation; there is little reason to think that it deliberately echoes the DSS *pišrô* [...]” See already Seifrid 1985, 27-34. Cf. Aageson 1986, 275-276. For the relationship between Bar. 3:29-30 and Rom. 10:6-8 see further especially Seifrid 1985, 20-23. He also discusses translations of Deut. 30:12-14 in the later targums (pp. 23-25). Similarly Koch 1986, 156-157 and 158-160.

¹⁵³ Schreiner 1998, 558 n. 16.

easy to understand why Paul explicitly combines his quotation from Deuteronomy with righteousness by faith. Consequently, he further adds as an explanation: “that is, the word of faith that we proclaim” (v. 8). There has been a long discussion as to whether the addition suggests the content of faith (*fides quae creditur*), or the act of believing (*fides qua creditur*). Maybe both alternatives are partially right: The phrase “the word of faith” surely stands for the gospel (*fides quae creditur*) which works faith (*fides qua creditur*). It is a “both – and,” not an exclusive “either – or” (cf. the next verses with the same intention).¹⁵⁴

As mentioned earlier, V. 8 (Deut. 30:14) introduces the pair of terms “in your mouth and in your heart,” which constitutes the constant theme in chapter 10 according to the following outline:

- the mouth (and the confession of the mouth) in vv. 9-10, 12-14 (to “call” on the name of the Lord) and
- the heart (and the faith of the heart) in vv. 9-11, 14, 16-17.

The quotation in v. 21 also alludes to the same pair of terms:

- ἀπειθοῦντα (“disobedient”) = one who is not convinced of the gospel in his heart
- ἀντιλέγοντα (“contrary”) = one who speaks contrary to the gospel.¹⁵⁵

The argumentation that follows in chapter 10 is influenced by the word order in Deut. 30:14. V. 9 repeats the dichotomy “mouth – heart” in this order. After that, v. 10 continues the reasoning in reversed order “heart – mouth” (a chiasmic structure A–B–B–A). Then, the reading in v. 11 makes the connection to “the heart” and the reading in vv. 12-13 to “the mouth.” The clarity of the composition is impressive. Next, the message as an Christological interpretation of the prophetic word from the perspective of the gospel will be examined.¹⁵⁶

V. 9 gives a short summary of the phrase “the word of faith that we proclaim” in v. 8. To begin with, the early church’s first creed, “Jesus is Lord,” is repeated. Then the foundational conviction, that “God raised him from the dead” is reiterated. Both doctrinal beliefs are obviously connected to the Christian rite of baptism. The latter presupposes the prior. Jesus’ resurrection proves that he is the Lord, viz. the Lord who has revealed himself in the Old Testament, in harmony with the Christological exposition of Scripture in vv. 6-8 (see also 9:5-6 above).¹⁵⁷ Indeed,

¹⁵⁴ Schreiner 1998, 559. Here I would like to compromise between Käsemann and Seifrid (1985, 26-27).

¹⁵⁵ Thurén 1994, 184. See also Hays 1989, 81 and Wagner 2003, 167. Cf. Cranfield 1981, 541.

¹⁵⁶ See commentaries. Cf. Aageson 1986, 276 and van der Minde 1976, 114-118.

¹⁵⁷ Cranfield 1981, 527, 530 and especially Legarth 2004, 85-100. For the conviction that “Jesus

to believe in him and confess him means that the word is “near”: in the heart and the mouth. Already here and especially later in v. 10 it is clear that the argumentation refers back to the theme verses of Romans (1:16-17, see above):

Καρδία γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην, στόματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται εἰς σωτηρίαν.

For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved (v. 10).

The language and content (faith, righteousness, salvation) is similar both in chapter 1 and 10. They revolve around the conditions for entrance to eternal life.¹⁵⁸

Moreover, v. 11 provides motivation for the preceding with a quotation, just as 1:16-17 which ends with Hab. 2:4. Here, the same portion of Is. 28:16 as already quoted in 9:33 is repeated:

Πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ κατασχυνθήσεται.

“Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.”

LXX: Ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνθῆ.

Paul adds the word πᾶς (“everyone”) in agreement with his own emphasis in v. 4 (“to everyone who believes”).¹⁵⁹ He has now come one step further in his argumentation. To “be put to shame” should primarily not be interpreted psychologically, but rather with the last day in mind. The phrase alludes to the condemned who shame themselves at the final judgment (cf. 5:5).¹⁶⁰ They will be excluded from the heavenly kingdom. In other words, the Old Testament quotation (Is. 28:16) in v. 10 is characterized by a strong eschatological perspective, a feature that is also true for the Old Testament quotation (Hab. 2:4) in 1:17. Besides, 1:16 speaks, in a similar way, about “not being ashamed of the gospel,” which will give salvation on the last day.¹⁶¹

V. 12 explains more closely the promise in Is. 28:16. The Greek word πᾶς is found here as well. There is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, “for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him” (cf. 3:22-23 and 29-30).¹⁶²

The next scriptural reference in v. 13, from Joel 2:32, again repeats the word πᾶς

is Lord” see further e.g. 1. Cor. 12:3, 16:22 (cf. also Rev. 22:20) and Phil. 2:9-11.

¹⁵⁸ Dunn 1988, 609.

¹⁵⁹ Shum 2002, 220-221. Cf. Koch 1986, 133. Or perhaps, already here, Paul has had in mind the word of promise “*whoever* calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Joel 2:32) that is later cited in v. 13 (Aageson 1986, 276, cf. Wagner 2003, 169).

¹⁶⁰ Schreiner 1998, 561.

¹⁶¹ Dunn 1988, 609.

¹⁶² Koch 1986, 133-134.

and also the previous verb “call on.”¹⁶³

Πᾶς γὰρ ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσῃται τὸ ὄνομα Κυρίου σωθήσεται.

For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

LXX: Πᾶς, ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσῃται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου, σωθήσεται.

On the whole, the context of the verse has several connections to the apostolic message:

- a) The Lord is Christ (see above),
- b) Joel 2:28-29 talks about the pouring out of the Spirit, which in the New Covenant is realized by faith.
- c) Joel 2:28 prophesies that the Spirit will be poured “on all flesh,” even on the Gentiles, in concert with Rom. 10:11-12.
- d) Joel 2:26-27 predicts (twice) that in the future the Lord’s people will never “be put to shame,” a view that connects to Is. 28:16 and Rom. 10:11.
- e) Joel 2:32 on the one hand emphasizes that “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” But on the other hand, no one else but those “delivered” or a “remnant” in Israel will be saved – as Rom. 9:27 (see further vv. 6-13 and 29, cf. 11:1-10) stresses in connection to Is. 10:22.

According to old established Jewish custom, one should each time (if necessary) also read the context of the quotation, which apparently has been done here.¹⁶⁴

Through repetition of the verb ἐπικαλεῖσθαι (“to call upon”), vv. 13 and 14 are associated with each other.¹⁶⁵ In vv. 14-15 there are in total four rhetorical questions, beginning with the interrogative “how,” which in depth explain Joel 2:32. The thought goes “backwards”: from the confession of the mouth to the faith of the heart, further to hearing and finally to proclamation as well as sending. It seems as if the verses leading up to v. 18 speak of man in general, but at least of the Jews in particular (cf. vv. 19-21).¹⁶⁶ V. 15 speaks about the proclaimers of the gospel and applies Is. 52:7 on their mission work (cf. Nah. 1:15 as a parallel passage):

Ὡς ὠραῖοι οἱ πόδες τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων ἀγαθά.

¹⁶³ Aageson 1986, 276, and Koch 1986, 134.

¹⁶⁴ In general, the commentaries hardly take notice at all of the connection between the context of Joel 2:32 and the argumentation of Romans.

¹⁶⁵ Aageson 1986, 276.

¹⁶⁶ See especially Dunn 1988, 618-620, 627. He discusses vv. 14-21 in context and formulates the rubrics for the whole pericope: “Israel’s Failure to Respond to the Gospel” (p. 618). See further Schreiner 1998, 565-572.

“How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

LXX: Ὡς ὥρα ἐπὶ τῶν ὁρέων, ὡς πόδες εὐαγγελιζομένου ἀκοὴν εἰρήνης, ὡς εὐαγγελιζόμενος ἀγαθά.

Instead of the singular like in Septuagint, the plural is used here (“messengers of joy”), with regard to all apostles and preachers.¹⁶⁷ Their footsteps are beautiful because they bring the gospel concerning forgiveness of sins. The word ὥραῖοι could also mean that they come “at the right time,” a phrase which mainly refers to the gospel as the most crucial eschatological turning point in salvation history. Obviously, Paul has the Jews in mind specifically since he already in 2:24 quotes Is. 52:5 with application to them.¹⁶⁸ Additionally, chapters 9-11 as a whole consider their unbelief. Vv. 14-15 argue that God in fact has sent out his messengers and that he through their proclamation calls his chosen people and other people to repentance.¹⁶⁹

The universal address of the gospel (vv. 9-13) does not, however, correspond to the hard reality of this world. Certainly, everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved (v. 13), but according to v. 16 “not all” want to trust him (*litotes*, a rhetorical device which denies the opposite and in actual fact implies that “most” do not want, cf. the idea of a remnant in 9:6 and 27).¹⁷⁰ They are not willing to obey the gospel, as the prophet Isaiah (53:1) predicts:

Κύριε, τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν;

“Lord, who has believed our message?”

The quotation follows LXX verbatim without any changes:

Κύριε, τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν;

To not “obey the gospel” (οὐ ὑπήκουσαν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ) and to not “believe our message” (τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν;) in v. 16 are synonymous in their content (see e.g. 1:5 and 16:26 where ‘obedience’ and ‘faith’ are connected to each other). Linguistically ὑπακοή (“obedience”) suggests that one so to say stands ὑπό (“under”) ἀκοή (“the preaching”).¹⁷¹ In light of Jewish tradition, Is. 53:1 more closely relates to the apostolic proclamation. The Targum translates the Hebrew word שְׂמוּעָה with the Aramaic word בְּשׂוּרָה, “message of joy.” If it were possible for

¹⁶⁷ Koch 1986, 113-114.

