

Renaming Abraham's Children: Election, Ethnicity and the Interpretation of Scripture in Romans 9

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RENAMING ABRAHAM'S CHILDREN: ELECTION, ETHNICITY,
AND THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE IN ROMANS 9

by

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ABSTRACT
RENAMING ABRAHAM'S CHILDREN: ELECTION, ETHNICITY,
AND THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE IN ROMANS 9

Robert B. Foster, BA, MA

Marquette University, 2011

In this study, I attempt to reconstruct Paul's pre-epistolary exegesis of Genesis that I hypothesize lies beneath Rom 9. This exegesis goes beyond the discussion of the patriarchs in Rom 9:6-13 and supports the reconfiguration of God's family in Rom 9:24-29. It enables Paul to view Israel as simultaneously chosen and rejected by God.

Adopting a method from Carol Stockhausen, I offer several criteria to establish this project's legitimacy. The Pauline exegesis that I propose is plausible to the extent that (1) it is rooted in his text; (2) it is historically credible; (3) it illuminates the argument in Rom 9; and (4) it resolves difficulties elsewhere in Romans.

Throughout his letters, Paul uses the stories of Abraham to create textual space in Genesis for Gentile believers in Christ. Outside of Romans, this results in an ethnically undifferentiated "Israel of God" (Gal 6:16). In Rom 4, however, Jews and Gentiles constitute separate lines of descent within one Abrahamic family.

In Rom 9, Paul resumes this mode of locating Gentiles among Abraham's children. The pentateuchal texts elucidating the election of the patriarchs (9:7, 9, 12) and the prophetic quotations vindicating God's inclusive call (9:25-29) are connected to each other by several links. If these are valid, then Hosea and Isaiah do not stand alone but extend and subvert the pattern of the chosen and rejected sons that Paul finds in Genesis. By juxtaposing texts from Torah and the Prophets, he creates separate genealogies yet intertwined destinies for Jewish and Gentile descendants of Abraham.

I seek to substantiate this hypothesis by arguing for the following claims, each corresponding to a recognized exegetical problem. First, Paul reads Gentiles into Hosea by typologically identifying them with Abraham's excluded children. Second, Paul presumes that they will inherit Abraham's territorial promise. Third, Paul uses the Isaian texts that speak of a remnant to effect a division within Israel. Fourth, Paul derives his theology of the remnant from Genesis rather than Isaiah. Finally, Paul's mode of argument, which seems to make contrary statements concerning Israel's chosen status, reenacts the ironic narrative of patriarchal election.

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Robert B. Foster, BA, MA

The road which led me from my entry into doctoral work to the production of this dissertation has been long, circuitous, and filled with unexpected—and sometimes unpleasant—surprises. I could have never have made the journey without support from many people.

I came to Marquette to study under Dr. Carol Stockhausen. I did not know that I was to have the unfortunate privilege of being among her final students. I was not particularly familiar with her work when I arrived, but I soon learned that she possesses a powerful capacity to expose the intricacies of ancient texts. Her ability to follow the logic of Paul's argument and trace its scriptural roots left me breathless. When she entered into semi-retirement, Marquette's loss became my fortune. It provided me with an unparalleled opportunity to pour over Pauline texts with her for hours in sessions that sometimes left me dazed. She became a model scholar, and I hope to honor her here not by repeating her own views, but by aspiring to hear Paul at work the way she did.

When Dr. Stockhausen's health finally proved too great an obstacle for her continued involvement, the responsibility for overseeing this dissertation fell to Dr. Julian Hills. He was not content to push me through the finish line and be rid of an unexpected burden. To the contrary, he assumed and went far beyond an advisor's full obligations. His keen editorial skills delivered me—and the reader—from many stylistic infelicities and his academic professionalism had a salutary effect on my sometimes intemperate mode of expression. His admonition that I write in a prose that "invites the reader into my argument" gave me an ideal to which I will aspire throughout my career.

To put it succinctly, if in this study I have presented anything worth *saying* (and that is for the reader to decide), I owe it to Dr. Stockhausen. If I have produced anything worth *reading* (also a judgment for the reader to make), I owe it to Dr. Hills. If I have failed on either account (or both!), the fault lies solely with myself.

A special word of thanks is due to my professors, especially those willing to serve on my dissertation board: Dr. Deirdre Dempsey, Fr. William Kurtz, Dr. Mickey Mattox, and Dr. Andrei Orlov. I truly appreciate their time offered as readers of this dissertation, as well as their guidance as professors, examiners, and mentors at an earlier stage of my studies.

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When I could not avail myself of the resources provided by the Marquette's Memorial Library, I was fortunate to have access to other venues. The G. H. Cachiaras Memorial Library at Crossroads College, formerly known as Minnesota Bible College,

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Concerning the woman who provided me with unfailing support at every step, and without whom I would have quite literally fallen out of the program years ago (I refer to my wife Carmen, though Gale Prusinski, our departmental secretary, nearly fits that description!), I cannot provide an acknowledgement sufficient to discharge the debt I owe her.

This dissertation does not address modern theological issues. It is my prayer, however, that God may use it in some way however modest to further the proclamation of his word and to edify his church.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	i
A NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS	vi
INTRODUCTION	vii
CHAPTER	
I. STORY, TEXT, AND TECHNIQUE: READING SCRIPTURE IN PAUL.....	1
1.1. PAUL'S INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE: STORY	1
1.2. PAUL'S INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE: TEXTS	14
1.3. PAUL'S INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE: METHOD.....	23
1.4. CONCLUSIONS.....	33
II. THE ABRAHAMIC MYTHOMOTEUR AND ISRAELITE IDENTITY IN THE LETTERS OF PAUL	36
2.1. ABRAHAMIC IDENTITY IN POSTEXILIC TEXTS	37
2.2. THE RECONFIGURATION OF ABRAHAMIC IDENTITY IN THE LETTERS OF PAUL	43
2.3. CONCLUSIONS.....	71
III. DISCRIMINATORY ELECTION AND LOGICAL REVERSALS IN ROMANS 9:6-13.....	73
3.1. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO ISRAEL: COVENANTAL FIDELITY OR COSMIC FARCE? ROMANS 9:6a IN CONTEXT	74
3.2. ISRAEL AND NOT ISRAEL: ROMANS 9:6b IN CONTEXT	78
3.3. STRUCTURE AND ARGUMENT IN ROMANS 9:7-13	81
3.4. ROMANS 9:7-9: FLESH DOES NOT MEAN SEED	84
3.5. ROMANS 9:10-13: OBEDIENCE DOES NOT MEAN ELECTION	98

3.6. CONCLUSIONS.....	114
IV. ESTABLISHING AN INTERTEXTUAL MATRIX: MOSES AND THE PROPHETS IN ROMANS 9	117
4.1. LEXICAL CONNECTIONS DISCOVERED BY PAUL.....	118
4.2. LEXICAL CONNECTIONS FORGED BY PAULINE ADAPTATION.....	128
4.3. THEMATIC CONNECTIONS: ELECTION, EXCLUSION, AND REVERSALS IN THE SCRIPTURES OF ISRAEL	141
4.4. CONCLUSIONS.....	158
V. THE EXCLUDED OTHER BECOMES US: HOSEA AND THE INVERSION OF ELECTION IN ROMANS 9:25-26.....	160
5.1. POWER AND PROVIDENCE IN ROMANS 9:14-23 AND 9:24.....	161
5.2. TRANSFORMED CHILDREN: ABRAHAM'S GENTILE DESCENDANTS IN HOSEA	167
5.3. PROMISE LAND AND RESTORATION ESCHATOLOGY IN PAUL	186
5.4. CONCLUSIONS.....	196
VI. READING THE REMNANT: THE GENESIS OF A SOTERIOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION	198
6.1. A CERTAIN AND SALVIFIC WORD	199
6.2. FROM RESIDUAL SEED TO ALL ISRAEL	206
6.3. A CERTAIN SALVATION—BUT NOT FOR ALL: REVERSING ELECTION IN ROMANS 9	225
6.4. CONCLUSIONS.....	228
VII. BEYOND CHAPTER 9: ELECTION AND REVERSAL IN ROMANS	230
7.1. GOD'S WORD TO "ISRAEL" HAS NOT FAILED— NOR HAS GOD'S WORD TO <i>ISRAEL</i>	231
7.2. TRADING PLACES WITH ESAU.....	235

7.3 THE PRIORITY OF ISRAEL AND THE EQUALITY OF THE GENTILES	240
7.4. CONCLUSIONS.....	242
CONCLUSIONS.....	243
1. SUMMARY OF THIS STUDY.....	243
2. GENESIS AND ISAIAH IN ROMANS.....	248
3. THE FIRSTBORN OF MANY BROTHERS	249
4. PROPOSAL FOR FURTHER STUDY.....	250
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	253
1. PRIMARY SOURCES	253
2. SECONDARY SOURCES	255

A NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS

Unless otherwise noted, English translations of the Hebrew Bible / OT, the NT, and the Apocrypha are taken from the RSV. English translations of the LXX are taken from the NETS. However, in using this translation I have taken the liberty of writing all proper names according to their normal anglicized form. In versification I have followed the Hebrew / Greek text, though I normally supply the corresponding references as they appear in English versions.

Standard translations and (occasionally) critical editions were consulted for all non-biblical works. These are listed in the Bibliography.

INTRODUCTION

In the musical *A Fiddler on the Roof*, the experience of a Jewish Ashkenazi community in pre-revolutionary Russia is conveyed through its milkman Reb Tevye. As Tevye delivers his products to distant neighbors, he passes the time talking with God. These conversations articulate the religious and folk traditions by which Tevye maintains his balance (“Like a fiddler on the roof!” he says) in an increasingly hostile and intrusive world. At the conclusion of one discussion, Tevye whimsically bemoans the unique privilege of the Jews as people of God’s favor. “I know, I know,” he ruminates, “we are your chosen people—but once in a while, can’t you choose someone else?”

Absent from many discussions of election in Rom 9, particularly among those who see in it a robust affirmation of Israel’s priority asserted against Gentile presumption, is Tevye’s perception that election is anything but straightforward. One does not have to read very far in the Bible before encountering traces of a less than harmonious relationship between God and his chosen covenantal partner. Indeed, the relationship between the two seems as often as not to be characterized by betrayal (on the part of Israel), indifference (on the part of God), and mutual recrimination.¹ The divinely imposed privilege of election brings in its wake not only benefits but also injuries. The

¹ A few examples will illustrate the point: Israel’s rebellion is assailed in prophetic texts (and elsewhere) too numerous to list; God’s indifference is lamented in many Psalms (e.g., Pss 10, 13, 22, 44, 69, 74, 83, 89, 139). Among other passages, in Judg 2 God plays the part of the scorned lover, and very near to the surface of Deutero-Isaiah’s confident rhetoric lies his community’s own embittered cynicism (evident, inter alia, in Isa 40:27 and 49:14-15).

Israel who prevails against God may win a blessing, but walks the rest of his life with a limp.

In this study, I argue that undergirding Paul's reconfiguration of Abraham's family in Rom 9 is a specific understanding of election which he derives from Genesis—an understanding that resonates with Tevye's wry question. Paul finds in the patriarchal stories not a charter for chosen-nation hubris, but the ironic portrayal of election through exclusion. The divine appointment of one man and his successive descendants as the progenitors of God's chosen people initiates a series of reversals. A younger brother is repeatedly assigned the status of firstborn, but he receives his inheritance only after suffering the rejection his elevation imposed on the elder son. It is this dialectic of election, displacement, and reversal that gives Rom 9 its exegetical foundation. The fate of Jews and Gentiles in the messianic era recapitulates the reversals endured by the chosen and rejected sons.

I seek to establish this claim over the course of seven chapters. In ch. 1, I present the method followed in this study. My attempt to reconstruct Paul's pre-epistolary exegesis of Genesis relies, in part, on the exegetical adaptations Paul makes to his biblical quotations. Therefore I must justify a reading of Paul that (1) probes behind his epistolary argument to an interpreted narrative supporting it; and (2) accounts for the variations between his quotations and their source in light of the textual diversity present in early Judaism.

In ch. 2, I provide the theoretical, socio-religious, and Pauline frameworks for my exegesis of Rom 9. For a viable theoretical model I draw on the ethno-symbolism of Anthony D. Smith. His approach to ethnic identity elucidates how stories, especially

myths of origin, express a collective self-understanding. I then show that Jewish interpreters in the Persian and Greco-Roman periods relied on stories of Abraham (and less frequently, of his children) as a cipher for ideal Jewishness. I devote the majority of this chapter to Paul's use of the Abrahamic stories. He draws on these to legitimate the incorporation of uncircumcised Gentiles, first into Israel itself (Gal, Rom 2), and then alongside Israel as a distinct line of descent in the family of Abraham (Rom 4). It is this latter perspective that he carries into Rom 9.

In ch. 3, I turn to Rom 9:6-13. I pay special attention to the texts that Paul quotes, their biblical contexts, and the issues that they pose for the Apostle's understanding of election and its traditional insignia, namely, circumcision and Torah observance. I side with those who understand Rom 9:6-13 as a defense of Israel's election, but I qualify this reading in two important ways: first, I contend that Paul's argument does not correspond to his initial claim (v. 6b) nor lead naturally to his conclusion (vv. 25-29); second, I maintain that, because his discourse places the rationale for election entirely on the sovereign choice of God, it thereby renders physical circumcision and obedience to Torah, the epiphenomena of election, superfluous. Precisely because the electing God is absolutely sovereign, he is free to reorganize his elect people on the basis of his call and nothing else.

The subject of ch. 4 is a series of connections that link Genesis (as interpreted by Paul) and the prophetic texts introduced in Rom 9:24 and quoted in Rom 9:25-29. If these connections can be demonstrated, they will support my hypothesis that beneath Rom 9 lies the interpreted narratives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Chapters 5 and 6 comprise the heart of this study. In them, I attempt to reconstruct Paul's exegesis of Hos 2:1, 2:25 (ch. 5) and Isa 1:9, 10:22-23 (ch. 6) as prophecies Paul uses to apply the patriarchal stories to the crisis presupposed in 9:6: the widespread Jewish rejection of the gospel and its corresponding acceptance by Gentiles. I seek to confirm this hypothesis by showing its ability to resolve five exegetical difficulties.

In ch. 5, I deal with two challenges set by Rom 9:25-26: (1) What rationale, if any, does Paul have for his use of Hosea to justify the inclusion of Gentile believers in apparent violation of the text's natural meaning? and (2) What reason does Paul have for emphasizing the geographic location of their calling?

In ch. 6, I address two problems in Rom 9:27-29: (3) What does Paul's difficult and shortened quotation from Isa 10:22-23 signify? and (4) What is the origin and purpose of his theology of the remnant? Finally, I close with an interpretive issue posed by my foregoing exegesis: (5) Why does Paul's argument in Rom 9 appear to lack coherence? I maintain that each of these questions can be answered by appealing to the dialectic of election and rejection embedded in Genesis's narrative of the chosen son. Paul sees Israel's destiny in the messianic age as a recapitulation of its etiology in the patriarchal age: the chosen and elect son Israel loses the privileged place he received by grace to his displaced brother, only to receive it back again on the far side of his humiliation.

In ch. 7, I propose that my hypothesized exegesis can resolve three additional conundrums outside of Rom 9: (1) Why do Rom 9:6b-11:10 (a remnant will be saved) and Rom 11:11-32 (all Israel will be saved) appear to give distinct and not entirely

consistent answers to the problem presupposed in 9:6a? (2) Why does Paul present the odd argument in Rom 11 that Jewish rejection of the gospel is *necessary* for Gentile salvation? and (3) Why does Paul throughout Romans affirm the priority of the Jewish people *and* insist on their equality with Gentiles? In attempting to answer these questions, I seek to demonstrate the logic underlying Paul's epistolary rhetoric and contribute to the quest for his elusive coherence.

Brandon Byrne, S.J., in his commentary for the Sacra Pagina series, wrote the following concerning Rom 9-11:

In pursuit of the ultimate inclusion of Israel Paul draws a very long bow indeed. . . . For a long time what is uppermost in the argument is Israel's rejection rather than her eventual acceptance. Modern readers who look to this section of Romans to find some positive reflection upon the fate of the Jewish people have to wait a long time before receiving satisfaction and even then the relevant passage (11:25-32) is not altogether without ambiguities of its own. Only in the context of the whole does Paul's basically "eirenic" vision emerge; *on the way to this complete vision several passages, taken by themselves, appear to cast Jews in a far from favorable light*. It is important, when considering individual elements, always to keep in mind the broader, ultimately "inclusive" vision pursued by Paul.²

According to Byrne, the steps that Paul takes towards his ultimate goal frequently appear to lead in the wrong direction. I agree with this assessment. Discrete elements in the overall argument point the reader to the opposite of its final conclusion. It is the purpose of the present study to answer why this is so.

² Byrne, *Romans* (SP 6; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1996), 284 (emphasis added).

CHAPTER ONE

STORY, TEXT, AND TECHNIQUE: READING SCRIPTURE IN PAUL

In this study, I will attempt to uncover Paul's pre-epistolary exegesis of the patriarchal narratives beneath Rom 9, an exegesis, I will argue, that extends far beyond his explicit quotations from Genesis in Rom 9:7, 9, 12. The evidence for this exegesis lies, to a significant degree, in the alterations Paul makes to his texts from Hosea and Isaiah in Rom 9:25-29. Thus three methodological issues are immediately posed. First, on what basis may an interpreter claim to reconstruct Paul's exegesis of narrative texts *behind* his expressed arguments? Second, given the plurality of biblical text forms in the late Second Temple period, on what basis may an interpreter claim that Paul makes specific changes to his biblical quotations? Finally, what procedures might Paul have used to move from antecedent text to an interpretation that accounts for the biblical quotations? These are distinct issues, requiring separate treatments, but they converge at the point where Paul's altered prophetic quotations indicate that he has performed exegetical operations on a prior narrative passage.

1.1. PAUL'S INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE: STORY

Paul sometimes construes the meaning of his Bible in ways that modern interpreters find cavalier. It is a bold exegete who cites the Torah against circumcision (Gal 3, esp. v. 6, quoting Gen 15:6, and v. 16, quoting a phrase from in Gen 12:7, 13:15, 17:7), who sets

Moses against himself (Rom 10:5-9, quoting Lev 18:5 and Deut 30:12, 14), who calls upon promises of Jerusalem's restoration to justify the inclusion of Gentile Christ-believers (Gal 4:27, quoting Isa 54:1), and who denies the natural meaning of "Don't muzzle the ox" in favor of a novel application to Christian missionaries (1 Cor 9:9, quoting Deut 25:4). From these examples, some scholars conclude that Paul appropriates Israel's Scriptures arbitrarily, perhaps colonizing their pages with foreign christological significations.¹ Those who claim that Paul respected the integrity of his sacred text have been forced to ask what process of hermeneutical extraction might produce these counter-intuitive readings.

Several researchers have claimed that between the quotations in Paul's text and their OT source stands an exegesis which accounts for these strange applications. This interpretive construal does not fully emerge in his letters, but it can be discerned behind them. A recent development within this approach, already anticipated by C. H. Dodd, combines the hypothesis of pre-literary exegesis with the current interest in *narrative* as constitutive of human thought and discourse. The contributions growing out of this research trajectory contain methodological implications important for the present study.²

¹ E.g., H. J. Schoeps, *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History* (trans. Harold Knight; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 244; Christopher D. Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture: The Rhetoric of Quotations in the Letters of Paul* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), passim.

² Broader summaries of the OT in Paul than that pursued here can be found in the following: E. Earle Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957); C. K. Barrett, "The Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New," in *From the Beginnings to Jerome* (vol. 1 of *The Cambridge History of the Bible*; ed. P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 377-411; D. Moody Smith Jr., "The Use of the Old Testament in the New," in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays: Studies in Honor of William Franklin Stinespring* (ed. James M. Efird; Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1972), 3-65; A. T. Hanson, *The New Testament Interpretation of Scripture* (London: SPCK, 1980); Kenneth D. Litwak, "Echoes of Scripture? A Critical Survey of Recent Works on Paul's Use of the Old Testament," *CR:BS* 6 (1998): 260-88; Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999); Craig A. Evans, "The Old Testament in the New," in *The Face of New Testament Studies: A Survey of Recent Research* (ed. Scot McKnight and Grant R. Osborne; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 130-45.

1.1.1. GETTING BEHIND THE TEXT

Before scholars appreciated either textual diversity or interpretive freedom as features of the ancient exegetical landscape, they frequently attributed differences between OT passages and their NT quotations to lapses in memory or, for the pious, direct inspiration of the Spirit. Mediating positions appeared occasionally, suggesting that the NT writers had appropriated Jewish methods of interpretation, or that rabbis had tampered with the Masoretic text for anti-Christian purposes.

Around the turn of the twentieth century, J. Rendel Harris sensed that these approaches had reached a dead-end and sought out a fresh approach. He began by noting that several biblical quotations in early Christian writings show certain peculiarities, for example, variant readings vis-à-vis both the Hebrew and Greek textual traditions and certain texts that appear in combination with each other over a series of writings. To explain these features, Harris argued that the first generation of Christian missionaries compiled lists of biblical passages, or testimonies, for use in the proclamation and defense of the gospel.³ Although no direct evidence for such compilations exists until Cyprian's *Ad Quirinum* (ca. 248), Harris inferred their early existence from the traces they allegedly left in the biblical quotations of the first Christians. This testimony hypothesis, he hoped, would not only account for these characteristics of OT quotations. It would also open a window into the development of early Christian literature in general.

Harris's theory caused more of a splash than a sea-change, but it soon found considerable support (albeit in modified form) in the work of C. H. Dodd. In his

³ Harris, *Testimonies* (2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1916-1920). See also Martin C. Albl, "And Scripture Cannot Be Broken": *The Form and Function of the Early Christian Testimonia Collections* (NovTSup 96; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 7-69; David Lincicum, "Paul and the Testimonia: Quo Vademus?" *JETS* 51 (2008): 297-308.

According to the Scriptures: The Sub-structure of New Testament Theology, Dodd moved the discussion away from a written collection or collections. Instead, he postulated an oral tradition of biblical interpretation, explicating the early kerygma and ultimately rooted in Jesus' own understanding that his ministry was the fulfillment of Scripture.⁴ Dodd made two significant observations concerning the original contexts of various OT proofs. First, many of them contain material frequently alluded to elsewhere in the NT. Second, these passages largely coalesce around three topics: apocalyptic and eschatological expectations, the new Israel, and the suffering servant / righteous one. Dodd labeled this material "the sub-structure of New Testament theology." Behind the NT documents lay an organized program for understanding and announcing the significant events that had brought the church into existence. The kerygma, by its claim to fulfill the Scriptures, imposed on the church a mandate for biblical research.⁵

Dodd's programmatic suggestions were to have a noticeable influence on subsequent research. They contain three implications important to the present study. First, early Christian exegetes actively searched the OT to support and explain evangelistic proclamation.⁶ Second, a quoted verse might serve to recall its larger context, which in turn may have affected an entire NT passage beyond the specific quotation.⁷ Third, the biblical passages that attracted these early readers and therefore

⁴ Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-structure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1952).

⁵ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 111-25.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 60, 126.

shaped their literary products were characterized by a *narrative pattern*.⁸ Relevant passages from Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Minor Prophets, and the Psalms shared an explicit or implied “plot” that seemed to illuminate the death of Christ and the origins of the church.⁹ Long before *narrative* came into vogue, Dodd discerned that the appropriation of Israel’s Scriptures by early Christians could only be understood with reference to the *story* or *stories* found in them.

A critical appreciation of Dodd’s proposals set in and various research projects began in their wake. The most sustained attempt to pursue his thesis in greater depth and exegetical grounding is perhaps Barnabas Lindars’s *New Testament Apologetic*.¹⁰ Although Lindars shifted the impetus for biblical interpretation from kerygmatic explication to apologetic exigency, he carried further Dodd’s attempt to recover the earliest Christian readings of Scripture. Less indebted to Dodd was Donald Juel. In his *Messianic Exegesis: Christological Interpretation of the Old Testament in Early Christianity*, he denied the significance of narrative patterns and placed more weight than Dodd did on Jewish comparative materials.¹¹ Yet in different ways, Dodd, Lindars, and Juel showed that any attempt to understand the developing theological beliefs of the first Christians must probe behind the canonical documents to reconstruct the exegetical labors that preceded them. The NT writings are the product of an interpretive effort and

⁸ Dodd developed an analogous proposal for understanding the early Christian proclamation in *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1936), 17, 21-24.

⁹ Dodd, *Sub-structure*, 72, 98, 102, 109, 128-29.

¹⁰ Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961).

¹¹ Juel, *Messianic Exegesis: Christological Interpretation of the Old Testament in Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988).

in many cases reflect not the fountainhead but the delta of exegetical reflection. Recent scholarship has extended this line of research.¹²

1.1.2. LOCATING A PRE-EPISTOLARY STORY

Dodd found the substructure of NT theology in the narrative shape of early Christian exegesis. In time this approach to biblical exegesis intersected with a burgeoning interest in *narrative* itself, both as a fundamental element of Paul's conception of reality and a scholarly tool for interpreting his texts.¹³ Three scholars in particular have explored this nexus in groundbreaking ways: Richard B. Hays, N. T. Wright, and Carol K. Stockhausen.¹⁴ Several common motifs make a synoptic view of their work appropriate.

¹² A notable development is the increasingly narrow focus evident in large monographs investigating single NT books. Some of the more important examples include Joel Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster / John Knox, 1992); Rikki E. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark* (WUNT 2 / 88; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997); David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (WUNT 2 / 130; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000).

¹³ A large number of studies have found Paul's letters congenial to narrative interpretation, including Daniel Patte, *Paul's Faith and the Power of the Gospel: A Structural Introduction to His Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983); Norman R. Petersen, *Rediscovering Paul: Philemon and the Sociology of Paul's Narrative World* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985); Romano Penna, "Narrative Aspects of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans," ch. 5 in *Jew and Greek Alike* (vol. 1 of *Paul the Apostle*; trans. Thomas P. Wahl; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1996); Stephen E. Fowl, *The Story of Christ in the Ethics of Paul: An Analysis of the Function of the Hymnic Material in the Pauline Corpus* (JSNTSup 36; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990); Ben Witherington III, *Paul's Narrative World of Thought: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster / John Knox, 1994); Michael J. Gorman, *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001); idem, *Inhabiting the Cruciform God: Kenosis, Justification, and Theosis in Paul's Narrative Soteriology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); A. Katherine Grieb, *The Story of Romans: A Narrative Defense of God's Righteousness* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster / John Knox, 2002); Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11* (2d ed.; Biblical Resource Series; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); Bruce W. Longenecker, ed., *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster / John Knox, 2002); James C. Miller, "Paul and Hebrews: A Comparison of Narrative Worlds," in *Hebrews: Contemporary Methods—New Insights* (ed. Gabriella Gelardini; Biblical Interpretation Series 75; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 245-64.

¹⁴ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989); Stockhausen, *Moses' Veil and the Glory of the New Covenant* (AnBib 116; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1989); idem, "2 Corinthians and the Principles of Pauline Exegesis," in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel* (ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders; JSNTSup 83; SSEJC 1; Sheffield: Sheffield

First, they all attempt to go beyond a narrow focus on Paul's explicit citations and approach Paul as a *biblical* theologian, a missionary and thinker who returns again and again to Scripture's attestation that God has acted in the past and its promise that he will do so in the future. Second, they all argue that Paul's hermeneutical horizon is arched by a narrative or set of narratives disclosed in Israel's sacred texts. He strives to understand and interpret *stories*, though whether Paul primarily engages a discrete biblical drama—with its self-contained plot, characters, and resolution—or the meta-story of God's involvement with Israel, the church, and the world varies with each interpreter. Finally, they all maintain that the biblical text has an autonomy which Paul respects. He does not merely exploit it for a series of rhetorically effective quotations, nor does he use it as a tool to magnify his own voice. Rather, Paul *reads* it and, to some degree, *learns* from it.

Despite these similarities, each of these interpreters situates *narrative* in a different location within Paul's interpretive practices. In Hays's research, what "echoes" through Paul's epistles is not simply the "Scriptures of Israel" but a more specific story of God's righteousness as covenantal faithfulness to his people. Hays wants to show that Paul seizes the scriptural testimony to God's actions in and for the Jewish people as a metaphorical representation of salvation in Christ, yet without violating the integrity of that witness or the divine faithfulness to which it points. The Scriptures are not a palimpsest over which Paul inscribes his own, unrelated set of meanings. Rather, they

Academic Press, 1993), 143-64; Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991); idem, *The New Testament and the People of God* (vol. 1 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God*; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992); idem, *What Saint Paul Really Said* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997); idem, *Paul in Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005); idem, *Justification: God's Plan and Paul's Vision* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2009).

comprise an account of God's commitment to Israel that can be neither "superseded nor nullified," but rather is "transformed into a witness of the gospel."¹⁵

Although Hays provides several criteria to identify where in Paul's letters this story reverberates (availability, volume, recurrence, thematic coherence, etc.), he is less interested in applying them to various passages than in exploring how the latent OT signification guides Paul's reading even when he appears to transgress it.¹⁶ A notorious example, relevant to the present study, occurs in Rom 9:25-26. Here Paul asserts that the promise of *Israel's* restoration in Hos 2:1 and 2:25 applies to *Gentile* Christians. Paul appears to subvert the text's transparent meaning, but, according to Hays, the controlling hermeneutical norm exerted by the story of God's faithfulness eventually pushes itself to the fore. The regulative weight of Israel's sacred story wins the day, reasserting itself against the Pauline trope and finally compelling him to proclaim that "all Israel will be saved" (11:26). It thereby seizes Paul's own "strong misreadings" and redeploys them as a sublimated testament to its own unconquerability.¹⁷

For Hays, the form of this story is not any specific biblical text whose details occupy Paul's attention, but an *abstracted, generalized witness* to God's covenantal faithfulness. A similar line is taken by N. T. Wright, but he brings a much greater emphasis on plot elements such as sequence and resolution than one finds in Hays's approach. Wright is not seeking metaphorical and symbolic possibilities between Scripture and gospel. Rather, he begins with Israel's sacred story of creation, covenant,

¹⁵ Hays, *Echoes*, 157.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 29-32.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 66-68.

law, curse, exile, and hoped-for renewal. Paul's unexpected encounter with the risen Messiah disclosed this story's surprising climax.¹⁸ According to Wright, the apostle's biblical interpretation constitutes an effort to reappropriate Scripture in light of its unexpected fulfillment.¹⁹

This maximalist understanding of covenant and story as mutually interpreting categories allows Wright to invoke a range of biblical texts as explanatory frameworks for Paul's biblical exegesis. He fits specific passages from the letters into the sweeping account of creation, covenant, curse, and cross. Wright wants to show that Paul evokes, reinterprets, confirms, or subverts various elements of Israel's meta-story on the basis of his belief in the resurrected Messiah.

If Hays presents an apostolic poet creatively reimagining the metaphorical potentialities of Israel's story, and if Wright finds a narrative theologian rethinking that story from the beginning to its cruciform climax, Carol Stockhausen offers a rabbinic exegete thoroughly engaged not with tropes or meta-stories but *specific narrative texts*, investigating them according to the standard procedures of his day, and finding in prophetic oracles the resources for actualizing (what Paul perceives as) their contemporary meaning. In a discussion of 2 Cor 3, she states Paul's hermeneutical interests in this way:

Paul himself [and not only his opponents] knows the narrative of Moses' glorious descent from the mountain in every detail. He follows its structure closely. He accepts the story unreservedly. He wants to understand it. He wants to explain it to his Corinthian readers. He wants to use it to support his argument to them. To do all these things he must find the true meaning of Exodus 34:29-35, solve its

¹⁸ Wright, *People of God*, 216; idem, *Saint Paul*, 34-35; idem, *Fresh Perspective*, 10 and passim; idem, *Justification*, 59-63.

¹⁹ Wright, *Climax*, 26; *Saint Paul*, 37; and frequently.

difficulties, and make it relevant to his contemporary audience. In short, he must interpret it.²⁰

Stockhausen is not looking for suppressed resonances echoing in Paul's letters but for clues embedded in his epistolary rhetoric that indicate a substantial exegetical enterprise occurring behind it. Explicit quotations, allusions, peculiar vocabulary, mixed metaphors, and argumentative leaps potentially serve as pointers to a scriptural context within which Paul's discourse operates.²¹ The interaction between his own biblical interpretation, on the one hand, and the situation-specific persuasive goals of his correspondence, on the other, shape the epistolary communication. A reading alert to the scriptural precursors that Paul's text points to can produce a hypothetical reconstruction of his exegesis that, while speculative, elucidates gaps in logic, jarring transitions, or apparent contradictions lying on the surface of his letters.

In order to carry out this program, Stockhausen posits for Paul a series of guiding hermeneutical interests.²² First, Paul demonstrates a keen interest in stories of Israel's founding heroes, especially Abraham and Moses. This claim has been established by Stockhausen's examination of 2 Cor 3 (where Paul interprets Exod 31-34) and Gal 3-4 (where he interprets Gen 12, 15, and 17), validated several times by her students, and independently confirmed in the extensive study by Francis Watson.²³ Second, Paul

²⁰ Stockhausen, *Moses' Veil*, 101; see also 147 n. 108.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 41.

²² *Ibid.*, 20-30; *idem*, "Principles," 144-46.

²³ C. Marvin Pate, *Adam Christology as the Exegetical & Theological Substructure of 2 Corinthians 4:7-5:21* (Lanham, N.Y.: University Press of America, 1991); Timothy W. Berkley, *From a Broken Covenant to Circumcision of the Heart: Pauline Intertextual Exegesis in Romans 2:17-29* (SBLDS 175; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000); Stephan K. Davis, *The Antithesis of the Ages: Paul's Reconfiguration of Torah* (CBQMS 33; Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association, 2002); Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (London: T&T Clark, 2004). Watson writes (against Hays and in agreement with Stockhausen): "If there is a 'narrative substructure' in Gal 3-4, it is to be found in

frequently applies prophetic and, less often, sapiential texts to these stories as hermeneutical lenses which clarify their perceived meaning for his own day (see §1.3.1.). Third, Paul consistently engages the entire context of his base text. Finally, Paul's rabbinic training equipped him with specific exegetical techniques like *qal wa-homer*, *gezera shawa*, and *peshet*, which enable him to perform a variety of interpretive maneuvers.²⁴ This Paul is less a "virtuoso reader" (so Hays) than an interpretive adept, skillfully and intensively committed to probing texts, ferreting out their meaning (as he understood it), and applying it to his own gospel and ministry.

1.1.3. LEGITIMATING A HYPOTHESIS

By postulating a narrative antecedent, or substructure, behind Paul's text, Hays, Wright, and Stockhausen are able to give plausible and even compelling readings of his letters. But conclusions inferred from operations allegedly occurring prior to or outside of the Apostle's act of writing cannot be other than hypothetical. The specific character of this enterprise requires firm criteria to obtain convincing results. Unfortunately, some of the work just reviewed occasionally leaves the impression that it lacks methodological rigor. For example, the list of criteria proposed by Hays does not reoccur in his ensuing exegesis, suggesting that intuition and sympathy often guide his judgments. Very different from Hays, Wright justifies an appeal to story by insisting on its public character: it is the great story which Israel told, retold, celebrated, and socially enacted.²⁵

the use of scriptural material and not in Paul's 'narrative christological formulations' " (*Hermeneutics*, 209 n. 53).

²⁴ Stockhausen also includes the location and resolution of textual contradictions in her list of Paul's hermeneutical principles.

²⁵ Wright, *People of God*, 47-80; idem, *Fresh Perspective*, 6-13.

But at times Wright's actual interpretation of Pauline texts comes dangerously close to relying on an abstracted meta-narrative to establish desired conclusions that could not be gained by straightforward exegesis.²⁶

On this score, Stockhausen's work provides considerable advantage. Her reliance on specific lexical connections, thematic overlap, and comparative methods brings objective controls to the task of discerning a potential narrative-based exegesis supporting Paul's arguments. It is her program that I have adapted to the needs of the present study. On this basis, I have formulated the following aims for this study. If the pre-epistolary exegesis I attribute to Paul meets them, its plausibility is thereby established.²⁷

²⁶ Wright's essays "Curse and Covenant: Galatians 3.10-14" and "Reflected Glory: 2 Corinthians 3" (in *Climax*, 137-56, 175-92, respectively) provide good examples of how he uses narrative to bring unruly passages into line. R. Barry Matlock expresses a suspicion, which applies to both Hays (whom he names) and Wright (whom he does not): "Until quite recently, my mental lexicon of contemporary biblical criticism had only the following (half-joking) entry under Narrative Criticism of Paul: 'What you do when the Pauline text doesn't actually say what you need it to (i.e., you read it in light of the underlying narrative)'" ("The Arrow and the Web: Critical Reflections on a Narrative Approach to Paul," in *Narrative Dynamics*, 44); see also Mark A. Seifrid, "The Narrative of Scripture and Justification by Faith: A Fresh Response to N. T. Wright," *CTQ* 72 (2008): 19-44.

²⁷ In setting forth these criteria, I do not imply that Paul's audience would necessarily have been able to discern any exegesis beyond what is evident from his explicit quotations, glosses, and allusions. The sources on which Paul draws to compose his epistles must remain methodologically distinct from the rhetorical aims he hopes to realize (*pace* Beate Kowalski, "Zur Funktion der Schriftzitate in Röm 9,19-29: Gottes Zorn und Erbarmen," in *The Letter to the Romans* [ed. Udo Schnelle; BETL 226; Louvain: Peeters, 2009], 719).