¹⁶⁸ Hübner 1984, 96.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Lübkings 1986, 89: “Bleibt Israels Ungehorsam in V. 14f mehr indirekt im Blickfeld, so wird er in V. 16 unmittelbar angesprochen.” See below.

¹⁷⁰ See especially Jeremias 1977, 194-195. Also Theißen 2002, 326 n. 24. Certainly, he immediately there after mentions another alternative: “Es [sc. expression ‘not all’] könnte sich aber auf alle Hörer des Evangeliums beziehen, auf Juden und Heiden [...]” Cf. my own interpretation below. See further Hübner 1984, 95.

¹⁷¹ Dunn 1988, 622-623 and Schreiner 1998, 571. Cf. Barrett 1977, 115.

such a translation to have been in use prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, then an obvious parallel to the Christian message of joy, the gospel, is found here.¹⁷²

V. 17 draws a conclusion from the previous verses.¹⁷³ Even if not all believe the Christian proclamation, faith still “comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (ἡ πίστις ἐξ ἀκοῆς, ἡ δὲ ἀκοὴ διὰ ῥήματος Χριστοῦ). Indeed, there are no other ways for faith to be created. Besides, the same Greek word ἀκοή denotes either “that which is heard” or “hearing.” Therefore, both of the following translations are valid:

- a) Thus, faith comes by preaching and preaching by the word of Christ (see v. 16).
- b) Thus, faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ (see vv. 14, 18 where the corresponding word “hear” occurs, cf. further Gal. 3:2).¹⁷⁴

In Greek, the two alternatives merge. That which is heard assumes hearing as well as hearing assumes that which is heard. Both have their origin in “Christ’s word.” Precisely, the phrase does not refer to the Christian message of him per se, but rather to the gospel as a fulfillment of the Old Testament promises in him. V. 8 speaks of τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως (“the word of faith”) in a similar way and combines it with a Christological reading of the Old Testament (see vv. 6-8).¹⁷⁵ It is exactly such a view of the Bible that according to v. 17 creates faith (cf. the conversion of the disciples in Luke 24:25-27 and 44-48), a truth which deserves to be given serious attention, not the least in churchly circles.¹⁷⁶

If faith has its origin in hearing (v. 17), then it naturally follows whether or not one has heard the gospel (v. 18), and also whether or not one has understood it (v. 19). The pronoun ‘they’ in v. 18 obviously refers to the Israelites in v. 19. Paul explicitly focuses on their relationship to the apostolic proclamation (see above). In light of Ps. 19:5, he argues that they certainly have heard:

Εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ἐξῆλθεν ὁ φθόγγος αὐτῶν, καὶ εἰς τὰ πέρατα τῆς οἰκουμένης τὰ ῥήματα αὐτῶν.

“Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.”

¹⁷² E.g. Thurén 1994, 192. The Rabbis use the word דְּמוּת in a sense “doctrine.”

¹⁷³ Lübking (1986, 90) attempts to show – however without success – that v. 17 should be later addition (glossa).

¹⁷⁴ See various translations and commentaries.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Aageson 1986, 277-278.

¹⁷⁶ See also e.g. 2 Cor. 4:5-6. The verses speak about faith’s origin through the apostolic preaching that has its source in Christ’s word, and which is further identified with God’s creative word (Gen. 1:3). For more about the origin of faith in the Pauline letters, see Laato 1991, 190-194 (in English: Laato 1995, 150-154).

The quotation follows LXX (Ps 18:5) verbatim without any changes:

Εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ἐξῆλθεν ὁ φόγγος αὐτῶν, καὶ εἰς τὰ πέρατα τῆς οἰκουμένης τὰ ῥήματα αὐτῶν.

Ps. 19:5 actually speaks about *general* revelation (“their voice” alludes to the witness of the heavens as to the creation). Later in vv. 8-12 the notion is associated with the *special* revelation (the teaching in Torah). According to Jewish reasoning there is hardly any definite difference between the two. The Lord’s speaking always permeates the whole universe. If one rejects his law, one violates his absolute order of creation. Therefore, general revelation leads – without saying – to special revelation.¹⁷⁷

Against the background of Ps. 19 as a whole, it is easy to see that Paul applies v. 5 to the apostolic proclamation. He takes for granted that the gospel reinforces and confirms the original message of creation. By faith man becomes “a new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17), “created after the likeness of God” (Eph. 4:24) or “after the image of its Creator” (Col. 3:10). He gets his true humanity back, which was lost owing to the fall. Here in Romans, the whole argumentation is built on Hebrew thinking.¹⁷⁸

Still, the challenge remains how Paul dares at all to claim that the gospel has “gone out to all the earth” already in his day. There are a number of attempts to explain his bold thesis. Some of the most important are presented as follows:

- a) Paul exaggerates (*hyperbole*).¹⁷⁹
- b) Paul talks about so-called corporative units, the Gentiles and Jews in general (but not every single individual).¹⁸⁰
- c) Paul understands the Greek word οἰκουμένη as a designation of the Roman Empire (but not the whole universe).¹⁸¹

It might turn out that each alternative deserves both attention and reflection. Yet, the undeniable fact is that here Paul focuses mainly on the mission to the Jews (vv.

¹⁷⁷ Murray 1982, II 61-62 and Schreiner 1998, 571-572. Cf. also Wilcock 2002, 71-73. In a similar way argues Rabbi S. R. Hirsch: *The Psalms*. Jerusalem / New York 1978, 134: psalm 19 “has as its theme the sources from which one could come to recognize the Lord and worship Him. To David these sources are the book of nature [general revelation], from which he derives his knowledge of God, and the Torah [special revelation], from which he has learned how to worship Him.” Later he continues: “Psalm 19 ends with the hope that this concept of God’s dual revelation in nature and in law [...] may find favor in the eyes of the Lord [...]”

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Laato 1991, 191-194 and 199-204. (in English edition: 1995, 151-154, 158-162).

¹⁷⁹ Käsemann 1980, 283-284, Lübking 1986, 91, Schlier 1977, 319, Wilckens 1980, 230. Cf. Moo 1996, 667.

¹⁸⁰ Cranfield 1981, 537-538. See also the discussion in e.g. Morris 1988, 393.

¹⁸¹ Cf. Käsemann 1980, 284 concerning the concept of οἰκουμένη: “Bezeichnet wird damit die Ordnung der bewohnten Erde.” Similarly Schlier 1977, 318.

19-21; see the argumentation on the whole in chapters 9-11). In line with his multiple years of experience, *they* all over the world have heard something about himself and the gospel (cf. e.g. Acts 17:6, 21:28, 24:5 and 28:22). From that perspective, v. 18 hardly seems exaggerated.¹⁸²

V. 18 can, for the sake of clarity, be translated and paraphrased as follows:

Their voice (i.e. the gospel) *has gone out* (or ingressive aorist: *began to go out*) *to* (εἰς: into) *all the earth and their words to* (εἰς: into) *the end of the world.*

In addition, it cannot be ruled out that Paul's entire mission strategy culminates in v. 18. Provided that he equates the gospel with the sun (cf. the religious expression: "the sun of grace") which enlightens the whole world (see Ps. 19:5 in comparison with 2 Cor. 4:6), their "moving paths" correspond to each other. The sun "rises at one end of the heavens, and makes its circuit to the other" (Ps. 19:6; cf. further v. 5). In the same way, the gospel has now begun its "circuit" from Jerusalem (= east) and will continue to Spain (= west) according to the plans in Rom.15:17-29 (cf. Col. 1:23).¹⁸³

In v. 19 Paul sets forth his argumentation as regards the unbelief of the Israelites. Now he asks if after hearing the gospel they perhaps did not understand it. The question assumes that they have understood. The problem is not at all a lack of comprehension from their part. In contrast, they do grasp the gospel, but they do not embrace it. Put differently, they do not receive it in faith.¹⁸⁴ Hence, *God's* chosen people rejected *God's* Word!¹⁸⁵ This absurd situation is certainly not easy to explain, but Paul undertakes it with the help of Holy Scripture. He quotes a passage from Deuteronomy (32:21):

Ἐγὼ παραζηλώσω ὑμᾶς ἐπ' οὐκ ἔθνει, ἐπ' ἔθνει ἀσυνέτῳ παροργιῶ ὑμᾶς.

"I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry."

¹⁸² Cf. also Räisänen 1987, 2908: "Doch wenn die Juden sowohl vor Vers 18 (V. 16!) als auch nach ihm (V. 19: Ἰσραήλ) anvisiert sind, dann muß von ihnen auch V. 18 die Rede sein. Es ist auch nicht einzusehen, welchen Grund Paulus haben könnte, zu betonen, daß die Heiden die Botschaft wohl gehört, aber nicht immer angenommen haben. Das Problem des Paulus ist *Israels* Unglaube: mit jenem Problem setzt er sich auch in V. 16-18 auseinander."

¹⁸³ Thurén 1994, 193.

¹⁸⁴ Cranfield 1981, 538.

¹⁸⁵ See Laato 1991, 252 and 1995, 199 (certainly with consideration of the fact that God's own people have rejected God's righteousness, see v. 3). Cf. Cranfield 1981, 538. He fastens his attention to Paul's use of language when he uses the concept 'Israel' (instead of, e.g., 'the Jews'), so pervasively in chapters 9-11, "no doubt because in them he is particularly concerned with the Jewish people as the object of God's election".

LXX: Καὶ γὰρ παραζηλώσω αὐτοὺς ἐπ’ οὐκ ἔθνει, ἐπ’ ἔθνει ἀσυνέτῳ παρ-
οργιῶ αὐτούς.

The quotation in content amounts to Hos. 2:23 as stated in Rom. 9:25 with the nearly identical statement about a “no nation” (see above). In its original context, Deut. 32:21 speaks of God’s punishments for the idolatry of the Israelites. He will soon repay them according to their iniquities. The retaliation will come in form of a foreign people devastating their whole country.¹⁸⁶ Paul interprets the verse typologically and applies it to the calling of the Gentiles through the gospel. He argues that the rejection of the Messiah in reality coincides with the former idolatry, a detail reminiscent of the argumentation in 9:1-5 (Christ is Israel’s God, see above), and 9:6-24 (where unbelieving Jews are equated with Ismael, Esau, Pharaoh and “the vessels of wrath”).¹⁸⁷ The direct address in second person plural, instead of third person plural as in Deut. 32:21, further emphasizes Israel’s guilt. They actually have a personal responsibility for their opposing stance.¹⁸⁸

The jealousy and ferocity that the Israelites feel owing to Paul’s law free mission to the Gentiles show with certainty that they have fully heard and understood his gospel. Otherwise their reaction against him would be entirely inconceivable. For that reason, he quotes Deut. 32:21 as his first evidence for the comprehension of the Israelites. His second evidence for their adverse attitude he finds in Is. 65:1-2. Yet another passage from the Torah (see further above 9:12-13) gets its exposition by prophetic text according to the Jewish way of arguing.¹⁸⁹ In v. 20 Paul has the same intention as in v. 19. He quotes Is 65:1 to emphasize the admission of the Gentiles into Israel, which will make God’s chosen people “jealous of those who are not a nation” (v. 19):

Εὐρέθην τοῖς ἐμὲ μὴ ζητοῦσιν, ἐμφανῆς ἐγενόμην τοῖς ἐμὲ μὴ ἐπερωτῶσιν.
“I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.”

LXX (the order of the phrases is reversed with minor changes): Ἐμφανῆς ἐγενόμην τοῖς ἐμὲ μὴ ζητοῦσιν, εὐρέθην τοῖς ἐμὲ μὴ ἐπερωτῶσιν

Is. 65:2 on the other hand is directed toward Israel, and is quoted in v. 21:

Ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν ἐξεπέτασα τὰς χεῖράς μου πρὸς λαὸν ἀπειθοῦντα καὶ

¹⁸⁶ Cranfield 1981, 539.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. e.g. Dunn 1988, 625: “[...] the implication being that Israel’s present lack of ‘faith’ is the eschatological equivalent of Israel’s unfaith in its most idolatrous periods.”

¹⁸⁸ Moo 1996, 668 n. 43: “Paul probably introduces this change himself, in order to highlight the ‘personal’ way in which God [...] addresses his people [...]” Cf. Hübner 1984, 97.

¹⁸⁹ Dunn 1988, 520-521 and 625.

ἀντιλέγοντα.

“All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

LXX: Ἐξεπέτασα τὰς χεῖράς μου ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν πρὸς λαὸν ἀπειθοῦντα καὶ ἀντιλέγοντα.

There has been much discussion as to whether Is. 65:1-2 as a whole pertains only to Israel. But at least according to Septuagint, v. 1 for sure relates to the Gentiles (ἔθνος) and v. 2 to the Jews (λαός). The corresponding words in Hebrew are יַג (v. 1) and נַע (v. 2). Although the language varies, the former seems, in light of Is. 42:1, 6 and 49:6, really refer to the Gentiles and the latter to the Jews (further see e.g. Gen. 22:18 and 26:4).¹⁹⁰ Moreover, it is not certain how the rest of Is. 65:1 should be translated. There are two distinguished alternatives: either “to a people who did not call on my name” or “to a people who was not named after my name.” The former rather alludes to Israel, who in their religious apostasy do not trust in the Lord. The latter alludes to the Gentiles, who in their appalling wickedness do not belong to the Lord. According to the Masoretic vocalization, the verb אָרַק should be interpreted as passive (*pual*). In that case, the text has to be translated in agreement with the second alternative: “to a people who was not named after my name.”¹⁹¹ Yet, it is not wholly excluded that the Gentiles are included even in the first alternative: “to a people who did not call on my name” (cf. LXX).¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ Schreiner 1998, 574. Cf. Thurén 1994, 194.

¹⁹¹ Moo argues that the first alternative (= “to a people who did not call on my name”) seems to be “the majority view among OT commentators” (1996, 669 n. 49). For occasional exceptions, see *ibid.*

¹⁹² Cf. Shum 2002, 228-229. He suggests that “the *larger literary context* of Isa.65:1 offers clues in light of which the passage may be understood as speaking of the Gentiles” (p. 229). He refers to J. A. Motyer who observes thematic parallels between Is. 65 and 66. They present themselves in a chiasmic pattern as follows (see p. 228):

- A¹ The Lord’s call to those who had not previously sought or known him (65:1)
 - B¹ The Lord’s requital on those who have rebelled and followed cults (2–7)
 - C¹ A preserved remnant, his servants, who will inherit his land (8–10)
 - D¹ Those who forsake the Lord and follow cults are destined for slaughter because they did not answer but chose what did not please him (11–12)
 - E Joys for the Lord’s servants in the new creation. The new Jerusalem and its people (13–25)
 - D² Those who have chosen their own way and their improper worship. They are under judgment because the Lord called and they did not answer but chose what did not please him (66:1–4)
 - C² The glorious future of those who tremble at the Lord’s word, the miracle children of Zion, the Lord’s servant (5–14)
 - B² Judgment on those who follow cults (15–17)
 - A¹ The Lord’s call to those who have not previously heard (18–21)
- Conclusion: Jerusalem, pilgrimage centre for the whole world (22–24).

Finally, Shum (p. 229) concludes: “In sum, viewed from the wider context of Isa.65:1-2 and the entire Isaianic tradition concerning the nations, Paul’s use of Isa.65:1 to the Gentiles does seem to make some sense.” *Pace* Wagner 2003, 205-216.

The quotation from Is. 65:1-2 concludes the discussion in the entire section of 9:30-10:21. At the same time, it points back to the beginning (*inclusio*). The Gentiles who did not seek God but found him (10:20) are precisely those who did not pursue righteousness but attained it (9:30). In contrast, Israel is a disobedient and obstinate people (10:21) which causes them to reject their Messiah and stumble on the stumbling stone (9:31-33). With such parallels, the main content of the passage is repeated as well as the extended argumentation summarized insightfully.¹⁹³

After Israel's faults have been brought to light, a question still remains: Has God definitely abandoned his people because of their apostasy? Is there no place for them in his plan of salvation? In view of that, the discussion has to continue in chapter 11, where the edge of the veil of the future is lifted.

4.5. 11:1-10

Paul begins chapter 11 with a question that closely and easily connects it to the last verse in chapter 10. He asks if God has allegedly "rejected his people." The verb ἀπώθειν has a very concrete meaning. It literally means "to repel" with his hands. Since God has held out his hands all day long to a rebellious and obstinate people (10:21), the question – as expected – rises, whether he has held out his hands only to repel his people.¹⁹⁴ No, that is not possible. "By no means" (μὴ γένοιτο)!¹⁹⁵ Paul uses himself as an example of a Jew who has not been rejected (v. 1).¹⁹⁶ Then, he adds as further assertion, the general sentence that God has not rejected his people (v. 2).¹⁹⁷ This functions as the great theme for vv. 1-32. Vv. 1-10 stand as a link between Israel's past/present time (9:6-10:21), and future (11:11-32). Paul talks about the remnant primarily with a negative purpose especially in 9:27-29: *only* a remnant will be saved. Yet in 11:1-10, he talks about the remnant with a positive purpose: there still *is* a remnant that will be saved.¹⁹⁸

In fact, v. 2a reproduces both 1 Sam. 12:22 and Ps. 94:14 which according to

¹⁹³ Koch 1986, 281.

¹⁹⁴ Barrett (1977, 106) is inclined to believe that the sentence "all day long I have held out my hands" (10:21) "may well mean through the whole of Old Testament history".

¹⁹⁵ Thurén 1994, 195.

¹⁹⁶ Especially Theißen has particularly analyzed the similarities between the life of Paul and the fate of Israel. He summarily draws the following conclusion: "Die persönlichen Einleitungen in Röm 9-11 folgen einer gewissen biographischen Ordnung: Wir hören nacheinander etwas von dem geborenen (9,1ff.) und dem ungläubigen 'Saulus' (10,1ff.), dann von dem erwählten (11,1ff.) und missionierenden 'Paulus' (11,13)." (2002, 320; cf. also pp. 317, 331, 335, 337, 339).

¹⁹⁷ Here as well Theißen (2002, 328) maintains a strong "psychological" interpretation which sounds interesting: "Seine [sc. des Paulus] Botschaft ist für die Juden eine willkommene Freudenbotschaft. Wenn sie abgelehnt wird, so hindert das Gott nicht daran, sich trotzdem Israel zuzuwenden. Eben das vollzieht Paulus nach: Wenn er nach Jerusalem reist, so ist seine Reise das Ausstrecken der Hand Gottes nach seinem Volk."

¹⁹⁸ Lübking 1986, 102: "Der Rest ist nicht wie in 9,27ff Verdeutlichung des Gerichts über Israel, sondern Merkmal der bleibenden Gnade." Similarly, Moo 1996, 671-672, 679.

Septuagint (see also Biblia Hebraica) has the exact same word order:

Οὐκ ἀπόσατο ὁ θεὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ.

“God did not reject his people”

LXX: Οὐκ ἀπόσεται κύριος τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ.¹⁹⁹

This promise regarding the Lord’s protection and support in the future prevails for Israel, despite the fact they do not deserve it in the slightest. Quite the opposite, they have abandoned him as their King (1 Sam. 12). Moreover, they suffer agony and torment under enemies because of their gross sins (Ps. 94). Even if it is difficult to understand precisely what Paul intends with his quotation, the Old Testament context fits well with the historical situation during his time: Israel has abandoned their King, the Messiah, and lives under the tyranny of Rome. The future of the people is threatened by a total catastrophe (cf. the development during 66-70 AD).²⁰⁰ Nevertheless, God’s promise stands firm. He does not want to reject his people. The conviction is based on God’s gracious choice. He “foreknew” (προέγνω) Israel as his own. The verb ‘foreknow’ assumes the election of the people (cf. Amos 3:2a) which embraces not only a small remnant but *all* of Israel.²⁰¹ They still have, even in their unbelief, a special position among the other people in the world (see vv. 28-29, cf. 9:1-5 above).²⁰² After the thorough argumentation in 9:30-10:21, such a conclusion seems a little surprising, but nevertheless worthy of attention.