Concerning this point, a comparison with methodology of J. Ross Wagner is telling. In his argument that Isaiah leads Paul to affirm Israel's final salvation, Wagner repeatedly draws conclusions from Rom 9 by the dual expediency of referring his exegesis to Rom 11 (in truth, Rom 11:26-27, the only unambiguous affirmation of all Israel's salvation in Romans) and to the promises in Isaiah. On the basis of these "echoes [that linger] in the background" and the "undercurrents tugging [at] Paul's logic" the explicit argument of Rom 9 is made to yield Wagner's desired results, which it patently would not be able to do if Wagner stuck more closely to what Paul actually states (*Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul "in Concert" in the Letter to the Romans* [NovTSup 101; Leiden: Brill, 2002], 53, 75; see also 39, 43-44, 70-71, and his frequent appeals to the meaning of discrete passages established "on the basis of Rom 9-11 as a whole," e.g., p. 76). But then, why does the Isaianic undercurrent flow in a direction opposite to the movement of the argument on the surface? Wagner cannot decide what carries the semantic and rhetorical burden of the discourse: is it what Paul actually says in Rom 9 or rather what Wagner finds in the original context from which Paul drew his quotations? (Sigurd Grindheim makes a similar criticism in *The Crux of Election: Paul's Critique of the Jewish Confidence in the Election of Israel* [WUNT 2 / 202; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005], 148-49 n. 47.) An example will illustrate. Wagner states that by interpreting Rom

First, the proposed exegesis will have a demonstrable connection to the epistolary argument. It will rely on explicit quotations from the proposed Scriptural background. These provide objective controls because they ground the hypothetical exegesis in Paul's text. But even where quotations are lacking, the presence of unique vocabulary, prominent themes, or clear OT allusions may indicate an interpretation occurring prior to Paul's writing the epistle. I attempt to meet this criterion in ch. 4.

Second, the proposed exegesis will incorporate exegetical techniques known from Paul's intellectual world (§1.3.). Given his rabbinic training, the pervasive occurrence of certain interpretive methods in antiquity, and the christological and eschatological hermeneutics common in early Christianity, the methods of Paul's biblical interpretation should cohere with comparative evidence from his cultural milieu. I seek to incorporate this material in most of the chapters that follow (esp. §2.2.; §4.1.; §5.2.2.1.; §6.2.4.).

Third, the proposed exegesis will resolve difficulties not easily accounted for on other grounds. At least some problematic features in Paul's text should become lucid if the hypothesized exegesis is to have merit. In the present study of Rom 9, the problems addressed are five in number: (1) Why does Paul use passages from Hosea to justify the inclusion of the Gentiles? (2) What is the significance of the emphasis on place in Hos 2:1 = Rom 9:26? (3) What does Isa 10:22-23 signify, given that its form in Rom 9:27-28 differs remarkably from both the MT and the LXX? (4) What is the origin and meaning of

9:22-24 in light of Rom 11, "the echoes of the scriptural texts Paul cites in chapters 9-11—texts that speak of God's commitment to save his people Israel—combine to form a counter-melody that gradually swells in volume until it becomes the dominant strain of chapter 11" (ibid., *Heralds*, 77-78). I can only ask: "Counter-melody to *what*?" Wagner has just interpreted *the meaning of 9:22-24* on the basis of Rom 11, so that Rom 9 and Rom 11 *both* contain the same hope for all Israel. If the two levels of meaning are *actually contrary* to each other, which they need to be for Wagner's "counter-melody" metaphor to work, then Paul should say or imply in Rom 9 precisely what he does not in Rom 11. But if they *are* contrary to each other, why would Paul be led to argue in such a confusing fashion? It is this is the elephant in room of Wagner's monograph that I hope to deal with.

the remnant? and (5) Why does the argument of Rom 9 appear to run in opposite directions? The first two of these questions will be engaged in ch. 5, the last three in ch. 6.

Fourth, the proposed exegesis will have explanatory power that extends beyond the exegetical difficulties of the specific passage under investigation. If the interpretation postulated for Paul is capable of solving problems beyond those in Rom 9, the text that generated the hypothesis, it can claim substantial confirmation. This aim will be met in ch. 7, in which I will suggest that the results of this study can resolve three further difficulties: (1) Why does Rom 9:6-11:10 appear to contradict Rom 11:11-32? (2) What accounts for the convoluted reasoning in Rom 11:11-32 itself? (3) How can Paul affirm the continued viability of Israel's election while insisting that there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles?

If the present study meets all four of these goals, its claim to isolate and explicate Paul's interpretation of the patriarchal narratives behind Rom 9 will rest on a firm basis.

1.2. PAUL'S INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE: TEXTS

Objective criteria are needed not only to establish a narrative-based exegesis behind a given passage in Paul's letters. They are also necessary for evaluating the text forms of his biblical quotations and interpreting the significance of any alterations that appear in them. If Paul reproduces a scriptural passage that deviates markedly from its form as found in the LXX, can the interpreter deduce from this variation that Paul intentionally changed the wording to reflect the results of a previous exegesis? The present section will outline the problem and pose criteria for determining when Paul has indeed made theologically significant alterations to his quoted texts.

1.2.1. TEXTUAL DIVERISTY IN SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM

When Paul desired to consult his Scriptures, he could have had recourse to a broad range of texts. The manuscript evidence from the Second Temple period indicates that multiple text types existed simultaneously and even, as the Qumran discoveries prove, side by side. Not only did the Dead Sea Scrolls confirm the antiquity of the MT's predecessor, they also provided examples of the *Vorlagen* of the LXX and the Samaritan Pentateuch. Further, they revealed additional biblical texts that could not be aligned with any of these textual traditions. As Emanuel Tov summarizes: "It appears that during the last three pre-Christian centuries many texts were current in Palestine; in other words, this period was characterized by textual plurality."²⁸ Scholars like Frank Moore Cross (building on William F. Albright), Eugene Ulrich, and other have presented models to understand the complex development of the biblical text during this period, but all agree with Tov's assessment that the Second Temple era was characterized by extensive diversity of text types.²⁹

²⁸ Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 191.

²⁹ Albright, "New Light on Early Recensions of the Hebrew Bible," *BASOR* 140 (1955): 27-33; Cross, "The History of the Biblical Text in the Light of Discoveries in the Judaean Desert," in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text* (ed. Frank Moore Cross and Shemaryahu Talmon; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 177-95; repr. from *HTR* 57 (1964); idem, "The Contribution of the Qumrân Discoveries to the Study of the Biblical Text," in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, 278-92; repr. from *IEJ* (1966); idem, "The Evolution of a Theory of Local Texts," in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, 306-20; Ulrich, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Biblical Text," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (2 vols.; ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam; Leiden: Brill, 1998-1999), 1:79-100; idem, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible* (SDSSRL; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999). See also P. W. Skehan, "The Qumran Manuscripts and Textual Criticism," in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, 274; repr. from *Volume du Congrès, Strasbourg, 1956* (ed. G. W. Anderson; *SupVT* 4; Leiden: Brill, 1957); Tov, "A Modern Textual Outlook Based on the Qumran Scrolls," *HUCA* 53 (1982): 11-27; idem, *Textual Criticism*, 114-17; Natalio Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible* (trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson; Leiden, Brill: 2001), 197, 250-51; R. Timothy McLay, "Biblical Texts and the Scriptures for the New Testament Church," in *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament* (ed. Stanley E. Porter; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 55.

The situation is similar with respect to the Septuagint, but for reasons unique to its translation and transmission process.³⁰ The triumph of the Lagardian model over the opposing thesis of Paul Kahle concerning LXX origins suggests that only a single Greek translation existed for each biblical book until the time revisions began to occur.³¹ It is the task of the Göttingen Septuaginta-Unternehmen, founded by de Lagarde's student Alfred Rahlfs, to recover this original text insofar as the extant evidence permits.

Yet this does not mean that Paul had access to a pristine LXX text. The discoveries from Qumran and its environs have shown that revisions began prior to the rise of Christianity. The most significant of these discoveries is the Greek scroll of the Twelve Prophets from Naḥal Ḥever (1st cent. C.E.).³² Dominique Barthélemy proved that its text resulted from a systematic revision designed to bring a LXX text type into

³⁰ Some scholars restrict the term "Septuagint" (LXX) to the Christian uncials from the fourth cent. and later, and apply the label "Old Greek" (OG) to the Greek translation of the Hebrew undertaken first in Alexandria (or even limited to the translation of the Pentateuch). However, even this restriction has its own ambiguities. For my purposes, I see no reason to dispense with "Septuagint" (following Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000], 31-32; the problem is also discussed in Leonard Greenspoon, "The Use and Abuse of the Term 'LXX' and Related Terminology in Recent Scholarship," *BIOSCS* 20 [1987]: 21-29).

³¹ Harry M. Orlinsky, "Qumran and the Present State of Old Testament Text Studies: The Septuagint Text," *JBL* 78 (1959): 33; Jobes and Silva, *Invitation*, 274-76; Fernández Marcos, *Context*, 102-3; James Barr, "Paul and the LXX: A Note on Some Recent Work," *JTS* NS 45 (2003): 598-99; R. Timothy McLay, *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 103; Emanuel Tov, "Greek Biblical Texts from the Judean Desert," in *Hebrew Bible, Greek Bible, and Qumran* (TSAJ 121; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 363; repr. from *The Bible as Book: The Transmission of the Greek Text* (ed. S. McKendrick and O. A. O'Sullivan; London: British Library and Oak Knoll Press, 2003).

Paul de Lagarde argued that behind the various divergent texts and recensions that characterize the extant manuscripts of the LXX lay a single translation, an *Ur*-text. This text could, in principle, be recovered through textual criticism. Paul Kahle objected to this model of LXX origins and argued instead that from the beginning, separate Greek translations occurred in different locations at different times for different purposes; the "LXX" was an authorized version intended to suppress all previous translations (Kahle, *The Cairo Geniza* [2d ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959], 211-28; idem, "Problems of the Septuagint," in *Studies in the Septuagint: Origins, Recensions, and Interpretations* [ed. Sidney Jellicoe; New York: KTAV, 1974], 67-77; repr. from *Studia patristica* (ed. F. L. Cross and Kurt Aland; 2 vols.; TU 63-64; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1957).

³² Emmanuel Tov, with R. A. Kraft and P. J. Parsons, *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Naḥal Ḥever (8ḤevXIIgr)* (DJD 8; Oxford: Clarendon, 1990).

conformity with the proto-MT. This conclusion decisively pushed the period of recensional activity well before the Aquila (ca. 130 C.E.), traditionally thought to have been the first scholar to undertake a thorough revision of the Greek Bible.³³

Most of these revisions sought to “correct” the Greek text according to a Hebrew exemplar, though the Hebrew tradition itself was still in flux.³⁴ In addition, extant manuscripts indicate that scribes made revisions due to stylistic as well as theological commitments. Recensional labors have even produced two distinct versions of several books (Judges, sections of Kings, Habakkuk 3, Esther, Daniel, Tobit, Susanna, Judith). To complicate matters further, not only do the surviving manuscript groupings reveal an extremely complex process of transmission, a given manuscript frequently contains disparate recensions within it. Therefore the Greek Scriptures, no less than their Hebrew counterparts, existed in multiple forms during the Second Temple period.

Early Christian writings themselves witness to the wide range of available texts and recensions. New Testament evidence such as the use of proto-Theodotion Daniel and the distinctive Matthean formula quotations show that the textual diversity characterizing early Judaism also obtained in the nascent Christ-movement. Given this state of affairs, an interpreter who makes definitive claims that Paul used “the LXX” or that he himself made any specific alteration may appear to be speaking without due circumspection. Clearly, reliable criteria are necessary to appreciate not only what text Paul read but also how he used it.

³³ Barthélemy, “Redécouverte d’un chaînon manquant de l’histoire de la Septante,” in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, 127-39; repr. from *RB* 60 (1953); idem, *Les devanciers d’Aquila* (VTSup 10; Leiden: Brill, 1963).

³⁴ Cross, “History of the Biblical Text,” 179; Tov, “Jewish Greek Scriptures,” in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters* (ed. Robert A. Kraft and George W. E. Nickelsburg; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 224-25.

1.2.2. DETERMINING PAUL'S QUOTATIONS

Nevertheless, in the majority of instances, the source of Paul's biblical quotations poses little difficulty. If they agree with the text of a critically reconstructed edition such as the Göttingen LXX, as they frequently do, the reading can be judged septuagintal.³⁵ However, there are frequent variations. In theory, any of the following could account for them:

- 1) Paul quotes the LXX; the modern edition, either through editorial error or lack of extant evidence, does not reproduce the correct text in this case.
- 2) Paul quotes the LXX from memory and does not produce his text exactly.
- 3) Paul quotes from a LXX MS that has been revised; in most cases, this would involve a revision towards the Hebrew text.
- 4) Paul quotes from a LXX MS that he has revised himself.³⁶
- 5) Paul quotes from a LXX MS that has suffered from textual corruption.³⁷
- 6) Paul quotes from an alternative Greek translation; like the septuagintal revisions, other known translations of the Scriptures into Greek usually aimed at closer fidelity to a Hebrew prototype than was achieved by the LXX.³⁸
- 7) Paul translates his quotation directly from the Hebrew.
- 8) Paul quotes from the LXX, but the altered text form reflects his own prior exegetical work and is designed to bring out more clearly the interpretive significance he finds in it.

³⁵ Paul's letters contain approximately eighty-three quotations from the OT. Whereas their measure of agreement with the LXX is extensive, in only four to six cases do they follow the MT noticeably (estimates vary), and never completely (William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* [5th ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1902], 302-3; Henry Barclay Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914], 400; Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 11-12; D. Moody Smith, "The Pauline Literature," in *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars, SSF* [ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988], 272-73; Christopher D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature* [SNTSMS 74; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992], 67; Moisés Silva, "Old Testament in Paul," *DPL* 630-32; Fernández Marcos, *Septuagint*, 328-29).

³⁶ Martin Hengel favors this theory (*The Septuagint as Christian Scripture: Its Prehistory and the Problem of Its Canon* [trans. Mark E. Biddle; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2002], 22, 89, 108-9).

³⁷ This is how Dietrich-Alex Koch accounts for the wording of Isa 10:22-23 in Rom 9:27-28 and of Isa 52:7 in Rom 10:15 ("The Quotations of Isaiah 8,14 and 28,16 in Romans 9,33 and 1 Peter 2,6.8 as a Test Case for Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament," *ZNW* 101 [2010]: 223-40). I follow his conclusions with respect to Isa 10:22-23 in §4.2.2. below.

³⁸ This approach is advocated by Timothy H. Lim (*Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1997], 140-60) and R. Timothy McLay (*Use of the Septuagint*, 27, 117; "Biblical Texts," 38-58). Nevertheless, even McLay concedes that "there is . . . merit to the view that general agreement with the OG [on the part of NT writers] indicates substantial dependence unless proven otherwise" (*Use of the Septuagint*, 43).

- 9) Paul quotes not the OT directly, but an early Jewish or Christian exegetical tradition, in which case several of the above possibilities could, *mutatis mutandis*, apply to the quoted tradition.³⁹

Not all of these options deserve equal consideration. Number 1, while remaining a theoretical possibility, requires anyone pursuing it to offer arguments of overwhelming strength to counter the expertise with which the Göttingen volumes have been produced. That Paul quoted from memory (#2) is an option difficult to square with the exact and nearly exact agreement between several quotations and their parent text, especially when the quoted material is quite lengthy, for example, the string of passages quoted in Rom 15:9-12.⁴⁰ It also fails to explain why several of Paul's "memory lapses" conform to the requirements of his argument so closely.⁴¹ Nor does Paul's recourse to the Hebrew text have great merit (#7); aside from the paucity of examples where Paul's quotation matches any known Hebrew text, he quotes from the LXX even when the Hebrew form would further his argument.

The remaining possibilities may claim greater plausibility, but each Pauline quotation must be examined on its own merits before a judgment is made. While none should be summarily dismissed or accepted, previous research has tended to focus on the third and eighth possibilities. These require further comment. First, in several instances Paul's quotations diverge from the LXX reading because he used a text that had been revised towards the Hebrew. This conclusion was arrived at by Dietrich-Alex Koch on

³⁹ Barnabas Lindars's work tends in this direction (*Apologetic*; idem, "The Old Testament and Universalism in Paul," *BJRL* 69 [1987]: 511-27).

⁴⁰ Dietrich-Alex Koch, *Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums: Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus* (BHT 69; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986), 93.

⁴¹ There are however specific instances where quotation from memory is plausible, e.g., Isa 29:16 and 45:9 in Rom 9:20-21 (so Maillot, "Essai," 62; see also Koch, *Schrift*, 35-42; Kowalski, "Funktion," 716).

the basis of a thorough analysis, and it has been confirmed by further research.⁴² Where a quotation in Paul's letters follows the LXX text in most of its details yet diverges in the direction of the MT or another known Hebrew text, he most likely utilized a manuscript type that had been previously revised.

Second, like other Jewish interpreters Paul made changes in his quoted texts to explicate the meaning he found in them.⁴³ In antiquity, it was common for interpreters of authoritative texts to alter quoted passages in order to express more clearly their perceived meaning in the contemporary situation. The practice occurred in early Christianity; early Judaism, especially among the rabbis; and the Greco-Roman environment at large.⁴⁴ While the intellectual context of such exegesis varied, ancient readers routinely inscribed their own understanding into a quoted text, whether the ideological basis be eschatological, apocalyptic, priestly, philosophical-ethical, or something else.⁴⁵

⁴² Koch, *Schrift*, 78-81; idem, "Quotations," 223-40; Hengel, *Septuagint*, 22, 109. Koch's conclusions with respect to Isaiah were confirmed in Florian Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus* (FRANT 179; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 41-42; idem, "Letters of Paul as Witnesses to and for the Septuagint Text," in *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures* (ed. Wolfgang Kraus and R. Glenn Wooden; SBLSCS 53; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 253-71; Wagner, *Heralds*, 344-46. Philo's quotations from the Septuagint attests to similar revisions towards the then-current Hebrew text (Peter Katz, "Septuagintal Studies in Mid-Century: Their Links with the Past and Their Present Tendencies" in *Studies in the Septuagint*, 51; repr. from *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology: Studies in Honour of C. H. Dodd* [ed. W. D. Davies and David Daube; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956]).

⁴³ Koch, *Schrift*, 102-98; Fernández Marcos, *Septuagint*, 329. A relatively straightforward example occurs in Rom 10:11, quoting Isa 28:16. Here Paul has intentionally added the word *πᾶς*, *all*, to the text, as indicated by a comparison with Rom 9:33, where the correct form of Isa 28:16 appears.

⁴⁴ Most scholarly attention has been directed towards the Qumran *pesharim* (e.g., Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and Its Use of the Old Testament* [2d ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968], 183-202; Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 139-47). Christopher Stanley has shown that the reshaping of quoted material occurred much more broadly ("Paul and Homer: Greco-Roman Citation Practice in the First Century C.E.," *NovT* 22 [1990]: 48-78; idem, *Language*, 267-337).

⁴⁵ I. Howard Marshall, "An Assessment of Recent Developments," in *It Is Written*, 13.

Clearly, an interpreter of Paul's quotations must approach any particular instance aware of these possibilities and not close off alternatives prematurely. As Stanley notes, within a single letter (Romans), the quotations from a single book (Isaiah) provide data witnessing to all the main septuagintal textual families as well as pre-Christian revisions towards the Hebrew.⁴⁶ The interpreter making the case that Paul intentionally altered a biblical text in a theologically significant manner is faced with the challenge, How can one establish that Paul has adapted his quotation to his argument if the peculiar form might indicate an alternative text available to him?

To address this issue, I employ a simple criterion: If Paul is the only known witness for a specific reading (or if his reading is on text-critical grounds prior to other witnesses) and if the changes are (a) integrated with the surrounding Pauline context and / or (b) connected to the other texts with which he is working, then one can conclude that he himself is responsible for the form of the quotation as it appears in his epistle.⁴⁷ A secondary criterion can provide additional confirmation: If the Pauline quotation is altered away from the MT, it is more likely to have originated from Paul's own hand rather than from a lost revision, since the motive for most known revisions (i.e., to bring it in line with a Hebrew exemplar) is not present. On the basis of these criteria, individual quotations can be analyzed and the extent of Paul's rewriting assessed.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Stanley, *Language*, 68-69. McLay issues a similar call for caution (*The Use of the Septuagint*, 26).

⁴⁷ This is similar to the methodological principle enunciated by Wilk: "[D]eviations from the septuagintal text should be attributed to [Paul] only if they match his intention in quoting from the Scriptures" ("Witnesses," 261; see also pp. 263-64).

⁴⁸ These criteria are most salient in ch. 4, though not rehearsed in a mechanical fashion at every juncture. Their role in chs. 2 and 3 is more implicit, because most of the quotations discussed in these chapters come from Genesis, a book whose Greek version follows its Hebrew *Vorlage* closely, and whose transmission in both languages was characterized by remarkable textual stability; see Swete, *Introduction*,

1.2.3. EXCURSUS: PAUL AND THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

In the chapters to follow, I base my arguments largely on the Greek Scriptures, and I never make claims for Paul and his biblical interpretation that rely exclusively on connections possible only in Hebrew. However, I have not hesitated to make extensive reference to the Hebrew text. I do this for three reasons. First, in my judgment a full appreciation of the interpretive issues involved, from Paul's end or ours, can be attained only when one is aware of the transformations in meaning involved as the Scriptures journeyed from their original Hebrew to Greek translation. Second, it is entirely possible that some of the exegetical work informing Paul's letters came to him as part of an interpretive tradition that had been assembled by Hebrew-speaking readers.

Finally, and most importantly, I consider it very likely that Paul had sufficient command of Hebrew to read his scriptural texts in their native language. Paul refers to himself as a "Hebrew of Hebrews" and as a Pharisee (Phil 3:5; 2 Cor 11:22), a peculiar self-description for one incapable of reading Hebrew.⁴⁹ His self-identification as a Ἑβραῖος is not mere an ethnic or religious categorization but includes a linguistic component, though the word itself cannot determine whether this means Hebrew or Aramaic or includes both.⁵⁰ Paul's claim to superior accomplishments in "Judaism"

315; Cross, "History," in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, 182-83; Skehan, "Qumran Manuscripts," in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, 213; John William Wevers, "An Apologia for Septuagint Studies," *BIOSCS* 18 (1985): 37 (though Wevers's cautionary remarks in also deserve notice: *Text History of the Greek Genesis* [MSU 11; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974], 186-87, 217); Johann Cook, "The Exegesis of the Greek Genesis," in *VI Congress of the IOSCS* (ed. Claude E. Cox; SBLSCS 23; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 91-125; Melvin K. H. Peters, "Septuagint," *ABD* 5:1101. In these instances, the unique textual history of Genesis limits the problem of textual plurality.

⁴⁹ So Martin Hengel, *The Pre-Christian Paul* (trans. John Bowden; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1991), 38.

⁵⁰ "Neither in II Cor. 11.22 nor in Phil. 3.5 can Hebrew mean anything other than someone speaking Ἑβραϊστί, i.e. a Palestinian Jew speaking the sacred language or Aramaic, or a Diaspora Jew, who in origin and education had extremely close connections with the mother country and who therefore also

beyond his colleagues (Gal 1:14), even if he is indulging in hyperbole, would not be possible without linguistic fluency in the language of his sacred texts.

The book of Acts supports this understanding. It claims that Paul received rabbinic training in Jerusalem under Gamaliel (22:3), that he could address the Jerusalemite crowds in a Ἑβραϊκῆ διάλεκτος (i.e., Aramaic; 21:40), and that he still had relatives in that city (23:16). Even if this information is not directly corroborated by Paul's own biographical statements it comports well with them.⁵¹

Therefore, reference to the Hebrew text of passages Paul used is pertinent, not only because as part of his pharasiac training he may have learned exegetical traditions forged from it, but also because he may have been competent to engage it directly.

1.3. PAUL'S INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE: TECHNIQUE

As part of his intellectual development Paul inherited interpretive tools that facilitated construction of textual meaning. Three of these are particularly important for the present study: the use of prophets to interpret Torah, *gezera shawa*, and atomizing exegesis. I will rely on these techniques to elucidate Paul's hermeneutical practice throughout this study (esp. §2.2.; §4.1.; §5.2.2.1.; §6.2.4.).

These reading strategies should be distinguished from large-scale hermeneutical perspectives. As the discussion will demonstrate, the apocalyptic typology of the Dead

understood Hebrew" (ibid., 23). See also Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 36-37; Jörg Frey, "Paul's Jewish Identity," in *Jewish Identity in the Greco-Roman World* (ed. Jörg Frey, Daniel R. Schwartz, and Stephanie Gripentrog; AJEC 87; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 291.

⁵¹ As Jörg Frey notes, "Not every detail unconfirmed by Paul's own words is necessarily an invention of Luke," ("Identity," 293); similarly, Günter Stemberger, "The Pre-Christian Paul," in *The Beginnings of Christianity: A Collection of Articles* (ed. Jack Pastor and Menachem Mor; Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press, 2005), 66-69.

Sea sectarians, the philosophical mysticism of Philo, and the halakic codifications of the rabbis could equally perform the same type of textual maneuver.⁵² The present topic therefore is not Paul's interpretive framework nor the rich, multi-layered social discourses within which biblical exposition occurred, but the specific tools he received from his intellectual context that allowed him to connect scriptural text to theology, proclamation, practice, and argument.

1.3.1. TORAH AND THE PROPHETS

By the first century C.E., the practice of reading Pentateuchal texts in combination with passages from the Prophets attained institutional status in Judaism.⁵³ The Tosefta indicates that at the time of its compilation (3d cent. C.E.), lectionary readings occurring in weekly synagogue services had standardized the correlation of Moses and the Prophets ("Prophets" here including the historical works, recognized as "the Former Prophets" in the Hebrew canon).⁵⁴ However shrouded in obscurity are the origins of this practice, evidence from the New Testament demonstrates that it was already taking shape in Paul's day. According to Acts 13:15, the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch opened with a reading "from the Law and the Prophets."

⁵² The peculiar emphases and interests of a specific writer or genre should not therefore restrict the application of these terms. For example, W. Sibley Towner defines *gezra shawa* strictly in terms of rabbinic formulations, with their specific halakic intent and generic peculiarities, and therefore denies that it occurs in any early Christian / New Testament writer ("Hermeneutical Systems of Hillel and the Tannaim: A Fresh Look," *HUCA* 53 [1982]: 134 n. 66).

⁵³ Ben Zion Wacholder, prolegomena to *The Palestinian Triennial Cycle: Genesis and Exodus*, by Jacob Mann (vol. 1 of *The Bible as Read and Preached in the Old Synagogue*; New York: KTAV, 1971), 3, 10; Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (2d ed.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 153; Louis Jacobs, "Torah, Reading of," *EncJud* 2d ed., 20:49; Louis Isaac Rinowitz, "Haftarah," *EncJud* 2d ed., 8:199.

⁵⁴ *t. Megillah* 3.1-9. The reading of Deut 25:17-19, for example, is followed by a reading from 1 Sam 15 (*t. Megillah* 3.2).

This liturgical practice had its analogue in the use of prophetic texts for clarifying passages from Moses. Whether the liturgical correlation grew out of exegetical habit or occasioned it is not possible to establish, but the evidence is sufficient to indicate that the custom was early and widespread. The *Damascus Document*, for example, expounds the meaning of the fourth commandment in Deut 5:12 by means of the prophetic instruction given in Isa 58:13 (CD X, 16-21), indicating that already in the first century B.C.E. prophetic passages could be drawn on to elucidate Torah.

Rabbinic interpreters laboring to apply Mosaic legislation to a later era also had recourse to prophetic oracles. This can be illustrated from *m. Yoma* 8, which attempts to synthesize the biblical data for the Day of Atonement. The passage closes with a blessing, placed on the lips of Ribbi Akiba, that expounds Lev 16:30 by recourse to Ezek 36:26 and Jer 17:13 (8.9).

Paul also finds the meaning of Torah latent in the prophets. Romans 4:1-7, where Psa 32:1-2 explicates Gen 15:6, may provided an example, given David's reputation as a prophet. Recently, Francis Watson has argued that in light of Rom 3:19 ("Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law"), the immediately preceding catena in 3:10-18 should be understood as a commentary on the law from the psalms and the prophets, recording God's negative verdict on humanity.⁵⁵

Carol Stockhausen has applied this technique to 2 Cor 3 to great effect, even making it a methodological principle (§1.1.1.). She writes:

It is Paul's usual procedure to apply prophetic and occasionally sapiential texts to bring the Torah into the proper contemporary focus. These secondary interpreting texts are usually (perhaps always) linked to each other verbally and linked to the

⁵⁵ Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles: Beyond the New Perspective* (rev. and expanded ed.; Grand Rapids: Eedrmans, 2007), 228.

fundamental Torah verbally—forming a network of mutually-interpreting texts which creates a new synthetic meaning at once scriptural and Pauline.⁵⁶

Stockhausen considers this practice fundamental to Paul’s exegesis.

These data suggest that Paul, like other Jewish interpreters, read the prophets as a divinely inspired commentary on Torah. In ch. 2, I offer further examples. Together, these provide the foundation for my exegesis of Rom 9:25-29 = Hos 2:25, 2:1; Isa 10:22; 1:9 as oracles providing the “true” meaning of Genesis and explicating the fate of Israel latent in its narratives.

1.3.2. ANALOGY: *GEZERA SHAWA* AND *HEQESH*

The association of Penteteuchal texts with a prophetic counterpart normally finds its justification in the presence of specific verbal links.⁵⁷ Most of the examples given in 1.3.1. are connected in this way. In *t. Megillah* 3.2, Deut 25:17-19 and 1 Sam 15:2 are connected both linguistically by the term זָכַר, “remember,” and thematically by the topic of the Amalekites and their fate. In *m. Yoma* 8.9, Lev 16:30 and Ezek 36:26 are joined by the term שָׁחַט. Genesis 15:6 and Psa 32:2 contain the term λογίζεσθαι, important for Paul’s interpretation in Rom 4. Shared vocabulary was one of the most common means of justifying the interpretation of one verse by means of another, even if by modern standards the connection appears more fortuitous than substantive.

According to rabbinic tradition, R. Hillel codified this interpretive principle (along with six others) calling it *gezera shawa*, the comparison of texts on the basis of

⁵⁶ Stockhausen, “Principles,” 144; similarly, Alphonse Maillot, “Essai sur les citations vétérotestamentaires contenues dans Romains 9 à 11,” *ETR* 5 [1982]: 58, 72.

⁵⁷ Wacholder, “Prolegomena,” 11-12, 14. To illustrate, the texts mentioned above from *t. Megillah* 3.2 (Deut 25:17-19 and 1 Sam 15:2) are connected both linguistically by the term זָכַר, “remember,” and thematically by the topic of the Amalekites and their fate.

similar expressions.⁵⁸ As defined by David Instone Brewer, *gezera shawa* is “the interpretation of one text in the light of another text to which it is related by a share word of phrase.”⁵⁹ Within rabbinic circles, the term properly applies to the interpretation of legal texts. However, the practice of linking biblical texts by means of common hook words was widespread, early, and not limited to *halakah*.

Among the Dead Sea Scrolls *gezera shawa* appears frequently. In CD XIX, 1-8, Nah 1:2 explains Lev 19:18 on the basis of the shared terms נטר, “bear a grudge,” and נקם, “take vengeance,” a passage that provides a further example of using prophetic quotations to clarify Torah. Similarly, in 4QFlor, Isa 8:11, something of a favorite in sectarian exegesis, is used to expound Psa 1:1 since they both contain הלך, “walk” and בדרך, “in the way” (1-3 I, 14-16).

The rabbis employed *gezera shevah* pervasively. One example should suffice.

According to *Avot of Rabbi Nathan*, the following discussion occurs:

Rabbi Nehemiah says: How do we know that one man is equal to all the work of Creation? For it is said, *This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him* (Gen 5:1), and elsewhere it says, *These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven* (Gen 2:4): even as in the latter there was *creation* and *making*, so in the former there was *creation* and *making*. This teaches that the Holy One, blessed be He, showed to Adam all the generations destined to come forth from him, standing and rejoicing before him as it were. And some say: God showed him only the righteous, as it is said, *All those that were written unto life in Jerusalem* (Isa 4:3).

⁵⁸ Hillel’s seven hermeneutical rules can be found in *t. Sanh. 7.11; Avot R. Nat. 37*.

⁵⁹ Instone Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis before 70 CE* (TSAJ 30; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 18. Concerning *gezera shawa*, see Towner, “Hermeneutical Systems,” 116-18; Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 156-57, 249; Juel, *Messianic Exegesis*, 41; Louis Jacobs and David Derovan, “Hermeneutics,” *EncJud* 2d ed., 9:26.

Here the use of link words is explicit: the two verses contain ברא, “creation” and עשה, “making” (as well as תולדות, “generations,” which R. Nehemiah does not mention).⁶⁰

Jewish interpreters showed no hesitation when it came to applying the same technique to a translation. Philo begins *Quis rerum divinarum heres sit* with an exegesis of Abraham’s call. In Gen 12:1, God commands him to depart ἐκ τῆς γῆς σου (Heb: מארצך). What does this mean? For an answer, Philo turns to 2:7, where God creates Adam’s body out of χοῦν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆ (Heb: וייצר את האדם עפר מן האדמה), into which God breaths his spirit. From the textual connection provided by γῆ only in the Greek, Philo understands Abraham’s call as a summons of his spirit heavenward, leaving behind corporeal existence for the divine realms. If Philo knew that this alignment works only in Greek he appears to be not bothered in the least.

Examples of *gezera shawa* appear frequently in Paul’s letters, demonstrating his own propensity for employing hook words to link together disparate texts into a new semantic entity. Two obvious examples appear in Romans: the combination Isaiah 8:14 and Isa 28:16 in Rom 9:33 as a single quotation, a rewriting made possible by the appearance of λίθος, and the string of passages in 15:9-12, all connected by the term ἔθνη (Psa 17:50 [LXX; Heb.: 18:50; Eng.: 18:49]; Deut 32:43; Psa 116:1 [LXX; Heb., Eng.: 116:19c-117:1]; Isa 11:10). Stockhausen as shown how this technique lies behind 2 Corinthians 3, allowing Paul to bring an entire pool of prophetic texts (Jer 38:31-34;

⁶⁰ This passage also includes an additional text, Isaiah 4:3, intended to limit the interpretation provided by R. Nehemiah. What makes this addition interesting is the fact that the citation, intended to demonstrate that Adam witnesses only the righteous, neglects the crucial phrase necessary to make this point, “And the one who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy.” Paul also makes use of *gezera shawa* without citing the terms that make the analogy possible (Rom 10:19-20; see §5.2.2.1.).

39:38-40; Ezek 11:19-20; 36:26-28) to bear on his base text from the Torah (Exod 34).⁶¹

It would appear, then, that like his propensity for using prophetic texts to actualize Mosaic passages, Paul also shares with his Jewish co-interpreters a firm conviction that verbal links between passages provide divinely granted legitimation for bring such texts into a mutually interpreting relationship.

In creating analogous relations based on catch words, ancient interpreters could also make connections based on larger thematic or structural analogies. The rabbis refer to this association as *heqesh*. Unlike *gezera shawa*, it bases its comparisons not on verbal links but on similarity of subject matter.⁶²

A Jewish exegetical tradition found in *Jubilees*, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, and Josephus illustrates how readers could move from a verbal connection (*gezera shawa*) to structural parallels (*heqesh*). The biblical description of Abram's journey to Egypt in Gen 12:10-13:4 mentions his wealth twice, giving two distinct inventories in two different contexts. According to 12:16, Pharaoh, in exchange for Abram's stunning "sister," gives him sheep, oxen, donkeys, servants, female donkeys, and camels (in addition to royal favor). The ensuing plot sequence admits of no ambiguity: *first* Pharaoh gives gifts in exchange for Sarai, *then* he suffers afflictions from God. Yet upon Abram's subsequent return to Canaan, 13:2 unexpectedly informs us that the patriarch "was very rich in cattle, and silver, and gold." In terms of both content and narrative location, these two enumerations of Abram's fiscal assets stand independent of each other.

⁶¹ *Moses' Veil*, 56-67; 106-7.

⁶² Instone Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions*, 18 (though he finally dismisses any substantive distinction between *gezera shawa* and *heqesh*). On *heqesh* see also Towner, "Hermeneutical Systems," 129-30; Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 157 n. 36, 249.

Early tradents introduced a subtle but significant change in the narrative sequence. The story as retold in *Jubilees* (13:13-15), the *Genesis Apocryphon* (XX, 31-33), and Josephus (*Ant.* 1.165) heightens Abram's anguish over his wife, introduces the gifts *after* God afflicted Pharaoh's house, and suggests (*Jubilees* and Josephus implicitly, *Genesis Apocryphon* explicitly) that these gifts include items from *both* lists in Gen 12:16 and 13:2. In these retellings, Pharaoh *first* suffers the divinely sent plagues, *then* he gives remunerative gifts to Abram.

The rationale for this revision is not difficult to discern. A catch word links this story with the plague and exodus narratives. Because Pharaoh appropriated Abram's wife, the Lord נגעיִ Pharaoh and his house with great נגעיִם (Gen 12:17). In Exodus, the series of afflictions God brings on Egypt culminates in a final נגע on the house of Pharaoh and every Egyptian (Exod 11:1). Finally securing their freedom, the Israelites ask, and receive, gold, silver, and clothes (cf. the similar list from Gen 13:2) from their former captives. The transformation of Gen 12 in the hands of Jewish interpreters brings its sequence into line with the events recounted in Exodus: bondage in Egypt, deliverance by afflictions, plundering the oppressor. A thin narrative analogy in the Scripture is made explicit by a subtle rearrangement of its elements in order to make explicit the typological connection unifying Abraham and his children.⁶³

I am not here arguing that Paul knew a hermeneutical rule entitled *heqesh* and that he consciously set out to apply it to his texts. I propose the more modest claim that

⁶³ This example is also relevant for the way it finds in Abraham a mirror of Jewish identity. He anticipates in his own person a narrative pattern that reemerges in Israel's defining experience of liberation. Once the exegetical link is made, of course, the interpretive avenue permits traffic to flow both ways: the epic events of Israel's slavery and redemption clarify *ex post facto* the compact episode recounted in Gen 12. As the forefather in whom all Israel exists seminally, Abraham's experiences prefigure those of his offspring. In ch. 2 I explore Abraham's paradigmatic role in Jewish and Pauline texts.

rabbinic commentators acknowledged a mode of comparing texts on the basis of broad analogies, that they named this reading strategy *heqesh*, and that this practice is already in evidence in texts that predate Paul. He could therefore draw texts into an interpretive dialogue based on thematic parallels he discerned in them, whether the term *heqesh* was current in his day or not. I will argue that he finds narrative pattern in Genesis that is recapitulated in Hosea, in Isaiah, and finally in Abraham's heirs during the messianic era.