V. 2b then draws on the story of Elijah’s fight against Baal’s prophets (a combination of LXX 1 Kgs 19:10 and 14).²⁰³ In his anguish and anxiety, he turns to God with the following prayer:

¹⁹⁹ Besides, this is how the verb ἐγκατέλιπεν appears in LXX Ps. 93:14b (τὴν κληρονομίαν αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψει) as well as in Rom. 9:29 (cf. 11:4 also)

²⁰⁰ The commentators often overlook the fact that the historical situation in 1 Sam. 12 (and Ps. 94) is similar to the realities of world politics in Paul’s day. However, see already Wright 1993, 247 n. 39: “We should not miss the deliberate ‘echo’ in 11.2 of 1. Sam. 12.22, in which another Saul, from the tribe of Benjamin, was in himself the evidence that ‘God had not forsaken his people’.” Strictly speaking, it is not Saul that becomes a sign that the Lord has not forsaken his people in Samuels’ farewell speech. Rather, his designation as king demonstrates Israel’s *apostasy*. So v. 25 prophecies that “if you do wickedly you will be swept away, both you and your king.” (1. Sam 12:25, ESV) Later, the prophecy is fulfilled with certain penalties (also during the first century A.D.). 1. Sam. 12:22 promises a bright future for Israel on the basis of “the Lord’s Great Name.” He shall reign over them, even if they have rejected him as their king (see 1. Sam. 8). Now Israel has once again rejected the Lord (according to 9:5 the Messiah, Christ!) as their king but the same promise still applies to them.

²⁰¹ 8:29 talks about the *individual’s* election. But 11:2 apparently points to the election of the *people* of Israel in accordance with the usual Old Testament and Jewish understanding.

²⁰² See Moo 1996, 673: “Despite her disobedience, Israel remains ‘the people of God’ - in what sense, Paul will explain in the rest of the chapter.”

²⁰³ Cf. the phrase/expression ἐν Ἡλίῳ/ with Mark 12:26.

Κύριε, τοὺς προφήτας σου ἀπέκτειναν, τὰ θυσιαστήριά σου κατέσκαψαν,
καὶ γὰρ ὑπελείφθην μόνος καὶ ζητοῦσιν τὴν ψυχὴν μου.

“Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars,
and I alone am left, and they seek my life.” (v. 3)

Though the clauses are reproduced in a slightly different order, the quotation is undeniably from 1 Kings 19:10 and 14, without any meaningful changes.²⁰⁴

Immediately thereafter God’s response is quoted:

Κατέλιπον ἐμαυτῷ ἑπτακισχιλίους ἄνδρας, οἵτινες οὐκ ἔκαμψαν γόνυ τῇ
Βάαλ.

“I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee
to Baal.” (v. 4)

The text is from 1 Kings 19:18, with a few insignificant changes.²⁰⁵

The application of the two quotations follows in v. 5. It is once again based on a typological exposition (see already 9:6ff). As in Elijah’s time, there was in Paul’s time, and even still, a remnant who believe in the Lord and will be saved.²⁰⁶ Consequently, “unbelief in gospel” is almost identical with Baal’s worship, a very heightened conclusion like the previous comparisons between Isaac and Ismael or Jacob and Esau (9:6-13), the narrative about Pharaoh’s hardened heart (9:14-18), the parable about “the vessels of wrath” (9:20-24), as well as accusation of idolatry (10:19).²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ However, cf. the sharp observation of Theißen: “Elia ist ein Beispiel für ‘Eifer’. [...] Denn mochte sich Paulus auch früher als ein Eiferer nach dem Modell des Elia und des Pinehas verstanden haben, so tut er es jetzt nicht mehr. [...] Deswegen lässt er in der Klage des Elia in 3 Rg 19,10 LXX [1 Kings 19:18] das Motiv des Eifers aus [...]” (2002, 335). See also pp. 318-319 n. 13. Cf. Barrett 1977, 114: “It is worth noting that Paul as a Christian does not speak of having ζῆλος Θεοῦ.”

²⁰⁵ For the two Old Testament quotations in vv. 3-4 in comparison with the original text, see Koch 1986, 74-77. He thinks: “Es handelt sich jeweils um Verbesserungen des z. T. äußerst ungeschickten Übersetzungsgriechisch an diesen beiden Stellen.” (p. 76) He adds later: “Paulinische Herkunft ist für die Überarbeitung dieser beiden Zitate nicht wahrscheinlich zu machen.” Also, take note that the feminine article comes before the masculine subject Baal! In accordance with the Jewish use of language, in such a case one ought to read αἰσχύνη (“shame”) in the place of the idol’s name (Thurén 1994, 196). At least Jer. 3:24 as well as Hos. 9:10 speak of Baal as “the shameful thing” and “the thing of shame” respectively.

²⁰⁶ Cf. Moo 1996, 677: “It is possible that Paul also finds a parallel between Elijah and himself: each is a key salvation-historical figure, is confronted with the apparent downfall of spiritual Israel, but finds new hope in God’s preservation of a remnant of true believers.” Theißen (2002, 318-320) presents more detailed discussion on the (typological) similarities between Elijah and Paul. In another context he maintains: “So wie Elia offenbart wurde, dass weit mehr als er allein Gott treu geblieben sind, so erhält Paulus die Offenbarung: Nicht nur ein Rest, sondern ganz Israel wird gerettet werden.” (p. 336). Cf. also Johnson 1984, 95. Pace Lübking 1986, 101. Cf. Müller 1964, 45.

²⁰⁷ Thurén 1994, 197.

Since 1 Kings 19:18 explicitly underscores that God in his mercy has reserved for himself faithful men, his actions are based on nothing but grace, and not on human merits. Vv. 5-6 emphasize that point of view. Here, our works do not count. They are completely excluded, “otherwise grace would no longer be grace” (v. 6). Then, v. 7 relates the doctrine of predestination (the talk about the chosen and becoming hardened, see 9:6-29) to the notion of man’s full responsibility (the talk about “pursuing” and “reaching,” see 9:30-10:21). The Israelites in general have not reached what they have been pursuing with zeal. Only the elect have attained righteousness, the others are hardened (cf. 9:30-31). Yet, both groups belong to Israel, here as well as in v. 2 (cf. 9:6-7). The special status of the people does not change even for the sake of nonbelief, although in that case they certainly lose their part in the coming kingdom.²⁰⁸

Deep down, God is behind the hardening in v. 7. His work is expressed, according to the Jewish manner, with the help of so called divine passive (ἐπωρώθησαν, *passivum divinum*). Next, vv. 8-10 explain the assertion with a number of texts which draw on the three parts of the Old Testament: the Torah (Deut. 29:4), the Prophets (Is. 29:10), and the Writings (Ps. 69:23-24).²⁰⁹ V. 8 principally quotes Deut. 29:4 but adds “a spirit of stupor” from Is. 29:10 (instead of “a heart to understand”)²¹⁰ and accordingly changes – together with a few small variations – the negative clause (“the Lord has *not* given”) to a positive clause (“God has given”) in support for the direct act of hardening on God’s part in v. 7b.²¹¹ Thus, the quotation now goes:

Ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Θεὸς πνεῦμα κατανύξεως, ὀφθαλμοὺς τοῦ μὴ βλέπειν καὶ ὄτια τοῦ μὴ ἀκούειν, ἕως τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας.

“God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day.”

Then vv. 9-10 quote Ps. 69:23-24 with a few minor changes:²¹²

Γενηθήτω ἡ τράπεζα αὐτῶν εἰς παγίδα καὶ εἰς θήραν καὶ εἰς σκάνδαλον καὶ

²⁰⁸ See Hübner’s comparison of the argumentation in chapters 9 and 11 (1984, 103).

²⁰⁹ Aageson 1986, 282 and Lübking 1986, 103.

²¹⁰ As to the possible reason for the adjustment of the text, see Theißen: “Paulus betont noch entschiedener den vorübergehenden Charakter dieses Unverständnisses [der Juden], indem er das Herz, ein konstantes Organ, gegen einen vorübergehenden Zustand, den Geist der Betäubung (aus Jes 29,10), eintauscht [...]” (2002, 327; cf. p. 336). See also Shum 2002, 234-235. *Pace* Hübner 1984, 104. In contrast, Koch (1986, 171) speaks about “eine Verschärfung der Verstockungsaussage”.

²¹¹ Moo 1996, 681-682 and Shum 2002, 232. Notice that Paul attributes the motive of hardening to God (rather than the Lord). Apparently he attempts to avoid “ein mögliches Mißverständnis vom κύριος im Sinne von Χριστός” (Koch 1986, 121, see also p. 87).

²¹² For those minor changes, see Evans 1984, 567 and Wagner 2003, 257-265..

εἰς ἀνταπόδομα αὐτοῖς,
σκοτισθήτωσαν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτῶν τοῦ μὴ βλέπειν, καὶ τὸν νῶτον αὐτῶν
διὰ παντὸς σύγκαμψον.
“Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a
retribution for them;
let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs
forever.”

The whole argumentation in vv. 8-10 relates to “eyes that would not see” as the common subject.²¹³ All that reminds of Is. 6:9-10, a passage which the New Testament often recurs to when explaining the spiritual hardening among the Jews (see e.g. Mark 4:12 and the parallels, John 12:40, Acts 28:26-27).²¹⁴ Their obstinate unbelief in the gospel especially in v. 7 goes back to the obduracy, which according to the Old Testament witness has already happened to them numerous times and is repeated once again. Still, it has never been final. Hence, there is hope for the future, which will be fulfilled in the eschatological turning point (11:26-27, see below).²¹⁵

Occasionally, the metaphorical language in vv. 9-10 has been analyzed down to the smallest detail. Who knows whether the “table” (v. 9) refers to the Jewish sacrificial cult²¹⁶ or the table fellowship of Pharisees?²¹⁷ Who says if “bent backs” (v. 10) portrays the Roman tyranny?²¹⁸ Perchance the whole argumentation from Scripture here depicts the time of the crucifixion of Jesus. The Passover Seder was celebrated but he received vinegar for his thirst (see Ps. 69:22). Then the verses quoted in Rom. 11:9-10 (Ps. 69:23-24) follow. Does the Old Testament context result in a deeper interpretation by Paul? Does he imply that the happy celebration of Passover, without worrying about the suffering and death of Jesus, was a reason for the hardening of the Jews? At least the subsequent fall of Jerusalem was in fact caused by their blind trust in temple worship and their permanent rejection of the Messiah. In that case their “table” has indeed become a “snare” and a “trap” for them.²¹⁹ For sure, there are no easy conclusions.