1.3.3. ATOMZING EXEGESIS

A final hermeneutical operation common to first century Jewish interpreters has relevance for the present study. Operating with the conviction that Scripture in its totality expressed the very word of God, Jewish exegetes held that no portion of it could be superfluous. They therefore frequently gave discrete applications to phrases of Scripture that might more naturally appear (to us, at any rate) to be parallel descriptions of the same phenomena.⁶⁴ Although interpreters could (and did) apply this procedure to specific words, they could also split up the constituent elements of Hebrew poetic parallelism and assign distinct meanings to each resulting line.⁶⁵

A well-known, early example comes once again from *Damascus Document*. In VII, 18-21 occurs a messianic passage built on Num 24:17. Balaam's oracle employed a standard poetic device to describe a single entity with parallel descriptions: "a star shall

⁶⁴ Following a suggestion from Julian V. Hills and Fr. William Kurz, I refer to this technique as "atomizing exegesis" to emphasize that its use involved the attribution of discrete semantic qualities to parallel elements of a single text. The more common term *atomistic* exegesis implies the use of texts abstracted from and without regard for their contexts. Jews did practice *atomistic* exegesis as well (e.g., the Qumran *pesharim*). However, this study approaches Paul as a reader always aware of and working with the context of his scriptural texts.

⁶⁵ On this technique, see Jan Willem Doeve, *Jewish Hermeneutics in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts* (Assen: van Gorcum, 1954), 74-75, 82; Lim, *Holy Scripture*, 49-50; Instone Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions*, 15-16, 21-22.

come forth out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.” The *Damascus Document*, however, understands here an eschatological prophecy indicting two distinct figures. One, the Interpreter of Torah, will come (or has come?) to Damascus; the other, the Prince of the Congregation, will engage in some kind of destructive, possibly military, action. The interpreter responsible for this innovation disregards the poetic canons for the sake of building an eschatological scenario.⁶⁶

Rabbinic examples abound. In *Avot of Rabbi Nathan* 4.1, Ben Zoma cites the twice-described blessing of Psa 128:2, “You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; *you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you,*” as an indication that the person so described will attain beatitude both in this life and in the life to come. Similarly, in *b. Sahn* 43b, R. Assi appeals to Josh 7:20, which literally reads, “Achan said, ‘*I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel, and as this and as this I did*’ (אֲנֹכִי חָטָאתִי לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי (יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכֹזֵאת וְכֹזֵאת עָשִׂיתִי אֲמַנָּה). R. Assi concludes that Achan violated the ban against Jericho three times.⁶⁷

The same propensity appears early Christian texts. In the messianic prophecy of Zech 9:9, a coming King will enter his capital “riding on an ass (חֲמֹר; ὑποζύγιον), on a colt the foal of an ass (עֵיר בֶּן אֲתָנוֹת; πῶλον νέον).” Although Mark and Luke claimed that Jesus fulfilled this prophecy by riding into Jerusalem on a colt only (Mark 11:1-7; Luke 19:29-35), Matthew insists that he entered the Holy City straddling both a donkey

⁶⁶ Other examples could be easily adduced: 11QMelch II, 8-10, 24-25 take the dual appearance of אֱלֹהִים in Psa 82:1 as an indication that both Yahweh and Melchizedek are spoken of; 4QIsa^a 8-10 III, 5 comes from a very fragmentary text but evidently finds distinct applications for the description of Lebanon in Isa 10:33-34.

⁶⁷ R. Johanan is quick to counter that since Achan’s confession to Joshua contains five words, he actually violated the ban five separate times.

and a colt in unison (Matt 21:1-7). As he understands Zechariah's predication, each term must have its corresponding referent.

Clearly, when Jewish and Christian interpreters of the Second Temple period (and beyond) felt they had warrant, they could find diverse meanings in terms and phrases that might appear to refer to single entities. In ch. 5 I will argue that Paul is able to find dual prophecies concerning Israel and the nations in texts where the Gentiles are not mentioned (§5.2.2.1.). His post-Damascus convictions lead him to do so, but his intellectual heritage made it possible.

1.4. CONCLUSIONS

While the context-specific rhetorical strategies in Paul's letters may be dictated by the contingent historical circumstances, he is able to draw on interpretations of Scripture that exist independently of the moment's exigencies. But recovering a pre-epistolary exegesis is no straightforward task. Reasonable criteria are needed to establish whether a proposed interpretation is legitimate. In the present study, I attempt to meet the following standards: the reconstructed exegesis will rest on clues present in Paul's text (vocabulary, thematic connections, explicit quotations), it will make sense on a comparative basis, and it will explain difficulties in the text. In addition, if its explanatory power extends to other Pauline passages, its plausibility is correspondingly increased.

Because the case for a pre-epistolary exegesis relies heavily on Paul's explicit quotations, any variations from their source must be taken into account. Given the multiform state of the biblical text in the Second Temple era, the claim that Paul made interpretive changes also needs to meet criteria. Therefore I have adopted the following guide: if Paul's quotation deviates from the LXX in ways otherwise unattested, if the

changes are not made in the direction of the Hebrew text, and if they are thoroughly integrated into his argument, then the likelihood of an intentional Pauline adaptation is high.

The methods Paul used to locate and re-present textual meaning derived from his surrounding intellectual milieu. Three of them bear on the following chapters. Paul interpreted pentateuchal narratives by means of prophetic passages; these and other textual connections were made by verbal and thematic analogies; and he could split parallel texts to increase the range of possible significations.

I consider it an advantage of this approach that it does not foreclose the possibility that Paul engaged his Bible in a meaningful way. Clearly, he did not come to Scriptures without interpretive suppositions or innocent of the outcomes he hoped to obtain. Paul did not open a scroll or pull out a parchment and absorb the text's latent meaning. His Christology and his apostolic convictions were, perhaps from the time of his conversion, hermeneutically fundamental. If he claims to have fulfilled the law while dispensing with circumcision and *kashrut*, he is operating with interpretive norms not disclosed by the biblical text itself.

Nevertheless, I resist the idea that the Apostle's theological commitments were so dogmatic that he only heard his own voice projected back to him when he read, or that he only employed the text as a megaphone to broadcasting his own independently-derived viewpoints as loudly as possible. Paul could be surprised by Scripture and change his positions accordingly. In ch. 2 I attempt to document a major shift in Paul's theological evaluation of Israel and its relation to Abraham. The historical factors which *occasioned* this development will probably never be fully known. But it is the burden of this

dissertation that Paul gathered the *substance* of his new perspective from Malachi, Hosea, Isaiah, and above all Genesis.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ABRAHAMIC MYTHOMOTEUR AND ISRAELITE IDENTITY IN THE LETTERS OF PAUL

The previous chapter outlined a method for abstracting a narrative-based exegesis from the Pauline argument it supports. The present chapter will show which narratives matter. In Paul's efforts to conceptualize the relationship between Jews and Gentiles in the ἐκκλησία of Christ, he turns to the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It is from within this narrative world that he mediates to Gentile Christ-believers the heritage formerly possessed exclusively by Israel.

Paul interprets the Jewish Scriptures to implement this program in several passages. In my examination of these, I will seek to establish the following claims: (1) that the interpretive horizon within which Paul understands and argues for Gentile participation in Israel's covenant is determined by the patriarchal narratives; (2) that Paul frequently discerns their meaning and contemporary relevance by means of prophetic texts; (3) that this combination of patriarchal and prophetic texts disrupts rather than repristinates Israel's covenantal traditions; and (4) that in Romans, Paul's interpretation of the patriarchal narratives displays a positive theological reflection on Israel "according to the flesh" absent from his other epistles. In arguing for these claims, I will set in place the theoretical, social-religious, and Pauline framework for the interpretation of Rom 9 in the chapters that follow.

2.1. ABRAHAMIC IDENTITY IN POSTEXILIC TEXTS

When Paul assumed the task of constructing a biblical identity for his Gentile converts, he turned to stories of Abraham. His decision was not an arbitrary one. It was a reflex of their role as identity-creating narratives among the Hebrew people. Genesis provided the myths of origin that, together with the account of Israel's political and legal formation under Moses, ancient Jewish interpreters utilized to articulate a collective self-understanding. By creating textual space in Genesis for uncircumcised children of Abraham, Paul reconfigures the meaning of the narrative and hence of *Israel* itself.

In the term used by Anthony D. Smith, the narratives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob comprise the Jewish *mythomoteur*, a community's driving political myth. It is an adaptable expression of collective identity that provides continuity over time, offers guidance in crises, and shapes the symbolic reality for the socialization of successive generations.¹

Important components of any mythomoteur include a community's myths of origin and its remembered history. The myths of origin usually chronicle the descent of an ethnic group from a single ancestor or family. Its memory of historical experiences is composed of traditional stories which encapsulate features the group perceives as essential to its character. It recalls and, in light of its own experience, refracts these traditions of origin and memories of history by a threefold narrating process: *selection*, choosing from a potentially unlimited range of events just those episodes that crystallize

¹ The following discussion is indebted to Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (London: Blackwell, 1986); idem, *The Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, "Introduction," in *Ethnicity* (ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith; Oxford Readers; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 6-7; Stephen Cornell, "That's the Story of Our Life," in *We Are a People: Narrative and Multiplicity in Constructing Ethnic Identity* (ed. Paul Spickard and W. Jeffrey Burroughs; Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000), 41-53.

its self-understanding; *plotting*, combining such episodes into a meaningful narrative which encodes values and assigns roles; and *interpretation*, making claims concerning what the plot, events, characters, and outcomes signify about the group.² Through this process of narration, the remembered past shapes current perceptions, articulates the criteria necessary for membership, and projects visions of a common destiny.

In addition to providing myths of origin and memories of the past, a mythomoteur locates its community in a real or symbolic homeland, a territory hallowed by associations with stories of origin, migration, or conquest. Smith refers to this sacred geography as an *ethnoscape*.

A community's mythomoteur integrates its diverse membership and provides shared meanings that unite otherwise disparate subgroups, factions, or parties.³ It also

² Cornell, "That's the Story," 41.

³ Smith, *Myths*, 14; idem, *Ethnic Origins*, 49-50. The emphasis on the integrative, solidarity-inducing, and affective dimensions of ethnic affiliation distinguishes Smith from Fredrick Barth, whose enormously influential work takes the boundary-making and differentiating processes as fundamental to ethnic awareness. See Barth, "Introduction," in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference* (ed. Fredrik Barth; Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1969), 9-38; idem, "Boundaries and Connections," in *Signifying Identities: Anthropological Perspectives on Boundaries and Contested Values* (ed. Anthony P. Cohen; London: Routledge, 2000), 17-36; Smith, *Origins*, 97; idem, *Myths*, 14. Barth's approach is concerned with the boundary-making functions of ethnic discourse more than its community-forming dimensions, and its cognitive factors more than its social and symbolic realities. It is his influence, at least in part, that can be seen in the deeply volunteeristic and cognitive approaches to Jewish ethnicity, e.g., in Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (HCS 31; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 5-6, 53-62, 66-68, 105; Martin Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations* (New York: Knopf, 2007), 160-68. A similar emphasis on ethnic fluidity and its corresponding volunteerism typifies most applications of ethnic theory to the letters of Paul, e.g., Philip F. Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 19-39; Pamela Eisenbaum, "A Remedy for Having Been Born of Woman: Jesus, Gentiles and Genealogy in Romans," *JBL* 123 (2004): 671-702; idem, "Paul, Polemics, and the Problem of Essentialism," *BibInt* 13 (2005): 224-38; Denise Kimber Buell and Caroline Johnson Hodge, "The Politics of Interpretation: The Rhetoric of Race and Ethnicity in Paul," *JBL* 123 (2004): 235-51; Caroline Johnson Hodge, "Apostle to the Gentiles: Constructions of Paul's Identity," *BibInt* 13 (2005): 270-88; idem, *If Sons, Then Heirs: A Study of Kinship and Ethnicity in the Letters of Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Dennis C. Duling, "'Whatever gain I had . . .': Ethnicity and Paul's Self-Identification in Philippians 3:5-6," *HvTSt* 64 (2008): 799-818; idem, "2 Corinthians 11:22: Historical Context, Rhetoric, and Ethnicity," *HvTSt* 64 (2008): 819-43; idem, "Ethnicity and Paul's Letter to the Romans," in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament* (ed. Dietmar Neufeld and Richard DeMaris; London: Routledge, 2010), 68-89; Love L. Seacrest, *A Former Jew: Paul and the Dialectics of*

relates members to outsiders. The stories of ancestors and past generations provide paradigms for evaluating and interacting with nonmembers and alien groups.⁴ But a mythomoteur's dialectic of self and other does not produce fixed categories of understanding or static social relations. Though it imposes an authoritative mythology and set of ethical models, it persists through time precisely because it yields to interpretive exigencies.

A mythomoteur's ability to structure the discursive practices of a community and establish norms for behavior can be readily seen in the regulative power the Abrahamic narratives exercised among Jews in antiquity. Beginning in the postexilic era at the latest, the founding stories of Abraham and his children offered a common set of symbols, traditions, and memories. In them were embedded models of legitimate Jewish identity. Options for ethnic, religious, and moral expression were limited by these implicit standards. As N. L. Calvert notes, in various Jewish writings members of the community were "instructed to live in their respective situations in the same way that Abraham is portrayed as living in a particular context."⁵

Yet even as it circumscribed the range of options for expressing identity, the Jewish mythomoteur invited its own reinterpretation in light of new challenges. Although its shared script was recognized by Jews as the authoritative account of their origin and character, it nevertheless permitted a wide and contentious range of social

Race (LNTS 410; London: T&T Clark, 2009); Markus Cromhout, "Paul's 'Former Conduct in the Judean Way of Life' (Gal 1:13) . . . Or Not?" *HvTSt* 65 (2009): 126-37; idem, *Walking in Their Sandals: A Guide to First Century Israelite Ethnic Identity* (Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade, 2010), 69.

⁴ Barth, "Introduction," 14.

⁵ "Abraham," *DPL* 1; see further Robert L. Cohn, "Negotiating (with) the Natives: Ancestors and Identity in Genesis," *HTR* 96 (2003): 147-66; Ronald Hendel, *Remembering Abraham: Culture, Memory, and History in the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 31, 34, and passim.

reenactments. Cultural brokers with conflicting social agendas and divergent religious visions met on the common ground offered by the Abrahamic mythomoteur and attempted to out-interpret their opponents. As the narrative traditions articulating the mythomoteur were gradually fixed in a written authority, struggles over communal self-definition increasingly became exercises in textual hermeneutics.⁶

Polemics of this sort left traces in the Hebrew Bible itself. Genesis and Ezra-Nehemiah reveal divergent perspectives on the nature of Abraham's descendants (his *seed*), their requisite purity, their relation to the land, and their attitude towards other ethnic groups. Genesis offers a Jewish identity that is cautious towards outsiders but not hostile, while Ezra-Nehemiah promotes a more aggressive ethnocentrism (cf. Lev 19:19; Deut 22:9 with Ezra 9:1-3; ch. 10; Neh 9:7-8, 23; 13:1-3, 23-29). Though their concrete proposals differ markedly, both claim to project an authentic and authoritative Abrahamic identity onto its native ethnoscape.⁷

⁶ Joseph Blenkinsopp labels this the "core problem" of the postexilic community. He writes, "In biblical texts from the period . . . the same traditional self-referential language is in use as was previously—Israel, the seed of Israel, the holy seed, the people of God, the children of Abraham—but in this period it is not unproblematically clear to whom these terms refer" ("Judeans, Jews, Children of Abraham," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context* [ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011], 471; emphasis original). Analyses of specific examples can be found in Joseph Blenkinsopp, "Interpretation and the Tendency to Sectarianism: An Aspect of Second Temple History," in *Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman Period* (ed. E. P. Sanders, A. I. Baumgarten, and Alan Mendelson; vol. 2 of *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 1-26, 299-309; James Kugel and Rowan A. Greer, *Early Biblical Interpretation* (LEC 5; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 36-38; Albert I. Baumgarten, *The Flourishing of Jewish Sects in the Maccabean Era* (SupJSJ 55; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 114-36.

⁷ Space, unfortunately, prohibits full examination of these texts and the dynamics of identity construction that animate them. I regard the ideology of ethnic identity in Genesis as less subversively cosmopolitan than do Mark G. Brett and Frank Crüsemann, yet less culturally chauvinistic than do Keith Whitelam, E. Theodore Mullen Jr., and Ronald Hendel (Whitelam, "Israel's Traditions of Origin: Reclaiming the Land," *JSOT* 44 [1989]: 24-28; Crüsemann, "Human Solidarity and Ethnic Identity: Israel's Self-definition in the Genealogical System of Genesis," in *Ethnicity and the Bible* [ed. Mark G. Brett; Leiden: Brill, 1996], 57-76; Mullen, *Ethnic Myths and Pentateuchal Foundations: A New Approach to the Formation of the Pentateuch* [SBL SemeiaSt; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997], 131, 145-46, 153, 158, 160; Brett, *Genesis: Procreation and the Politics of Identity* [OTR; London: Routledge, 2000], 79 and passim; idem, "Reading the Bible in the Context of Methodological Pluralism: The Undermining of Ethnic Exclusivism in Genesis," in *Rethinking Contexts, Rereading Texts: Contributions from the Social Sciences*

Eventually, both these texts entered Israel's common religious heritage, but divergent interpretive interests perpetuated conflicting visions of ethnic identity. Among later writers, Demetrius and Ben Sirach carry forward a program similar to that expressed in Genesis. They find in Abraham's virtue a charter for attitudes of (modest) cultural superiority and religious exclusivism, yet without Ezra-Nehemiah's anxious xenophobia (Demetrius, apud Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.21.16; 9.29.1, which demonstrates a concern with endogamy; Sir 44:19-21).⁸ Much less reserved are those historians (or perhaps better, romance writers) who searched genealogical accounts from ancient civilizations looking for opportunities to plant Abraham's family tree in the soil of Hellenistic

to *Biblical Interpretation* [JSOTSup 299; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000], 48-74; Hendel, *Remembering*, 31-44). The evaluation of Claus Westermann, lying between these two approaches, appears to me more judicious (*Genesis 1-11* [trans. John J. Scullion; CC; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984], 529; similarly, Blenkinsopp, "Judeans," 473-75).

The construction of ethnic identity and the demonization of outsiders in Ezra-Nehemiah is treated in Gösta W. Ahlström, *The History of Ancient Palestine from the Palaeolithic Period to Alexander's Conquest* (ed. Diana Edelman; JSOTSup 146; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 846; James Kugel, "The Holiness of Israel and the Land in Second Temple Times," in *Texts, Temples, and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haran* (ed. Michael V. Fox, et al.; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 24; Lester L. Grabbe, "Triumph of the Pious or Failure of the Xenophobes? The Ezra-Nehemiah Reforms and their *Nachgeschichte*," in *Jewish Local Patriotism and Self-Identification in the Graeco-Roman Period* (ed. Siân Jones and Sarah Pearce; JSPSup 31; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 57-58; Christine E. Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities: Intermarriage and Conversion from the Bible to the Talmud* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 27-33; Philip Esler, "Ezra-Nehemiah as a Narrative of (Re-Invented) Israelite Identity," *BibInt* 11 (2003): 413-26; Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, "Between Ezra and Isaiah: Exclusion, Transformation, and Inclusion of the 'Foreigner' in Post-Exilic Biblical Theology," in *Ethnicity and the Bible*, 123 n. 14, 124; Blenkinsopp, *Opening the Seal Book: Interpretations of the Book of Isaiah in Late Antiquity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 66; idem, *Judaism: The First Phase* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 35-37, 66.

⁸ Burton L. Mack, *Wisdom and the Hebrew Epic: Ben Sira's Hymn in Praise of the Fathers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 205-14; Patrick W. Skehan and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: A New Translation with Notes* (AB 39; New York: Doubleday, 1987), 504-5; Pancratius C. Beentjes, "Ben Sira 44:19-23—The Patriarchs. Text, Tradition, Theology," in *Studies in the Book of Ben Sira* (ed. Géza B. Xeravits and József Zsengellér; SupJSJ 127; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 209-28; Bradley C. Gregory, "Abraham as the Jewish Ideal: Exegetical Traditions in Sirach 44:19-21," *CBQ* 70 (2008): 66-81.

historiography, a project that implied the legitimate integration of Jewish religion and Hellenistic culture.⁹

A reaction was not long in coming. *Jubilees* reasserts the militant ethnocentrism of Ezra-Nehemiah. In its symbolic universe, an idealized myth of origins combines angelic status, Abraham's holy seed, promised land, primogeniture, and endogamy in order to express a Jewish identity ontologically distinct from pagan nations (2:17-18, 28, 30-31; 15:27; 22:14, 16, 27; 24:6; 25:3-4; 32:19). Abraham and especially Jacob, whose election is woven into the fabric of the cosmos (2:19-23), crystallize the Torah piety and ethnic purity characterizes every true Jew.¹⁰ By contrast, Jacob's brother Esau

⁹ Artapanus, apud Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.18.1; 9.23.1-2 (where *Israel* should probably be emended to *Ishmael*; see Jacob Fruedenthal, *Alexander Polyhistor und die von ihm erhaltenen Rest jüdischer und samaritanischer Geschichtswerke* [Hellenistische Studien 1-2; Breslau: Skutsch, 1875], 232; John J. Collins, "Artapanus: A New Translation and Introduction," in *OTP* 2:897 n. b); 9.27.4-6; Cleodemus Malchus, apud. Josephus, *Ant.* 1.239-241; Eupolemus, apud Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.17.2-9 (Robert Doran provides strong arguments for the authenticity of this fragment; on this question see Fruedenthal, *Polyhistor*, 82-103, 105-30; Ben Zion Wacholder, "Pseudo-Eupolemus' Two Greek Fragments of the Life of Abraham," *HUCA* 34 [1963]: 84; idem, *Eupolemus: A Study of Judaeo-Greek Literature* [MHUC 3; Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1974]; Carl R. Holladay, *Historians* [vol. 1 of *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*; SBLTT 20; P 10; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983], 158-59; Robert Doran, "The Jewish Hellenistic Historians Before Josephus," *ANRW* 20.1:270-74; idem, "Pseudo-Eupolemus: A New Translation and Introduction," *OTP* 2:874-76; John J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora* [2d ed.; BRS; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000], 46-61). A comparison between these writers and Paul on Jewish ethnicity can be found in Carl R. Holladay, "Paul and His Predecessors in the Diaspora: Some Reflections on Ethnic Identity in the Fragmentary Hellenistic Jewish Authors," in *Early Christianity and Classical Culture: Comparative Studies in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe* (ed. John T. Fitzgerald, Thomas H. Olbricht, and L. Michael White; NovTSup 110; Leiden: Brill, 2003): 429-60.

These attempts to forge genealogical relations with non-Jewish peoples served political goals in the world of Hellenistic kinship diplomacy. According to 1 Macc 12:21, the Spartans and Onias the High Priest recognized a common ancestry, which the Hasmoneans were afterwards eager to embrace (Jonathan A. Goldstein, *I Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB 41; New York: Doubleday, 1976], 445-62; Eric S. Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998], 253-68; Christopher P. Jones, *Kinship Diplomacy in the Ancient World* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999], 74-79).

¹⁰ Joseph P. Schultz, "Two Views of the Patriarchs: Noahides and Pre-Sinai Israelites," in *Texts and Responses: Studies Presented to Nahum N. Glatzer on His 70th Birthday by His Students* (ed. Nahum N. Glatzer, Michael A. Fishbane, and Paul R. Mendes-Flour; Leiden: Brill, 1975), 44-48, 57-58; John C. Endres, S.J., *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees* (CBQMS 18; Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1987), esp. ch. 4: "Jacob, the Model Patriarch" (85-119), but more generally 18-84, 214-17; James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (GAP; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 110-14. According to the definition given by Benjamin H. Isaac, *Jubilees* embodies a proto-

symbolizes the Other, the non-Jew, the repository of everything antithetical to membership in Abraham's family (19:14; 25:4-10; ch. 28; 29:18). In the not-so-subtle climactic battle between their two clans, Jacob is forced to kill Esau in self-defense.

The different ways that Jewish writers appropriated and interpreted the patriarchal stories throughout antiquity attests to the power of their shared mythomoteur to confer social, religious, and political currency on Abrahamic descent. When Paul attempted the unlikely task of extending this prestige to Gentile Christ-followers, he was compelled not merely because of the historical exigencies provoking an epistolary response. His own conceptual horizon demanded it.

2.2. THE RECONFIGURATION OF ABRAHAMIC IDENTITY IN THE LETTERS OF PAUL

Although *Jubilees*'s xenophobia only took root among sectarian isolationists, programs to police Jewish identity, and employ violence if necessary to maintain its boundaries, were more widespread.¹¹ By his own testimony, Paul embodied precisely this kind of purifying zeal (Gal 1:13-14; 1 Cor 15:9; Phil 3:5-6). Paul's apostleship, commissioned as it was by the Jewish Messiah of the Hebrew God, did not repudiate his religious heritage, but it did require a drastic reinterpretation of his prior narrative universe.

racist ideology, because the moral degeneracy of the Gentiles is hereditary and therefore cannot be changed (Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006], 23-24, 35-37).

¹¹ Torrey Seland, *Establishment Violence in Philo and Luke: A Study of Non-Conformity to Torah and Jewish Vigilante Reactions* (Biblical Interpretation Series 15; Leiden: Brill, 1995); idem, "Saul of Tarsus and Early Zealotism: Reading Gal 1,13-14 in Light of Philo's Writings," *Bib* 83 (2002): 449-71.

2.2.1. ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND ISRAEL IN GALATIANS

In Galatians, Paul gives his earliest extant attempt to “exegete” Gentile believers into the etiology of the Hebrew people. The mode of argument is surprising. He does not relate these converts to any of the prophetic predictions of righteous Gentiles coming to worship Israel’s God in Zion, although attempts to read him in this way persist.¹²

Instead, he forges for them a new genealogical pedigree. To do this he selects key moments from the story of Abraham and his children, reorganizes their plot, and reinterprets their significance.¹³

2.2.1.1. *Abraham and the Gentiles in Galatia*

The debate in Galatia, as E. P. Sanders has convincingly shown, centered on the requirements for entry into the people of God.¹⁴ Jewish Christ-followers in Galatia were

¹² Johannes Munck understood Paul in light of expectations that Gentiles would make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the eschaton; this view remains common (Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* [trans. Frank Clarke; London: SCM Press, 1959], 279-81 and passim; Paula Fredriksen, “Judaism, the Circumcision of Gentiles, and Apocalyptic Hope: Another Look at Galatians 1 and 2,” *JTS* NS 42 [1991]: 532-64; idem, “Judaizing the Nations: The Ritual Demands of Paul’s Gospel,” *NTS* 56 [2010]: 241-44; Mark D. Nanos, “Paul and Judaism: Why Not Paul’s Judaism?” in *Paul Unbound: Other Perspectives on the Apostle* [ed. Mark D. Given; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2010], 135-36, 145-50. Primary sources documenting the Gentile pilgrimage tradition are collected in Terence L. Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles: Jewish Patterns of Universalism (to 135 CE)* [Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2007]). However, I remain unconvinced. I cannot find the Gentile pilgrimage tradition in Galatians (nor in Romans). Although the letter is framed with eschatological statements (1:4, 6:15), Paul actually argues that Gentile Christ followers are *Abraham’s seed*, making the entire Gentile pilgrimage motif superfluous. Abraham’s seed does not need to undertake a Gentile pilgrimage. Conversely, the Gentile pilgrimage motif neither postulates the full acceptance of Gentiles as God’s people in the eschatological age nor that such Gentiles count as the seed of Abraham (so Terence L. Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles: Remapping the Apostle’s Convictional World* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997], 166-69, 187-97, 233-34). Mark Nanos supposes without discussion that these two ways of presenting Gentile Christ-believers (Abraham’s seed, righteous Gentiles in the eschaton) are the same (“Paul and Judaism,” 134-36; idem, *The Irony of Galatians: Paul’s Letter in First-Century Context* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002], 12, 99-101, 129, 135, 152, 155, 198), but this is a significant confusion of distinct conceptualities.

¹³ See Stephen Cornell’s threefold narrating process for constructing communal identity discussed in §2.1. above.

¹⁴ Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1983), 18-20; see also Terence L. Donaldson, “The ‘Curse of the Law’ and the Inclusion of the Gentiles: Galatians 3.13-14,” *NTS*

apparently advocating that Paul's Gentile converts adopt circumcision and (possibly) that they observe the Torah in order to count as full members of God's people. For this claim they had powerful scriptural support in the story of Abraham. According to Genesis, he left his pagan roots (ch. 12), believed God (ch. 15), accepted circumcision (ch. 17), and obeyed God's commandment (ch. 22). The paradigmatic significance is clear: (male) Gentiles Christ-believers who desire full inclusion in God's covenant must also submit to circumcision and assume the yoke of Torah.¹⁵

In response, Paul claims that faith in Christ and reception of the Spirit, qualities that the Galatians self-evidently possess, suffice.¹⁶ Several aspects of his counterproposal deserve note.

2.2.1.2. *Locating Gentiles in Genesis*

First, Paul draws explicit attention to those passages in Genesis which emphasize a blessing for Gentiles "in Abraham." Although Paul introduces the patriarch as one whose justification occurred on the basis of faith, citing Gen 15:6 in 3:6, he does *not* draw the conclusion that Gentiles are therefore also justified by faith. Instead, he claims that Abraham's *sons* are therefore justified by faith (3:7). Since the identity of these sons is

32 (1986): 94-112; idem, *Gentiles*, 118; James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (BNTC; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993), 16-17.

¹⁵ On the importance of Abraham to Paul's opponents, see Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 139-40; Bernard Hungerford Brinsmead, *Galatians—Dialogical Response to Opponents* (SBLDS 65; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1982), 107-14; J. Louis Martyn, "A Law-Observant Mission to Gentiles: The Background of Galatians," in *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Studies in the New Testament and Its World; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 18; repr. from *SJT* 38 (1985); idem, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997), 302-6; Stockhausen, "Principles," 153-54; Donaldson, *Gentiles*, 120-22.

¹⁶ I regard Paul's use of "faith" terminology as a shorthand for "faith in Christ," rather than a generalized disposition towards God that Jews lack (following Donaldson, *Gentiles*, 116-20; Watson, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 35-36, 121-30).

not yet established, this represents only a middle stage in the argument. In 3:8, Paul quotes a text composed of Gen 12:3 and 18:18: ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, “all the Gentiles / nations will be blessed in you.”¹⁷

Whatever the significance of the prepositional prefix -ἐν in Gen 12:3, Paul understands the Greek ἐν in an instrumental or perhaps even locative sense.¹⁸ The Scriptures place the nations *inside* Abraham seminally, as the ensuing question concerning the identity of Abraham’s σπέρμα shows (v. 16). It is *because* the Gentiles have become Abraham’s children that *therefore* what was true in his situation may be predicated of theirs. Since he was justified by faith, so too are his children. The Scriptures locate the nations / Gentiles *within* Abraham and therefore attribute to them his blessings.¹⁹

Paul does not specify the content of this blessing, but 3:10-14 suggests that it consists of a twofold benefit: *life* and *Spirit*. Neither appears in Genesis, and Paul likely derived both by exegetical means. The blessing of the Spirit is discussed below (§2.2.1.4.). The provision of *life* enters Abraham’s bequest through the intervention of

¹⁷ Gen 12:3: ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς; Gen 18:18: ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν αὐτῷ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς. This composite text bears the weight of Paul’s argument more than Gen 15:6 does. Its combined contents are evoked in 3:16, 17, 18, 29. This string of verses links all the key terms under debate: promise, blessing, seed, faith, righteousness, and the Gentiles / nations (Sanders, *Jewish People*, 21; Jeffrey S. Siker, *Disinheriting the Jews: Abraham in Early Christian Controversy* [Louisville, Ky.: Westminster / John Knox, 1991], 73; Dunn, *Galatians*, 159; Martyn, *Galatians*, 301-2).

¹⁸ Hays, *Echoes*, 106.

¹⁹ E. P. Sanders, *Jewish People*, 18; Siker, *Disinheriting*, 37; Donaldson, *Gentiles*, 113-22; Watson, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 131. The logic at work here, rooted deeply in ancient conceptions of ethnicity, kinship, and descent, is that what holds true in the case of an ancestor will bear out in succeeding generations (Rosalind Thomas, “Genealogy,” in *OSCC*, 301; Johnson Hodge, *If Sons*, 19-20, 22-26; against the weaker formulations of Betz, *Galatians*, 142; Hays, *Echoes*, 108-9; Dunn, *Galatians*, 163, 165; Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 188-89).

Hab 2:4, quoted in Gal 3:11.²⁰ This verse, like Lev 18:5 (quoted in Gal 3:12), bears several lexical connections to Gen 15:6 and informs Paul that the sons of Abraham who share in his blessings (Gal 3:7, 9) therefore experience life.²¹ Therefore, Paul not only links several texts from Abraham's story to create a genealogical connection with Gentile Christians (Gen 12:3; 15:6; 18:18), he also finds in Habakkuk the blessing they inherit as a result. This nexus of Torah and prophet makes Gentile Christ-followers heirs of Abraham and procures for them the corresponding benefits.

2.2.1.3. *Participation in Abraham's Single Seed*

Second, Paul assimilates Gentile believers to Abraham's family by a Christological reading of *καὶ τῷ σπέρματι* in combination with his participationist soteriology.²² He argues that baptism into Christ's body provides these Gentiles with the necessary pedigree (3:29) because Christ *is* the σπέρμα to whom the promises are entrusted (3:16).

The complex exegetical rationale for this equation has been elucidated by Nils A. Dahl, who demonstrated that behind Paul's identification of Christ and σπέρμα lies a use of 2 Sam 7:12 to facilitate a messianic reading of Gen 49:10.²³ This solitary Davidic seed

²⁰ Stockhausen, "Principles," 159.

²¹ Although Paul is not explicit, he likely means eschatological life, eternal life in the age to come (1:4; 6:15) which is already anticipated in the present (2:20).

²² On Paul's participationist soteriology in Galatians 3, see Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 173-74, 196-98; Donaldson, *Gentiles*, 119.

²³ Dahl, "Promise and Fulfillment," in *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977), 121-36. See also Max Wilcox, "The Promise of the 'Seed' in the New Testament and the Targumim," *JSNT* 5 (1979): 2-20, who shows that similar exegetical routes lead to several christological statements in Luke-Acts; Dunn, *Galatians*, 183-85; Calvert, "Abraham," 4-5. I find this explanation more persuasive than the argument that Paul understands both σπέρμα and Christ in 3:16 as collective terms (Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 70-73; Wright, *Climax*, 162-68), or that he derived his identification of the two solely from Gen 12:3 and 15:6 (as Watson appears to suggest; *Hermeneutics*, 193).

is, in Gal 3, less the *promised* Messiah than the *sole beneficiary* of the inheritance promised to Abraham's offspring (Gal 3:16, 19).²⁴ Thus Christ himself lays exclusive claim to the Abrahamic goods, namely, justification and the Spirit, which he thereby distributes to those incorporated into him. This participation in Christ the sole σπέρμα permits a secondary equation of σπέρμα and the ἔθνη blessed in Abraham (Gal 3:7-8). The argument is summed up in 3:29 and recapitulated in 4:28. The way into Abraham's family is through incorporation into Christ.²⁵

The corollary of this, however, is that Abrahamic status obtains *only* for those who believe in Christ, terms which hold good for Jew and Gentile alike.²⁶ Spirit, baptism, and faith induct members into Christ and thereby make them partakers of the Abrahamic blessings. These are bestowed in contradistinction to the provisions of the law (2:15-16; 3:5, 9, 14, 17-18, 21, 23-29; 5:4, 18) and without reference to circumcision (5:2-3, 6; 6:12-15). Only by the Spirit's activity is God called "Father!" (4:6), because only by the Spirit is one baptized into Christ and thereby constituted as Abraham's seed

²⁴ This point is particularly stressed by Sam K. Williams ("Promise in Galatians: A Reading of Paul's Reading of Scripture," *JBL* 107 [1988]: 709-20).

²⁵ Hays, *Echoes*, 121; Siker, *Disinheriting*, 42; Wright, *Climax*, 165; Martyn, *Galatians*, 306, 340.

²⁶ W. D. Davies, "Paul and the People of Israel," in *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 128; repr. from *NTS* 24 (1978); J. Bradley Chance, "The Seed of Abraham and the People of God: A Study of Two Pauls," in *SBLSP* 32 (ed. Eugene H. Lovering; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 388; Richard H. Bell, *The Irrevocable Call of God: An Inquiry into Paul's Theology of Israel* (WUNT 184; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 162, 172; against Johnson Hodge, *If Sons*, 67, 70, 71. The point is conceded reluctantly by Siker (*Disinheriting*, 49) and Susan Grove Eastman ["Israel and the Mercy of God: A Re-reading of Galatians 6:16 and Romans 9-11," *NTS* 56 [2010]: 370 n. 9, 388]. On the other hand, Esler goes beyond the evidence when he maintains that Paul's rhetoric would eliminate even Judean (i.e., Jewish) followers of Christ from membership (*Conflict*, 183). Against this claim, several data imply that Paul includes non-Pauline, Christ-following Jews in his understanding of the Christ-determined community: (1) the positive references to Christian communities in Jerusalem and Judea (1 Thess 2:14; Gal 1:22-24; Rom 15:26-27); (2) Paul's characterization of the Jerusalem leaders, which, although somewhat tepid, refrains from the more aggressive polemic reserved for his direct opponents (cf. Gal 2:6, 9, with 2:4, 4:17; 5:12; 6:12-13; a similar distinction occurs in the contrast between the "super-apostles" and the "servants of Satan" in 2 Cor 10-13); and (3) Paul's determination to carry through his collection for the Jerusalem church.