Anyway, the hardening of the Jews appears easier to comprehend from the overall perspective of Gentile mission. After they first rejected the gospel, it spread

²¹³ Aageson 1986, 282.

²¹⁴ Evans 1984, 568 n. 25. Cf. already the Old Testament passages, such as Deut. 29:4, Is. 42:18-19, Jer. 5:21 and Ez. 12:2.

²¹⁵ Cranfield 1981, 552.

²¹⁶ Koch 1986, 138 and n. 30. Käsemann 1980, 289, Wilckens 1980, 239. See also Dunn 1988, 650.

²¹⁷ Michel 1978, 342. See also Dunn 1988, 650.

²¹⁸ Thurén 1944, 198.

²¹⁹ Thurén 1944, 211.

widely, throughout the whole world (vv. 11-12).²²⁰ A more thorough explanation is put forth in the next pericope.

4.6. 11:11-32

The pericope begins in the same way as the previous one, with the phrase λέγω (“I ask”). A provocative question follows and a direct negative answer, amounting to a longer exposition.²²¹ Gradually, Paul goes from a strict argumentation from Scripture to practical measures relating to relationship in the church between Jewish and Gentile Christians. For that reason he largely avoids quoting the Old Testament, other than in vv. 26b-27. Needless to say, the whole presentation still overflows with Old Testament allusions, not the least because to some extent he builds on what he already has presented in chapters 9-10 (cf. e.g. the notion of “envy” in 10:19 and 11:11 as well as the thought of “stumbling” in 9:33 and 11:11).²²²

Starting in v. 11, Paul first and foremost explains the key events in salvation history. He argues that Israel’s stubbornness, something negative in itself, has caused something positive. Through “their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles,” which in turn will make them “jealous” and long for the same deliverance (vv. 11-12)?²²³ Hence, there is no reason for the Gentile Christians in Rome to be arrogant toward Jewish Christians or Jews in general. That kind of erroneous attitude affirms that one has misunderstood God’s plan of salvation in history.²²⁴ He has consigned all to disobedience so that he may have mercy on all (v. 32). In particular the parable about the olive tree (vv. 16-24) addresses human boasting at large. It shows that the Gentile Christians do not exist independently from Israel’s past history and traditions. On the contrary, Israel is the “root,” which carries the Gentile Christians as “branches” (v. 18).²²⁵ Maybe certain adversaries have even argued that Paul himself as a former Pharisee has now abandoned the mission to the Jews to work solely as the apostle of the Gentiles. Here, he wants to repudiate the false rumor and demonstrate his loyalty toward his countrymen and the Old

²²⁰ Hübner (1984, 107) concludes: “Erst auf dem Hintergrund der durch Gott gewirkten Verblendung als Heilswirkung für die Heiden wird der gegenwärtige Zustand Israels ‘erklärlich’.” See already 9:17 above.

²²¹ Moo 1996, 671, 686. Cf. Lübking 1986, 103 and 108.

²²² Moo 1996, 685 n. 4. Cf. Lübking 1986, 112 and 117-118.

²²³ Cf. Theißen 2002, 321: “In Röm 11,11ff. wird der Eifersuchtsgedanke aus Röm 10 neu interpretiert. Aus der aggressiven Ablehnung [Röm. 10:2] wird eine nachahmende Konkurrenz von Juden und Christen auf dem Weg zum gleichen Ziel.”

²²⁴ However, it is not necessary a case of antisemitism. See above (1) prolog.

²²⁵ Cf. e.g. Johnson 1984, 99: “It is instructive to consider which metaphor Paul does not use. One might have expected one in which God cuts down the unfruitful tree and plants in its place a completely different tree. That is precisely the concept Paul tries so intensely to expunge from the church.”

Testament heritage (vv. 13-15).²²⁶

Because the line of thought in vv. 11-24 entails virtually no Scriptural readings, the passage will not be addressed here. Instead we will move directly to vv. 11:25-27, which yet again takes up references to the Old Testament. Vv. 28-32 are to be discussed in as much as they shed light on the interpretation.

V. 25 reveals a mystery, which vv. 26-27 more in depth explain.²²⁷ It says that πώρωσις ἀπὸ μέρους (“a hardening in part”) has come upon (in Greek γέγονεν expresses God’s activity) Israel, but in the end πᾶς Ἰσραήλ (“all Israel”) will be saved as the heavenly Deliverer intervenes.²²⁸ The prediction about salvation is mainly based on

- a) the testimony of Scripture (vv. 26b-27),
- b) the faithfulness of God toward his covenant and promise (vv. 28-29), and
- c) the observation that God acts in the same manner with all people as well as with the intention to show them his mercy (vv. 30-32) and be praised by them (vv. 33-36).²²⁹

The argumentation in chapters 9-11 or even in the whole letter culminates in the revelation of the mystery (v. 25).²³⁰ It is completely thinkable that Paul has received knowledge about Israel’s national restoration in the future through *one* specific revelation by studying *the* specific revelation, viz., Holy Scripture (vv. 26b-27). In his thinking the former does not exclude the latter. In addition, he warns

²²⁶ Aageson 1986, 282-284.

²²⁷ Chr. Plag (1969, 65) tries to convince that Rom. 11:25-27 should be considered as “Überrest eines anderen Paulusbriefs” (see further pp. 41 and 66). But see Hvalvik 1990, 88-89: “But there are a lot of weighty arguments against Plag’s hypothesis. It is, therefore, no surprise that he has met with little, if any, approval from other scholars.”

²²⁸ V. 26a should not be translated: “... and in the following way, all Israel will be saved as it is written ...” in concert with Stuhlmacher 1971, 560. Against his interpretation see e.g. Räisänen 1987, 2918-2919 n. 154 and Sängner 1986, 107-108. Neither is the particle οὕτως (v. 26a) any real designation of time. Rather, it points to the manner in which Israel will be saved, namely, in accordance with that process of salvation outlined in vv. 11-24 and summarized in v. 25. Nevertheless, there is a temporal aspect included in the expression “for the manner in which all Israel is saved involves a process that unfolds in definite stages” (Moo 1996, 720). Similarly, Grindheim 2005, 167-168 n. 115, Lübking 1986, 123. Take notice also of Hahn 1982, 227, Hofius 1989b, 192-193, Hübner 1984, 110, Hvalvik 1990, 96-97 and Jeremias 1977, 198-199. For similarities between Rom. 11:26a and Is. 45:25 see Hofius 1989b, 202 and Hübner 1984, 113.

²²⁹ Moo 1996, 712.

²³⁰ See e.g. Sängner 1986, 107 and 115 The concept of ‘mystery’ first appears in Daniel (2:17-18, 27-30, 47). Even the mystery religions of antiquity spoke about different mysteries. But Paul does not link to them. His use of language is derived from the Old Testament or Judaism (see e.g. Harrington 1992, 58). In the Pauline Letters the concept of ‘mystery’ normally refers to the gospel (*passim*) but in Rom. 11:25 and in 1 Cor. 15:51 to a course of events before or in connection with the end of world history. See Sängner 1986, 112-114. However, he surprisingly does not think that vv. 25-26a present any new thing or any ‘mystery’ in light of what was said previously (pp. 108-112). Cf. further Johnson 1984, 101. In contrast, Moo 1996, 716-719.

against trusting in one's own wisdom (v. 25, the original Greek referring to Proverbs 3:7). Considering all the Old Testament allusions and quotations in the chapters 9-11, it does not seem plausible that the climax itself in the presentation would lack a Scriptural argument.²³¹

The term *πᾶς Ἰσραήλ* ("all Israel" in v. 26) goes back to Old Testament language. It apparently refers to the *ethnic* Israel, which Paul also speaks about previously in v. 25b. For certain, he does not intend the *spiritual* Israel, the Christian church, which is made up of both Jews and Gentiles. Should the mystery in v. 25 ultimately stand for the simple truth, that all Christians will be saved?²³² That kind of interpretation would only increase the arrogance of the Gentile Christians toward the Jewish Christians even more (cf. above). Moreover, the Christian church cannot be portrayed as currently "enemies" (v. 28) or now "disobedient" (v. 31).²³³ In Old Testament language, "all Israel" never refers to "every Israelite," but includes the *nation* Israel as a whole, disregarding a few individuals who for one reason or another do not count (such as apostates).²³⁴ Further, *πᾶς Ἰσραήλ* ("all Israel") as a term is in agreement with *πλήρωμα* ("the full number") of Israel in v. 12, which correspond to *πλήρωμα* ("the full number") of the Gentiles in v. 25. Just as not every single Gentile will be saved, likewise not every single Israelite will be.²³⁵ Notwithstanding, a slight difference between diachronic and synchronic perspective may be seen: Even if all Israelites in all times (the diachronic alternative) without doubt do not inherit the coming kingdom, yet all Israel will at the end

²³¹ Cf. Hofius 1989b, 200-202, see especially Kim 2002, 239-257. Similarly, Carson 2004, 421-422, Hübner 1984, 121. Jeremias (1977, 201) goes even so far that he determines exactly which text in the Old Testament has disclosed the mystery in Rom. 11:25-26 for Paul! He maintains: "Es spricht in der Tat alles dafür, dass es das Wort vom 'Eifersüchtigmachen auf ein Nicht-Volk' (Dtn 32, 21 vgl. Röm 10, 19; 11, 11. 14) gewesen ist, das dem Apostel die Augen für Gottes Pläne mit seinem Volk geöffnet und ihm das Rätsel der Verstockung Israels gelöst hat."