(3:16, 29).²⁷ Israel's covenantal adoption has been not dissolved but redirected exclusively towards the Messiah.

2.2.1.4. *Overcoming Circumcision with the Prophets*

Third, Paul gives oblique indication that various prophetic oracles enable him to overcome those passages most problematic for his innovative understanding of Abrahamic descent. His two most difficult texts both relate to the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael, Gen 17 and 21.²⁸ I will address each in turn.

In 3:1-5, Paul appeals to the Galatian believers' reception of the Spirit. With a logic not entirely clear (but paralleled in Acts 11:18), he supposes that this Spirit / spiritual manifestation proves their justification by faith. In 3:6, he suddenly introduces Abraham. The transition from one topic to the next is not evident. In fact, an exegetical link between the Spirit and blessings promised to all nations ἐν Abraham lies beneath the surface and ties these verses together.

The question Paul struggles with is, Who constitutes the σπέρμα of Abraham that, according to Gen 13:16 and 15:18, stands to inherit the divine promises and covenant? Genesis 17 presents a dramatic and paradigmatic answer. Verses 10-11 explicitly define the σπέρμα in question as those who undergo the rite of circumcising τὴν σάρκα, "the flesh" (see also vv. 14, 23). Yet in v. 16 God says to Abraham, "I will bless (εὐλογήσω) her [viz., Sarah] and I will give to you from her a child (τέκνον); and I will bless

²⁷ The bonds created by the Spirit represent for Paul not "fictive kinship ties" nor acceptance into a metaphorical family, but a supernaturally procured filiation supervening that established by natural genesis (Johnson Hodge, *If Sons*, 4, 72-76; Secrest, *Former Jew*, 117-18, 125-26, 133, 186).

²⁸ Hays's comment on Gen 21 applies equally well to ch. 17: it is the very text "that might threaten to undo his mission to the Gentiles" (*Echoes*, 111). Although Paul never quotes Gen 17, its presence can be easily discerned from the shadow it casts over Paul's argument; see Stockhausen, "Principles," 159-60.

(εὐλογίῳ) him, and he (?) will be for [or, will become] nations (εἰς ἔθνη), and kings of nations will come from him.”²⁹ The language overlaps considerably with Isa 44:3b: “I will set my spirit (τὸ πνεῦμά μου) upon your [viz., Jacob / Israel, mentioned in v. 2] seed (τὸ σπέρμα σου) and my blessings (τὰς εὐλογίας μου) upon your children (τὰ τέκνα σου).”³⁰ Only this passage from Isaiah in the entire OT equates the blessing of Abraham’s children with the Spirit. In this, it corresponds to Gal 3:14, the only place in the NT which sets the same two elements in parallel. Because of Christ’s redemptive death, the blessings of Abraham have come upon the Gentiles and the promise of the Spirit is made available to “us.”³¹ The application of Isa 44:3 to Gen 17 by means of their common vocabulary (*gezera shawa*) allows Paul to interpret the blessing inherited by Abraham’s τέκνον as the Spirit. Working backwards, those possessing the Spirit are therefore Abraham’s children. Charismatic experience may convince Paul that God’s Spirit is present in and among his Gentile converts, but an exegetical and ethnological logic folds them into Abraham’s family.³²

²⁹ My translation. The masculine object of “bless” is peculiar to the LXX; the Hebrew text reads וברכתיה. In the following clause, which refers to “nations,” no subject appears in either Hebrew or Greek. A feminine subject can be deduced from the Hebrew verb form וברכתיה; the Greek is ambiguous. See also Gen 22:7-8, which also speaks of Isaac as τέκνον.

³⁰ My translation.

³¹ Even if Paul’s pronouns “we / us” and “you” in this passage refer to Jews and Gentiles respectively (a view towards which I incline; see Donaldson, “Curse,” 94-112; Wright, *Climax*, 143; Rodrigo J. Morales, “The Words of the Luminaries, the Curse of the Law, and the Outpouring of the Spirit in Gal 3,10-14,” *ZNW* 100 [2009] 275; but see the critical assessment in Martyn, *Galatians*, 334-36), the distinction between the blessings of Abraham and the reception of the Spirit in each half of 3:14 is probably rhetorical (Dunn, *Galatians*, 179). Both Jews and Gentiles receive the same blessing, viz., the Spirit.

³² The one who possess the blessing in Isa 44:3 is identified as *Israel*, but in view of Gal 6:16, discussed below, I do not think this is problematic. Of course *Israel* is Abraham’s seed; the important question is, How is *Israel* to be defined?

The relevance of Isa 44:3 was floated by Richard B. Hays, but undeveloped and overshadowed by his alternate, and preferred, explanation of Spirit-language in Galatians, namely, the Christian community’s foundational story celebrating Christ as the dispenser of the Spirit (*Faith of Jesus Christ*, 182-83; it is absent in *Echoes* altogether). The importance of this verse for Paul’s understanding of Gen 17 and its

If Isa 44:3 assists Paul in his need to deal with Gen 17, another Isaianic verse aids his interpretation of Gen 21. Although this chapter does not mention circumcision, it presents problems to Paul for analogous reasons. In it, the character of Isaac provides a bridge between Abraham and Jacob, father of Israel's twelve tribes. The threat to the integrity of the Abraham-Isaac-Jacob succession in the person of Ishmael must be eliminated. In context, the story suggests the inviolable nature of Abraham's seed on a trajectory culminating in the Jewish people. It is this passage that Paul attempts to overcome with his strange allegory in 4:21-31.³³

This is not the place to untangle the complexities of what Richard B. Hays has called Paul's act of hermeneutical jujitsu, but a few comments are in order.³⁴ It would appear that a further exegetical substructure supports his interpretation of Abraham's two sons. In Gen 11:30, Sarah is introduced into the narrative with the remark that she is "barren" (עקרה, στειρα). In Isa 51:2, Sarah is called "the one who bore you" (תחוללכם, την ὄδίνουσαν ὑμᾶς). In Gal 4:27 Paul quotes Isa 54:1, which combines these two descriptions: "Rejoice, O barren one (עקרה, στειρα) who did not bear; break forth and

concentration of the exegetical topics *seed*, *promise*, and *inheritance* has rarely received its full due, being entirely ignored (e.g., Betz, *Galatians*; Hays, *Echoes*, 108, 110; Wilk, *Bedeutung*), largely unnoticed (e.g., Dunn, *Galatians*, 180; Martyn, *Galatians*, 323 n. 121), or flatly denied (Williams, "Promise," 713 n. 10). But Rodrigo Morales has presented arguments for its centrality that I find convincing (*The Spirit and the Restoration of Israel: New Exodus and New Creation Motifs in Galatians* [WUNT 282; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010], 111-14; idem, "Outpouring of the Spirit," 270, 276-77, though Morales does not consider Gen 17 as the base text that Isa 44:3 is being used to interpret, as I do).

³³ Gen 21 is the only place in Genesis where Abraham's two sons are placed in direct opposition to each other.

³⁴ Hays, *Echoes*, 112. On the allegory, see *ibid.*, 111-21; C. K. Barrett, "The Allegory of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar in the Argument of Galatians," in *Essays on Paul* (London: SPCK, 1982), 154-70; repr. from *Rechtfertigung: Festschrift für Ernst Käsemann zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. Johannes Friedrich, Wolfgang Pöhlmann, and Peter Stuhlmacher; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1976); Susan Eastman, *Recovering Paul's Mother Tongue: Language and Theology in Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 127-60; and especially Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Contraversions; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 32-36, which I have found particularly helpful.

shout, you who you who have not been in travail (הלל אל, ἡ οὐκ ὠδίνουσα); for the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her that is married” (NRSV). The identification of Sarah, the barren one who moves from a state of being ἡ στεῖρα (Gen 11:30) to that of ἡ ὠδίνουσα (Isa 51:2), with the mother of 54:1 lies close to hand. Once again the connection is made on the basis of common lexical terms. The equation of Sarah with Jerusalem follows naturally from Isa 54:1-3 and the various other Isaianic texts which speak of the holy city as a mother yearning to gather her children (e.g., 1:26 LXX; 49:14-21; 62:1-5).

Although these intertextual links illustrate how Paul might have identified Sarah with the heavenly Jerusalem, other elements in the allegory remain obscure. The connection between her son Isaac and the Galatian Christians probably rests on the same christological reading of σπέρμα employed in 3:16. Gentiles who believe are κατὰ Ἰσαὰκ ἐπαγγελίας τέκνα, “children of the promise like Isaac” (4:28).³⁵ In this way, Paul elides any connection between Sinai and the Isaac-patterned children of promise whose native city lies in the heavens. In order to stem a potentially disastrous “common sense” reading of Gen 21, Paul turns to the prophets and the risen Christ as hermeneutical keys which unlock the true significance of Abraham’s story and gives him discernment into how its concealed meaning transforms the genealogical heritage of Gentile believers.

³⁵ This identification recalls the earlier summarizing statement in 3:29: if one belongs to Christ, that one is Abraham’s σπέρμα and κατ’ ἐπαγγελίαν κληρονόμος, “an heir according to the promise.” See also Hays, *Echoes*, 114; Dunn, *Galatians*, 255-56; Calvert, “Abraham,” 6; Martyn, *Galatians*, 443-44. Paul’s preference for the term τέκνον in his allegory, rather than his usual υἱός, may be related to the fact that in Genesis, both Ishmael and Isaac are referred to as υἱός (16:11, 15; 17:19, 23, 25, 26; 18:10, 14, 19; frequently in chs. 21, 22), while only Isaac is called a τέκνον (17:6; 22:7, 8).

Paul thus offers an interpretation intended to counter the linear and self-evident reading strategy of his opponents.³⁶ Promise (Gen 12), faith (Gen 15), circumcision (Gen 17), and fulfillment (Gen 21) do not unfold organically in a unitary narrative possessing direct, normative significance for Gentile Christ-followers. Prophecy and Christology determine how Paul selects, plots, and reinterprets Israel's foundational story, discerns its dialectical meaning, and sets forth its contemporary relevance.³⁷

2.2.1.5. *Paul, Judaism, and "the Israel of God"*

In addition to the preceding observations, I would mention other indications that Paul no longer takes the meaning of *Israel* for granted. He adopts a generally dismissive tone towards fundamental indicators of Jewish ethnic and religious identity. He looks back on his ἀναστροφήν ποτε τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ (1:13-14); insists that Torah observance ensnares one in or perpetuates a state under the curse, and therefore cannot justify (3:10-12); suggests that salvation history, such as it is, skips from Abraham directly to Christ (3:16); implies that the textual record of the intervening historical trajectory serves as an allegory of the Christian community (4:24); equates the Sinaitic covenant with present Jerusalem (distinguished from "Jerusalem above") and both with slavery (4:25-26); limits those qualified to inherit Abraham's promise to those who believe in Christ, of whatever national or ethnic background (3:16, 29); concedes to the law a positive role only by

³⁶ Here I have been particularly influenced by Stockhausen ("Principles," 153-54; 158-59; see also Hays, *Echoes*, 107, 116; Martyn, *Galatians*, 302-6); against Dunn, *Galatians*, 165, 249.

³⁷ Paul's hermeneutic of mystery has roots in his own biography. Just as his calling to the Gentiles was determined before his birth, but revealed only when he encountered Christ (1:15-16, alluding to Isa 49:1, 5; Jer 1:5), so too the prophetic oracles long ago determined the correct way to organize narrative of Genesis, but this meaning was unveiled only with the resurrection. On the connection between Paul's biography and his hermeneutics, see John M. G. Barclay, "Paul's Story: Theology as Testimony," in *Narrative Dynamics*, 133-56; Eastman, "Mercy," 390-94 (though Eastman draws different conclusions than I).

assigning to it a negative function (3:21-22); quotes the septuagintal phrase καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου with emphasis but ignores the territorial dimension (the ethnoscape) attached to it in every case;³⁸ implies that Jewish history prior to (and apart from?) the coming of Christ constitutes an enslaved existence analogous to Gentile idolatry (4:1-7); equates Gentile circumcision and law-keeping with apostasy from Christ and a loss of grace (5:3-4); makes a crass pun on his opponents' advocacy of circumcision using the disparaging term ἀποκόπτω (5:12); and closes two sections of his argument by insisting that union with Christ makes Torah and circumcision, at best, irrelevancies (2:19-21; 6:14-15). In the course of his allegorical treatment of Isaac and Ishmael, he makes comprehensive and wholly negative assessments of the Sinaitic covenant, and nothing in the rhetoric or context suggests that Paul was anxious to clarify that he really had in mind *only* his Jewish-Christian opponents.³⁹

A final point: Paul's entire argument over six chapters and the unrelenting push of his rhetoric give the expression ὁ Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ in 6:16 a definite meaning. It

³⁸ Gen 13:5, 17:8, and possibly 24:7 (where καί is textually suspect). Galatians gives no indication whether Paul attaches any importance to Judea as the divinely guaranteed homeland waiting for the return and restoration of its native inhabitants (though assessments from various perspectives can be found in Williams, "Promise," 716-19; Dunn, *Galatians*, 183, 186; N. T. Wright, *Climax*, 174; idem, "The Letter to the Galatians: Exegesis and Theology," in *Between Two Horizons: Spanning New Testament Studies* [ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000], 225-26; Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 199-200). His allegory implies a thoroughgoing transcendentalization, possibly along Platonic lines (4:25-26), on which see Boyarin, *Radical Jew*. I do *not* agree with Boyarin that Paul was a Platonist, but his research raises the distinct possibility that Middle Platonic currents influenced Paul's hermeneutics.

³⁹ The recent strategy of scholars to insist that Paul's bracing rhetoric in all these instances extends only to (Jewish) *Christian* opponents, and therefore does not extend to Judaism itself, fails to appreciate how little Paul himself respects that distinction. For examples, see Sanders, *Jewish People*, 19; Siker, *Disinheriting*, 32, 41, 44, 46, 48, 213 n. 62; Charles B. Cousar, "Paul and Multiculturalism," in *Many Voices, One God: Being Faithful in a Pluralistic World: Essays in Honor of Shirley Guthrie* (ed. Walter Brueggemann and George W. Stroup; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster / John Knox, 1998), 56; Martyn, *Galatians*, 36-37, 40-41, 455-56. The contrary opinion is given in Betz, *Galatians*, 204, 246, 250-51; Bell, *Irrevocable Call*, 173-77. Nanos's attempt to limit the significance of the allegory to a rejection of the need for Gentile proselytizing ignores that fact that Paul explicitly frames his interpretation in light of Torah (4:21) and proceeds to discuss the Mosaic covenant without qualification (4:24-25; Nanos, *Irony*, 156-57).

encompasses the Abrahamic community, redefined around Christ—with the implication that the title applies *only* to them.⁴⁰ Christ conveys the Abrahamic blessings, and his Spirit engrafts into him those who believe, Jew and Gentile alike, so that the believing-in-Christ community constitutes Abraham’s exclusive σπέρμα (3:29). Gentile believers are taken into “Israel” by virtue of their connection, through Christ, to Isaac and Abraham. Jews who fail to respond to Paul’s gospel in faith do not so much suffer replacement as they forfeit their standing.⁴¹ Circumcision, a badge of identity which formerly attested to divinely bestowed Jewish prerogatives, is disposed of as irrelevant to the new creation (6:14-15). God’s Israel stands in *continuity* with Abraham’s seed, but it is *reconfigured* according to a christological exegesis of the scriptural promise.

⁴⁰ This *Israel* is not the *Gentile church* but the messianically determined people of God open to believing Gentiles; see Schoeps, *Paul*, 234, 241; Sanders, *Jewish People*, 173-74; Frank J. Matera, *Galatians* (SP 9; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1992), 232; Boyarin, *Radical Jew*, 283 n. 29; Gregory K. Beale, “Peace and Mercy Upon the Israel of God: The Old Testament Background of Galatians 6,16b,” *Bib* 80 (1999): 204-23; Martyn, *Galatians*, 574-77 (though he seems to equivocate in *Theological Issues*, 122-23); *pace* Davies, “People of Israel,” in *Studies*, 129; Dunn, *Galatians*, 345-46; Campbell, *Paul and the Creation of Christian Identity* (London: Continuum, 2008), 100; Eastman, “Mercy,” 367-95. The limitation of the phrase to believers *in Galatia* (so Betz, *Galatians*, 322; Charles A. Ray Jr., “The Identity of the ‘Israel of God,’” *TTE* 50 [1994]: 105-14) is too restrictive.

The debate over the nature of the καί in καί ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ would not decide the issue even if resolved (Matera, *Galatians*, 232). Contextual factors must determine the overall meaning. According to the rule of maximum redundancy, the sense of καί which adds the least semantic weight should be given priority. This would disqualify reading into this verse an unexpected reference to the Jewish people (Ray, “Identity,” 107-8). I am inclined to think that Paul uses καί because in 6:16a he still has his focus fixed on the situation in Galatia, while in 6:16b he broadens his view. In other words, realizing that his wish for peace could be construed as limited to the letter’s recipients, Paul adds “even the Israel of God” to expand the reference to those who follow his canon wherever they may be found. The καί is not merely expegetic: the latter group encompasses but goes beyond the former.

⁴¹ In Galatians, Paul’s theology of Israel is structurally similar to what Hartmut Stegemann claims for the Essenes: “From the outset . . . the Essenes never regarded themselves otherwise than as the sole legitimate representation of the twelve tribes of Israel as a whole in the current age. . . . The decisive thing was that the Essenes’ union . . . was the unification of all Israel in the Holy Land. Those who persisted in declining this union thereby *definitively closed themselves off from Israel* and from the salvific people of God, spurned the covenant God made on Sinai, and abandoned the foundation of the Torah, which had inextricably bound up salvation for Israel with Israel’s existence in God’s Holy Land” (*The Library of Qumran: On the Essenes, Qumran, John the Baptist, and Jesus* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998], 166, 168; emphasis added and Stegemann’s original emphasis removed). I therefore disagree with Richard Bell, who concludes that “Paul . . . in Galatians 3-4 [as in 6:16] has argued that the Church of Jews and Gentiles replaces Israel” (*Irrevocable Call*, 179; also 174-77, 178, 180).

2.2.1.6. Summary

These results show that in Galatians, Paul has performed an ethnogenetic feat of some consequence. He has pioneered for his Gentile converts an entirely new kinship-based religious identity. He does this through a rigorous and counterintuitive exegetical reinterpretation of Israel's founding etiology, assisted at every step by prophetic oracles which actualize its meaning and by his certainty that a new creation has begun with the coming of Christ (6:15). Paul extracts from his narrative text a broad range of Abrahamic elements symbolic of Jewish identity: seed, faith, righteousness, blessing, inheritance, and a promise of "life" (Hab 2:4) and "Spirit" (Isa 44:3). All these he applies in toto and without remainder to those incorporated into Christ. He leaves his opponents only a euphemism for foreskin (σάρξ) and expresses his criticism of them so strongly that it touches Torah itself (4:24-26).⁴² He shakes the designation *Israel* loose from its semantic synonymy with the Jewish ethnos and reconfigures its boundaries so that it becomes coterminous with the in-Christ community (6:16).⁴³ In his hands, the story of Abraham and his seed secures a position *in Israel* for *uncircumcised* Gentiles who are *equal in status* to believing Jews, and *limits* this Israel to those who, of whatever ethnic background, believe in Christ.⁴⁴

⁴² The land Paul leaves unaddressed but, as noted earlier, he implies that it exists only as a heavenly reality (4:26).

⁴³ On this point, I have been particularly influenced by Boyarin (*Radical Jew*, 111-12, 117).

⁴⁴ Writing on the social effects of Paul's rhetoric in this epistle, Francis Watson concludes, "Paul disinherits the Jewish community and claims that his congregations of mainly Gentile Christians are the sole legitimate possessors of these traditions" (*Beyond the New Perspective*, 132). Martyn maintains a similar position (*Galatians*, 350). However much this claim may grate against current sensibilities, it is not wide of the mark. I would argue that Paul disinherits the *unbelieving* (viz., in Christ) Jewish community, places the crucified and risen Christ at the center of what *Israel* means, and leaves open the question concerning on which side his Jewish-Christian opponents stand.

Bengt Holmberg concludes from his analysis of Gal 1-2 that, "when . . . Jewish identity conflicts with Christian identity, the former must be abandoned" ("Jewish Versus Christian Identity in the Early

At the same time, Paul shows himself firmly committed to Abrahamic paternity as determinative for participation in Israel. The Hebrew mythomoteur has exerted itself in an unprecedented situation, and Paul's commitment to it reveals deeply held convictions. Inclusion in Abraham's family as necessary for salvation is a core belief of Paul's, and not only of his opponents. He therefore appears to view his Gentile converts as "proselytes" to a christologically determined Abrahamic family.⁴⁵ The collective identity of Israel has been drastically reconfigured—*but not radically*, since a filial connection to Abraham remains the sine qua non of membership.

2.2.2. FORMER GENTILES WITH CIRCUMCISED HEARTS

This extension of *Israel* to Gentile Christ-believers, and its corresponding limitation to Jews who follow Christ, coheres well with indications of ecclesial identity in Paul's other letters. He associates the non-Jewish members of Christ's body to whom he writes with Israel's religious heritage to the extent that in his symbolic universe they acquire a set of transferred kinship relations. The myths, memories, and symbols of Israel's ethnic heritage have become the exclusive property of the Christ-believing community.

2.2.2.1. *Former Gentiles in 1 Corinthians*

Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians shows the apostle laboring to overcome the liminal status of Gentiles who follow the Jewish Messiah. Several passages intimate that these believers, by virtue of their relation to Christ, constitute a distinct entity existing outside

Church?" *RB* 103 [1998]: 416). But this is to state what Paul's position *implies*—*from the perspective of Paul's opponents*. In any case, it is not a question of the *church* replacing Israel, but of a messianically redefined Israel requiring faith in the Christ as the membership criterion which supersedes and nullifies all others. Gentiles responding in faith are adopted into Abraham's family, Jews who respond in unbelief forfeit their inheritance.

⁴⁵ Here I follow Donaldson, *Gentiles*, 121.

the traditional Jew-Gentile dichotomy. In the opening discourse, Paul sets those called to be in-Christ opposite Jews and Greeks as a third entity (1:23-24).⁴⁶ This same taxonomy appears with parallel terms in ch. 7: those called to the ἐκκλησία should remain content in their current state, whether they were called already circumcised or still in uncircumcision (vv. 17-20). When discussing his adaptable preaching and lifestyle strategies in 9:19-23, Paul appears to operate with a similar threefold classification: Jews, referred to as “those under the law,” exist side by side with “those who are without the law”; in contrast to both are those whom Paul has “won” and thereby “saved.”⁴⁷ Finally, a parallel division of humanity appears in 10:32, where, despite speaking of “the weak” and “the strong,” Paul concludes his call to Christian accommodation with the admonition, “Give no offense καὶ Ἰουδαίοις . . . καὶ Ἑλλησιν καὶ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ.”⁴⁸ In 12:2, he casually calls attention to times past when his readers *were* Gentiles (οἴδατε ὅτι ὅτε ἔθνη). Shortly thereafter he affirms that the identity which Christian believers possess “in Christ” supersedes those previously held, εἶτε Ἰουδαῖοι εἶτε

⁴⁶ Paul acknowledges that the called group is comprised of both Jews and Greeks / Gentiles, but I am not convinced that he is motivated by a concern to affirm their ethnic particularity (as argued in J. Brian Tucker, *You Belong to Christ: Paul and the Formation of Social Identity in 1 Corinthians 1-4* [Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick, 2010], 166-72).

⁴⁷ Paul states categorically that he himself is not under the law in 9:20, making Mark Nanos’s attempt to reclaim a Torah observant Paul in 1 Cor 9 shaky at best (“The Myth of the ‘Law-Free’ Paul Standing Between Christians and Jews,” *SCJR* 4 [2009]: 18; Nanos’s views are shared by Tucker, *You Belong to Christ*, 139 n. 51).

⁴⁸ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 489 n. 66; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 794-95; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 32; New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2008), 403. Tucker interprets the final καὶ as ascensive, which would make the Jews and Gentiles referred to members of the church (*You Belong to Christ*, 81). However, the conjunctive use is much more natural (see Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar* [rev. Gordon M. Messing; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956], §2878).

Ἕλληνας (12:13). The initial impression given by these texts is that Paul understands the messianic people as distinct from either Jews or Gentiles.

First Corinthians 10, however, complicates this picture and signals a return to the perspective expressed in Gal 6:16. Israel's historic experiences entered Scripture for the sake of the terminal generation, whom Paul identifies with his own audience (10:11). He unreflectively refers the wilderness grumblers as οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν, "our fathers" (10:1). What Moses speaks concerning Israel has direct relevance for the Corinthian Gentile Christians on the basis of this newly asserted genealogical connection.⁴⁹

Once the Gentile believers are made the posterity of ancient Israel, the interpretive bridge permits movement in both directions. The eucharistic presence of the risen Lord among the Corinthian Christians discloses the meaning of Israel's biblical traditions, identifying the rock from which the fathers drank as the pre-existent Christ (10:4; see also 10:16-17; 11:24-25, 27; 12:12-13, 27).

Additional evidence suggests that Paul understands the Corinthian believers as representatives of a new, spiritual Israel. When he draws an illustration from the contemporary operation of the Temple cult, he is careful to express that it comes from ὁ Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα (10:18), language which invites the reader to consider the possibility

⁴⁹ Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians* (ICC; New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1911), 199; C. K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (BNTC; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1968), 220; Hans Conzelman, *1 Corinthians* (trans. James W. Leitch; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 165; Fee, *First Corinthians*, 444; Boyarin, *Radical Jew*, 76; Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 380; *pace* Fredriksen, "Judaizing," 243; Tucker, *You Belong to Christ*, 147, both of whom see here an ethnic distinction.

The "our" in 10:1 occurs in a context where Paul is not merely expositing but directly addressing the Corinthian recipients and including himself with them in the same collective entity. Thus it stands apart from the use of *our* in the phrases "our forefather Abraham" (Rom 4:1), spoken to a Jewish interlocutor, and "our father Isaac" (Rom 9:10), where Paul is presenting a survey of patriarchal history and adopting an insider's perspective.

of an Israel κατὰ πνεῦμα.⁵⁰ If Paul regards the presence or absence of foreskin as irrelevant and sets both in contrast to keeping God’s commandments (7:19), and if his self-portrayal as an adaptable teacher indicates a rather liberal attitude towards Torah observance (9:19-21), the phrase ὁ Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα indicates the ontology that makes such convictions possible.⁵¹ Only by operating with a (S / s)pirit / flesh conceptuality can Paul distinguish the ἐκκλησία from “Jews” and at the same time align it with οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν. The redefinition of Israel that Paul believes has occurred with the Messiah’s appearance makes circumcision irrelevant, Temple service “fleshly,” and Torah observance a policy stipulation adopted for strategic reasons!

To summarize: the Corinthian Christians no longer have an identity as ἔθνη (12:2), their ancestors traveled in the wilderness (10:1), yet they remain distinct from unbelieving Jews (1:22-24) and ὁ Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα (10:18). The founding myths, heroic—and not so heroic—ancestors, and shared historical memories of Israel have a community-forming significance for Paul’s Gentile believers. Yet this new identity does not require a theology of supersession or transference. As in Galatians, Paul appears to be working with a conception of Israel as an entity so thoroughly recreated through its Messiah that belief in him renders once indispensable identity markers superfluous. It is into this New *Israel* (an anachronism in terminology but not conceptuality) that Paul invites Gentile idolaters to enter.⁵²

⁵⁰ Robertson and Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 215; Fee, *First Corinthians*, 470 n. 38; Boyarin, *Radical Jew*, 74; Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 392. Σάρξ here denotes not moral venality but either or both of two “aspects of human existence: physical observances of Jewish ritual, especially circumcision in the flesh, and physical kinship” (Boyarin, *Radical Jew*, 72). See further §3.4.2. below.

⁵¹ Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 308, 368-71.

⁵² Barrett claims that the language of a “third race” lies close to hand (*First Corinthians*, 279; Holmberg is similar [“Jewish *Versus* Christian Identity,” 422]), but I think that Paul’s dialectical

2.2.2.2. *Circumcised Hearts in Philippians and Romans*

This reapplication of Israel's traditions to the Jewish-and-Gentile community of Christ is further confirmed by Paul's characterization of circumcision elsewhere. In Phil 3, he declares that he together with the Gentile Christians in Philippi are ἡ περιτομή, "the circumcision," a title explicitly placed in contrast to what he denigrates as ἡ κατατομή, (vv. 2-3).⁵³ "The circumcision" he correlates with those who "worship God in / by (the) S / spirit" (οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες), and "glory in Christ" (οἱ . . . καυχόμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), while the practice of "mutilation" aligns with those who "put confidence in the flesh" (ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες). As in Galatians, the fact that this polemic is directed in the first instance against (the same?) rival *Christian* missionaries does not obscure the fact that Paul expresses himself in a way that deprecates physical circumcision itself.⁵⁴

reconfiguration of and fidelity to Israel's traditions is better conveyed by "New Israel" language, though both phrases are absent from his writings. On the other hand, terminology such as *restored* or *renewed* Israel suffers from the opposite defect: these terms are insufficient to express the new creation that Christ has inaugurated and inadequate to convey the fact that, for Paul, Israel's history from Sinai forward demonstrates the presence of sin and the pervasive effects of Adam's transgression (Rom 2:17-24; 3:19-20; 5:12-14, 19-21; 7:7-11; on Rom 7 and the history of Israel, see Douglas J. Moo, "Israel and Paul in Romans 7.7-12," *NTS* 32 [1986]: 122-35; Wright, *Climax*, 196-97).

⁵³ I consider Philippians to have been written shortly after Galatians, perhaps from an Ephesian imprisonment. The warnings in ch. 3 are in my judgment more likely a reflection of Paul's anxiety to head off another debacle similar to the one that had exploded in Galatia than a reflection of opponents already present in Philippi (following G. S. Duncan, "A New Setting for St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians," *ExpTim* 43 [1931]: 7-11; Robert Jewett, "Conflicting Movements in the Early Church as Reflected in Philippians," *NovT* [1970]: 364; Thomas H. Tobin, S.J., "What Shall We Say that Abraham Found? The Controversy behind Romans 4," *HTR* 88 [1995]: 442 n. 11; Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians* [rev. and expanded by Ralph P. Martin; WBC 43; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004], 1, iv; Bell, *Irrevocable Call*, 181; Grindheim, *Crux*, 121-22; Watson, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 137-50; John Reumann, *Philippians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB 33B; New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2008], 17, 470).

⁵⁴ Peter T. O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 358; Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 175; Grindheim, *Crux*, 125-26; against Gordon D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 298-99; Bell, *Irrevocable Call*, 182; Reumann, *Philippians*, 473-74, who do not find a polemical element here.

Jewish interpreters also applied "circumcision" to the condition of the heart (as already Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 4:4 encouraged them to do; see 1QS V, 5; 1QH II, 7, 18; XVIII, 20; Philo, *Ques. Gen.* 3.46). But even the allegorists to whom Philo elsewhere refers (*Migr.* 92-93) show no indication of a

According to Paul those who worship God in (S / s)pirit and boast in Christ, whether physically circumcised or not, can claim the title “the circumcision”—inclusive of Gentiles! His position indicates a thoroughgoing reconfiguration of what circumcision means and the ethno-religious body it signifies.⁵⁵

In Rom 2:28-29, Paul presents a similar understanding. He distinguishes between that which is euphemistically described as ἐν τῷ φανερωῷ, ἐν σαρκί, “outward, in the flesh” (2:28, NASB) and circumcision itself, an inward reality which he describes as καρδιάς ἐν πνεύματι οὐ γράμματι, “of the heart, by the Spirit and not by the letter,” and thus obtainable by Gentiles as well as Jews. The detailed investigation of this passage by Timothy W. Berkley has shown that Paul’s thorough reinterpretation of circumcision has an exegetical basis which was barely hinted at in Phil 3:2. Genesis 17 again lays out the problem Paul needs to solve: How can physically uncircumcised Gentiles become partakers in a covenant whose fundamental demand is the removal of male foreskin? To

polemical assault on physical circumcision as “mutilation.” As Frey states, the notion of “heart” circumcision was common among Jewish interpreters, but “we cannot deny that Paul uses the idea quite differently” (“Identity,” 313).

⁵⁵ Boyarin, *Radical Jew*, 81-82. Nanos tries to resist conclusions similar to those drawn here, but his counter-proposals are unconvincing. Two of them are relevant here. First, σάρξ in v. 3 has no connection to Paul’s frequent use of this word to indicate circumcision (§3.4.2. below) or to the κατατομή in v. 2. He suggests instead that ἐν σαρκί πεποιθότες “could certainly signify” the rejection of magical practices such as self-mutilation to influence pagan gods (though no evidence for such usage is offered; “‘Judaizers’? ‘Pagan’ Cults? Cynics? Reconceptualizing the Concerns of Paul’s Audience from the Polemics in Philippians 3:2, 18-19” (paper presented at the Philippians People’s History working group, Nov 2010; available at <<http://www.marknanos.com>> [23 July 2011], 13). Second, Paul’s expression, “We are the circumcised,” is a rhetorical device for including uncircumcised Gentiles within the Jewish community (so that “We are the circumcised” is a metonym for “We are the circumcised and the non-circumcised,” *ibid.*, 17-18). Significantly, Nanos does not seem to know what to do with vv. 7-8; he applies to these verses the label “dissociative rhetoric” (which is not explained in this essay, nor does he cite his earlier [opaque] discussion in *Irony*, 56-59), but how this description is supposed to convince us that when Paul uses the word σκύβαλον, he really means (in Nanos’s words) “the superior, spiritual values” of Judaism that he wants his Gentile converts to identify with, remains unclear (*ibid.*, 7, 15, 18-19). It appears to me, rather, that Paul’s willingness in the same passage to characterize the advantages of his Jewish heritage with a crudely pejorative slang in 3:8 confirms his negative perspective on physical circumcision in v. 2 (so too Duling, “Whatever Gain,” 810-14).

meet this challenge, Paul employs pentateuchal and prophetic texts (Deut 29-30, Ezek 36, Jer 7) which allow him to reinterpret the “circumcision of the *flesh*” in Gen 17 (vv. 11, 13, 14, 24, 25) as a *spiritual* circumcision. This exegetical maneuver enables Paul to understand “being a Jew” as a spiritual reality and therefore inclusive of the Gentile Christ-believers.⁵⁶ However, Paul does not denigrate circumcision (as in Phil 3:2) but only qualifies its meaning. This shift accords with the general tenor of Romans, as the examination of Rom 4 below also suggests.

2.2.2.3. *Summary*

Not only in Galatians but also in 1 Corinthians, Phil 3, and Rom 2, Paul’s rhetoric of identity remains consistent: Christ-believing Gentiles have joined messianic Jews like himself and received an entirely new founding ancestor, ethnic affiliation, and stock of historical experiences. The apostolic discourse creates an identity for Gentile converts that encroaches on the cultural heritage guarded by the Jewish community. As W. D. Davies wrote, “In the [Church] Paul sees the world-wide growth of the true Israel, an Israel formed of those who had accepted the claims of Jesus as Messiah.”⁵⁷ But, as Davies implies, even at his most extreme, Paul remains committed to the founding narratives of his native community. The Abrahamic mythomoteur, even when not

⁵⁶ Berkley, *Broken Covenant*, 141-58; see also C. K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans* (2d ed.; BNTC; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991), 57-58; Thomas R. Schreiner, “Circumcision,” in *DPL*, 137-39; Wright, *NIB* 10:448-50; Frey, “Identity,” 313, 315; against Robert Jewett, *Romans* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008), 235-36, who finds the primary background in the Jesus tradition of Matt 6.

⁵⁷ Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology* (4th ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 75.

explicitly invoked, regulates Paul's efforts to conceptualize an identity for Gentile Christ-followers appropriate to their share in God's new creation.⁵⁸

2.2.3. ROMANS 4 AND THE TWO BRANCHES OF ABRAHAM'S FAMILY TREE

Paul's most sustained interpretation of Abraham as a progenitor of the Christ-determined community appears in Rom 4. As in Galatians, an exegetical argument extends genealogical ties from the patriarch to Gentile believers. But a remarkable shift occurs in this passage. In Galatians, those in Christ, Jew and Gentile alike, constitute the single seed of Abraham and the ethnically undifferentiated Israel of God. The argument was based on a locative or instrumental interpretation of ἐν in Gen 12:3 and 18:18, supplemented by Gen 15:6, and made possible by a christological reading of σπέρμα.

In Rom 4, by contrast, Paul bypasses Gen 12:3 and 18:18, gives Gen 15:6 an independent role, and relies largely on Gen 17:5. More significantly, although he anticipates his closing christological statement in vv. 24-25 as early as v. 17, his interpretation of Genesis evinces no christological hermeneutic. As a result, law-free Gentiles retain their newly-found Abrahamic paternity but are carefully placed *alongside* a Christ-believing Jewish community which Paul acknowledges *will persist in observing*

⁵⁸ Donaldson has presented strong arguments that a categorical differentiation between Jew and Gentile in Paul's conceptual universe persisted throughout his career (*Gentiles*, 178-84; several works argue the same, e.g., William S. Campbell, *Paul's Gospel in an Intercultural Context: Jew and Gentile in the Letter to the Romans* [Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity 69; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1992], 48; idem, *Creation*, 48-49, 100-101, 127, and passim; Leander E. Keck, "The Jewish Paul Among the Gentiles: Two Portrayals," in *Early Christianity and Classical Culture*, 461-81, esp. 470-75; Nanos, "Paul's Judaism"). By way of response, I would point out, first, that the majority of Donaldson's evidence comes from Rom 4, 9-11, and 15, not Gal, 1 Cor, Phil, or Rom 2. Second, Donaldson's main concern is to demonstrate the abiding relevance of the category *Israel* in Paul's thought, against approaches which dissolve his Jewish identity so as to facilitate the construction of a Christian Apostle of Universalism (Bultmann is specifically named but many others could be cited). But my argument here is that until Rom 4 *Israel*—redefined around the crucified and risen Messiah—is the *only* relevant category; outside of this there is nothing but wrath and idolatry (e.g., 1 Thess 1:9-10; 2:15-17 [if authentic]; Gal 2:15; 4:8-9; Phil 2:15; 1 Cor 5:5, 9-13; 6:9-11; 2 Cor 4:3-4; Rom 1:18-32; 2:17-24). I would also add, once again, that nowhere in the texts canvassed does Paul draw on Gentile pilgrimage traditions.

circumcision (v. 12) and *Torah* (v. 16).⁵⁹ It is here, for the first time, that Paul is willing to speak of separate branches in the one Abrahamic family tree.

2.2.3.1. *Justification, Circumcision, and Abraham's Children in Romans 4:9-12*

Romans 4 introduces Abraham to prove that justification occurs on the basis of faith (vv. 3-6, quoting Gen 15:6 in v. 3) and is effective for the forgiveness of sins (vv. 7-8, quoting Psa 32:1-2). In vv. 9-12, however, Paul moves from Abraham as example of justification to Abraham as ancestor of God's people.⁶⁰ He marks the transition with the question, "Is this blessing pronounced only upon the circumcised, or also upon the uncircumcised?"

⁵⁹ On the differences between Gal 3 and Rom 4, see Siker, *Disinheriting*, 72-74; J. Paul Sampley, "Romans and Galatians: Comparisons and Contrasts," in *Understanding the Word: Essays in Honor of Bernard W. Anderson* (ed. James T. Butler, Edgar W. Conrad, and Ben C. Ollenburger; JSOTSup 37; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 315-39; Chance, "Seed," 391; Martyn, *Galatians*, 350-52. In Berkley's study, the divergent strategies of Rom 2, where Gentiles are capable of *becoming Jews* on the basis of Paul's redefinition of circumcision, and Rom 4 and 9-11, where Gentiles are included within Abraham's family *alongside Jews / Israel without* such a transformation, are briefly acknowledged (*Broken Covenant*, 192 n. 72), but otherwise glossed over (*ibid.*, 152, 160-61, 163-70).

⁶⁰ Richard B. Hays argues that 4:1 be translated, "What then? Shall we say to have found Abraham as our forefather according to the flesh?" ("Abraham as Father of Jews and Gentiles," in *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scriptures* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 61-84; repr. from "'Have We Found Abraham to Be Our Forefather according to the Flesh?' A Reconsideration of Rom 4:1," *NovT* 27 [1985]; he is followed in Michael Cranford, "Abraham in Romans 4: The Father of All Who Believe," *NTS* 41 [1995]: 71-88; Berkley, *Broken Covenant*, 163; N. T. Wright, *NIB* 10:487, 489-90, 494; see criticisms in James D. G. Dunn, *Romans* [WBC 38; Dallas: Word, 1988], 1:199; Tobin, "Controversy," 443 n. 14; Jewett, *Romans*, 307-8). This translation would bring 4:1-8 under the rubric of Abraham's true family and eclipse the exemplary significance Abraham would otherwise seem to possess. Despite the exegetical and linguistic arguments Hays presents, I suspect more theological motivations afoot: an unwillingness to acknowledge that Paul's argument shifts its focus midstream; a realization that Abraham functioning as exemplar for the believer in Rom 4:1-8 would have potentially catastrophic results for Hays's understanding of πίστις Χριστοῦ; and a discomfort with traditional Protestant exegesis of Paul which finds very strong support from 4:1-8.

The accuracy of Protestant interpretations of 4:1-8 was acknowledged frankly by Sanders (ironically; *Jewish People*, 35) but is resisted by several proponents of the New Perspective, e.g., Dunn, *Romans*, 1:204-5; idem, *The New Perspective on Paul* (rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 48-50; Wright, *NIB* 10:491-92; see further Simon J. Gathercole, "Justified by Faith, Justified by His Blood: The Evidence of Romans 3:21-4:25," in *The Paradoxes of Paul* (vol. 2 of *Justification and Variegated Nomism*; ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O'Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 156-60; Peter T. O'Brien, "Was Paul Converted?" in *The Paradoxes of Paul*, 377-78 n. 57; Gerhard H. Visscher, *Romans 4 and the New Perspective on Paul: Faith Embraces the Promise* (Studies in Biblical Literature 122; New York: Lang, 2009) and the response in Don Garlington, review of Gerhard H. Visscher, *Romans 4 and the New Perspective on Paul: Faith Embraces the Promise*, *RBL*, 27 November 2009 <http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/7088_7701.pdf> (13 January 2011).

Genesis 15:6 answers Paul's question concerning the *basis* of justification, but it is the broader context which explains how the multiethnic recipients of justification relate to each other and to Abraham. A number of features in Rom 4:9-12 require comment.

First, Paul bases his argument on the narrative sequence in Genesis. It is supremely important to him that Abraham's justification occurs *before* his circumcision, that Gen 15 appears *prior to* Gen 17. Paul develops a dual significance from these two moments in Abraham's story that has no analog in his other extant letters. He identifies the meaning of the narrative order in this way: "The purpose was to make [Abraham] the father of all who believe without being circumcised . . . *and likewise* (καί) the father of the circumcised" (vv. 11b-12a). Abraham's paternity encompasses distinct classes of people whose relation to him depends on the paradigmatic text that corresponds to their respective situations. The righteousness credited to him solely on the basis of faith (Gen 15) demonstrates his ancestral potency for those who believe without circumcision, while his subsequent circumcision (Gen 17) reveals his fatherhood of those who, believing, follow the same path to circumcision.⁶¹ The chronology of Genesis enables Abraham to symbolize the *multiform unity* characterizing God's people.⁶²

Second, although Paul never provides an explicit statement concerning how these groups actually become Abraham's children, 4:11-12 implies an answer. These verses

⁶¹ This interpretation takes τοῖς στοιχοῦσιν κτλ. in v. 12 as a reference to the same group referred to with τοῖς οὐκ ἐκ περιτομῆς μόνον in the same verse, an interpretation required by the placement of the first τοῖς with respect to οὐκ . . . μόνον; see C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (2 vols.; 6th ed.; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1975-1979), 1:237; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:211; Chance, "Seed," 391-92; against Jewett, *Romans*, 320.

⁶² Anthony J. Guerra, "Romans 4 as Apologetic Theology," *HTR* 81 (1988): 263-64; Hays, *Echoes*, 56; Andrew T. Lincoln, "Abraham Goes to Rome: Paul's Treatment of Abraham in Romans 4," in *Worship, Theology, and Ministry: Essays in Honor of Ralph P. Martin* (ed. Michael J. Wilkins and Terence Paige; JSNTSup 87; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 169-70, 172; Siker, *Disinheriting*, 58-61; Calvert, "Abraham," 7; Tobin, "Controversy," 447; idem, *Paul's Rhetoric in Its Contexts: The Argument of Romans* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2004), 152; Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 213-14; Campbell, *Creation*, 63.

suggest that *following Abraham's example* suffices for *both groups* as a standard for membership in his one family.⁶³ Abraham becomes the father of Gentiles who believe as he believed, and of Jews who not only believe but *στοιχοῦσιν τοῖς ἴχνεσιν*, “walk in the footsteps of,” “conduct oneself in the manner of” (BDAG, s.v. *στοιχέω* and *ἴχνος*). Genesis provides distinct Abrahamic paradigms for each group to model.⁶⁴

Third, Paul continues to read the story of Abraham from the perspective articulated in Gal 6:15: a new creation in Christ has interrupted Israel's historic traditions. While the drastic break so evident in Galatians is here and throughout Romans attenuated, Paul nevertheless refuses to read the Abrahamic story as a single organically unfolding plot, whose narrative trajectory possesses an univocal significance for all Abraham's subsequent children. The constituent elements of the Abrahamic myth do not combine in a straightforward etiology for an undifferentiated people. They contrast with each other and in so doing anticipate the paradoxically diverse unity of God's eschatological family.⁶⁵

2.2.3.2. *Torah, Inheritance, and Abraham's Children in Romans 4:13-17*

In vv. 13-17a, Paul moves the discussion from circumcision to Torah. This suggests that his interest in Abraham's “biography” has moved from Gen 15 and Gen 17 to Gen 22, the sacrifice of Isaac. Jewish interpreters commonly read this episode as the ultimate

⁶³ This despite Paul's invocation of Abraham, “our forefather *according to the flesh*,” a phrase which implies that actual descent through procreation has a contributing role.

⁶⁴ Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 216.

⁶⁵ This soft emphasis on discontinuity is supported, I think, by the way Paul suppresses the significance of circumcision even for the Jewish branch of Abraham's family in vv. 11a and 12. It is only the seal of Abraham's *prior* righteousness, and it was adopted so that he can be the father of those who are not ἐκ περιτομῆς *μόνον*. The clear implication is that for both branches of the Abrahamic tree, righteousness occurs through faith. For neither does it occur on the basis of circumcision.

example of Abrahamic obedience and the anticipation of Torah-based piety.⁶⁶ This transition allows Paul to reiterate his arguments from 4:9-12 while shifting their focus from circumcision to *Torah*.⁶⁷

The emphasis on Abraham's family as a multiplicity, rather than an undifferentiated unity, persists in this new phase of Paul's discussion. Σπέρμα in v. 13 is given its natural, collective sense, glossed in v. 16 as παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι, "all the seed." Consistent with this, Abraham becomes ὁ πατήρ πάντων ἡμῶν, "the father of us all" (v. 16) and—on the basis of Gen 17:5—πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν, "the father of many nations" (v. 17). The christological argument of Galatians which assimilated Gentile Christ-followers to ὁ Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ can not accommodate this emphasis on diverse peoples stemming from Abraham; accordingly it disappears.

Paul's new reading of σπέρμα has theological and social-symbolic repercussions. Just as the continuing role of circumcision for Jewish Christ-followers was acknowledged in 4:12, Paul here accepts the significance of Torah for the same branch of Abraham's children. Gentile believers enter the family of Abraham along side those ἐκ τοῦ νόμου (v. 16).⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Ancient readers frequently understood Gen 15:6 as an anticipatory verdict validated only on the basis of Abraham's obedience in Gen 22: Sir 44:19-21; *Jub.* 17:15-18; 18:16; 19:8; 1 Macc 2:52; Philo, *Abr.* 192; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.223-225; Pseudo-Philo, *L.A.B.*, 40:2, 5; 4 Macc 14:20; *m. Avot* 5.3. Jon D. Levenson present a vigorous modern defense of this position in *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993), 125-42. Incidentally, this perspective is shared by the author of *1 Clem.*, who makes the birth of Isaac as the fulfillment of God's promise contingent on Abraham's willingness to sacrifice him (with an implied appeal to God's foreknowledge, though this is not stated; *1 Clem.* 10:7).

⁶⁷ Stanislas Lyonnet, *Études sur l'épître aux Romains* (AnBib 120; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1989), 265. On the meaning of νόμος and ἔργα in Paul, see §3.5.2.

⁶⁸ In light of vv. 9, 11, 13, and especially 12 ("the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but also follow the example of the faith which our father Abraham had") and 14 ("If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void"), I regard Paul's language in v. 16 as imprecise; with οἱ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου he has in mind Jewish believers in Christ (whom Paul conceives

And as he did in 4:9-12, Paul applies a reading strategy that refuses to allow later moments in the narrative to determine earlier ones. He already separated Gen 15 and 17 and made each the symbolic paradigm for a distinct line of descendants; here he sets both in opposition to Gen 22. He insists that Abraham's justification occurred not as a proleptic assessment of his character that the Akedah would confirm, but only on the basis of his faith in the divine promise. Some of Abraham's seed may continue to be οἱ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου, but ὁ νόμος itself fails to demarcate his heirs (v. 13). Paul assigns to it a diagnostic purpose; any greater significance would undo the unity of Abraham's multiethnic descendants (v. 15; see also 2:17-24; 3:19-20; 5:20; 7:7-12).⁶⁹

But Paul does more in 4:13-17a than apply his prior arguments to Torah. In a further contrast with Galatians, he specifically addresses the Jewish ethnoscape in 4:13. It is this territorial dimension, rather than the Spirit, that he identifies with the promise.⁷⁰ Although this development commits Paul to a reading closer to the "original meaning" of Genesis, he interprets it in light of an eschatological trend: Abraham and his σπέρμα will "inherit the κόσμος." The promise of land not only remains in force, but now delivers

of as Torah observant or whom he refers to with stock terminology) alongside Gentile believers in Christ—not Torah-observant but *non-Christian* Jews juxtaposed against *Gentiles* who believe as Abraham did (with Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:242; Wright, *NIB* 10:498; against Dunn, *Romans*, 1:216; Jewett, *Romans*, 331).

⁶⁹ As γράμμα, the law in Romans has *only* this diagnostic function. However, in the power of the Spirit the law is given a fresh lease on life—but it must be read in a correspondingly new way (cf. 7:6, 8:3-4). This dialectic explains Paul's consistent willingness to give the law a positive role in the believer's life, an emphasis unique to this letter (3:27; 7:12-16, 21-25; 8:2-4; 9:4; 10:5; 13:8-10). This programmatic reinterpretation of the law marks a fresh development over the stance Paul adopted in Galatians, where the statements concerning fulfilling the law in 5:14 seem to me to appear abruptly and without being anticipated earlier in the epistle. The work of Daniel Boyarin has convinced me that Paul has joined a Middle-Platonic hermeneutic to his distinction between the S / spirit and the letter and made possible the dual law which appears throughout this epistle (3:27-31, ch. 7; 8:1-4; 10:6-8).

⁷⁰ The Spirit will reappear in connection with language related to *inheritance* in Rom 8, esp. vv. 15-17.

the entire creation.⁷¹ If Abraham is to generate *nations*, then the compact bit of real estate located around Jerusalem can hardly suffice as their place of residence. Only a world-encompassing fulfillment can contain a posterity so vast.

Romans 4 thus shows both considerable consistency as well as remarkable innovation when compared to the remainder of Paul's corpus. He continues to rely on the narratives of Abraham to understand the messianic family. But here he also evinces a process of selection, emplotment, and interpretation not anticipated in his previous letters.⁷² By shifting his exegetical bases from Gen 12:2 and 18:18 to 17:5—a most unlikely verse, given its context!—Paul has found a different way of reading Gentiles into Genesis. He applies to Gen 15, 17, and 22 his dialectical mode of reading: successive episodes in Abraham's life do not combine into a seamless whole but signify now his Gentile children, now his Jewish ones, now the impossibility of law to supplement the justification of either. Both groups share an *Abrahamic* but no longer an

⁷¹ Dahl, "The Future of Israel," in *Studies*, 139-40; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:239-40; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:213; Johnson Hodge, *If Sons*, 188 n. 30. Paul evaluation of Israel's ethnoscape will receive a more detailed discussion in §5.3. below.

⁷² I do not address the reasons for this shift in the present study. But in my evaluation, Paul's altered perspective was likely triggered by numerous factors, few of them related to conflicts in the Roman community (a hypothesis favored by many scholars). Rather, his understanding was affected by several challenges rooted in his own ministry: a reconsideration of the arguments he employed in Galatians and their implications for Israel; the moral disaster in Corinth, which led him to rethink the continuing role of Torah; his need to mend fences for the sake of the Christ-followers in Rome, many of whom may have been Jews or influenced by "the Jewish way of life," in order to garner support for his trip to Spain—Rom 3:8 gives a clear indication that Paul feared libelous accusations would poison his reception (on the issues confronting Paul when he wrote Romans, I have been greatly helped by John W. Drane, *Paul: Libertine or Legalist? A Study in the Theology of the Major Pauline Epistles* [London: SPCK, 1975]; idem, "Why Did Paul Write Romans?" in *Pauline Studies: Essays Presented to Professor F. F. Bruce on His Seventieth Birthday* [ed. Donald A. Hagner and Murray J. Harris; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980], 208-27; Peter Stuhlmacher, "The Purpose of Romans," in *The Romans Debate* [ed. Karl P. Donfried; rev. and expanded ed.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991], 231-42; Tobin, *Paul's Rhetoric*).

However, while these factors may have changed Paul's hermeneutical horizon, they did not dictate his hermeneutical outcomes. I submit, and I hope to demonstrate in the following chapters, that the new emphases present in the letter to Rome derived *at least in part* from his reading of Scripture. This is not, of course, to claim that Paul was ever innocent of interpretive interests, that he ever retrieved from Scripture its unadulterated meaning, or that he ever lacked some idea of what he was looking for. It is only to claim that Paul's convictions regulated his reading but did not in every case determine it (§1.3.).

Israelite kinship. Paul thus found an interpretive path into Israel's traditions for his Gentile converts that did not violate the integrity of Jewish ethnic affiliation, and this discovery runs in tandem with a new appreciation for the importance of the territorial promises to Abraham. As fundamental elements of the Abrahamic mythomoteur, circumcision, Torah, and land have reasserted themselves and made their presence felt in Paul's interpretation of Israel's etiological myth. They will emerge again in Rom 9.

2.3. CONCLUSIONS

When Paul conceptualizes an identity for Gentile Christ-followers, he pursues a single hermeneutical agenda: they must be incorporated into Abraham's family. The exegetical means by which he makes the connection through Christ to Abraham changes over time. In Galatians, Paul bases his exegesis of Gen 12:3, 15:6, and 18:18 on his participationist soteriology: those in Christ are *ipso facto* children of Abraham. In Rom 4, however, the plural *πολλῶν ἐθνῶν* from Gen 17:5 provides him with the necessary warrant for engrafting Gentiles into the patriarchal family tree. Romans 9 will provide yet another means of situating Gentiles within the community of Abrahamic heirs.

But these are diverse means by which Paul arrives at his unchanging goal. Those who believe in Christ become Abraham's seed. New creation does not obliterate the significance of Abraham as progenitor of the covenant community, but supplies an avenue for making the Abrahamic endowment available to all nations. Paul consistently presents interpretations drastic in their revisionist implications yet grounded in the sacred mythomoteur. The textual meanings of seed, righteousness, circumcision, promise, and inheritance are all recategorized and given new referents in Paul's symbolic landscape, but these concepts are never uprooted from their native soil.

However, Paul does not merely expand Jewish religious identity until it is sufficiently broad to accommodate righteousness-in-Christ for Gentiles. Participation in Abraham's family now requires membership in the messianic community (Gal 3:29; 1 Cor 12:13). Ethnic Jews, in Romans at least, may continue to observe their traditional practices, but Paul bars them from membership in Abraham's family apart from faith in Christ. On this issue, he shows no indication of ambiguity.

Paul is consistent in another area: he refuses to read Genesis as an unambiguous charter of Jewish ethnic solidarity. Instead, he finds a text characterized by disruption and fracture, composed of episodes whose discrete significances can be placed in contrast to each other, and whose ultimate meaning can be perceived only from the standpoint of the end of the ages brought about by Christ (1 Cor 10:11). To understand how God has brought about this paradoxical fulfillment, he turns repeatedly to prophetic texts that unveil the meaning of Abraham's blessings for the messianic community.

These results confirm the conclusions formulated by Carol Stockhausen in her own work on Paul reviewed in the previous chapter. When Paul interprets the OT, he pays close attention to the narrative shape of his base text, particularly the Pentateuch. He employs prophetic texts to make the narrative meaning relevant to his own time. And he uses the rabbinic technique of linking together texts on the basis of shared vocabulary (*gezera shawa*). Paul will execute the same hermeneutical program in Rom 9, where he once again turns to the etiology of Israel in Genesis to decipher its meaning for his own day.

CHAPTER THREE

DISCRIMINATORY ELECTION AND LOGICAL REVERSALS IN ROMANS 9:6-13

According to the previous chapter, Paul broke new interpretive ground in Romans. In ch. 4, for the first time, his theological assessment of Israel “according to the flesh” concedes the legitimacy of its observance of circumcision, its practice of Torah, and its territorial promise. Romans 4 witnesses a further development: Paul provides a place within Abraham’s family for both Jewish and Gentile Christ-followers, and he does not assimilate one group to the other. The generative power of his native mythomoteur has opened new avenues for understanding the new community created in Christ.

This reconfiguration of Abraham’s family as a *dual* unity occurs again in Rom 9.¹ Its argument presupposes a simple fact: Abraham had *two* sons, and according to Genesis, their fates are intertwined. The etiology of the Jewish ethnos bears the power to explain the mystery of Jews and Gentiles in God’s one eschatological family. It need only the skills of a hermeneutical adept to reveal itself.

¹ Scholars increasingly recognize that Paul keeps Israel and Gentiles / the nations separate in Rom 9-11 as he had in ch. 4 (Bruce W. Longenecker, “Different Answers to Different Issues: Israel, the Gentiles and Salvation History in Romans 9-11,” *JBL* 36 [1989]: 96-98; James M. Scott, *Paul and the Nations: The Old Testament and Jewish Background of Paul’s Mission to the Nations with Special Reference to the Destination of Galatians* [WUNT 84; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995], 132-33; Campbell, *Creation*, 102, 131; Jewett, *Romans*, 575; *pace* Ellis, *Paul’s Use of the Old Testament*, 137-39; Davies, “People of Israel,” in *Studies*, 132; Williams, “Righteousness,” 281; James W. Aageson, “Typology, Correspondence, and the Application of Scripture in Romans 9-11,” *JSNT* 31 [1987]: 55; Bruce Chilton, “Romans 9-11 as Scriptural Interpretation and Dialogue with Judaism,” *ExAud* 4 [1988]: 31; Mary Ann Getty, “Paul and the Salvation of Israel: A Perspective on Romans 9-11,” *CBQ* 59 [1988]: 459; E. Elizabeth Johnson, *The Function of Apocalyptic and Wisdom Traditions in Romans 9-11* [SBLDS 109; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989], 139-41; Wright, *Climax*, 238; Byrne, *Romans*, 292-93, 304).

In the present chapter, I begin my case for a pre-textual interpretation of Genesis underlying all of Rom 9. I argue, first, that in Rom 9:7-13 Paul interprets Genesis so as to affirm God's inviolable election of Israel; second, that he does so in a peculiar manner, namely, by detaching circumcision and Torah from election and promise, and by drawing attention to the exclusionary reflex election entails; and third, that he does this in apparent defiance of his own opening thesis in 9:6. In that verse, Paul promises a vindication of God's word (9:6a) on the basis of a distinction *within Israel* (9:6b). Although the quotations from Isaiah in vv. 27-29 finally effect this inner-Israel rupture, the intervening verses push in a very different direction. In subsequent chapters I will show how Paul's interpretation of Genesis via Hosea and Isaiah explains these shifts in his argument.

3.1. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO ISRAEL: COVEVANTAL FIDELITY OR COSMIC FARCE? ROMANS 9:6a IN CONTEXT

In Galatians, Paul's christological redefinition of ὁ Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ implies that Israel's election persists in the Christ-believing community alone. This understanding of Christ and Israel has controversial implications for the viability and perceived efficacy of Israel's religious traditions. For anyone not predisposed to accept Paul's premises, it implies that God has arbitrarily changed the terms defining his people in complete disregard of his commitment, repeated endlessly in Scripture, to ensure their eventual salvation. This is the challenge he deals with in Rom 9-11.

Unfortunately, Paul does not lay out his thesis quite so clearly. He begins with a preamble establishing his character: Paul deserves a hearing as someone who acknowledges the historic privileges of Israel and confesses a deep concern for their

salvation (vv. 1-5). Then comes the declaration: Οὐχ οἶον δὲ ὅτι ἐκπέπτωκεν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, “But it is not as though the word of God has failed.” Most commentators identify 9:6a as his *propositio*.² Yet the statement is jarring, since it has no grammatical connection with the preceding enumeration of Israel’s benefits. Its relation must be inferred.

Paul’s restriction of God’s saving act to the community of Christ-followers lies behind this declaration. He made this limitation in his other letters (§2.2.), and he repeats it in Romans. Earlier in the letter, Paul argued that the Jews proved themselves disobedient to the demands of the covenant (2:21-24);³ that the terms of righteousness which God has laid down consist of faith in Christ (3:22-24); that Torah observance (3:19-21; 4:13-17a; 7:4-6) and circumcision (2:25-29; 4:9-12) no longer define Abraham’s children or channel the blessings promised to his descendants.

This characterization of Israel persists into chs. 9-11. Already in v. 3 Paul states his willingness to become ἀνάθεμα . . . ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου κατὰ σάρκα, “cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh” (NRSV). This implies that Israel’s relation to its religious heritage is in Paul’s mind

² Dahl, “Future of Israel,” in *Studies*, 143; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:473; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 261; Ulrich Wilckens, *Röm 6-11* (vol. 2 of *Der Brief an die Römer*; EKK; Zürich: Benziger, 1980), 191; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:539; Wright, *NIB* 10:635; Grindheim, *Crux*, 141; Jewett, *Romans*, 570-71, 574. On the application of classical rhetorical analysis to 9:6, see Benjamin Fiore, S.J., “Romans 9-11 and Classical Forensic Rhetoric,” *Proceedings of the Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies* 8 (1988): 120; Johann D. Kim, *God, Israel, and the Gentiles: Rhetoric and Situation in Romans 9-11* (SBLDS 176; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 123-24; Jewett, *Romans*, 572-73.

³ Michael Cranford, “Election and Ethnicity: Paul’s View of Israel in Romans 9.1-13,” *JSNT* 50 (1993): 31-33; Berkley, *Broken Covenant*, 124-25. See also §2.2.2.2.

Dunn’s view that Paul targets Jewish “national presumption” in this passage is too narrow (*Romans*, 1:113-14, 117), while Wright’s attempt to combine both perspectives on Rom 2 (disobedience and nationalism) is perhaps an example of having one’s cake and eating it too (*NIB* 10:445-58).

problematic, to say the least.⁴ His later claims that Israel lacks “righteousness” (9:30-31; 10:3) and stands in need of “salvation” (10:1) clarify Paul’s position further. And even as he anticipates that God will undo Israel’s current situation, he acknowledges three times that the nation is disobedient (ἀπειθέω, ἀπειθεία, 11:30, 31, 32) and characterizes the Jews as enemies (ἐκθροί, 11:28).⁵

If Paul’s argument polemically denies to Israel, viewed as a totality, its reliance on election and covenant, his portrayal of Gentile Christ-followers exacerbates the scandal. According to Romans, Gentiles who believe in Israel’s messiah obtain a share in adoption (8:15-17, 23); in glory (8:21, 30); in circumcision (2:29); in the law (3:27; 3:31; 8:4; 13:8-10); in cultic service (12:1; 15:16); and in the promises (4:13-15). In other words, Paul sees the same privileges enumerated in 9:4-5 extended to Gentile Christ-followers, while correspondingly limited to Jews who make the same christological confession. In light of the paltry numbers of Jews confessing κύριος Ἰησοῦς (10:9) and the comparative success of Paul’s apostolate among the Gentiles, his reconfiguration of covenant and salvation around the Christ raises a problem: Does this unexpected development undermine God’s faithfulness towards the historic people of Israel?⁶

⁴ Ἀνάθεμα is a particularly strong term; in the conquest traditions, it refers to the ban placed on accursed objects devoted to destruction (Num 21:3; Deut 7:26; Josh 6:17; 7:12; Judg 1:17; BDAG, s.v.; J. Behm, “ἀνατίθημι, προσανατίθημι, κτλ.,” *TDNT* 1:353-56; H. Aust and D. Müller, “Anathema,” *NIDNTT* 1:413-15). In the present context, it signifies the state of being delivered over to divine wrath (Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:457; Barrett, *Romans*, 165; Moo, *Romans*, 557-58; Bell, *Irrevocable Call*, 198-99; against the weaker formulation of Jewett, *Romans*, 561).

⁵ Paul’s discourse twice provokes the question as to whether God has rejected his people (11:1; 11:10); the vehement denials indicate his desire to avoid conclusions one could potentially draw from his own discussion, however unwarranted he thinks those conclusions are.

⁶ So Dunn, who writes: “How is it that Gentiles are entering into the promises to Abraham so readily while most of [Paul’s] own people to whom the promises were given seem to be missing out? If God is not faithful to Israel, how can Paul proclaim his faithfulness to the Gentiles?” (*Romans*, 2:530); also C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (MNTC; New York: Harper, 1932), 150, 155; Schoeps, *Paul*, 237; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:447; Chilton, “Romans 9-11,” 27-28; Hays, *Echoes*, 64; Longenecker,

With the affirmation of v. 9:6a, therefore, Paul sets out to prove that the new era inaugurated by Christ has not abrogated the divine promises vouchsafed to Israel in days past.⁷ As Ulrich Wilckens has expressed it, the objection Paul must answer is whether or not his gospel “is built on the shattered foundation of salvation history,” and whether or not “the righteousness of God, which is proclaimed in the gospel, can in reality be anything other than unrighteousness, since it has nothing more to do with the covenantal righteousness for Israel.”⁸ On Paul’s own understanding of the Christ-event, did God

“Different Answers,” 95; Johnson, *Function*, 145-46; Lyonnet, *Études*, 264, 266; Wayne A. Meeks, “On Trusting an Unpredictable God,” in *Faith and History: Essays in Honor of Paul W. Meyer* (ed. John T. Carroll, Charles H. Cosgrove, and E. Elizabeth Johnson; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 105; Barrett, *Romans*, 164, 166; Wright, *Climax*, 235-36; Moo, *Romans*, 548-49, 568; Byrne, *Romans*, 282; Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 120; Tobin, *Rhetoric*, 304; Grindheim, *Crux*, 139 n. 8.

⁷ Other evidence indicates that Paul’s overarching concern to vindicate God’s faithfulness to Israel drives the entire epistle. In Rom 3:1-8, the leading indicator of Jewish advantage is the fact that the Jews were “entrusted with τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ” (3:2). In context, these λόγια must involve something to which God has pledged himself. Lexical evidence suggests a flexible concept embracing, on the one hand, God’s promises, deeds, pledges, and intentions for his people, and on the other, the Scriptures recounting these acts (e.g., 3:20-21, 31; see also BDAG, s.v. 1αβ [though I disagree with BDAG’s preferred definition under 2a], Jan Willem Doeve, “Some Notes with Reference to τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ in Romans 3. 2,” in *Studia Paulina in honorem J. de Zwaan* [Haarlem: Bohn, 1953], 111-23; T. W. Manson, *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles* [ed. Matthew Black; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962], 87-96; Käsemann, *Commentary*, 262; Sam K. Williams, “The ‘Righteousness of God’ in Romans,” *JBL* 99 [1980]: 265-70, 281-82 [though his restriction of λόγια / λόγος to the specific promise that Gentiles were to be included in Abraham’s family is too narrow]; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:130-31; Bell, *Irrevocable Call*, 197). Hence, the issue of Jewish advantage immediately becomes a question of divine faithfulness (3:2), truthfulness (3:4), and justice (3:5-6).

The closing peroration in Rom 15:7-13 leads to the same conclusion. In these verses, Paul summarizes the argument of Romans with the claim that Christ has become a minister for the circumcision for the sake of God’s truthfulness (ὑπὲρ ἀληθείας θεοῦ), in order to establish the promises of the fathers (εἰς τὸ βεβαιῶσαι τὰς ἐπαγγελίας, v. 8). God’s act in Christ does not nullify what he pledged to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but confirms it (Williams, “Righteousness,” 285-89; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:845-49; Hays, *Echoes*, 70-73; Donaldson, *Gentiles*, 95-100; Jewett, *Romans*, 888-93).

I find unconvincing the argument that ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ in 9:6 refers to the gospel, so that Paul must account for its ineffectiveness among Jews (so R. David Kotansky, “A Note on Romans 9:6: *Ho Logos tou Theou* as the Proclamation of the Gospel,” *Studia Biblica et Theologica* 7 [1977]: 24-30; James C. Walters, *Ethnic Issues in Paul’s Letter to the Romans: Changing Self-Definitions in Earliest Roman Christianity* [Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity, 1993], 80-81; Jewett, *Romans*, 573). This interpretation ignores the presence of ὁ λόγος ἐπαγγελίας in v. 9, which cannot refer to the gospel.

⁸ Wilckens, *Röm*, 181-82; see also *ibid.*, 191. So too Dunn: v. 6a “responds to a question which arises naturally from a Jewish perspective on Paul’s gospel” (*Romans*, 2:539). See also Charles Gore, “The Argument of Romans IX-XI,” in *Studia Biblica et Ecclesiastica* (ed. S. R. Driver, William Sanday, and John Wordsworth; 5 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1895), 3:39-40; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 226, 238; Käsemann, *Romans*, 261; Donald Sneen, “The Root, the Remnant, and the Branches,” *WW* 6 (1986): 400; Hays, *Echoes*, 64; Otfried Hofius, “‘All Israel Will Be Saved’: Divine Salvation and Israel’s Deliverance

change his mind in the middle of history and capriciously switch one plan for another?⁹ Does Paul preach a gospel that implies God foisted a cruel trick on Israel, duping it into pursuing a path of Torah obedience and then arbitrarily substituting for it a competing basis for salvation?¹⁰ It is this unthinkable possibility, which Paul's own reconfiguration of Israel's mythomoteur has opened up, that he must now close off with his affirmation that God's word has not failed.¹¹

3.2. ISRAEL AND NOT ISRAEL: ROMANS 9:6b IN CONTEXT

If v. 9:6a presents the thesis for chs. 9-11 as a whole, v. 9:6b, οὐ γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ οὗτοι Ἰσραὴλ, "For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel" (NIV), functions as a distinct, secondary *propositio*. The γὰρ indicates that this phrase supports what precedes it. In turn, the following οὐδ' ὅτι connects v. 7a tightly with v. 6b. The distinction between πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ and οὗτοι Ἰσραὴλ, and the corresponding demarcation of Abraham's σπέρμα from his τέκνα in v. 7a provide Paul's thesis with a dual rationale:

in Romans 9-11," *PSBSupJ* 1 (1990): 27-28; Barrett, *Romans*, 168-69; Wright, *Climax*, 236; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 33; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 539-41, 558; Byrne, *Romans*, 282, 286, 289.

⁹ Wright, *Climax*, 238.

¹⁰ Meeks, "Trusting," 108.

¹¹ Francis Watson makes the following statement which, though I would not accept it without qualification, does place the weight on the correct foot: "The main subject of Rom. 9-11 is *the consistency of the Pauline view of God's activity with the OT Scriptures*, and not 'Israel's unbelief' *per se*. Everywhere, the presupposition is the Pauline view that God has rejected the majority in Israel and called to himself a new people consisting mainly of Gentiles (although also a Jewish remnant). The question for Paul and his readers is: Is such a view of God's activity consistent with his revelation of himself in Scripture?" (*Paul, Judaism and the Gentiles: A Sociological Approach* [SNTSMS 56; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986], 162; emphasis original; similarly, Wilckens, *Röm*, 191; Watson, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 303-5, 307).

God's promissory word made to Israel has not failed *because* not all those from Israel count as Israel, *because* not all those who are Abraham's children count as his seed.¹²

To vindicate God's word, Paul must first establish the proper referent of the *Israel* whom it address.¹³ This requires drastic hermeneutical procedures. With the phrases of ἐξ Ἰσραήλ and οὔτοι Ἰσραήλ, Paul ruptures the continuity of God's people. It is *that* Israel who can depend on the reliability of what God has spoken, not the "Israel" who does not count as Israel.

Although Paul's discussion of election in the immediate sequel (9:7b-13) does not follow the expectations raised by this bifurcation (πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ vs. οὔτοι Ἰσραήλ; τέκνα vs. σπέρμα), it reappears in Paul's quotations from Isaiah in 9:27-29 and is developed extensively in 11:1-10. In these passages, the *Israel* reckoned as *seed* exists as the *remnant*, while οἱ λοιποί, "the rest," have forfeited their inheritance and can claim only bent backs, blind eyes, and (divinely!) hardened hearts (see §6.1.2., §6.2.1.). From the opening knell, Paul situates his exegetical discussion in terms of an opposition that is both binary and hierarchical. Election, he intimates, entails exclusion.

Although Rom 9:6b and 7a are tightly connected by their grammar and rhetorical intent, their two sets of contrasts are not coterminous. In moving from v. 6 to v. 7, Paul changes focus. Sanday and Headlam noted this shift, as the following observation shows:

¹² In my estimation, πάντες τέκνα must be the subject of εἰσίν and the broader category, despite its greater distance from the verb, and σπέρμα the predicate. Only in this way can 7a cohere with the following quote from Gen 21:12 (so NRSV, ESV, NJB; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 240-41; Hays, *Echoes*, 206 n. 61; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:540; Barrett, *Romans*, 169; Moo, *Romans*, 575 n. 25; Jewett, *Romans*, 575; against KJV, RSV, NASB, NIV, ASV, NAB; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:473; Byrne, *Romans*, 293; Mark A. Seifrid, "Romans," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* [ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007], 639).

¹³ Johnson, *Function*, 139; Barrett, *Romans*, 169; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 559-60; Moo, *Romans*, 573; Wagner, *Heralds*, 49.

The grammatical connexion of this passage with the preceding is that of an additional argument; the logical connexion is that of a proof of the statement just made. St. Paul could give scriptural proof, *in the case of descent from Abraham* [i.e., 9:7], *of what he had asserted in the case of descent from Jacob* [i.e., 9:6b], and thus establish his fundamental principle—that inheritance of the promises is not the necessary result of Israelitish decent.¹⁴

These commentators perceive that Paul promises an argument concerning the nature of belonging to the *people of Israel*, but turns his discussion to the chosen and rejected *children of Abraham*.¹⁵ The two categories are not coterminous.

This difficulty has rarely been noticed in the past because interpreters have been frequently misled by Paul's own initial statement in v. 6b, its continuation in vv. 27-29, and its conclusion in 11:1-10.¹⁶ But 9:7-13 most naturally points elsewhere. These verses fail to execute the inner-Israel division just anticipated.¹⁷ Some recent interpreters have perceived this and accordingly attempted to force 9:6b and vv. 27-29 (and 11:1-10)

¹⁴ Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 240.

¹⁵ Other commentators notice this adjustment without pursuing its full implications: "Οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ concerns Israel, not the patriarch" (Käsemann, *Romans*, 262); "Paul never returns to [v. 6b] . . . After the statement about Israel in 9:6b, Paul immediately turns to the specific cases of Abraham and Isaac, both of whom lived before Jacob / Israel, in such a way as seems to follow immediately on 9:6a" (Tobin, *Paul's Rhetoric*, 327; however, Tobin's statement that the claim of 9:6b disappears for good is would seem unfounded; 9:27-29 and 11:1-10 clearly take up its thought).