²³² First and foremost against Jeremias 1977, 199-200. In reference to him Ponsot 1982, 406-417 – despite his patristic perspective which F. Javier Caubet-Iturbe formulated as follows: "L'interprétation, depuis le III^e siècle jusqu'à la fin du XII^e, à l'exception de trois ou quatre commentateurs des IV^e et V^e siècles, parmi lesquels il faut compter saint Augustin à certaines époques, a toujours et uniquement compris dans le mot Israël le peuple juif, descendant d'Abraham selon la chair." (p. 407). See further Wright 1993, 250. For criticism, see Longenecker 1989, 97. Similarly e.g. Hahn 1982, 221 and Räisänen 1987, 2916-2917 n. 145. Hvalvik (1990, 100) concludes the state of research unequivocally: "As to the meaning of 'all Israel', there is today almost general agreement that 'Israel' here refers to the Jewish people [...]." See also Grindheim 2005, 166 n 113. Cf. Carson 2004, 421 and n. 76 as well as Harrington 1992, 59-60.

²³³ Grindheim 2005, 166-167.

²³⁴ Harrington lifts up a well-known parallel in the (late) Rabbinic literature: "Mishnah *Sanhedrin*, chapter 10, begins with a general statement: 'All Israel has a portion in the world to come.' Then it proceeds to present a long list of those who have no share in the world to come." (1992, 60). Similarly Jeremias 1977, 199: "Das Erstaunliche an diesem Text ist die grandiose Unbekümmertheit, mit der eingangs ohne jede Einschränkung der Satz aufgestellt und durch Schriftbeweis untermauert wird: 'Ganz Israel hat Anteil an der künftigen Welt' und dann trotzdem eine lange Liste von Ausnahmen folgt, die in dem (freilich nicht unbestrittenen) Ausschluß der gesamten zehn Stämme Israels gipfelt." See further Hvalvik 1990, 100. Cf. Müller 1964, 44.

²³⁵ Thurén 1994, 203-204. Hahn (2002, 229) sees it a little differently.

of all history (the synchronic alternative) attain eternal life (bearing in mind the previous reservations).²³⁶

The Pauline vision of all Israel's salvation in the future counteracts an anti-Semitic or anti-Jewish approach.²³⁷ Besides, it is closely related to the theme in chapters 9-11, which in the main argues that God's word has not failed (9:6), and that he has not rejected his people (11:1). Thus, the trustworthiness of the Old Testament writings is emphasized. "So let it be written, so let it be done."²³⁸ Yet, Israel's special status does not suggest that their coming salvation could be fulfilled in any other way than through faith in Jesus Christ. He alone saves (10:4-13, see above). There is only *one* olive tree (11:16-24).²³⁹ Despite his real hope for the future, Paul seems to be aware of the fact that he himself will not mark a turning point in the mission action among the Israelites. He tries to "save *some* of them" (11:14).²⁴⁰ Notwithstanding his best and most serious efforts, the end-time reversal or revival among them tarries.

Ultimately, a direct answer concerning questions of time is missing in chapter 11, but at least three clarifications are given:

a) ἡ πρόσλημψις (the "acceptance") of the Israelites means ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν ("life from the dead" in v. 15).²⁴¹

²³⁶ See Moo 1996, 723. Cf. also Grindheim 2005, 167 n. 114. The prophetic utterance of Jesus in Luke 21:24 b corresponds to Romans 11:25b-26a. He speaks about Jerusalem's devastation "until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" and uses similar language (cf. the expression ἄχρι and the verb πληροῦν). Cf. Hübner (1984, 111) in reference to Lagrange: "la conversion des gentils n'est pas seulement le signal que l'heure est venue: elle aura aussi sans dout *sa part de causalite* sur celle des Juif." See further Moo 1996, 719.

²³⁷ Here Longenecker speaks of Paul's "return to a Jewish ethnocentrism" (1989, 97) in line with Old Testament: "Although he [Paul] can sustain the logic of salvation by faith throughout most of Rom. 9-11, at this point [Rom. 11.26] he admits to a salvation which will ultimately spring from an ethnic condition." (pp. 97-98). See also pp. 104, 112-114.

²³⁸ Schreiner 1998, 491: "In addition, 9:6a constitutes the theme of all of 9:6b-11:32, reaching its climax, as already intimated, in 11:26-29, where the covenantal promise effects the eschatological salvation of Israel. The unbelief of Israel does not nullify God's promises, because nothing can thwart his word; what he has promised will certainly come to pass." See also Piper 1993, 217-218.

²³⁹ According to certain prominent scholars the Jews and Gentiles would each have their own salvation ("bi-covenantal theology", "Zwei Häuser-Theorie" resp. "Sonderweg"). See e.g. Mußner 1977, 43-44 and Stendahl 1976, 4. Against that kind of interpretation, correctly Gräßer 1981, 411-429. Similarly Sanders 1983, 193-195. See also Davies 1977-78, 28, Grindheim 2005, 167 n. 114, Hahn 1982, 230, Hübner 1984, 116-120, Hvalvik 1990, especially 87-91, Jewett 1985, 344, Johnson 1984, 101-102, Longenecker 1989, 99-100, Lübking 1986, 125-128, Ponsot 1982, 408-409, Räisänen 1987, 2917-2918, Sängner 1986, 116-118, Wright 1993, 253-255 (cf. already p. 248). Cf. further Harrington 1992, 67 and Theißen 2002, 339-340 (and 332-333 n. 33).

²⁴⁰ E.g. Davies 1977-78, 17. Käsemann (1980, 293-294) interprets v. 14 against the background of a Jewish respectively apocalyptic vision of the future. He thinks that "some of them" actually indicates "the whole of Israel." Against such an understanding, see Johnson 1984, 97-98.

²⁴¹ Theißen 2002, 340 n. 42: "Schon in Röm 11,15 hatte Paulus betont, dass die endzeitliche 'Annahme' Israels durch Gott 'Totenaufstehung' sei (und nicht nur 'wie' eine Totenaufstehung). Das weist auf ein Wunder jenseits der Geschichte."

b) Their repentance will not happen until “the full number of the Gentiles” has come in (v. 25b).²⁴²

c) The Deliverer, Messiah himself, will turn all ungodliness away from his people when he returns (26b-27).²⁴³

So, the time will come. Though, it seems that Israel’s fate will change not simply through “regular” mission work, but by means of God’s own mighty intervention.²⁴⁴ For sure, it is not revealed how he will fulfill his plans in the end.²⁴⁵

Though already treated in passing, vv. 26b-27 depict the turning point for the history of salvation with a Scriptural argument:

Ἦξει ἐκ Σιών ὁ ῥυόμενος, ἀποστρέψει ἀσεβείας ἀπὸ Ἰακώβ. καὶ αὕτη αὐτοῖς ἡ παρ’ ἐμοῦ διαθήκη, ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι τὰς ἀμαρτίας αὐτῶν.

“The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will turn ungodliness away from Jacob. And this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”

Once again, two Old Testament passages are combined. In this case they are both from Isaiah: 59:20-21a in vv. 26b-27a and 27:9 in v. 27b. The text follows LXX. Hence, it says that the Deliverer will come and ἀποστρέψει ἀσεβείας ἀπὸ Ἰακώβ (“turn ungodliness away from Jacob”) instead of “to those in Jacob who turn from transgression” (but still due to God’s goodness as in Is. 59:21b). The last clause in the quotation is then adapted to suit the previous. Accordingly, it is plural: “*their*

²⁴² Theißen 2002, 339-340: “Der Widerstand Israels gegen die Heidenmission war ja für Paulus die eigentliche Verblendung und ‘Sünde’ Israels (vgl. 1 Thess 2,14-16). Sie wäre definitiv überholt, wenn die Vollzahl der Heiden zum Heil gekommen ist.”

²⁴³ See below.

²⁴⁴ Hofius 1989b, 197-198. He concludes: “*Israel kommt auf die gleiche Weise zum Glauben wie Paulus selbst!*” (p. 198). Similarly, Theißen 2002, 339: “So wie Paulus als ungläubiger Israelit durch eine Erscheinung vom Himmel bekehrt wurde, so wird auch ganz Israel durch den zur Parusie kommenden Christus gerettet werden.” See also Longenecker 1989, 101: “Paul has simply transplanted this event from his own experience to the culmination point of the history of unbelieving Israel.” Cf. Davies 1977-78, 34: “For him [Paul], there is no ‘solution’ to the Jewish question until we are at the very limit of history and at the threshold of the age to come, when God will be all in all and the distinctions of this world even between Jew and Gentile transcended [...]” In a different context he stresses the verb’s passive form (*passivum divinum*) in the statement “the whole of Israel will be saved” (v. 26a) and maintains rightly that it points to “an activity of God whereby he will bring his covenant [...] to fruition”. Against Räisänen 1987, 2918-2919.

²⁴⁵ Cf. Sängner 1986, 109: “Über den Modus, *wie* das geschehen soll und darüber, *was* dies Geschehen impliziert, äußert sich der Apostel an diesem Punkt nicht. Jedoch deutet er zumindest an, daß Israels jetzige Situation keineswegs als ein unveränderlicher status quo festgeschrieben ist.” See also p. 117. Similarly, Walter 1984, 177: “Es *bleibt* vielmehr Gottes Geheimnis, *wie* er das bewerkstelligen wird, was Paulus von ihm mit Gewißheit erwartet.” Here, the question that remains unanswered is “wie sich die erhoffte Erlösung dieses (und nur dieses einen) Volkes zu dem Individualprinzip des Heils verhält [...]” (ibid.) See further Brandenburger 1985, 46 and Harrington 1992, 61 and 66-67.

sins” (τὰς ἀμαρτίας αὐτῶν, in keeping with “my covenant with *them*”), not singular: “his [= Jacob’s] sins.”²⁴⁶ Further, Paul himself changes the phrase “to Zion” (BH) or “for Zion’s sake” (ἕνεκεν Σιῶν, LXX) to “from Zion” (ἐκ Σιῶν). Presumably, he does this in order to communicate the Old Testament understanding of salvation, which stems from Zion. Especially Ps. 50:2 is relevant because it describes how God shines forth out of Zion. The context speaks of his coming (v. 3) in consort with the rising and setting of the sun (v. 1), just as Is. 59:19-20 (LXX).²⁴⁷ In addition, the phrase “from Zion” is also found e.g. in Ps. 14:7 and 53:6 with the hope of “salvation for Israel,” a desire which relates them to Is. 27:9 and 59:20-21 (then coalesced in Rom. 11:26b-27). What is more, both the psalmist and the prophet direct their words to “Jacob,” another common feature between them.²⁴⁸ All things considered, it seems as if Paul finds his Scripture quotations from different sources. He intentionally compiles associated traditions into a multifaceted totality. In his exposition, Isaiah’s prophecies are explained by the prayers of the Psalms.²⁴⁹

The one who, according to Is. 59:20, will come is the Lord (Jahve). In Rom. 11:26 the text is applied to Christ himself (see above, 9:5).²⁵⁰ The word ὁ ῥυόμενος (“Deliverer”) has a strong eschatological content and refers to his return (1 Thess. 1:10; cf. Rom. 7:24 as well).²⁵¹ The future tense of the verb, ἥξει (“shall come”), includes the same nuance.²⁵² On Doomsday, Christ will come from Zion, which either refers to the “earthly” Jerusalem (Matt. 23:39, Acts 1:11) or to the “heavenly” Jerusalem (Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22, Rev. 3:12).²⁵³ At that moment he

²⁴⁶ Shum 2002, 236-240. Cf. Koch 1986, 175-178 and Lübking 1986, 124-125.