¹⁶ Scholars who allow v. 6b to determine how they interpret vv. 7-13 include E. P. Gould ("Romans IX-XI," *JBL* 3 [1883]: 22-23), Gore ("Argument," 40), Sanday and Headlam (*Romans*, 238-50), Cranfield (*Romans*, 2:474), Käsemann (*Romans*, 262), Watson (*Sociological Approach*, 163-64, 227 n. 9, 228 n. 10), Heikki Räisänen ("Römer 9-11: Analyse eines geistigen Ringens," *ANRW* 25.4:2897-2902), Dunn (*Romans*, 2:539-40), Wright (*Climax*, 238), Michael Cranford ("Election and Ethnicity," 35, 38-40), Moo (*Romans*, 568-69), Craig A. Evans ("Paul and the Prophets: Prophetic Criticism in the Epistle to the Romans (with Special Reference to Romans 9-11)," in *Romans and the People of God: Essays in Honor of Gordon D. Fee on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday* [ed. Sven K. Soderlund and N. T. Wright; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999], 123-24), Wagner (*Heralds*, 51), Esler (*Conflict*, 279), and Grindheim, *Crux*, 142-46.

¹⁷ This tension can be illustrated by Gore's article, which on the basis of this passage attempts to reproduce a dialogue between Paul and a Jewish objector; unfortunately, none of the claims put in the mouth of the opponent on pp. 40-41 (based on vv. 7-13) match the initial objection expressed on p. 39 (based on v. 6).

into the mold of vv. 7-13.¹⁸ Yet by imposing the text onto a Procrustean bed, they generally produce interpretations of 9:6b that noticeably limp.

In other words, few interpreters have been able to take 9:6b and 9:27-29 on the one hand and 9:7-13 on the other with equal seriousness *because Paul's argument itself proceeds in different directions*. Although it becomes clear in hindsight that by the removal of circumcision and works from the logic of election Paul actually prepares for the rhetorical turn in vv. 24-29, the discourse as it moves forward seems to reverse on itself. I will discuss this problem further in ch. 6 of this study (§6.3).

3.3. STRUCTURE AND ARGUMENT IN ROMANS 9:7-13

The argument that Paul does present in vv. 7-13 progresses in two parallel phases, each containing two scriptural quotations and various interpretive comments. The first subsection, vv. 7-9, relates the inner-Abrahamic division to God's *promise* and juxtaposes this against *flesh*, while the second, vv. 10-12, connect this division to God's *call* and contrasts this relation with *works*. Structurally, the first paragraph contains four movements. Paul formally applies the thesis of v. 6b to the family of Abraham, quotes a supporting text (Gen 21:12), provides an interpretive comment, and adds a second quotation supporting the gloss on the first (Gen 18:10). These verses may be analyzed as follows:

¹⁸ Interpreters who are guided by vv. 7-13 include Lloyd Gaston (*Paul and Torah* [Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987], 96), Getty ("Salvation of Israel," 465), Campbell (*Paul's Gospel*, 48, 142-43; *Creation*, 121-27); Walters, *Ethnic Issues*, 82; John G. Gager, *Reinventing Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 131; Eastman ("Mercy," 377 n. 34, 382).

Claim applying the thesis statement of 6b	7a
Quotation supporting the claim, introduced with ἀλλά	7b
Interpretive gloss, introduced with τοῦτ' ἔστιν	8
Quotation supporting the gloss	9

In terms of quotation technique, the *peshet*-like phrase τοῦτ' ἔστιν is noteworthy.¹⁹

Although Paul is not producing running commentary on a piece of consecutive text, he does present the scriptural witness as confirmation of how he himself understands election and covenant.

The second subsection contains a bit of awkward grammar, and is accordingly more difficult to analyze. The initial phrase in v. 10, οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καί, not only marks out a further stage in Paul's argument but also indicates that the following example will prove the overarching claim even more clearly than the previous one, with καί referring back to vv. 7-9.²⁰ There follows what initially appears to be the grammatical subject, "Rebecca." The remainder of the sentence lacks a finite verb, includes a nominal phrase (Ἰσαὰκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν) separated from its antecedent (ένός, itself the object of the preposition ἐκ) by a participial phrase (κοίτην ἔχουσα), and seems to lose itself completely in what follows. Verse 11 begins a lengthy γάρ clause, composed of a compound genitive absolute introduced with an adverb (μήπω γὰρ γεννηθέντων μηδὲ

¹⁹ On Paul's use of *peshet* interpretation, see Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 139-48; James D. G. Dunn, "2 Corinthians III, 17: 'The Lord is the Spirit,'" *JTS* NS 21 (1970): 309-20; Koch, *Schrift*, 227-30; Stockhausen, *Moses' Veil*, 28-30, 111-13, 123-52; Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis*, 113-16. A dissenting, but to my mind unpersuasive, argument against the value of *peshet* for understanding Paul's hermeneutical techniques appears in Timothy H. Lim, "Midrash Peshet in the Pauline Letters," in *The Scrolls and the Scriptures: Qumran After Fifty Years* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Craig A. Evans; JSPSup 26; Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1997), 280-92.

²⁰ The intensification is lost by the NRSV: "something similar happened."

πραξάντων τι ἀγαθὸν ἢ φαῦλον).²¹ There follows a purpose clause (ἵνα ἢ κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ θεοῦ μένη). All this leads toward the quotation from Gen 25:23. Only as the biblical text is introduced are we given a passive verb with an implied (divine) subject and indirect object: ἐρρέθη αὐτῇ.

These unwieldy constructions are more easily understood if Ῥεβέκκα in v. 10 is taken as a dative noun, the indirect object of the main verb ἐρρέθη in v. 11, making αὐτῇ resumptive. The material which intervenes between Ῥεβέκκα and ἐρρέθη αὐτῇ all anticipate the quotation and guide Paul's audience in making the correct deductions from it. This material is parenthetical only in terms of *grammar*; its content is essential for a proper understanding of the quoted text. On this interpretation, the kernel sentence reads: “And not only this, but it was also said to Rebecca [in addition to what was said to Abraham].”²² A final prophetic quotation from Mal 1:2-3 supports both the quotation from Gen 25:23 in 9:12b and Paul's introductory comments in 9:10-12a; it also summarizes the entire pericope and concludes the argument so far. Romans 9:10-13 may be analyzed in the following way:

²¹ A γάρ clause may support ideas not expressed which must be supplied from the context (BDAG, s.v. 1e; Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, §2810). Such is the case here. The γάρ in v. 11 provides the reason for the implied thought behind the expression οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καί of v. 10: what can be demonstrated from the case of Isaac is made even more certain in the case of Jacob, because in the latter instance Jacob and his twin were not yet even born.

²² The resumptive use of αὐτῇ may be indirectly confirmed by \mathfrak{B}^{46} and the corrector of D, who apparently considered the word superfluous and deleted it. I find this solution more satisfying than most of its competitors. Cranfield refuses to take vv. 11-12a as a parenthesis but must posit hypothetical, unexpressed thoughts in Paul's mind to derive a sensible meaning (*Romans*, 2:477; similarly, Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 244); Fitzmyer considers the grammar faulty but understands the participial phrase Ῥεβέκκα . . . ἔκουσα as a nominative absolute to which αὐτῇ eventually refers (*Romans*, 561-62); Moo takes Ῥεβέκκα as a pendant nominative, but agrees that αὐτῇ is resumptive (*Romans*, 579 n. 44); Jewett understands vv. 10-13 as “a loose syntactic unit whose subject is Rebecca and whose finite verb must be supplied from the preceding argument” (*Romans*, 577). In any case, the various clauses are not so much parenthetical statements (so Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 243; Wilckens, *Röm*, 194; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:538; Moo, *Romans*, 580) as exegetical guideposts: they maneuver Paul's readers along the interpretive course he sets for them.

Introduction and intensification	10a
Circumstances of divine oracle 1: identical parents	10b
Circumstances of divine oracle 2: prenatal state of the children	11a
Purpose of these circumstances	11b-12a
Quotation: divine oracle to Rebecca	12b
Quotation: summary Scripture	13

Both sections of this pericope are more or less parallel in form: assertion, biblical quotation, interpretative gloss, conclusion. Despite the difficult grammar, they demonstrate a certain care and conceptual symmetry in their production.

3.4. ROMANS 9:7-9: FLESH DOES NOT MEAN SEED

Although Paul does not actually retell the stories of Genesis in Rom 9:7-13, he does select, plot, and interpret key episodes.²³ These evoke the Jewish mythomoteur with its intertwined stories of domestic strife and divine election. The following discussion will first look at the text form of Paul's quotations, then examine two terms which crystallize the hermeneutical issues at stake, and finally relate this analysis to the argument of 9:7-9.

3.4.1. SCRIPTURAL QUOTATION IN ROMANS 9:7-9

By means of Gen 21:12 and 18:10 and their *peshet*-like interpretations, Paul elucidates the operation of God's electing activity and the external manifestation by which it becomes visible. Although both quotations lack introductory formulae, Paul does provide indications that he has inserted a biblical witness at each point (ἀλλά, ὁ λόγος οὗτος).

²³ On the use of selection, plotting, and interpretation as a means of constructing a communal identity, see §2.1.

Paul's fidelity to the original text varies considerably. In Rom 9:7 he reproduces Gen 21:12 precisely as written in the LXX, itself a close rendering of the Hebrew.

Gen 21:12 Hebrew Text	Gen 21:12 LXX	Rom 9:7
<p>ויאמר אלהים אל אברהם אל ירע בעיניך על הנער ועל אמתך כל אשר תאמר אליך שרה שמע בקלה כי ביצחק יקרא לך זרע²⁴</p>	<p>εἶπεν δὲ ὁ θεὸς τῷ Ἀβραάμ Μὴ σκληρὸν ἔστω τὸ ῥῆμα ἐναντίον σου περὶ τοῦ παιδίου καὶ περὶ τῆς παιδίσκης· πάντα, ὅσα ἐὰν εἴπῃ σοι Σαρρα, ἄκουε τῆς φωνῆς αὐτῆς, ὅτι ἐν Ἰσαακ κληθήσεται σοι σπέρμα.²⁵</p>	<p>οὐδ' ὅτι εἰσὶν σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ, πάντες τέκνα, ἀλλ', <u>Ἐν Ἰσαὰκ κληθήσεται σοι σπέρμα.</u>²⁶</p>

The text is well chosen. Paul will relate every term to his argument. Further, his analysis of election as it operated in the patriarchal generations is supported not only by the specific words but also by divine voice. God himself speaks from Scripture through Paul's epistle. This feature is common to all of the explicitly marked OT quotations through 9:27.²⁷

²⁴ "But God said to Abraham, 'Be not displeased because of the lad and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for through Isaac shall your descendants be named.' "

²⁵ "But God said to Abraham, 'Do not let the matter be hard in your sight on account of the child and on account of the slave-girl; whatever Sarah says to you, obey her voice, for in Isaac offspring shall be named for you.' "

²⁶ "And not all are children of Abraham because they are his descendants; but 'Through Isaac shall your descendants be named.' "

²⁷ The one exception is Paul's quotation of Isa 29:16 in v. 20, which, as the only quotation to lack some kind of introductory formula, is the only one which could not be recognized as a biblical passage on first hearing. When Paul drops the impression of direct divine speech in the introduction to Isa 10:22 in v.

Genesis 18:10 as it appears in Rom 9:9 seems to have undergone several alterations.²⁸ The following chart illustrates the relationship.

27, he explicitly draws attention to this shift in speakers: Ἡσίας δὲ κρᾶζει. When Paul quotes divine speech from Scripture elsewhere, he usually attributes it directly to God (Gen 17:5 in Rom 4:17; Gen 15:5 in Rom 4:18; Exod 20:17 / Deut 5:21 in Rom 7:7; Deut 32:21 in Rom 10:19; Isa 65:1-2 in Rom 10:20-21; 1 Kings 19:10, 14 in Rom 11:3-4; Isa 59:20, 27:9 in Rom 11:27; Deut 32:35 in Rom 12:19; Exod 20:13-17 / Deut 5:17-21 in Rom 13:9; Isa 29:14 in 1 Cor 1:19; Isa 49:8 in 2 Cor 6:2; Gen 12:3 / 18:18 in Gal 3:8 and possibly Ezek 37:27 in 2 Cor 6:16; Isa 52:11; if authentic, also Ezek 20:34 in 2 Cor 6:17; 2 Sam 7:14 in 2 Cor 6:18). However in 2 instances the speaker is probably Christ (Isa 49:18, 45:23 in Rom 14:11 [probably]; Isa 28:11-12 in 1 Cor 14:21). Nowhere else does he present such a sustained series of biblical quotations in which God is presented as the sole speaker.

²⁸ These changes are commonly obscured in English translations.

Gen 18:10 Hebrew Text	Gen 18:10 LXX	Rom 9:9
<p>ויאמר שוב אשוב אליך כעת חיה והנה בן לשרה אשתך ושרה שמעת פתח האהל והוא אחריו²⁹</p>	<p>εἶπεν δέ <u>Ἐπαναστρέφω ἥξω πρὸς σέ</u> <u>κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον</u> εἰς ὥρας, καὶ ἔξει υἱὸν Σαρρα ἢ γυνή σου. Σαρρα δὲ ἤκουσεν πρὸς τῆ θύρα τῆς σκηνῆς, οὐσα ὀπισθεν αὐτοῦ.³⁰</p>	<p>ἐπαγγελίας γὰρ ὁ λόγος οὗτος, <u>Κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον</u> <u>ἐλεύσομαι</u></p>
Gen 18:14 Hebrew Text	Gen 18:14 LXX	
<p>היפלא מיהוה דבר למועד אשוב אליך כעת חיה ולשרה בן³²</p>	<p>μὴ ἀδυνατεῖ παρὰ τῷ θεῷ ῥῆμα; εἰς τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον ἀναστρέψω πρὸς σέ εἰς ὥρας, <u>καὶ ἔσται τῇ Σαρρα υἱός.</u>³³</p>	<p><u>καὶ ἔσται τῇ Σαρρα υἱός.</u>³¹</p>

Paul moves the prepositional phrase *κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον* into the opening position, inverting it with the verb. In the process, *εἰς ὥρας* has fallen out; perhaps he deemed it superfluous. The verbal phrase itself he has reduced to a simple *ἐλεύσομαι*.³⁴ The actual

²⁹ “The LORD said, ‘I will surely return to you in the spring, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.’ And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him.”

³⁰ “And he said, ‘I will come to you, when I return, during this season next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.’ And Sarah, who was behind him, listened at the tent door.”

³¹ “For this is the word of promise: ‘At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son.’ ”

³² “Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, in the spring, and Sarah shall have a son.”

³³ “Can it be that a matter is impossible with God? In this season I will come back to you next year, and Sarah shall have a son.”

³⁴ The only other occurrence where Paul reduces an entire phrase to a simple verb seems to be 2 Cor 6:16—if the passage is authentic—, where *ἐνοικήσω* replaces *καὶ ἔσται ἡ κατασκήνωσίς μου* from Ezek 37:27. Otherwise, the verbs in Paul’s quotations occasionally vary from the LXX. The reasons

content of the promise corresponds more closely to the Hebrew than the LXX, perhaps as a result of the similar phrasing in 18:14; there is no reason to think Paul intentionally conformed his quotation to the Hebrew of Gen 18:10.³⁵ These changes considerably abbreviate the original verse and achieve the same effect that Paul created with his straightforward quotation of 21:12: all extraneous elements are removed and the focus lies exclusively on the operation of promise and call.³⁶

3.4.2. ΣΠΕΡΜΑ AND ΣΑΡΞ IN ROMANS 9:7-9

Fundamental to Paul's reinterpretation of membership in Abraham's family is a distinction between σάρξ and σπέρμα (9:7). In Genesis, the word שָׂרֵץ / σπέρμα indicates the organic connection tying together a single people descending from an individual progenitor. Manifold seed (i.e., descendants) forms a constituent aspect of the divine promise to Abraham and his children (Gen 12:7; 13:15; 15:5, 18; 17:7-10, 19; 22:17-18; 24:7; 26:3-4, 24; 28:4, 13-14; 32:13 [Eng.: 32:12]; 35:12; 48:4). In the social memory shaped by these stories, the term developed powerful connotations. It signified inclusion within Abraham's family and the covenantal privileges such standing implied. The

differ, and it is difficult to be certain in many cases. The cause may be stylistic (e.g., καταλείψεις, ὄκλασαν in 1 Kings 19:18 → κατέλιπον, ἔμκαψαν in Rom 11:4), textual (e.g., οἶδασιν in Isa 59:8 → ἔγνωσαν in Rom 3:17; Paul agrees with A; ἐμβάλῳ in Isa 28:16 → τίθημι in Rom 9:33); theological (e.g., κρύψω in Isa 29:14 → ἀθετήσω in 1 Cor 1:19, perhaps under the influence of Ps 32:10 [Heb., Eng.: 33:10]) or even accidental (e.g., νικήσης in Ps 50:6 [Heb., Eng.: 51:6] → the grammatically incorrect νικήσεις in Rom 3:4, although νικήσης is a variant reading; cf. the same change in tenses: καταισχυθηῖ in Isa 28:16 → καταισχυθήσεται in Rom 10:11).

³⁵ Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 243; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:476; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:548; Jewett, *Romans*, 577. Stanley presents an alternative view. He denies Gen 18:10 is quoted at all and judges that the entire quotation comes from 18:14, κατά being the only word in Rom 9:9 absent from 18:14 but present in 18:10 (*Language*, 104).

³⁶ Jewett, *Romans*, 577, *pace* the more elaborate suggestions that ἐλεύσομαι refers to some future epiphany (Dunn, *Romans*, 2:541).

affective dimensions of shared ancestry, social memory, and even sacred geography coalesced around membership in Abraham's σπέρμα (§2.1.).³⁷

For most Jews, the connection between σπέρμα and σάρξ was self-evident and inviolable. Σάρξ also plays a role already in Genesis, where it assumes a consistent web of associations.³⁸ By euphemistic metonymy, it represents the male reproductive member and thus indicates alternatively or both relations based on physical procreation (Gen 2:23, 24; 29:14; 37:27) and the removal of foreskin as a divinely mandated act. In ch. 17, which offers the highest concentration of occurrences in the book (5 times: vv. 11, 13, 14, 24, 25; cf. 34:24), σάρξ is tied firmly to the institution of circumcision as a physical symbol of the covenant between God and Abraham's seed.

In Genesis, therefore, the two terms are integrally related. If σπέρμα connotes the religiously significant genealogy of Abraham, the organic relation tying one generation to the next, and the corporate contours of the Abrahamic covenant, σάρξ refers to bonds of kinship established through marriage and procreation and to the physical site of the circumcising ritual. Σάρξ and σπέρμα overlap in the relation which makes all Jews descendants of Abraham, a kinship symbolized in the removal of foreskin. The institutionalized rite constantly evoked the belief in shared ancestry, which in turn

³⁷ Siegfried Schulz and Gottfried Quell, "σπέρμα, κτλ.," *TDNT* 7:536-47; Bruce A. Demarest and Colin Brown, "Seed, etc.," *NIDNTT* 3:521-27.

The integral connection between *seed* and Abrahamic paternity is indicated in the way several texts use the term to indicate ethnic solidarity and shared descent: Deut 1:8; 4:37; 10:15; 11:9; 2 Chron 20:7; Isa 41:8; 45:19; Jer 33:26; *Jub.* 17:6; 19:16; 21:25; 22:9-11, 15, 24, 27-30 and passim; Wis 10:5; Sir 1:13 (perhaps an implied reference to Israel as the place where Wisdom abides); 44:21; *Pss. Sol.* 9:9; 18:3; 3 Macc 6:3; 4 Macc 18:1.

³⁸ E. Schweizer, F. Baumgärtel, and R. Meyer, "σάρξ," *TDNT* 7:106-7; H. Seebass and Anthony C. Thiselton, "Flesh," *NIDNTT* 1:671-82; R. J. Erickson, "Flesh," *DPL*, 303-6.

recalled the mythomoteur that gave circumcision its meaning.³⁹ The language of σπέρμα and σάρξ thus have deep roots in the historical memory and social reality of Jewish life: election, covenant, and ethnic origin are all interwoven around these symbols.⁴⁰ It is this complex that Paul sets out to unravel.

³⁹ The ability σάρξ to refer to kinship is illustrated by Gen 37:25. Joseph's brothers say to each other, "Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh (σάρξ)." Literature of the Second Temple period continued to evoke Gen 17 when linking circumcision to covenantal status: Achior the Ammonite believed in God, περιτέμετο τὴν σάρκα τῆς ἀκροβυστίας αὐτοῦ, "had the flesh of his foreskin circumcised" (NAB), and joined the house of Israel (Jud 14:10). Sirach describes Abraham's fidelity to Torah with the phrase ἐν σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ ἔστησεν διαθήκην, "he established the covenant in his flesh" (44:20).

Although σάρξ carries a range of meanings in Paul, in several instances it can refer only to circumcision and / or physical descent through natural procreation (BDAG, s.v. 2bβ, 4). Gal 3:3 and 6:12-13 indicate that perfection of one's spiritual life σαρκί means initiation through circumcision; the description of Ishmael as the child according to flesh (4:23, 29) aligns him with the circumcising party (cf. 2:12). *Flesh* in Gal 4:14 could be a further reference (so Troy Martin, "Whose Flesh? What Temptation? (Galatians 4:13-14)," *JSNT* 74 [1999]: 65-91). Phil 3:2-5 makes the same association. The discussion of the circumcision of the heart in Rom 2:28 also connects circumcision and σάρξ and in 4:1 it stresses a genealogical connection to Abraham by means of physical generation (§2.4.2, §2.4.3). The presence of Gen 17 in the background of Paul's argument in Rom 9:7-9 suggests that here σάρξ refers *primarily* to circumcision. In light of vv. 6-7, physical descent clearly plays a role, but commentators sometimes err in focusing on descent alone (e.g., Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 240, 242-43; Käsemann, *Romans*, 262; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 560).

Interpreters occasionally over-interpret the language of flesh and under appreciate its natural connection to circumcision and its ethnic-religious associations. According to Jewett, in 9:5, σάρξ "evokes the realm of self-justification by works as opposed to a neutral reference to human limitations" (*Romans*, 567); in 9:8 it "has a negative connotation strongly reminiscent of Gal 4:21-31, where slavery, hostility, the old age, and exclusion from the realm of the Spirit are the characteristics of those born of the flesh" (*ibid.*, 576; see also Wilckens, *Röm*, 193 n. 855; Käsemann, *Romans*, 262; Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 206; Seifrid, "Romans," 640). By contrast, Paul's meaning has been transparent to Jewish scholars like Jacob Neusner, (*Children of the Flesh, Children of the Promise: A Rabbi Talks with Paul* [Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1995], xi, xv, 13, 18) and Daniel Boyarin (*Radical Jew*, 70, 80-81). The agreement between Neusner and Boyarin on this point is striking, considering their very different perspectives on and evaluation of rabbinic Judaism and its relation to Paul's concern for the inclusion of Gentiles in God's people.

⁴⁰ John J. Collins, "A Symbol of Otherness: Circumcision and Salvation in the First Century," in *To See Ourselves as Others See Us: Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity* (ed. Jacob Neusner and Ernest S. Frerichs; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1985): 163-86; Robert G. Hall, "Circumcision," *ABD* 1:1028-29.

3.4.3. ISHMAEL'S EXCLUSION: CIRCUMCISION AND COVENANT IN ROMANS 9:7-9

In Rom 9:7-9, Paul relieves flesh of its role as signifier of divine election and reassigns this function entirely to ἐπαγγελία and κλησις.⁴¹ Neither the cut foreskin nor natural descent but the divine promise demonstrates the progress of election from one generation to the next.⁴² Flesh is overturned by God's promise which manifests itself in the designation of Abraham's *second-born* son as the one who is to inherit the blessings and covenant of his father.

Paul separates flesh from seed, promise, and election by a careful reading of Gen 21. The quotation of v. 12 supports his semantic reassignment of σπέρμα. Two elements make this verse ideal for Paul's purposes: the presence of key lexical items and the tight thematic correspondence between Gen 21 and the burden of Paul's argument. Almost every word in this brief quotation carries significance. First, while the use of ἀλλά to introduce a quotation is unusual, it reinforces the distinction just introduced between σπέρμα and τέκνον (v. 7a). Second, ἐν Ἰσαάκ limits the channel of God's election to only one of Abraham's sons, the second-born Isaac; the promise to Abraham constitutes a ban on Ishmael.⁴³ Third, the word κληθήσεται, a divine passive, accentuates the supernatural agency operative in election and introduces a leading term which, with its cognates, will drive a large share of the argument through 11:29. Fourth, σοί refers, of

⁴¹ Paul uses only the verb form καλέω except in 11:29.

⁴² I regard as without exegetical basis the claim that in Rom 9 Paul affirmed the superiority of natural descent from Abraham (Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* [New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1994], 305; Campbell, *Creation*, 114).

⁴³ Dunn, *Romans*, 2:540; Jewett, *Romans*, 576. It is worth noting, as an aside, that Paul clearly presupposes that his audience possesses a general familiarity with the stories that he alludes to; one can hardly make sense of either this verse or, more importantly, vv. 10-11 without some knowledge of Genesis.

course, to Abraham, further emphasizing Paul's main point: the election of Isaac involves a fracture *within* Abraham's family. Moreover, retaining the second person, Paul maintains the impression of direct divine speech. Finally, σπέρμα appears in a rhetorically effective final position. God calls only Isaac from Abraham's two sons and appoints *him* as seed.

Paul does not leave his audience to infer the correct conclusion for themselves. He gives an interpretive remark introduced with a standard τοῦτ' ἔστιν. Thus, v. 8a provides the necessary rhetorical frame for his quotation of Gen 21:12, while v. 9 completes the argument with its summarizing conclusion. On the surface, the logic is straightforward. Isaac was appointed by divine calling to be Abraham's seed; his birth was made possible by a divine promise; therefore, constitutive for Abraham's family, and hence God's, is a birth marked by calling and promise. At the same time, Ishmael's oblique appearance in v. 8, submerged under the collective label "the children of flesh," hints at the underside of God's elective action and draws attention to its exclusionary nature. Isaac's seed, not Ishmael's, inherits Abraham's blessing.

The effectiveness of God's promise can be seen in its ability to overturn the institution of primogeniture in favor of Abraham's younger son.⁴⁴ According to convention, Ishmael as the firstborn should stand to inherit the family goods, or at least—in the formulation of Deut 21:15-17—a double portion thereof. Genesis presupposes a knowledge of this institution for the rhetorical effect of its subversion.⁴⁵ Several Jewish

⁴⁴ Frank Thielman, "Unexpected Mercy: Echoes of a Biblical Motif in Romans 9-11," *SJT* 47 (1994): 169-81; Byrne, *Romans*, 292; Seifrid, "Romans," 640-41.

⁴⁵ The tension that propels the overarching narrative requires primogeniture as the societal "default" setting. Those scholars who argue from Genesis that primogeniture did not exist in ancient Israel neutralize the text's rhetorical potency. On this topic, see §2.1., §5.3, and the following: I. Mendelsohn, "On the Preferential Status of the Eldest Son," *BASOR* 156 (1959): 38-40; Eryl W. Davies, "The

writings indicate an awareness of this theme. *Jubilees*, the Primary Adam Books, and the Rabbis demonstrate a degree of sensitivity about this motif in Genesis, and *Jubilees* appears particularly uncomfortable in dealing with it.⁴⁶ The inversion of primogeniture thus continued to provoke reflection through Paul's time and supplied him with an alternative marker of election. God's call bypasses the preferential status of the elder son in favor of displaying his mercy on whom he will (cf. 9:15).

However, God's power to reverse primogeniture does not solve the exegetical problem of identifying proper referents of *σάρξ* and *σπέρμα*. Paul has already broached the issues of circumcision and identity in Rom 2 and Rom 4, so he can rely on his previous discussion here. But the suppressed mention of Ishmael in connection with *σάρξ* indicates a distinct exegetical maneuver not anticipated earlier in the letter. Paul denies that merely receiving biological life from Abraham as his τέκνον makes one his

Inheritance of the First-Born in Israel and the Ancient Near East," *JSS* 38 (1993): 175-91 (pp. 175-79 I found particularly helpful in clarifying what role the revocation of primogeniture plays in Genesis); F. E. Greenspahn, "Primogeniture in Ancient Israel," in *Go to the Land I Will Show You: Studies in Honor of Dwight W. Young* (ed. Joseph E. Coleson and Victor H. Matthews; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 69-80; Gary N. Knoppers, "The Preferential Status of the Eldest Son Revoked?" in *Rethinking the Foundations: Historiography in the Ancient World and in the Bible: Essays in Honour of John Van Seeters* (ed. Steven L. McKenzie and Thomas Römer; BZAW 294; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 115-26; Harvey Sicherman and Gilad J. Gevanyahu, "'Foremost in Rank and Foremost in Power': Conflict Over the First-Born in Israel," *JBQ* 31 (2003): 17-25; Ben-Zion (Benno) Schereschewsky, "Firstborn," *EncJud* 7:45-48.

⁴⁶ *Jubilees* addresses this topic frequently, e.g., 2:20, which interprets the culmination of the creation week in light of Exod 4:22; 24:1-7; 36:15 and makes Israel's primogeniture a cosmic reality. Otherwise, the idea is implicit throughout (see also Thielman, "Unexpected Mercy," 177-78). The rabbinic evidence is discussed in Judah Goldin, "The Youngest Son, Or Where Does Genesis 38 Belong?" *JBL* 96 (1977): 27-44. In the *Life of Adam and Eve* this inversion of primogeniture is extended backwards in time to explain the downfall of Satan and his envy of Adam (Latin *L.A.E.* 14-17, esp. 14:3, 15:3). This episode does not occur in the Greek version, generally considered the best witness to *L.A.E.*, nor in the Slavonic. However, the Greek *L.A.E.* 16:2-3 and 39:2-3 clearly demonstrate knowledge of it, even after removing the more explicit allusions in the additions of the ATLC manuscripts. Also, the Greek introduces Satan for the first time as an already-established character (2:4). For reasons unknown the story seems to have fallen out of the Greek textual tradition. The account was evidently widespread; similar stories are presupposed or appear in 2 *En.* 22 and *Ques. Bart.* 4:54. I regard *L.A.E.* as a pre-Christian work, though space prevents a discussion of this issue here.

σπέρμα, for Abraham of course had *two* τέκνα.⁴⁷ Paul must have exegetical reasons for maintaining that the one τέκνον counts as σπέρμα and not the other.⁴⁸

3.4.4. ISHAMEL'S EXCLUSION: CIRCUMCISION AND COVENANT *BEHIND* ROMANS 9:7-9

In one sense, Paul's identification of Isaac as the child of the covenant could hardly be more prosaic. When he traces election from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob, exclusive of Ishmael and Esau, he simply restates the most elemental features of Israel's mythomoteur. What sets his analysis apart from standard Jewish suppositions concerning covenant and kinship lies in his refusal to permit circumcision any role in determining covenantal membership. In opposition to Paul's (apparently) cavalier attitude towards circumcision stands Gen 17, a text that reiterates the necessity of circumcising all Hebrew males four times in as many verses (vv. 10-13) and issues a dire warning against disregarding this command (v. 14). No other passage in Scripture connects circumcision to covenant so strongly, yet Paul finds here the exegetical resource for decoupling participation in Abraham's family from circumcision and flesh.

Paul exploits two texts and in so doing manages to make Gen 17 a problematic passage in terms of circumcision's role as a distinguishing trait of Jewish ethnicity:

⁴⁷ Wilckens, *Röm*, 192-93.

⁴⁸ I would reiterate here my methodological starting point that, contrary to the working assumptions of some exegetes, Paul was not barred from interpreting his Bible except when some specific controversy erupted in his churches, at which point he scurried about available papyri for ad hoc proof texts. What emerges in the letters, with their explicit quotations, allusions, and echoes is the iceberg's tip, mere traces of a profound and relentless drive to grapple with Israel's heritage and its written record (§1.1., §2.1.). The power of his native mythomoteur and the need to reinterpret it after his experience with Christ were imposed on Paul from the beginning.

Gen 17:23 Καὶ ἔλαβεν Ἀβραὰμ Ἰσμαὴλ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ πάντα τοὺς οἰκογενεῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ πάντα τοὺς ἀργυρωνήτους καὶ πᾶν ἄρσεν τῶν ἀνδρῶν τῶν ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ Ἀβραὰμ καὶ περιέτεμεν τὰς ἀκροβυστίας αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης, καθὰ ἐλάλησεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεός.⁴⁹

Gen 21:13 καὶ τὸν υἱὸν δὲ τῆς παιδίσκης ταύτης, εἰς ἔθνος μέγα ποιήσω αὐτόν, ὅτι σπέρμα σὸν ἐστίν.⁵⁰

The chapters containing these two verses have already appeared in Paul’s efforts to reconceptualize the family of Abraham inclusive of Gentiles (Gal 3, 4; Rom 4; see §2.2.1.4., 2.2.3.). They address the same dilemma: the threat Ishmael poses to Isaac’s inheritance and therefore Israel’s status. But taken together, they state that Abraham had not only two τέκνα / υιοί, but that he also had two σπερμάτα—and both were *circumcised*.⁵¹ Genesis 17:23 and 21:13, on the one hand, and 21:12, on the other, represent a glaring textual contradiction: *Isaac* is the σπέρμα, therefore Ishmael may be discarded. Yet Ishmael himself is also circumcised σπέρμα. He receives almost the same benefits as were promised to Abraham and later conferred on Isaac: a blessing, a great

⁴⁹ “And Abraham took his son Ishmael and all his homebreds and all the ones bought with money and every male of the men that were in Abraham’s house, and he circumcised their foreskins at the opportune time of that day, as God had said to him.”

⁵⁰ “And as for the son of the slave-girl, I will make him also into a great nation, because he is your seed” (NETS, modified).

⁵¹ Rabbinic discussions also show a nervous awareness that Ishmael’s circumcision poses interpretive challenges. According to the dictum of R. Jose b. Hanina, “Every precept which was given to the sons of Noah and repeated at Sinai was meant for both [heathens and Israelites].” If valid, this principle would make circumcision a universal requirement and dissolve its connection to Jewish religious and ethnic identity. In the case of Ishmael, this principle would include Gentiles under the command to be circumcised (Gen 17:9). Thus, the need to exempt the non-chosen branches of Abraham’s family becomes acute, and an exegetical argument must be assembled to avoid this conclusion; hence: “Circumcision was from the very first commanded to Abraham only [and not to the Noachides in general]: *Thou shalt keep my covenant, therefore thou and they seed after thee in their generations*, meaning, thou and thy seed are to keep it, but no others. If so, should it not be incumbent upon the children of Ishmael [Abraham’s son]? – *For in Isaac shall thy seed be called*. Then should not the children of Esau be bound to practice it?—*In Isaac, but not all Isaac*” (*b. Sanh.* 59a-59b; cf. also *b. Ned.* 31a).

These parallels show that Paul shared the rabbinic concern to isolate a single trajectory of Abrahamic descent as the exclusive heirs of election and covenant. But they also indicate his uniqueness. The discussions in *b. Sanh.* 59 are animated by a concern to *preserve* circumcision as a sign of Israel’s election and difference from the nations. Paul wants to eliminate it.

nation, and fruitful increase of offspring (16:10; 17:20; 21:18; cf. 25:12-18). He does *not*, however, receive the covenant, circumcised though he may be. Despite Paul's own distinction between the (mere) children and the seed, the scriptural text identifies Ishmael as *both*. Paul needs a reason to disqualify Ishmael as σπέρμα despite the fact that the text indicates he is precisely that.

Jewish interpretation tended to explain Ishmael's expulsion with reference to the cryptic expression that Sarah witnessed him קָרַח with the younger Isaac (Gen 21:9), preferring an answer based on his lack of moral character.⁵² Paul, however, finds a *theological* solution. According to Gen 18:10, only Isaac entered the world under the superintendence of God's promise.⁵³ His birth in Gen 21:1 occurred as a result of the Lord's visitation.⁵⁴ Isaac entered the world in fulfillment of God's commitment and in demonstration of his power. Ishmael, by contrast, resulted from the maneuvering of Sarah and the passivity of Abraham, with results both had cause to regret. Paul signifies

⁵² Rabbinic interpretation often understood קָרַח as idolatry (*Tg. Ps-J.* and *Tg. Neof.* on Gen 21:9). *T. Sota* 6.6 provides a catalogue of Ishmael's possible deficiencies (repeated in *Gen. Rab.* 53.11): idolatry, attempting to murder Isaac by arrows (with reference to Prov 26:18-19; similarly, Josephus, *Ant.* 1.215; *Pesiq. Rab.* 48.2; *Pirqe R. El.* 30), and, most relevant to Rom 9, a jealous defense of his primogeniture. On the character of Ishmael in rabbinic literature, see David J. Zucker, "Conflicting Conclusions: The Hatred of Isaac and Ishmael," *Judaism* 39 (1990): 37-46; Carol Bakhos, *Ishmael on the Border: Rabbinic Portrayals of the First Arab* (New York: SUNY Press, 2006).

Another option was to explain Ishmael's rejection on the basis of his Egyptian ethnicity, which, according to rabbinic law, he would have inherited from his mother (Cohn, *Beginnings*, 263-307); this assumption may lie behind *Gen. Rab.* 53.15.