²⁴⁷ For similarities between Ps. 50:2 and Is. 59:19-20, see Hofius 1989b, 196 n. 82. Here I intentionally pass on the question of an eventual text critical conjecture in Isaiah 59:20 LXX. See Schaller 1984.

²⁴⁸ Cf. Cranfield 1981, 577 and Schreiner 1998, 619.

²⁴⁹ Cf. also Wagner 2003, 284-286.

²⁵⁰ Cranfield 1981, 578, Dunn 1988, 682, Hvalvik 1990, 92, Legarth 2004, 257-259 and Schreiner 1998, 619-620. *Pace* Shum 2002, 243-244, 247.

²⁵¹ E.g. Davies 1977-78, 27. Otherwise Hvalvik 1990, 92. At least one rabbinic text (BT Sanh. 98a) interprets Is. 59:20 as referring to Messiah. See Harrington 1992, 62. However, he himself is uncertain whether the Old Testament quotation relates to God or Christ (pp. 61-63).

²⁵² *Pace* Räsänen 1987, 2920. Here he claims a little surprisingly (in contrast to the apparent eschatological context) that “das Futur in 11,26b kontextbedingt ist und das Anvisierte vom Gesichtspunkt des alttestamentlichen Propheten (nicht aber von dem des Paulus) aus als zukünftig bezeichnet.” Similarly, Hvalvik 1990, 93.

²⁵³ Cf. especially Hofius 1989b, 196: “Die Angabe, daß der ῥυόμενος ‘aus Zion’ kommen wird, muß nicht notwendig auf das Erscheinen Christi vom himmlischen Jerusalem her gedeutet werden. Paulus kann sehr wohl an den irdischen Zion denken, auf dem sich Christus bei der Parusie offenbaren und von dem aus er sein Rettungswerk an Israel vollführen wird.” Neither is it necessary to interpret Rom. 11:26b-27 as a critique of the Old Testament’s notion of the eschatological pilgrimage of the Gentiles to Jerusalem that ought to introduce the end times (see e.g. Is. 2:2ff. or Micah 4:1ff.). Would Paul have modified the tradition and meant that such prophecies are *already now* fulfilled in a different manner through faith in the gospel? Then he would emphasize that only after this event the Jews themselves would flow into the Christian church! Cf. Hübner in reference to many others: “[...] anstelle der Wallfahrt der Völker die

will cleanse his people by turning ungodliness away from them and forgiving their sins. Simply put, he still keeps to his Messianic program and does not act as a political Messiah. He introduces a *spiritual* renewal (which for certain has practical and concrete consequences). The language here by its very nature reminds of the presentation of Abraham's (and David's) justification in chapter 4. The adjective ἀσεβής (“ungodly”) and the term αἱ ἁμαρτίαι (“sins”) in plural (commonly in singular in the Pauline epistles) are found there (vv. 5, 7).²⁵⁴ At Christ's Parousia, all Israel will be saved in the same way as everybody else, namely, through faith in the gospel (see above). Their transgressions will be forgiven and righteousness counted as theirs in agreement with the theme of Romans (1:16-17).²⁵⁵ The promise of a new covenant in Jer. 31:31-34, which the Scripture quotation “my covenant with them” in v. 27 clearly alludes to, will be realized in Israel. The hardening of the people only has a temporary character (cf. the context for Is. 27:9 and 59:20, which both speak about the end of God's punishment sometime in the future).²⁵⁶

On occasion, the question arises whether there is a contradiction between the two statements “all Israel will be saved” (chapter 11) and (only) “a *remnant* of Israel will be saved” (chapter 9). Yet, it has already been shown above that the phrase “all Israel” should not be understood in a *diachronic* but in *synchronic* way, in other words, it does not embrace all Israelites at all times, but those Israelites living at the end of world history. Therefore, all Israel in fact represents a remnant of Israel. Further, chapter 9 strictly refers to the *spiritual* Israel, while chapter 11 relates to the *ethnic* Israel, which later on after an intervention by Messiah himself becomes spiritual. Consequently, there is no foundation for a contradiction between the two perspectives. The argumentation is stringent and consistent throughout.²⁵⁷

In short, finally the anguished question becomes silent: “Who has believed what

‘Wallfahrt’ der Schätze der Heiden (Jes 60,1 ff., vor allem 60,5 f.), sprich: die paulinische Kollekte, geschehen wird.” (1984, 112). Similarly, e.g. Lübking 1986, 124-125. Although the apostle surely reserves his freedom to make new spiritual interpretations, they need not completely and wholly exclude a literal fulfilment of the Old Testament statements. He may well have thought that the Gentiles would go up to Zion in connection to the conversion of Israel as stated in Rom. 11:26b-27. Cf. further Theißen 2002, 339 n. 41: “Man muss hier also nicht unbedingt an das himmlische Jerusalem denken. Dass der zur Parusie kommende Christus vom Himmel kommt, ist ohnehin selbstverständlich.” See also Walter 1984, 182.

²⁵⁴ Hvalvik 1990, 96. Cf. also Müller 1964, 46 and 106-108.

²⁵⁵ Then Israel finally follows in Abraham's footsteps and like him believes in God who makes the ungodly righteous by his grace alone (Rom. 4, see above).

²⁵⁶ Schreiner 1998, 619-620.

²⁵⁷ Piper 1993, 25-31. Against Räisänen 1987, especially 2930-2936. His argumentation has been criticized by Schreiner 1998, 621-623. See also Spanje (1999). First he refers to Räisänen's arguments (pp. 91-119) and then transitions to a thorough assessment of them. (pp. 139-253). Cf. Brandenburger 1985, 43-47 and Lübking 1986, 99ff. and 135ff. Also against Theißen 2002, 322 and many others.

he has heard from us?” (10:16). Astonishingly, all Israel believes and is saved (11:26)! At their salvation, only thanksgiving and praise remain. The next passage shows one good example.

4.7. 11:33-36

The verses conclude the entire argumentation in chapters 9-11 and even chapters 1-11.²⁵⁸ The doxology in v. 36b corresponds to the eulogy in 9:5. Considering that fact, praise of God takes a dominant place in the presentation. He is praised already in the beginning of chapter 9 and over again in the end of chapter 11. The structural arrangement works well with the general theme, which focuses on the question of the Jewish people, as the term ‘Jew’ denotes “the one who praises the Lord” (Gen. 29:35).²⁵⁹

Vv. 33-36 are made up of three stanzas, which each have three units:

- a) V. 33 (three exclamations relating to God’s wise salvation historical plan),
- b) Vv.34-35 (three rhetorical questions pertaining to man’s inability to understand God’s wise salvation historical plan), and
- c) V. 36 (three short expressions with different prepositions which all emphasize that God is absolutely sovereign in his wise salvation historical plan).²⁶⁰

The doxology as a whole circles around the unfathomable in the Lord’s good counsel, as it is proclaimed in the Old Testament and treated in chapters 9-11.

Exclamations like “oh” (ὦ) and “how” (ὥς) in v. 33 are characteristic facets for hymnal and liturgical texts. The condensed phrases praise God’s “riches and wisdom and knowledge,” his “unsearchable judgments” and “inscrutable ways.” Each of them briefly summarizes some significant aspect of the previous argumentation as regards Holy Scripture:

- πλούτου (“riches”), God’s grace toward all sinners (cf. v. 12),
- σοφίας (“wisdom”), God’s salvation plan pertaining to Jews and Gentiles (cf. especially vv. 30-32)
- γνώσεως (“knowledge”), mainly God’s election (cf. especially v. 2, see also 8:29),
- τὰ κρίματα – αἱ ὁδοί (“judgments” and “ways”) God’s sovereign guidance of history (cf. vv. 11-12 and 30-32). Both ‘how’-phrases are parallel in their

²⁵⁸ Walter 1984, 176-177.

²⁵⁹ For sure, it should not be forgotten that the initial pericope, which consists of a complaint against Israel, finishes with a eulogy in 9:5. See 4.1. Prologue above.

²⁶⁰ Dunn 1988, 698. See also Jeremias 1977, 203-204.

structure: predicative adjective – definitive article – subject – possessive pronomen (furthermore, both predicative adjectives begin with the same root: *anex-*).²⁶¹

The depth which characterizes God’s sovereign actions in agreement with v. 33 no one can understand. He rises above all human comprehension. Not even the Old Testament as such discloses the hidden mysteries written in there. It will be “unveiled” only due to the gospel (see 1:2-4 and 16:25-26).²⁶² Yet, every now and then a special revelation is necessary to shed more light over certain obscure marks of salvation history. Patently, as an apostle, Paul himself has received an insight beyond measure into God’s mystery (11:25-27). His exceptional knowledge, as expected, exceeds general knowledge of Holy Scripture – but he does not in the least empty the well of truth (cf. 1 Cor. 2:6-16).²⁶³

The questions in vv. 34-35 are found in Is. 40:13-14 and Job 41:2. They seem to refer back to the three previous genitive nouns (v. 33) in chiasmic order:²⁶⁴

Τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν Κυρίου;

“*Who has known the mind of the Lord?*” (v. 34a)

corresponds to the exclamation regarding God’s knowledge (γνῶσις),

ἢ τίς σύμβουλος αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο;

“*Who has been his counselor?*” (v. 34b)

coincides with the proclamation concerning God’s wisdom, and

ἢ τίς προέδωκεν αὐτῷ, καὶ ἀνταποδοθήσεται αὐτῷ;

“*Who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?*” (v. 35)

²⁶¹ Moo 1996, 741-742. Jeremias also thinks that “judgments” points to “das Richtende” and “ways” to “das rettende Heilshandeln” (1977, 204).

²⁶² For Rom. 1:2-4 and 16:25-26, see Laato 2006, 47-50.

²⁶³ Theißen (2002, 322) tries to explain God’s “completely irrational” election by drawing attention to its obvious conditions: “Der erwählte und berufene Teil Israels war immer der schwächere: Isaak wurde von überalterten Eltern geboren, Jakob war der Jüngere, Mose vertrat gegenüber dem Pharao die versklavten Israeliten. Mit dieser Vorzugswahl der Schwächeren aber ist eine Verheißung verbunden: Sobald (das ungläubige) Israel in die Rolle des Geringeren und Schwächeren eintritt, könnte es eine erneute Chance haben.” But in essence, God’s election can never be explained, only praised!

²⁶⁴ See e.g. Dunn 1988, 698, Jeremias 1977, 204 and Koch 1986, 178-179. Cf. further Moo 1996, 743 He tries to equate the three questions (vv. 34-35) with the three previous assertions:

“Who has known the mind of the Lord?” (v. 34 a) corresponds to expression of God’s inscrutable ways (v. 33c),

“Who has been his counselor?” (v. 34b) coincides with the utterance of God’s unsearchable judgments (v. 33b), and

“Who has given a gift to him that he may be repaid?” repeats the statement concerning the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God, which characteristics point to his mercy (v. 33a).

finally retells the declaration in respect of God's riches.²⁶⁵

Apparently, the last question deals with the theme of Romans: justification by faith, which is not based on any human merits, but only on God's grace. The final doxology in v. 36 no doubt revolves around the same theme and exalts him alone, from which, through which, and to which all things are,²⁶⁶ not the least pertaining to the doctrine of justification.²⁶⁷ If it is so, the apostolic argumentation is not finished until the Creator, instead of humanity created by him, has been highly praised.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ Obviously, Paul translates Job 41:2 directly from the Hebrew. His other citation of Job's book (1 Cor. 3:19) also differentiates itself from LXX! See especially Koch 1986, 72-73. Cf. Hübner 1984, 126.

²⁶⁶ The statement "from him, through him and to him are all things" in v. 36 has various occasional parallels in Stoicism but should be perceived against the Pauline theological background. Cf. Cranfield 1981, 591: "But the sense of the formula as used by Paul is far from the pantheism of the Stoic use of it." Similarly, Moo 1996, 743: "Hellenistic Jews picked up this language and applied it to Yahweh; and it is probably, therefore, from the synagogue that Paul borrows this formula."

²⁶⁷ Hübner 1984, 126. Cf. further Dunn 1988, 704: "In an argument which began with man's rebellion against God as creator (1:18-25), what could be more appropriate than a final acclamation of God the creator?" Similarly already Jeremias 1977, 203 with the following summary of the line of thought in Romans: "Damit schließt sich ein Ring: die Preisgabe der Heiden, von der Röm 1, 24. 26. 28 die Rede war und die 11, 32 a auf Israel ausgedehnt ist, wird aufgehoben durch die Grenzenlosigkeit des göttlichen Erbarmens."

²⁶⁸ For the Pauline theology in general, see Jeremias 1977, 205: "Immer wieder beobachten wir, daß sein Ringen und Fragen nicht eher zur Ruhe kommt, als bis es zur δόξα Gottes gefunden hat [...]."

4.8. *Conclusions*

As a result, Paul's hermeneutical direction is established by the main thesis in Romans (especially 1:16-17), the general rules for his interpretation of the Old Testament, and the focus of his Old Testament quotations in Rom. 9-11. In the long passage of chapters 9-11, Paul quotes the Old Testament more frequently than anywhere else in his letters with the aim of clarifying Israel's place in salvation history. His reading of the Old Testament greatly differs from the philological and exegetical research common today. He does not limit himself to analyzing the historical meaning of the biblical texts but sees their actual fulfillment in Christ according to his gospel. Simply put, both philology and exegetics are subordinated to theology.

Accordingly, M. Silva maintains as follows:

“[...] there is no evidence that Paul or his contemporaries ever sat down to ‘exegete’ OT texts in a way comparable to what today’s seminary students are expected to do – that is, to produce an exposition that focuses on the historical meaning. Nevertheless, many of Paul’s actual uses of Scripture are acknowledged by all concerned to be consistent with such a historical meaning.”²⁶⁹

In other words, the Pauline exegesis is a Christological exposition of the Bible where the original historical setting of the Old Testament is not ignored but serves as an absolutely necessary condition for the interpretation. Similarly, J. R. Wagner concludes:

“The story of God, Israel, and the Gentiles that Paul tells in Romans reflects the dynamic interplay of his foundational convictions, his reading of Israel’s scriptures, his labors in mission, and his cultural and historical contexts. By no stretch of the imagination can Paul said to interpret Isaiah and other scriptural texts in Romans in a detached and disinterested manner. [...] And yet, at the same time, the letter to the Romans reveals, perhaps more clearly than any other of Paul’s letters, the deep and pervasive influence that Israel’s scriptures exert on the shape of his thought and on the contours of his apostolic ministry.”²⁷⁰

²⁶⁹ Silva 1993, 639.

²⁷⁰ Wagner 2003, 356-357. Similarly, Shum 2002, 247: “[...] our examination of the Isaianic material in Rom.9-11 has shown that Paul’s appropriation of the material exhibits a very strong theological continuity between its original and its new contexts.” and Wilk 1998, 265: “Das zentrale Ergebnis der vorstehenden Analysen lautet: Paulus führt Jesajazitate niemals ohne gleichzeitige Bezüge auf den jeweiligen Kontext an; in aller Regel spiegelt das paulinische

Given that Paul does not stop at a reading that focuses on the historical sense of the texts, he continually looks for a deeper meaning (*sensus plenior*) which takes the wider messianic context into account. Here, it is absolutely critical to understand that even the Christological Bible exposition claims to be literal – only seen from the perspective of Christian faith. Christ is indeed found in the Old Testament. He is, so to speak, interwoven in those texts. The prophecies are fulfilled through him. In him their message reaches its climax. With that said, the hermeneutics of Romans is based on Old Testament exegetics which asserts faith in Christ and assumes his life work, particularly his death on the cross and his resurrection on the third day. Hence, a purely historical explanation does not express the whole truth or the core of the truth. It fails to catch the messianic fulfillment (*sensus plenior*), imbedded in Holy Scripture.²⁷¹

All things considered, Paul's theology has a great impact on his way of reading the Septuagint. There is no "pure" philological analysis and evaluation of the Old Testament text. Everything in Scripture is expounded through the lenses of Christian faith. This outcome is to be taken at face value as the Pauline use of Septuagint is studied further and more in depth.

Umfeld diesen Kontext mehrfach wieder."

²⁷¹ The hard to comprehend concept *sensus plenior* is used here in accordance with the Christological perspective such as it appears in this work. For other definitions, see Moo 1986, 201-204 and 209-211. He combines a deeper meaning in the Old Testament text with "a canonical approach" (ibid., 204-209) that also involves a strong Christological interpretation: "[...] the New Testament views the Old Testament as a collection of books that, in each of its parts and in its whole, was somehow 'incomplete' until 'filled up' through the advent of Christ and the inauguration of the era of salvation." See above.

5. Summary

The undertaking of the present study was to examine Paul's use of the Septuagint in Rom. 9-11, especially the guidelines which affect his interpretation of the Old Testament. To truly come to terms with the issue, a concise overview of the content of his Epistle to the Romans was provided. The opening of the letter (1:2-4), the thematic verses of the letter (1:16-17) as well as the concluding climax of the letter (16:25-26) show that an Old Testament perspective is crucial in all of his theology.

In addition, some relevant aspects of Paul's general way of interpreting the Old Testament were presented and expanded. He repeatedly employs the "promise – fulfillment" scheme in his attempt to define more in-depth the relationship between the Old and New Testament. Further, he frequently draws on typological Bible exposition, rendering the Old Testament accounts and events as a paradigm for the New Testament time span. It follows that the Old Testament as a whole turns out to be a Christological book, referring to the salvation historical development in the New Testament.

The Pauline manner of interpreting the Old Testament achieved more precision and accuracy through a comprehensive exegesis of Rom. 9-11 which particularly relate to Israel and their Holy Scriptures. Here all Old Testament quotations (and various Old Testament allusions) were examined one by one. Where appropriate, the original context of the quotations was also observed. As regards quoting the Old Testament, Paul cites recurrently, but not always the Septuagint (or possibly another Greek translation). Sometimes he (or perhaps someone else before him) clearly translates his text directly from the Hebrew. Occasionally, different passages are joined or mixed together under the impression that they as Holy Scripture speak with one voice for the same truth. Everywhere, a strong theological, i.e. Christological, conviction has an important impact on their real meaning.

All in all, Paul does not read his Bible arbitrarily. There are crystal clear criteria for assessing his exposition of Scripture. He uses his methods – to put it anachronistically for the sake of clarity – “strictly scientifically.” Yet, his insights and understanding are not built on an atheistic or agnostic foundation, but on the cornerstone, Jesus Christ (cf. Eph. 2:20). Paradoxically, herein lies the stumbling stone: To really understand the Old Testament and therefore also the New Testament, or the other way around, the reader from the outset has to believe in Christ as the fulfillment of Scripture.

LIST OF LITERATURE

Preliminary Note

The abbreviations used in the list of literature refer as a rule to the list of abbreviations of S. Schwertner (TRE). Berlin 1993.

The several publications of one and the same author are arranged chronologically, those published in the same year indicated by distinguishing lower case letters.

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