⁵³ Ἐπαγγελία plays an important role in the theological rhetoric of Galatians 3-4 (nine occurrences of the term and its verbal cognates) and Rom 4 (five occurrences), 9 (three) and 15 (one). Despite its importance, and its first position in v. 9, it is the grammatically subordinate term: ἐπαγγελίας γὰρ ὁ λόγος οὗτος. The articular λόγος in the nominative followed by the demonstrative οὗτος should not be eclipsed by its genitival modifier ἐπαγγελίας. English translations demonstrate an unfortunate tendency to omit the grammatical subject wholly or partially. The RSV, NRSV, ESV, and NLT all lack a word equivalent to λόγος, while others (NIV, NAB, NJB) take λόγος as a term emphasizing the *exact wording* of the promise, scarcely an improvement (e.g., the NIV's "For this was how the promise was stated"). Just three verses earlier, Paul expressed his *propositio* in terms of the viability of ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ. This term ought to be reflected in any English translation (see also Cranfield's balanced comments, *Romans*, 2:476).

⁵⁴ "And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as he had spoken."

the relation of promise to seed by means of a term already saturated with Abrahamic associations: λογίζεται. Just as Abraham—and all who believe—was (and are) counted (λογίζεσθαι) as δίκαιος (δίκαιοι) by πίστις (so Rom 4), so Isaac—and all who believe—was (and are) counted (λογίζεσθαι) σπέρμα by ἐπαγγελία.

As he did in ch. 4, Paul draws theological meaning from the narrative sequence, although here in reverse order. In the earlier chapter, the point was Abraham's *justification before his circumcision*; here it is Ishmael's *circumcision enacted prior to the promise*. In both cases the circumcising rite misses the moment of divine affirmation. The περιτέμνειν τὴν σάρκα τῆς ἀκροβυστίας does not lead directly to covenantal blessing; the story of circumcision does not flow seamlessly in tandem with the story of covenant. A fault-line splits Abraham's family into two separate trajectories. Paul exploits this cleavage as the hermeneutical justification for rupturing the narrative coherence between the rite of ch. 17 and the promise of ch. 18.⁵⁵

Although Paul builds on the respective fates befalling Isaac and Ishmael, the switch in Rom 9:8 to collective labels in the plural indicates that Paul sees these figures as representative characters, *exempla* who prefigure respectively τὰ τέκνα τῆς σαρκός and τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας.⁵⁶ On the other hand, the singular verb λογίζεται emphasizes the corporate significance borne by each. Ishmael's expulsion from the patriarchal family opens a breach in Abraham's household through which issue all those constituted as (only) children of flesh. Divine election entails divine exclusion, and the determining

⁵⁵ William Richard Stegner has argued that Gen 18:10, the viability of God's word to Sarah, and possibly Gen 21:12 (or at least its context) came to Paul as an exegetical tradition ("Romans 9:6-29—A Midrash" *JSNT* 22 [1984]: 46-47). This is entirely possible, but Paul has made the text his own, and done so with full knowledge of their contexts (as Stegner himself emphasizes on pp. 40-41)

⁵⁶ Watson, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 314.

element lies wholly in God's inscrutable will, not in the fleshly realm of excised foreskin or biological affinity.⁵⁷ The undoing of Ishmael's primogeniture conveys participation in Abraham's σπέρμα for all those born of promise.

So far Paul's argument has exploited the division between τέκνα and σπέρμα, but he does not apply this semantic distinction to the identities of πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ and οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ as it first appeared he would (6b). His discussion lacks words or phrases such as συστοιχέω, οὕτως καί, νῦν, and the copulas εἰμί or γίνομαι; in other words, all the coordinating terms employed in the allegory of Gal 4:21-5:1 that might clarify how the determination of σπέρμα and ἐπαγγελία relate semantically to Ἰσραήλ. To this point, Paul's interpretation of Genesis makes clear the division within Abraham's family entailed by Ishmael's exclusion, but it does not call into question the election of the Abraham-Isaac-Jacob trajectory. The sequel in vv. 10-13 solidifies this connection between the Jewish people and their elect forefathers.

3.5. ROMANS 9:10-13: OBEDIENCE DOES NOT MEAN ELECTION

According to Genesis, God's actions produce diametrically opposed destinies for each of Abraham's circumcised sons. The exclusionary word he speaks concerning Isaac in Gen 21:12 leaves no room for Ishmael among the promised seed. Paul sees in these contrasting fates the impotency of σάρξ as a defining mark of the covenant people. In the following generation, God's word produces analogous effects. It exalts Jacob and humiliates Esau. Paul understands this extension of favor and its denial as an annulment of ἔργα. He continues to affirm the absolute election of Israel while deconstructing the religious practices that embody it in the social sphere. The following exegesis will show

⁵⁷ Seifrid, "Romans," 639.

how Paul does this. I will begin with an examination of his biblical quotations, discusses his understanding of ἔργα, and explore his characterization of election in exclusionary terms. For an argument aimed at the inclusion of the Gentiles, Paul's interpretation of Genesis appears headed in the wrong direction.

3.5.1. SCRIPTURAL QUOTATION IN ROMANS 9:10-13

Paul concludes the opening section of Rom 9 with two biblical quotations. In both cases his text corresponds to the LXX with only minor variation. In v. 12, Paul supports his understanding of election apart from works by citing a portion of Gen 25:23. In it, a divine oracle announces to Rebecca that her difficult pregnancy with twin boys foreshadows the antagonisms between their respective descendants. The original announcement is delivered in poetic form, consisting of two diptych lines, each half parallel with its pair, and both lines together parallel with each other. The first line emphasizes the distinctiveness of these embryonic progenitors. The second anticipates the tumultuous character of their relationship and declares the eventual ascension of the younger. Paul does not use a formula to introduce this verse, but opens the quotation by transforming “and the Lord said to her” of the LXX into a divine passive. He then quotes the last half-line of the oracle unchanged.

Gen 25:23 Heb. Text	Gen 25:23 LXX	Rom 9:12
<p>ויאמר יהוה לה שני גיים בבטנך ושני לאמים ממעיך יפרדו ולאם מלאם יאמץ ורב יעבד צעיר⁵⁸</p>	<p>καὶ εἶπεν κύριος αὐτῇ Δύο ἔθνη ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ σου εἰσιν, καὶ δύο λαοὶ ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας σου διασταλήσονται· καὶ λαὸς λαοῦ ὑπερέξει, καὶ ὁ μείζων δουλεύσει τῷ ἐλάσσονι.⁵⁹</p>	<p>οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ καλοῦντος, ἔρρηθη αὐτῇ ὅτι Ὁ μείζων δουλεύσει τῷ ἐλάσσονι.⁶⁰</p>

Like the earlier quotations (vv. 7, 9), this OT text conveys the impression that God is speaking in the first person. Paul presents himself in Rom 9 less as an interpreter of holy Scripture than as a channel of divine speech.

This first quotation is itself supported by another, this time from the Prophets. It is preceded by a standard introductory formula. Paul's strategy of appealing to direct divine support continues despite his shift from penteteuchal texts to a prophetic one. He is indeed determined to show that it is *God's word* that has not failed (v. 6).

⁵⁸ “And the LORD said to her, ‘Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples, born of you, shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the elder shall serve the younger.’ ”

⁵⁹ “And the Lord said to her, ‘Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from your uterus shall be divided, and a people shall excel over a people, and the greater shall be subject to the lesser.’ ”

⁶⁰ “She was told, ‘The elder will serve the younger.’ ”

Mal 1:2-3 Hebrew	Mal 1:3-2 LXX	Rom 9:13
אהבתי אתכם אמר יהוה ואמרתם במה אהבתנו הלוא אח עשו לי עקב נאם יהוה ואהב את יעקב ואת עשו שנאתי ואשים את הריו שממה ואת נחלתו לתנות מתבר ⁶¹	Ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς, λέγει κύριος. καὶ εἶπατε Ἐν τίνι ἠγάπησας ἡμᾶς; οὐκ ἀδελφὸς ἦν Ἡσαυ τοῦ Ἰακωβ; λέγει κύριος· καὶ ἠγάπησα τὸν Ἰακωβ, τὸν δὲ Ἡσαυ ἐμίσησα καὶ ἔταξα τὰ ὄρια αὐτοῦ εἰς ἀφανισμόν καὶ τὴν κληρονομίαν αὐτοῦ εἰς δόματα ἐρήμου. ⁶²	καθὼς γέγραπται, <u>τὸν Ἰακώβ ἠγάπησα.</u> <u>τὸν δὲ Ἡσαῦ μίσησα.</u> ⁶³

Paul makes only a single change.⁶⁴ He stresses the contrast between two collective persons by moving τὸν Ἰακώβ forward to the emphatic position. This brings the quotation into closer conformity with God’s oracle spoken to Rachel. Taken together, the two quotations form a sort of chiasm:

The greater will serve the younger.
 Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.

⁶¹ “‘I have loved you,’ says the LORD. But you say, ‘How have you loved us?’ ‘Is not Esau Jacob’s brother?’ says the LORD. ‘Yet I have loved Jacob but I have hated Esau; I have made his hill country a desolation and his heritage a desert for jackals’ ” (NRSV).

⁶² “I loved you, says the Lord. And you said, ‘How did you love us?’ Was not Esau Jacob’s brother, says the Lord. And I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau, and I made his mountains an annihilation and his gifts of the wilderness.”

⁶³ “As it is written, ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’ ”

⁶⁴ The LXX text for the seven words Paul quotes is secure, although \aleph adds λέγει κύριος to the end of v. 2. Paul’s quotation also shows no variation in the manuscript tradition. Therefore, most interpreters attribute the alteration to the apostle (e.g., Stanley, *Language*, 105-6; Jewett, *Romans*, 580; Steve Moyise, “The Minor Prophets in Paul,” in *The Minor Prophets in the New Testament* [ed. Maarten J. J. Menken and Steve Moyise; LNTS 377; London: Continuum, 2009], 103).

Formally, Moses and Malachi correspond to each other nicely as dual channels of divine revelation.⁶⁵

This concluding quotation from Malachi performs several functions. It acts as a hermeneutical lens which brings into focus the contemporary significance of Paul's narrative texts. It reinforces the previous quotation as a warrant for his claims about divine election and its unilateral character. It sums up the present passage (vv. 10-13), which began by drawing attention to the specific circumstances of Jacob and Esau's birth. Finally, it brings to a close Paul's seven-verse condensation of Israel's election and origin. The apostle has covered a large expanse of narrative material with a few, brief quotations from Genesis. This final prophetic text provides him with a condensed précis for his salvation-historical review and the prism through which the narratives of Israel's sacred story are to be read.

3.5.2. WORKS AND TORAH IN ROMANS 9:10-12

In these verses, Paul mounts an interpretation of Jacob's birth that will dismantle ἔργα as a pillar of Israelite self-understanding. He has in mind not the meritorious activities of an archetypal "self-righteous person," but the Mosaic Torah as the foundation of a religious and cultural heritage. Its observance signaled Jewish identity, mutual solidarity, and ethnic difference (*Let. Aris.* 139-142; Philo, *Legat.* 210; Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2:209-210). As W. D. Davies has stressed, possession of the law indicated "the special inheritance of Israel and . . . could be taken to indicate a whole cultural tradition which governed [a Jew's] life in its totality. To submit to or to reject the law was to accept or reject a particular culture

⁶⁵ Stanley, *Language*, 106.

or way of life in all its intricate ramifications.”⁶⁶ Torah both stipulates God’s covenantal requirements and separates Jews from their Gentile neighbors in distinctive ways.⁶⁷

In Jewish cultural memory, the centrality of Torah was projected onto the behavior of the patriarchs. Their demonstration of obedience was frequently set forth as the basis of Israel’s election. *Jubilees*, for example, situates election in the structure of creation (2:17-24) but narrates its emergence in history as a response to the patriarchs’ specific acts of devotion.⁶⁸ Philo similarly justifies Israel’s election on the basis of God’s foreknowledge of Jacob’s moral superiority (*Leg.* 3.88).⁶⁹ According to many accounts, Jacob’s immoral foil Esau lost his claim to carry on the covenantal line because of his wicked deeds (*Jub.* 19:15-16; Philo, *Leg.* 3.88; *Virt.* 208-210; Pseudo-Philo, *L.A.B.* 32:5; 4 *Ezra* 3:13-16).⁷⁰ The Damascus Document likewise emphasizes patriarchal piety

⁶⁶ Davies, “Paul and the Law: Reflections on Pitfalls in Interpretation,” in *Studies*, 93; repr. from *Hastings Law Journal* 29 (1978).

⁶⁷ This understanding of Torah and its role in early Judaism and Paul relies on the work of E. P. Sanders (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1977]), Francis Watson (*Sociological Approach*, 119-20, 130, 133-34, 139-41, 165-66; idem, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 102, 121-25, 128, 202, 212) and especially the later (and more nuanced) emphases of James D. G. Dunn (“The New Perspective on Paul,” in *Jesus, Paul and the Law* [Louisville, Ky.: Westminster / John Knox, 1990], 183-205; repr. from *BJRL* 65 [1983]; with important qualifications in “Additional Note,” in *ibid.*, 206-14; idem, “Yet Once More—‘The Works of the Law’: A Response,” *JSNT* 46 [1992]: 99-117; repr. in *The New Perspective on Paul* [rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008]). See also Joseph B. Tyson, “‘Works of Law’ in Galatians,” *JBL* 92 (1973): 423-31; Samuel Sandmel, *Judaism and Christian Beginnings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 9-18; W. D. Davies, “Law in First-Century Judaism,” in *Studies*, 3-26; repr. from *IDB* 3; E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992), 190-95; James D. Newsom, *Greeks, Romans, Jews: Currents of Culture and Belief in the New Testament World* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992), 102-6; Donaldson, *Gentiles*, 108-31; N. T. Wright, “Paul and Qumran,” *BR* 14 (1998): 18, 54; Martin G. Abegg Jr., “4QMMT, Paul, and ‘Works of the Law,’” in *The Bible at Qumran: Text, Shape, and Interpretation* (ed. Peter W. Flint; SDDSSL; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 203-16; Cromhout, *Walking*, 81-88.

⁶⁸ E.g., Abraham’s initial call comes only after he repudiates polytheism and calls out to the “Most High God” (12:16-24); Levi receives the priesthood in response to the slaughter the Shechemites (30:1-20).

⁶⁹ Philo does emphasize here the divine craftsman shaping the individual’s constituent parts, which takes him a step in Paul’s direction.

⁷⁰ Pseudo-Philo expresses himself with the words of Mal 1:2-3, suggesting that other Jewish interpreters besides Paul found in it a convenient crystallization of Genesis’s meaning (so too *Pesiq. Rab.*

as the basis for election: because Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob kept God's commands, they were reckoned his friends and inherited an eternal covenant (III, 2-4). *Second Baruch* makes similar claims (57:1-2), and some passages from the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* date specific aspects of the Mosaic legislation to the patriarchal era (*T. Levi* 9:3-14; *T. Zeb.* 3:4). In Paul's day, the question of how the piety of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob related to the election of Israel was a live one.⁷¹

None of these writings assumes that the patriarchs complied with the whole Torah as Moses brought it down from Sinai. Even *Jubilees* admits that Abraham did not know God's law in its entirety, and posits oral traditions and divine revelations as the source of specific pre-Sinaitic observances. Nevertheless, the homology is evident. The patriarchs may not have known all 613 commands, but their obedience to God's instructions anticipate the Torah observance to which every Jew ought to aspire. Gary Anderson elucidates as follows:

Exodus 19 stands as a sort of semi-permeable membrane in the Bible. On one side of the divide is the era of the Patriarchs in which the mandates of the Torah are rather casually if not blithely ignored whereas on the other side the centrality of these commandments could hardly be more emphatically underscored. . . . This severe imbalance sought some sort of equilibrium and in virtually any Jewish

48.2). This parallel provides further indications that in 9:7-13, Paul is adapting a conventional approach to Israel's election, and not pursuing the claim of v. 6a.

⁷¹ On this entire tradition, see further Joseph P. Schultz, "Two Views of the Patriarchs: Noahides and Pre-Sinai Israelites," in *Texts and Responses*, 43-59; Davies, "Law," in *Studies*, 8; Gary A. Anderson, "The Status of the Torah Before Sinai: The Retelling of the Bible in the Damascus Covenant and the Book of Jubilees," *DSD* 1 (1994): 1-29; idem, "The Status of the Torah in the Pre-Sinaitic Period: St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans," in *Biblical Perspectives: Early Use and Interpretation of the Bible in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. Michael E. Stone and Esther G. Chazon; STDJ 28; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 1-23; Jon D. Levenson, "How Not to Conduct Jewish-Christian Dialogue," *Commentary* 112 (2001), 36. Conflicting rabbinic views on this question can be found in *m. Qidd.* 4:14; *t. Qidd.* 4:21; *Gen. Rab.* 49:2 (Abraham knew the Mosaic Torah), and *b. Yoma* 28b (he did not). *Sifre Deut* §312 accounts for the Abraham-Isaac-Jacob trajectory of election by the contrasting Jacob's moral character with that of Ishmael and Esau. A similar rabbinic apology for election, which focuses on Sinai rather than the patriarchs, relates that all nations, including the Edomites and Ishmaelites, were given the opportunity to accept Torah but refused (*Mek.* on Exod 19:19 [*Bahodesh* 4.45-58]; *Mek.* on Exod 20:2 [*Bahodesh* 5.63-79]; *Sifre Deut* §343; *Pesiq. Rab Kah. Sup.* 1.15).

document one would care to consult . . . the tendency was for the *ethos*, if not the norms, of Sinai to cross over into the era of the Patriarchs.⁷²

According to the inner-logic of the Jewish mythomoteur, its constituent elements interpreted and homogenized each other in accordance with the general tenor of the whole: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob observed God's Torah.

Paul's argument and its polemical edge fits smoothly into this context. He does not speak of Torah / νόμος in the patriarchal stories but of ἔργα. His case rests on a structural analogy between those under the law (the Jews) and those prior to the law (the patriarchs), despite different historical contingencies. "Works" in v. 12 denotes practices which *anticipate* Torah obedience as the *sine qua non* of Jewish religious identity.

This understanding coheres with Rom 4:1-6, where Paul draws a parallel between a specific individual standing *outside* the sphere governed by Torah, Abraham, and those who stand *inside*, his Jewish descendents. *Abraham* was justified by faith apart from *works* just as the promises vouchsafed to his *descendants* are not secured through the *law* (οὐ . . . γὰρ διὰ νόμου). Paul relates *Abraham* to *works*, but his descendents to *law*. *Works*, on the one hand, and *law* and *works of the law* on the other (Gal 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10; Rom 3:20, 28), are not *coterminous* in meaning but *parallel* in effect.⁷³ By emphasizing the impotence of ἔργα to determine God's election in 9:11, Paul draws a similar

⁷² Anderson, "Status of the Torah," 22.

⁷³ "(The) works of the law" directly connects *works* with Torah observance. Hence the parallel formulations: justification does not come by *law* (Gal 2:21; 3:11, 21; 5:4; cf. Rom 4:13; 8:3), justification does not come by *works* of the law (Gal 2:16; Rom 3:20, 28); the Spirit provides what the *law* could not accomplish (Rom 8:1-4), and the *works* of law cannot provide the Spirit (Gal 3:5); the *law* brings wrath (Rom 4:15) and increases transgression (Rom 5:20; cf. Rom 7:5; Gal 5:1), those who are ἐξ ἔργων νόμου are under a curse (Gal 3:10; cf. Rom 6:14; 8:2).

correspondence between the situation of Jacob and Esau, who like Abraham had no direct relation to νόμος, and the Jewish people who did.⁷⁴

3.5.3. PATRIARCHS, PROPHETS, AND THE “DYNAMICS OF DISELECTION”⁷⁵

In Rom 9:10-13, Paul continues his dual approach to the narratives of Israel’s origin that he began in vv. 7-9. He embraces the conventional progress of election, covenant, and promise from Abraham through Isaac to Jacob, while enlisting the same characters in his attempt to separate nomistic practice from covenantal status. Jacob’s relation to election and to ἔργα is paradigmatic for interpreting Israel’s relation to νόμος. Paul uses this connection to draw out further the particularity of election: God’s preference for Jacob has an exclusionary reflex against Esau.

⁷⁴ Paul’s use of ἔργα in these instances should not be *equated* with the fuller ἔργων τοῦ νόμου, as some commentators tend to do. Dunn, for example, states that in 9:12, “Paul certainly means, as always with the ἐξ ἔργων formulation, works of *the* [Mosaic] law” (*Romans*, 2:543; similarly, Watson, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 125, 128). This understanding eliminates Paul’s careful nuance. On the other hand, neither does ἔργα refer to general human works which could conceivably be regarded as meritorious. Douglas J. Moo has argued for this understanding. He insists that Paul’s reference to ἔργα prior to the institution of the Mosaic administration (cf. Gal 3:15-18, Rom 5:13-14) demonstrates his opposition to works in and of themselves, even good works, in the matter of justification. He writes, “‘Works’ had no more place in the selection of Abraham and Jacob, who bore no relationship to the law . . . than in the justification of Galatian Gentiles, who were being encouraged to supplement their faith with ‘works of the law.’ In other words, Paul appears to criticize ‘works of the law’ not because they are *nomou* (‘of the law’) but because they are *erga* (‘works’)” (“‘Law,’ ‘Works of the Law,’ and Legalism in Paul,” *WTJ* 45 [1983]: 96-97; see also *idem*, *Romans*, 581-82, 582 n. 55). Similarly, Stephen Westerholm claims on the basis of Rom 9:11 (and 4:4-5) that Paul opposes the notion of *any* human activity as a possible contribution to an individual’s salvation (“Paul and the Law in Romans 9-11,” in *Paul and the Mosaic Law* [ed. James D. G. Dunn; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001]; *idem*, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The “Lutheran” Paul and His Critics* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004], 309, 315, 320; see also Grindheim, *Crux*, 144 n. 31). I think that this approach fails to take into account the polemical targets of Paul’s argument (which would answer the objection based on chronology) and does not appreciate the fundamental issue with which Paul wrestles in Rom 9: the relation between the Jewish people and the electing will of God.

⁷⁵ The phrase “dynamics of diselection” is taken from R. Christopher Heard, *The Dynamics of Diselection: Ambiguity in Genesis 12-36 and Ethnic Boundaries in Post-Exilic Judah* (SBL SemeiaSt; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001)

3.5.3.1. *Election and Its Opposite in Romans 9:10-13*

Jacob's appearance in the argument introduces the figure who even more than Abraham symbolizes the unity, integrity, and solidarity of the Jewish people. As patronymic ancestor of the twelve tribes, Jacob / Israel symbolize membership in the people he fathered. His centrality to Paul's argument can be seen in three aspects of these verses: Jacob's collective significance, the importance of chronology in divorcing his election from works, and the binary oppositions which underlie the discussion.

First, Paul is not only drawing attention to a pattern of election but arguing that what is true of Jacob / Israel holds good for the people descended from him.⁷⁶ Already in v. 8 Paul used the third person plural to draw out the respective destinies Isaac and Ishmael signaled for the people groups they represent. The same implication carries over into vv. 10-13. Furthermore, Paul's notice of Isaac as "our father" actualizes the belief in a shared descent from a common ancestor and the implicit norms ethnic prototypes embody.

Most importantly, the oracle of Gen 25:23 from which Paul quotes specifically addresses δύο ἔθνη. It identifies Jacob and Esau not as individual characters acting for their own benefit, but as paradigmatic figures. They bear the respective fates of the people groups whom they encode in the narrative. Paul's interest does not lie in how individuals illustrate eternal principles of predestination; he wants to show how the scriptural story of Jacob's election prefigures Israel's relation to νόμος and the ἔθνη. In the same way, Esau represents Jacob's obverse, the "Other" against whom the

⁷⁶ Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 121 n. 11. This same supposition underlies the argument of Gal 3 (§2.2.1.2.). In the context of Rom 9, Paul is speaking as a Jew and explicating how Genesis construes Jewish election; hence, "our father Isaac" in v. 10 does not necessarily include his Gentile audience.

prototypical, eponymous “Us” is defined. It is not a question of the historical Edomites entering into Paul’s argument any more than Ishmael signified the Arab peoples in 9:7-9. These figures signify “Not-Israel.” As Gaston stated, “It is clear, both from Genesis and from Paul’s use of it, that Ishmael and Esau are Gentiles and not chosen and, conversely, that Isaac and Jacob and their descendants were chosen.”⁷⁷

Second, Paul’s attempt to isolate works from election rests on the same attention to chronology that characterizes his interpretations elsewhere. In Gen 25, a pregnant Rebecca senses some upheaval taking place within her and “inquires of the Lord” (v. 22, evidently indicating some kind of cultic petition). The oracular response both discloses the transhistorical, interethnic hostilities her travails prefigure and also announces God’s intention to exalt the second-born Jacob over his elder brother. As in the previous generation, God’s word confounds the operation of primogeniture and elects the lesser child while excluding altogether the elder.⁷⁸

Paul’s notice that Jacob and Esau were born not from different mothers but from the same parental pair (indeed, from the same coital act!) reiterates the claim advanced in vv. 7-9: physical generation does not determine God’s favor.⁷⁹ But the new element is Paul’s emphasis on the chronology of election, birth, and moral development (or lack

⁷⁷ Gaston, *Paul and Torah*, 94. The introduction of the Edomites / Idumeans (or Ishmaelites / Arabs) as a historical people group obscures the way Jacob and Esau represent collective personalities (against Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 245-47; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:479; Campbell, *Paul’s Gospel*, 45; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 563). Wilckens (*Röm*, 195), Dunn (*Romans*, 2:544), Watson (*Beyond the New Perspective*, 314) and Jewett (*Romans*, 580) properly reject this claim, but err in the opposite direction by refusing to see any collective significance to Esau at all. Paul is not concerned with the historical peculiarities of various peoples but with the way God’s word to and about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob initiates the election of Israel as opposed to Esau, Israel’s paradigmatic enemy (see §3.5.3.2.).

⁷⁸ Seifrid, “Romans,” 640.

⁷⁹ BDAG, s.v. κοίτη 2b; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:476-77; Wilckens, *Röm*, 194; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:542; Moo, *Romans*, 579 n. 46.

thereof). The narrative sequence will not allow subsequent actions to condition the divine announcement. The actual circumstances surrounding Jacob's election and promised elevation rule out of court any contribution from works. God selects Jacob to be the preeminent brother by simple fiat and not as reward or penalty.

Finally, several oppositions shape Paul's conceptual framework, though their symmetry lies partially obscured under the distended syntax. Already in vv. 7-9 key terms were set against each other, making a series of contrasts: σπέρμα and ἐπαγγελία on the one hand and τέκνα and σάρξ on the other. In v. 11, the second genitive absolute of the adverbial clause, μήπω . . . πραξάντων, is conceptually set against the purpose clause, ἵνα ἢ κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ θεοῦ μένη. Human doing and divine election are mutually exclusive categories. In the next verse, a pair of grammatically parallel but materially contrastive prepositional phrases modify μένη: *not* on the basis of works *but* on the basis of the one who calls (οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ καλοῦντος). In these verses, then, Paul aligns ἔργα with πράσσειν, whether such are ἀγαθὸν ἢ φαῦλον. Opposite these terms stand God's ἐκλογή and κλήσις. By naming God ὁ καλῶν, "the one who calls," Paul establishes a connection with Gen 21:12 already quoted in v. 7: ἐν Ἰσαὰκ κληθήσεται σοι σπέρμα. God operated on the same basis when he choose Isaac and discarded Ishmael as he did when he exalted Jacob and rejected Esau. The calling of the one inevitably entails the exclusion of the other.⁸⁰

The words of Malachi in v. 13 give this opposition a particular severity with its binary allocation of God's love and God's hate. This summary provides the climax for

⁸⁰ Seifrid, "Romans," 640.

the series of antitheses which fills out Paul's argument dialectically. It may be expressed in parallel columns:

οἱτοὶ Ἰσραήλ	οὐχ Ἰσραήλ
Ἰσαάκ	(Ἰσμαήλ)
σπέρμα	τέκνα
σπέρμα	σαρκός
ἐπαγγελίας	σαρκός
ἐκλογή	πράσσω
κλήσις	ἔργον
ἐλάσσων	μείζων
Ἰακώβ	Ἔσαυ
ἀγαπέω	μισέω ⁸¹

These contrasts provide the interpretive frame which undergirds Paul's exegetical discussion. He has shifted the rationale for election from any connection with nomistic service (the right column) and based it firmly on God's prerogative (the left column). The operative force remains "God's electing purpose" and "the one who calls." The common assumption that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were deemed worthy on account of their fidelity to a proto-Mosaic set of covenantal stipulations fails to account for the election of Jacob over Esau, which was determined long before any respective moral attainments or failings had the opportunity to manifest themselves.⁸² God simply abrogates Esau's right of primogeniture by sovereign dictum. Abraham's authentic lineage does not proceed in terms of fleshly descent or nomistic fidelity but by the superintention of a divine action which discriminates for reasons wholly internal to God's mysterious will.

⁸¹ Similar pairs of opposites composed for exegetical purposes appear in Gal 4:21-5:1 and 2 Cor 3 (see Stockhausen, *Moses' Veil*, 73-82).

⁸² As Dunn comments, "Paul's fellow countrymen assume a direct link between their nationhood, the covenant, and the law, but their founding fathers *disprove* rather than prove the equation" (*Romans*, 2:548; similarly, Jewett, *Romans*, 579).

3.5.3.2. *Divine Love and Divine Hate in Romans 9:13*

Malachi 1:2-3 delivers the exegetical coup de grâce. This prophetic oracle recapitulates Paul's survey of the patriarchal story and provides it with a concluding hermeneutical frame. Its terse statement distills the meaning of Genesis' plot (as Paul interprets it) and thereby provides an authoritative guide for reading how divine election both grants grace and entails malignity. By subpoenaing a prophetic witness in support of his exegesis, Paul clinches the argument. Election relies on God's prerogative, not nomistic service.

The sovereign volunteerism of God's love over against the impotency of Torah is not the only thing that Malachi affirms. In robustly ethnocentric terms the oracle specifies what it means for "the greater to serve the lesser": one people has been elected to God's covenantal love and called by the free outpouring of his unconditional commitment to Abraham. Another people, a brother people, rejected from conception, labors under the burden of divine hatred.⁸³

The God of Malachi 1:2-3, like that of Rom 9:6-13, elects, discriminates, and damns.⁸⁴ Paul's understanding of what it means to be a child of Abraham includes the

⁸³ Wrangling over the precise force of *hate* remains beside the point. God actively predestines Esau to a destiny which excludes him from the covenantal love bestowed on his brother—for no fault of his own and indeed before his very birth (against those who argue that *hate* represents a Semitic idiom meaning *love less*; e.g., Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 563; Byrne, *Romans*, 295). As Cranfield aptly expresses it: "The word 'hate' should probably not be explained, either in Malachi or in Romans, as an instance of the Semitic use of a direct opposite in order to express a lesser degree of comparison. . . . God has chosen Jacob and his descendants to stand in a positive relation to the fulfillment of His gracious purpose: He has left Esau and Edom outside this relationship" (*Romans*, 2:480; similarly Dunn, *Romans*, 2:544; Moo, *Romans*, 587; Bell, *Irrevocable Call*, 225; Evans, "Paul and the Prophets," 124; Seifrid, "Romans," 641).

The predestinarian account in CD II, 2-13 supplies a close parallel to Paul's discussion. Like Rom 9, it rationalizes the lack of positive response from its author's (or, authors') intended audience; it explains this state of affairs by appealing not only to predestination but also the remnant; it claims for this remnant the presence of the holy spirit, the promise that *seed* will fill the earth, and the possession of God's truth. The passage ends: "But those whom he [God] hated [אָנְשׁוֹ] he led astray" (II, 13).

⁸⁴ As Watson points out, each of the divine utterances reported through v. 17 enacts a division (*Beyond the New Perspective*, 310).

shadow cast by God's gracious choice. Just as his calling of Isaac, the child(ren) of promise, segregates Ishmael, the child(ren) of flesh, from Abraham's family, so too his love for Jacob leaves destructive hatred for Esau.

Malachi's oracle, of course, does not speak from a vacuum, but itself expresses a pervasive anti-Edomite trajectory woven into the Scriptures.⁸⁵ It recapitulates a frequent celebration of God's vengeance about to be poured out on the historic enemies of Israel. However, it stands alone among prophetic denunciations in connecting Edom so tightly with Esau and the fraternal role he plays in Genesis. By recollecting the patriarchal drama, Malachi juxtaposes the inheritance of God's promise, covenant, law, and love—guaranteed for the chosen seed—against the desolation, ravaging animals, and relentless divine opposition in store for Esau (Mal 1:3-5; see also §4.1.7.).

Paul has chosen one of the most jingoistic verses in the Scriptures to complete his survey of election in Genesis. Although Mal 1:2-3 provides a fitting text encapsulating the exclusionary rhetoric in Rom 9:7-12, few passages could have supplied a more malapropos anticipation to the announcement of God's gracious inclusion of the nations

⁸⁵ Cranfield attempts to soften his own comments on Rom 9:13 by characterizing Esau as “an object of God's merciful care” according to “the testimony of Scripture” (Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:480). The texts he quotes in support represent a minority strand in the Bible (Gen 27:39-40; the genealogies in Gen 36 and 1 Chron 1; Deut 23:7). The Scriptures' dominant voice can be heard in Ps 137:7; Isa 11:14; 34:1-16; 63:1-6; Jer 49:7-22; Lam 4:21-22; Ezek 25:12-15; 35:1-5; 36:3-5; Joel 3:19; Amos 1:11-12; 9:11-15; Obad 8-10, 12, 17-18, 21. These passages show that the “canonical” conclusion to Esau's story is the one given by Malachi. In many cases, these denunciations of Edom go beyond the violence typical of oracles against the nations and express a desire for vindictive devastation. This thirst for revenge has its roots in the sense of betrayal many biblical authors / editors harbored for Edom's participation in the Babylonian conquests (see esp. Ps 137:7; Ezek 36:5; Obad 10, 12). Several investigations have concluded that “Edom” eventually became an emblem of Israel's paradigmatic antagonist (Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 39-41; Bruce C. Cresson, “The Condemnation of Edom in Postexilic Judaism,” in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New*, 125-48; Bert Dicou, *Edom, Israel's Brother and Antagonist: The Role of Edom in Biblical Prophecy and Story* [JSOTSup 169; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994], 14, 15, 102-4, 108, 154).

appearing at the end of the chapter.⁸⁶ To this point, Paul's argument has more in common with the unlikely *Jubilees*, which asserts that, "The Lord did not draw near to himself either Ishmael, his sons, his brothers, or Esau. He did not choose them (simply) because they were among Abraham's children, for he knew them. But he chose Israel to be his people. He sanctified them and gathered (them) from all mankind" (15:30-31a).⁸⁷ The very argument establishing Israel's election seems to place a significant roadblock in front of Paul's desired destination in 9:24-26.⁸⁸ The emphasis placed on God's discriminatory election of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob may suffice to preserve the integrity of his people despite the loss of circumcision and Torah as boundary-marking practices, but it hardly opens the door to including Gentiles in his family.

⁸⁶ Although this point eludes many commentators, Frank Thielman expresses it clearly: "The national symbolism of Jacob and Esau in the Malachi quotation . . . seems lost on Paul" ("Unexpected Mercy," 174). See also Jan Lambrecht, "Israel's Future According to Romans 9-11: An Exegetical and Hermeneutical Approach," in *Pauline Studies: Collected Essays* (BETL 115; Louvain: Peeters: 1994), 37; repr. from *Kerkelijk leven in Vlanderen anno 2000: opstellen voor Prof. Dr. Jan Kerkhofs bij zijn emeritaat* (ed. Jan Kerkhofs, J. Bulckens, and Paul Cooreman; Louvain: Acco, 1989).

Jewett speculates that Paul is "conscious of the problematic quality of the Malachi quotation" (*Romans*, 580). He claims that its only purpose is to present "an extreme statement of Paul's basic position—to confirm the reliability of the divine promise in the face of human rejection of the gospel" (*ibid.*). As evidence, he argues that Paul proceeds to develop the "loving side" of Malachi's antithesis. But in fact Paul develops *both* sides of Malachi's dual assertion, stressing the "hating side" in vv. 17-18 with reference to God's active hardening of Pharaoh's heart. It is this emphasis on hating / hardening that provokes the question of v. 19. Paul does not hesitate to draw out the implications of his severe theology in vv. 20-23 (§6.1.). If anything, the sequel to v. 13 shows that Paul is unmoved by the "problematic quality" of the quotation from Malachi (see 5.1.). Jewett criticizes previous commentators for attenuating the severity of Paul's claim, but he proceeds down the same path.

Some (esp. German) commentators find Paul's doctrine of justification by faith behind the discussion of election in 9:6-13 (so Käsemann, *Romans*, 264; Wilckens, *Röm*, 194-95, [tentatively]). The quotation from Malachi suggests that the argument is running along a different track altogether.

⁸⁷ The translation is VanderKam's, inclusive of parentheses. On *Jubilees*'s presentation of Esau as "Not-Israel," see §2.1.

⁸⁸ Again, Thielman: "Genesis is the first and programmatic chapter in the biblical story of how God chose the nation of Israel to be his people, and when read on its own terms seems to support precisely the *opposite* of what Paul is trying to prove in Romans 9" ("Unexpected Mercy," 14; emphasis added). Thielman's own solution is, overall, very compatible with my own understanding (see §7.2.2.).

My answer why Paul moves his discussion in this direction relies on the hypothetical substructure beneath his argument and the ironic understanding of election this exegetical foundation expresses. To establish this thesis, I must first demonstrate the extent to which Rom 9:24-29 resumes the themes from 9:6-15.

3.6. CONCLUSIONS

In his previous letters, Paul transferred Israel's covenantal heritage to the in-Christ community without remainder (§2.2.). The problem of Rom 9 is that vv. 7-13 appear to overcompensate for this absolute disinheritance of the (non-Christ following) Jewish people by resorting to ethnic chauvinism. Paul asserts God's inscrutable decision to bestow on Isaac and Jacob his gracious love and to exclude Ishmael and Esau from the divinely called Abrahamic family. He does this to such an extent that he appears to limit God's grace to the patriarchs and their descendants alone. The exclusionary nature of election in v. 13 threatens to betray Paul's repeated insistence throughout the epistle on the impartial grace of God extended towards Jews and Gentiles alike (2:11-13; 3:9, 22, 29-30; 10:12; 11:32).

Yet Paul does not re-pristiniate the standard narrative of Israel's primordial election. The biblically-warranted and publicly-recognizable marks of covenantal identity—circumcision and Torah—fail at the very moment when Israel emerged as a distinct entity.⁸⁹ The glosses which frame Paul's OT quotations breach Genesis's own textual warrants for tying covenant and election to circumcision and Torah as their irreducible symbolic enactment.

⁸⁹ Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 242-43.

In their place, Paul sets God's promise and call. The form God's election takes as it manifests itself in history is not related to foreskin or Torah fidelity, but to a divine calling which undoes human expectation and reverses the privilege of primogeniture. Paul brings into his argument not only the exclusionary effect of Israel's election but the surprising reversal it perpetrated by subverting the rights of the elder brother and conferring firstborn status on the younger.

"Reversal" not only characterizes how Paul understands the operation of election; *it also characterizes the argument of Rom 9 itself.* In his opening peroration, Paul implies that Israel has fallen into apostasy (9:2-3) and immediately thereafter he positions himself to rupture Israel from Israel (9:6b). This dual maneuver intimates a sectarian-like agenda that would reduce the true Abrahamic seed to a bastion of fidelity amidst a sea of apostasy. But in fact Paul has pursued an entirely different strategy. Verses 7-13, aside from their relativization of *σάρξ* and *νόμος*, produce a rather conventional statement of Israel's ethnic genealogy, tracing the passage of election from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob and pushing out the progenitors of Gentile peoples.

Romans 9:24 returns to the expansive view of God's mercy that otherwise characterizes Romans. It offers a drastically different ending to the story of patriarchal election than that provided by Mal 1:2-3. If 9:24-29 shows that the original conclusion was a ruse, why did Paul pose it at all?

The answer is to be found in the exegetical substructure that gives Rom 9-11 its paradoxical coherence. When Paul turns to Hosea and Isaiah at the end of ch. 9, he has not left Genesis behind, as the following chapter will demonstrate. I argue there that these three biblical texts share a narrative pattern characterized by election, exclusion,

reversal, and restoration. Paul, reading the story of election in light of the prophets, finds a sovereign freedom of God which is eternally pledged to Abraham's family but also capable of its unexpected recreation.

CHAPTER FOUR

ESTABLISHING AN INTERTEXTUAL MATRIX: MOSES AND THE PROPHETS IN ROMANS 9

Paul's rhetoric of exclusion and his sharp turns in argument do not cease after Rom 9:13. He proceeds to emphasize God's power and prerogative to exclude through 9:23. But in 9:24 the ethnically inclusive divine call springs on the reader a surprising about-face (§5.1.). Unless Paul knew neither where he was going nor how he wanted to get there, the logic of his case must lie outside the epistolary text.

What explains these difficult features are the narrative and theological patterns of the Abrahamic mythomoteur exerting themselves on both the mode and content of Paul's argument. This hypothesis presupposes what is not obvious, that as Paul moves his discussion from the patriarchs (9:7-13) to Moses (9:14-18) to the prophets (9:25-29), he remains within the horizon established by Genesis. Elsewhere, though, Paul frequently applies prophetic texts to Abrahamic episodes.¹ The present chapter will extend this claim to Rom 9: beneath Paul's argument lies a biblical substructure integrating Torah and the prophets.

Three lines of evidence point to this conclusion. First, a series of specific words and phrases connect these quotations to the patriarchal narratives, particularly those texts Paul quotes in 9:7-13; second, the altered elements in Paul's quotations suggest that he

¹ E.g., Hab 2:4 applied to Gen 12:3, 18:18 and Isa 44:3 applied to Gen 17 in Gal 3; Sam 7:12 applied to Gen 49:10 in Gal 3:16; Isa 51:2 and 54:1 applied to Gen 21 in Gal 4:27; Ezek 36 and Jer 7 applied to Gen 17 in Rom 2; see §2.2. above.

has intentionally integrated these narrative and prophetic texts; finally, a common theology of election, characterized by paradox and reversal, appears in the narrative cycles of Genesis, in the story of Hosea's children, in the fate of Israel according to Isaiah, and in the respective destinies of Jews and Gentiles in Rom 9. By showing the extent of these interrelationships, I will lay the groundwork for the reconstruction of Paul's exegesis mounted in chs. 5 and 6.²

4.1. LEXICAL CONNECTIONS DISCOVERED BY PAUL

The various texts from which Paul quotes share a network of common terms, providing the basis for a complex application of *gezera shawa*. Twenty-five years ago, William Stegner said of Rom 9 that “most commentators have not noted the interplay of key words whereby the proof-texts are linked to one another.”³ However, Stegner himself specified only *call*, *seed*, and *sons*. In fact, a string of interlocking lexical features weaves through Paul's discourse and ties together Genesis, Malachi, Hosea, and Isaiah in a single interpretive matrix. These include: (1) καλέω and cognates; (2) σπέρμα and cognates; (3) ὁ ἀριθμὸς υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης; (4) ἡ γῆ as Abraham's inheritance; (5) τὸ κατάλειμμα and cognates; (6) Σόδομα, Γόμορρα; (7) κληρονομία,

² As Ellis noted some years ago, the extent to which Pauline theological motifs “may be traced to the Pentateuch is striking. Most of the framework of Paul's theology rests upon the accounts of the Creation, the life of Abraham, and the Exodus. . . . However, it is a Pentateuch illumined and interpreted by the Prophets and Psalms, not by the tradition of the Elders” (*Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 117; see also the discussion of Carol Stockhausen's work in §1.1.2. and Maillot, “Essai,” 73). Yet the degree to which Rom 9:25-29 relies on the argument of 9:6-13 has been overlooked in the past. In 1988 James Dunn noted, “Many of the themes in these closing verses [of ch. 9] pick up key motifs from the opening of the section,” but he does not pursue them as relevant to his exposition (*Romans*, 2:257; see too Barrett, *Romans*, 178; Jewett, *Romans*, 600). By contrast, J. Ross Wagner and Florian Wilk have more recently insisted that Hos and Isa complete the meaning of Paul's opening discussion (e.g., Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 52, 120, 186). However, their enthusiasm for Isaiah has impeded a full recognition for the base text which alone can explain these verses and the argument as a whole.

³ Stegner, “Midrash,” 40. See also Wagner, *Heralds*, 48, whose approach is closer to mine, but still with significant differences.

particularly that of Jacob as contrasted with that of Esau. These seven terms and phrases all figure prominently in Paul's argument in Rom 9-11 (or, in the case of #7, close to hand), they all characterize the plot of Genesis or appear at significant narrative junctures, and they all bring into Genesis's orbit the prophetic texts quoted in Rom 9:25-29.⁴

4.1.1. "YOU WILL BE CALLED"

Paul makes a substantial investment in the term *καλέω*. He introduces it in v. 7 by way of Gen 21:12, explicates its theological significance in v. 12, and states its contemporary relevance in v. 24. Although the word *καλέω* disappears after ch. 9, the concept continues to play an important role. In 11:29, its noun form sums up all three chapters: ἀμεταμέλητα γὰρ τὰ χαρίσματα καὶ ἡ κλήσις τοῦ θεοῦ, "For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable." Therefore the appearance of *καλέω* in Paul's quotation of Hos 2:1 (9:26) can hardly be incidental to his appropriation of that text:

Gen 21:12

ἐν Ἰσαὰκ κληθήσεται σοι σπέρμα.⁵

Hos 2:1 (Eng.: 1:10)

ἐν τῷ τόπῳ, οὗ ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς Οὐ λαός μου ὑμεῖς, κληθήσονται υἱοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος.⁶

⁴ Interpreters occasionally argue that the series of quotations in Rom 9:25-29 came to Paul as a preformed tradition (Wilckens, *Röm*, 198; Lindars, "Universalism," 511-28). I believe that the results of this chapter will strengthen the opposite conclusion. Though Paul may have incorporated elements of traditional (Jewish or early Christian) exegesis, the resulting interpretive structure is his own.

⁵ "In Isaac offspring shall be called for you" (NETS, modified). Here and throughout only the relevant portion of the quoted verse is provided.

⁶ "And it shall be, in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' there they shall be called, 'sons of the living God'" (NETS, modified).

The divine call which creates life out of Abraham's sterile loins (4:17), which ensures the justification of the elect (8:30) and which counts Isaac as Abraham's seed (9:7) also announces that a people not God's own are now his children.

4.1.2. "SEED"

According to Rom 9:7 = Gen 21:12, what God calls is Abraham's σπέρμα. This word reappears in 9:29, where the quotation of Isa 1:9 reprises this theme from earlier in the chapter. Furthermore, in the unquoted portion of Hos 2:25, the verbal form σπερῶ introduces a promise that after judgment God will restore fecundity to the land (see also 2:5, 11, 14 [Eng.: 2:3, 9, 12]).

Gen 21:12

ἐν Ἰσαὰκ κληθήσεται σοι σπέρμα.⁷

Hos 2:25 (Eng. 2:23)

καὶ σπερῶ αὐτήν ἐμαυτῶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.⁸

Isa 1:9

καὶ εἰ μὴ κύριος σαβαώθ ἐγκατέλιπεν ἡμῖν σπέρμα, κτλ.⁹

In Genesis, the viability of God's promise to Abraham depends on the successful establishment of a family from his own σπέρμα.¹⁰ This motif of Abraham's seed pulls both Isa 1 and Hos 2 into the narrative of Genesis.

⁷ "In Isaac offspring shall be named for you."

⁸ "And I will sow her for myself in the land." Wilk is among the few who notice the relevance of σπερῶ in Hos 2:25 to Paul's argument but he does not relate this connection to Genesis (*Bedeutung*, 187).

⁹ "And if the Lord Sabaoth had not left us offspring," etc.

¹⁰ With some variation in expression: Gen 12:7; 13:15; 15:18; 17:8; 22:17-18; 24:7; 26:3; 26:24; 28:13; see also 15:13; 28:4; 35:12.

4.1.3. “AS NUMEROUS AS THE SANDS OF THE SEA”

Genesis records several instances in which God specifies that his promise of seed involves descendants beyond measure. This pledge comes by a threefold simile: the σπέρμα would be as numerous as the dust (עפר, ἄμμος) of the earth (13:16; 28:14), as the stars (כוכבים, ἀστέρες) of the sky (15:5; 22:17; 26:4), and as the sand (לֵיל, ἄμμος) of the sea (22:17; 32:13 [Eng.: 32:12]). These promises provide a further connection with Paul’s prophetic texts. Genesis 22:17 and 32:13 closest in form:

Gen 22:17

καὶ πληθύνων πληθυνῶ τὸ σπέρμα σου . . . ὡς τὴν ἄμμον τὴν παρὰ τὸ χειλὸς τῆς θαλάσσης.¹¹

Gen 32:13 (Eng.: 32:12)

καὶ θήσω τὸ σπέρμα σου ὡς τὴν ἄμμον τῆς θαλάσσης, ἣ οὐκ ἀριθμηθήσεται ἀπὸ τοῦ πλήθους.¹²

Hos 2:1 (Eng.: 1:10)

καὶ ἦν ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης, ἣ οὐκ ἐκμετρηθήσεται οὐδὲ ἐξαριθμηθήσεται.¹³

Isa 10:22

καὶ ἐὰν γένηται ὁ λαὸς Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης, κτλ.¹⁴

In Hebrew, the two prophetic verses display an even tighter parallelism:

Hos 2:1 (Eng.: 1:10)

והיה מספר בני ישראל כחול הים

Isa 10:22

כא אם יהיה עמך ישראל כחול הים

¹¹ “I will make your offspring . . . as the sand that is by the seashore.”

¹² “I will . . . make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which shall not be counted for multitude.”

¹³ “And the number of the sons of Israel was like the sand of the sea, which shall not be measured nor numbered.” Because the LXX translates both עפר and חול with ἄμμος, Hos 2:1 bears a further link with Gen 13:16 and 28:14.

¹⁴ “And if the people of Israel become like the sand of the sea,” etc.

Thus Hos 2:1 and Isa 10:22 both recall God's commitment to give Abraham seed beyond measure.¹⁵

4.1.4. INHERITING THE LAND

What the seed inherits is *the land*. The story of Abraham's journeys begins with the divine grant of Canaan (Gen 12:1-2), bringing into focus the need for descendants who can possess it.¹⁶ The dual promise of *seed* and *land* reappears in conjunction at several points (Gen 13:15; 15:18; 17:8; 24:7; 26:3-4; 28:4, 13; 35:12; 48:4). These intertwined motifs charged the religious and political imagination of Jews into the first century. An oblique reference to this ethnoscape may explain a recurring but overlooked element in Paul's biblical quotations in Rom 9: their geographical connotations.

Exod 9:16 as quoted in Rom 9:17

εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἐξήγειρά σε ὅπως ἐνδείξωμαι ἐν σοὶ τὴν δύναμίν μου καὶ ὅπως διαγγεληῖ τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῆ.¹⁷

¹⁵ Although the phrase “as the sands of the sea” can picture a great multitude without any reference to the patriarchal promises (Gen 41:49; Judg 7:12; 3 Kgdms 2:35; Jer 15:8), it never lost its primary association. Several occurrences explicitly or implicitly recall God's pledge to Abraham and his sons (Num 23:10; 1 Kgs 4:20 = 1 Kgdms 4:26; Jer 33:22 [only in Hebrew, a possible reference]; *Jub.* 19:22; 27:33; 1 Macc 11:1; Sir 44:21; Pr Azar 1:13). Isa 48:19 connects *seed* and *sand* in a way that probably alludes to the patriarchal promise. The Hebrew contains an untranslatable word play indicating this. The relevant portion reads, ויהי כחול זראעך וצאצאי מעיך כמעתי, ויהי כחול זראעך וצאצאי מעיך כמעתי. The word מַעֵה in מעיך refers to the internal organs or inward parts. Here it means *womb*, as also in Gen 25:23; Isa 49:1; Ps 71:6; Ruth 1:11; 4QTob^e II, 2; 11QT L, 10 (BDB, s.v.; DCH, s.v.). מַעֵה in כמעתי is a difficult term occurring only here in the HB. It is evidently derived from מַעֵה, grain (BDB, s.v.; DCH, s.v., though both express some uncertainty). The masculine singular suffix on כמעתי apparently refers to חול in the first part of the verse. Hence, God says to Israel, had Israel obeyed him, “the issue of your womb (מַעֵה) would be as its [=the sand's] grains (מַעֵה).” The lost opportunity for *seed* to increase as sand echoes the promise to Abraham. Further, וצאצאי מעיך may recall Gen 15:4: “This man shall not be your heir; your own son (אשר יצא ממעיך) shall be your heir.”

¹⁶ Technically, the divine bestowal of the promise land on Abraham is only implied in Gen 12:1-2, but present nonetheless. An explicit statement occurs at 13:14-15.

¹⁷ “I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.”

Hos 2:25 (Eng.: 2:23)

καὶ σπερῶ αὐτήν ἐμαυτῷ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.¹⁸

Hos 2:1 (Eng.: 1:10) as quoted in Rom 9:26

καὶ ἔσται ἐν τῷ τόπῳ, οὗ ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς Οὐ λαός μου ὑμεῖς, ἐκεῖ κληθήσονται υἱοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος.¹⁹

Isa 10:22b-23 as quoted in Rom 9:28

λόγον γὰρ συντελῶν καὶ συντέμων ποιήσει κύριος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.²⁰

I argue in the following section that Gen 45:7 is also relevant to Paul's argument. It too contains a reference to the land:

Gen 45:7

ἀπέστειλεν γάρ με ὁ θεὸς ἔμπροσθεν ὑμῶν ὑπολείπεσθαι ὑμῶν κατάλειμμα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.²¹

The verbal chain connects an entire series of texts and strengthens the claim that Genesis, Hosea, and Isaiah are connected in an exegetically significant manner.²²

4.1.5. THE REMNANT

Most commentators explain both the presence and theology of the remnant in Rom 9-11 with reference to Isaiah. There is reason to suspect, however, that Paul's understanding

¹⁸ “And I will sow her for myself in the land.”

¹⁹ “And it shall be, in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they shall be called ‘sons of the living God’ ” (NETS, modified).

²⁰ “For the Lord will perform [his] word quickly and certainly” (my translation; see §4.3.3.1.).

²¹ “For God sent me before you, to leave behind a remnant of you on the earth.”

²² Ps 19:5 (Gk.: 18:5; Eng.: 19:4), a portion of which is quoted in Rom 10:18, may also belong here, though its context is too far removed to be certain: εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ἐξῆλθεν ὁ φθόγγος αὐτῶν καὶ εἰς τὰ πέρατα τῆς οἰκουμένης [cf. Isa 10:23] τὰ ῥήματα αὐτῶν, “Their sound went out to all the earth, and to the ends of the world their utterances.”

derives from Genesis (see §6.2.). Two texts in the patriarchal narratives bear comparison with Isa 10:22 and its context:²³

Gen 32:9 (Eng.: 32:8)

²⁴ ויאמר אם יבוא עשו אל המחנה האחת והכהו והיה המחנה הנשאר לפליטה

Gen 45:7

²⁵ וישלחני אלהים לפניכם לשום לכם שארית בארץ ולהחיות לכם לפליטה גדלה

Isa 10:20-22

והיה ביום ההוא לא יוסיף עוד שאר ישראל ופליטת בית יעקב

...
שאר ישוב שאר יעקב אל אל גבור

כי אם יהיה עמך ישראל כחול הים שאר ישוב בו²⁶

The Greek translation of Gen 32:9 attenuates these connections by erasing its remnant terminology. However, its rendering of פליטה with σῶζω maintains a link with Isa 10:20. Further, the LXX also allows for the inclusion of Isa 1:9 in this collection of references. The relevant passages are as follows:

²³ See also Gen 7:23, which notes that only Noah's family of all living things on the earth was "left" (שאר; κατελείφθη). On the remnant in Gen 18, see §6.2.3.

²⁴ "For he [Jacob] said, 'If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the company which is left will escape'" (NASB).

²⁵ "And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors." The passage contains other vocabulary related to the remnant, although this is evident only in the Hebrew. In v. 5, Joseph assures his brothers: "And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to *preserve life* (למחיה; LXX: εἰς . . . ζωήν)." This rare term (seven occurrences in the HB, a possible eighth in Neh 9:6 is probably a Piel ptc., not a noun) appears elsewhere in connection with remnant-related language. Ezra 9 records a prayer that reads in part, "But now for a brief moment favor has been shown by the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant (להשאיר לנו פליטה; τοῦ καταλιπεῖν εἰς σωτηρίαν), . . . to grant us a little reviving (מחיה מעט; ζωοποίησιν μικράν) in our bondage. . . . [God] has extended to us his steadfast love . . . to grant us some reviving (מחיה; ζωοποίησιν)" (vv. 8-9). The same association is made by the Qumran Hodayot: "[For] I [kn]ow that shortly you will raise a survivor (מחיה) among your people, a remnant (ושארית) in your inheritance (בנחלתכה)" (1QH^a XIV, 7-8). These parallels show how easily an ancient interpreter might connect language of Gen 45:7 to the theology of the remnant.

²⁶ "In that day the remnant of Israel and the survivors of the house of Jacob will no more lean upon him that smote them . . . A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. For though your people Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will return."

Gen 32:9 (Eng.: 32:8)

καὶ εἶπεν Ἰακώβ Ἐὰν ἔλθῃ Ἡσαῦ εἰς παρεμβολὴν μίαν καὶ ἐκκόψῃ αὐτήν, ἔσται ἡ παρεμβολὴ ἢ δευτέρα εἰς τὸ σώζεσθαι.²⁷

Gen 45:7

ἀπέστειλεν γάρ με ὁ θεὸς ἔμπροσθεν ὑμῶν, ὑπολείπεσθαι ὑμῶν κατάλειμμα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐκθρέψαι ὑμῶν κατάλειπιν μεγάλην.²⁸

Isa 10:20-22

καὶ ἔσται ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ οὐκέτι προστεθήσεται τὸ καταλειφθὲν Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ οἱ σωθέντες τοῦ Ἰακώβ οὐκέτι μὴ πεποιθότες ὧσιν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀδικήσαντας αὐτούς, ἀλλὰ ἔσονται πεποιθότες ἐπὶ τὸν θεὸν τὸν ἅγιον τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ,

καὶ ἔσται τὸ καταλειφθὲν τοῦ Ἰακώβ ἐπὶ θεὸν ἰσχύοντα.

καὶ ἐὰν γένηται ὁ λαὸς Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸ κατάλειμμα αὐτῶν σωθήσεται.²⁹

Isa 10:22 as Cited in Rom 9:27-28

ἐὰν ἢ ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σωθήσεται.³⁰

Isa 1:9

καὶ εἰ μὴ κύριος σαβαὼθ ἐγκατέλιπεν ἡμῖν σπέρμα, κτλ.³¹

The use of ἐγκαταλείπω in Isa 1:9 to translate רִיתִי (Hiphil, √רִת), a word often related to the remnant (1 Kgs 19:10, 14; Ps 79:11; Ezek 6:8; Mic 5:2; Zeph 2:9; Zech 14:2), transforms a thematic link attaching תִּירָאֵשׁ and רָאֵשׁ to רִת' into a lexical one connecting ὑπολείπω, κατάλειμμα, κατάλειψις, τὸ καταλειφθὲν (Gen 45:7; Isa 10:22, 24), and

²⁷ “And Jacob said, ‘If Esau should come to one company and eradicate it, then there will be the second company to be saved’ ” (NETS, modified).

²⁸ “For God sent me before you, to leave behind a remnant of you on the earth and to nourish a great posterity of you.”

²⁹ “And it shall be on that day that what remains of Israel will no more be added [Brenton: join themselves with; Brenton mg.: repeat their offense], and those of Jacob who have been saved will no more trust in those who have wronged them but will trust in God, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. And what remains of Jacob will be to the mighty God. And if the people of Israel become like the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved.”

³⁰ “If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that shall be saved” (ASV).

³¹ “And if the Lord Sabaoth had not left us offspring,” etc.

ἐγκαταλείπω (Isa 1:9). These connections support the claim that Paul's deployment of these prophetic texts was inspired by his reading of Genesis.

4.1.6. SODOM AND GOMORRAH

Isaiah 1:9 = Rom 9:29 mentions Sodom and Gomorrah, locales which figure prominently in Gen 13 and 18-19.³² The connections between Isaiah and Genesis go beyond the mere appearance of these names. Given Paul's meticulous attention to the narrative shape of the texts he interprets, he may have found in Isaiah a specific reflection of Genesis's plot. His quotation contains the following terms: ἐγκαταλείπω, σπέρμα, and Σόδομα and Γόμορρα. Genesis 17 addresses the identity of Abraham's σπέρμα (§3.4.4.). In the following chapter, his bartering with God introduces the *concept* of the remnant, though without its typical vocabulary (§6.2.3.). There follows in ch. 19 the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Thus Gen 17-19 and Isa 1:9 are both concerned with σπέρμα, the remnant, and the notorious twin cities.³³

³² In Jewish writings, Sodom and Gomorrah often appeared as symbols of human wickedness (Deut 32:32; Isa 1:10; 3:9; Jer 23:14; Ezek 16:44-52; *T. Naph.* 8:12), divine judgment (Deut 29:22; Isa 1:9; 13:9; Jer 48:19; 50:40; Amos 4:11; Zeph 2:9), or both (Lam 5:6; *Jub.* 16:9; 22:22; 3 Macc 2:5; *T. Ben.* 9:1). The New Testament also cites these as illustrations of retribution justly deserved (Matt 10:15 // Luke 10:12; Matt 11:23-24; Luke 17:29; 2 Pet 2:6; Jude 7).

³³ In view of Paul's treatment of Jacob and Esau in Rom 9:10-13, a final connection between Isa 1:9 and the patriarchal stories may be possible. In texts affected by the events of 587 B.C.E., Edom assumed a symbolic status parallel to that of Sodom and Gomorrah: its name became an epithet for wickedness itself (§3.5.3.2.). Thereafter Edom could potentially be equated with the two cities, and at least one OT text avails itself of this possibility. Jer 49 (32 LXX), an oracle of doom against Edom, expressly connects this nation with its forefather Esau (v. 8) and compares it to Sodom and Gomorrah as symbols of complete devastation (v. 18; LXX: v. 12). It is impossible to be certain that Paul incorporated this passage into his interpretation of Genesis, but the connections are suggestive nevertheless.

4.1.7. EDOM'S INHERITANCE

Edom figures prominently in the oracle that opens Malachi, whose full text resonates with further allusions.³⁴ In light of the concern in Genesis to trace the called seed as beneficiaries of a promised inheritance, two terms stand out: κληρονομία / κληρονομέω and (ἐπι)καλέω. Both appears in Gen 21:10-12:

Mal 1:3c, -5

καὶ ἔταξα . . . τὴν κληρονομίαν αὐτοῦ εἰς δόματα ἐρήμου. διότι ἐρεῖ ἡ Ἰδουμαία Κατέστραπται, καὶ ἐπιστρέψωμεν καὶ ἀνοικοδομήσωμεν τὰς ἐρήμους· τάδε λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ Αὐτοὶ οἰκοδομήσουσιν, καὶ ἐγὼ καταστρέψω· καὶ ἐπικληθήσεται αὐτοῖς ὄρια ἀνομίας καὶ λαὸς ἐφ' ὃν παρατέτακται κύριος ἕως αἰῶνος.³⁵

Gen 21:10, 12

καὶ εἶπεν τῷ Ἀβραάμ Ἔκβαλε τὴν παιδίσκην ταύτην καὶ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς· οὐ γὰρ κληρονομήσει ὁ υἱὸς τῆς παιδίσκης ταύτης μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ μου Ἰσαάκ. . . . εἶπεν δὲ ὁ θεὸς τῷ Ἀβραάμ Μὴ σκληρὸν ἔστω τὸ ῥῆμα ἐναντίον σου περὶ τοῦ παιδίου καὶ περὶ τῆς παιδίσκης· πάντα, ὅσα ἐὰν εἶπῃ σοι Σάρρα, ἄκουε τῆς φωνῆς αὐτῆς, ὅτι ἐν Ἰσαάκ κληθήσεται σοι σπέρμα.³⁶

The removal of Ishmael from the promised line in Gen 21 is later replicated in Esau's loss of his birthright and inheritance (§4.3.1.). Malachi 1:2-5 alone among prophetic denunciations connects Edom with the patronymic Esau *and* the fraternal role he plays in the patriarchal narratives; it also discloses the miserable inheritance that Esau *does*

³⁴ For some reason, Moyise seems concerned to downplay the connection between Genesis and Malachi in Paul's argument ("Minor Prophets," 103).

³⁵ "I made . . . his inheritance gifts of the wilderness. For Idumea will say, 'It is destroyed. And let us return and rebuild the desolate places.' This is what the Lord Almighty says: They will build, and I will tear down. And they will be called borders of lawlessness and a people against whom the Lord is drawn up in battle forever'" (NETS, modified).

³⁶ "Then she [Sarah] said to Abraham, 'Cast out this slave-girl and her son; for the son of this slave-girl shall not inherit together with my son Isaac.' . . . 'Do not let the matter be hard in your sight on account of the child and on account of the slave-girl; whatever Sarah says to you, obey her voice, for in Isaac offspring shall be named for you.'"

receive. Verses 1-2 succinctly express the destiny of the non-chosen children of Abraham and therefore encapsulate Paul's argument very well.³⁷

4.1.8. SUMMARY

In Paul's quest to specify the term *Israel* through the etiology of Abraham's family, the prophets provide necessary assistance. By their allusions to Genesis, they extend and reinterpret the divine call which brought this family into existence. Like threads through a tapestry, a series of interrelated themes run through these pentateuchal and prophetic texts: call, seed, the sand-like number of Israel, the land, the remnant, Sodom and Gomorrah, and the inheritance. In the following section, I will show that Paul does not merely collect and quote texts; he alters their wording to express their interpreted meaning.

4.2. LEXICAL CONNECTIONS FORGED BY PAULINE ADAPTATION

The terms just discussed sometimes travel in clusters. In CD II, 11-12, for example, several of the them appear together: "remnant" (התיר פליט), "land" (ארץ), "world" (תבל), and "seed" (מזרעם).³⁸ Yet it does not seem that an interpretation of Genesis lies behind their use, even if that book provides their origin and ultimate referent. Perhaps

³⁷ A further allusion to the narratives of Jacob and Esau probability occurs in Rom 9:11. Here, Paul describes the twins' amoral condition with the phrase, μηδὲ πραξάντων τι ἀγαθὸν ἢ φαῦλον. The choice of φαῦλος departs from the much more common pairing of ἀγαθός with either πονηρός or κακός (in Paul alone, see Rom 3:8; 7:19; 12:9, 21; 13:3, 4; 16:19; 1 Thes 5:15). Although 2 Cor 5:10 indicates that Paul may use φαῦλος for stylistic reasons, its occurrence at this point in Rom 9 may be significant. Esau is never said to be πονηρός or κακός, but in Gen 25:34, he is connected with the only occurrence of φαῦλος / φαυλίζω occurring in that book: Esau ἐφάυλισεν his birthright. Hence, before Jacob had done anything good or Esau anything φαῦλος (such as ἐφάυλισεν his birthright), divergent destinies had already been assigned to each brother.

³⁸ A similar example occurs in 1QH^a XIV, 7-8.

Paul in Romans employs a linguistic network that had long since been abstracted from their source and attained a life of its own.

Against this supposition stands Paul's own modifications of the quoted lemmata. He has reworked his verses in order to bring out more clearly the inner connection he perceives them to share with the patriarchal stories. The resulting textual peculiarities indicate neither the apostle's faulty memory nor, in most cases, alternative textual traditions. They show, rather, that Paul's hermeneutical act has brought Moses and the prophets into a dialogical relation.

The heuristic principle guiding this section was stated in §1.2.2.: variations between Paul's quotations and the LXX can be attributed to Paul if (1) the variation is attested only in Paul; (2) the variation reflects the emphases of Paul's argument; and (3) the variation indicates the influence of other texts Paul quotes from. Furthermore, variations *away from* the MT are more likely the work of Paul than of a scribal reviser. The application of this norm to Paul's quotations of Hos 2:25 and Isa 10:22-23 will show the impact his exegesis of Genesis had on his prophetic quotations.³⁹

³⁹ Isa 1:9 in Rom 9:29 does not vary from the LXX and therefore need not be discussed under this heading, which deals with changes Paul (likely) made himself. The quotation of Hos 2:1 is more complicated for two reasons. First, Paul's text contains the word ἐκεῖ, matching the Hebrew עִקְרָב. Ἐκεῖ is textually secure in Rom 9:26. However, the Göttingen editor judges it non-septuagintal. Zeigler's text reads instead κληθήσονται καὶ αὐτοί, following (with some variation) S, B, Q, the majority of the Alexandrian tradition, a portion of the Lucianic tradition, and the Catena witnesses. Ἐκεῖ is supported by V (Hexaplaric); 239 (Catena); A, 29 (Alexandrian), part of the Lucianic tradition, and it is followed by Rahlfs. While it is possible to give ἐκεῖ a plausible meaning within the context of Rom 9 (§5.3.), I do not think that the evidence supports a deliberate insertion by Paul subsequently taken up into a minority of the LXX manuscripts. Koch posits a rather complicated, inner-LXX corruption (*Schrift*, 54, 174), while Stanley remains uncommitted (*Language*, 113). Yet Koch's own conclusions with respect to the revised nature of Paul's LXX text towards the Hebrew would suggest that ἐκεῖ most likely entered into the manuscript tradition as a translation of עִקְרָב in a Hebraizing revision prior to Paul, which subsequently found its way into Romans.

Second, the textual witnesses to Rom 9:26 divide between the uncontested LXX reading ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς, which most manuscripts of Romans follow, and the more weakly attested (ε)αν κληθήσονται (̂⁴⁶ F G, Old Latin MSS, and the Peshitta). The issue has provoked a debate between Stanley, who prefers the LXX reading ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς in Rom 9:26, and Wagner, who provides arguments in favor of the variant (ε)αν

4.2.1. HOSEA 2:25 (ENG.: 2:23) IN ROMANS 9:25

Hosea 2:25 undergoes two significant transformations which solidify the intertextual relations that connect it to Genesis. These are illustrated in the following chart:

Hos 2:25 (Eng.: 2:23)	Rom 9:25
<p>καὶ σπερῶ αὐτήν ἐμαυτῷ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐλεήσω τὴν Οὐκ ἠλεημένην καὶ ἐρῶ τῷ Οὐ – λαῷ – μου Λαός μου εἶ σύ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐρεῖ Κύριος ὁ θεός μου εἶ σύ.⁴⁰</p>	<p>ὡς καὶ ἐν τῷ Ὡσηὲ λέγει, <u>καλέσω τὸν οὐ λαόν μου λαόν μου</u> <u>καὶ τὴν οὐκ ἠγαπημένην ἠγαπημένην.</u>⁴¹</p>

First, the thematically significant verb καλέω replaces the less notable ἐρῶ (fut. of λέγω).

The LXX reading is uncontested, and because the Hebrew reads יְהַרְמֵס, Paul's text cannot reflect a Hebraizing revision. Given the prevalence of καλέω in the argument, evidence of a Pauline adaptation appears strong. This alteration links Hos 2:25 with its sister text Hos 2:1 (κληθήσονται υἱοὶ ζῶντος) and both with Gen 21:12 (ἐν Ἰσαὰκ κληθήσεται σοὶ σπέρμα). This substitution allows Hos 2:25 to advance Paul's discussion of God's call as

κληθήσονται (Stanley, *Language*, 113 n. 86; Wanger, *Heralds*, 84-85 nn. 126-27; Seifrid sides with Stanley, "Romans," 647). I believe that either reading will support the interpretation proposed here. However, my impression is that it would be redundant for Paul, after changing ἐρῶ to καλέσω in Rom 9:25 = Hos 2:25, to substitute (ἐ)ὰν κληθήσονται for ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς in Rom 9:26 = Hos 2:1, especially when Rom 9:26 = Hos 2:1 already contains κληθήσονται in its final phrase. The variant accepted by Wagner can be explained on the supposition that a scribe, noticing that Paul changed λέγω to καλέω once in 9:25 = Hos 2:25, followed his authority in reproducing the same change in 9:26a = Hos 2:1a.

Therefore, Paul quotes Hos 2:1 as it stood in the Greek version he was familiar with. Like Isa 1:9, it need not be referred to in a discussion of Pauline adaptations.

⁴⁰ "And I will sow her for myself in the land. And I will have pity on Not Pitied, and I will say to Not My People, 'You are my people,' and he shall say, 'You are the Lord my God.'"

⁴¹ "As indeed he says in Hosea, 'Those who were not my people I will call "my people," and her who was not beloved I will call "my beloved."'" Paul revises the structure of this verse considerably. The complex chiasm of Hos 2:25 works both as aa'bb' and as abb'a'. Paul retains only the second and third lines in reverse order, concentrating the entire oracle on a single announcement expressed in synonymous parallelism.

the power directing election from the patriarchal generations to the time of his own mission.⁴²

The second alteration is far more complex and its Pauline origin controverted. Whereas the original oracle contained an allusion to the epigrammatic name of Hosea's daughter, Οὐκ-ἠλεημένη, "Not-mercy," the quotation given by Paul instead reads, τὴν οὐκ ἠγαπημένην ἠγαπημένην, "I will call . . . [she who was] not-loved, loved." His text maintains both the participial form and the feminine gender, but omits the prophecy's essential term *mercy* in favor of a different concept altogether.

A deliberate alteration by Paul may appear unlikely in light of the preceding passage, where *mercy* had been a major motif. The verb ἐλεέω appeared four times in the space of four verses (9:15-18); the noun form ἔλεος resumes the same theme in 9:23, leading into the concatenation of verses in 9:25-29, headed by Hos 2:25 itself.⁴³ Because many commentators have not provided a compelling reason for an intentional change, some have argued that Paul quoted the text as he read it.⁴⁴ According to Stanley, Rom 9:25 preserves a minority textual tradition found in various LXX manuscripts where the

⁴² Commentators largely agree that Paul made this change himself (Koch, *Schrift*, 105, 167; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:571; Stanley, *Language*, 110; Barbara Fuss, *Dies ist die Zeit, von der geschrieben ist: Die expliziten Zitate aus dem Buch Hosea in den Handschriften von Qumran und im Neuen Testament* [NTAbh nF 37; Münster: Aschendorff, 2000], 175; Wagner, *Heralds*, 80; Jewett, *Romans*, 600; Moyise, "Minor Prophets," 105), including Wilckens (*Röm*, 199), who otherwise argues that Rom 9:25-29 reflects pre-Pauline tradition.

This transformation of ἐρῶ to καλέω effects further changes. Paul rephrases the divine announcement from direct speech addressed to Hosea into a public proclamation (Stanley, *Language*, 110-11; Wagner, *Heralds*, 81). The verb's object shifts accordingly from the dative case (τῷ Οὐ-λαῶ-μου) to the accusative (τὸν οὐ λαόν μου) and as a result the words εἰ σύ drop out.

⁴³ *Mercy* continues to play an important role in Romans, as 15:8-9a demonstrates: "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, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy."

⁴⁴ Dunn, for example, speculates that Paul may have wanted to retain ἐλεέω in a consistently positive sense throughout his argument, and so refrained from speaking of οὐκ ἠλεημένην. But he admits that a reason for diverging from Hosea's text at this point is not clear (*Romans*, 2:571).

Hebrew $\text{לֹא תִאָּחַז בְּיָדָאָהְרֵי־אֵלֶיךָ}$ is translated $\text{καὶ ἀγαπήσω τὴν οὐκ ἠγαπημένην}$. Although the evidence is sparse, this reading has cropped up among diverse textual families. B, V (both Hexaplaric); 407 (Alexandrian); the Coptic and Ethiopic witnesses to the LXX; Cyril and Jerome all attest to this reading in Hos 2:25.⁴⁵

Stanley supports his claims with three arguments: (1) the combination of Hos 2:25 and 2:1 in Paul's text makes it unlikely that Rom 9:25 has influenced the minority reading in Hos 2:25; (2) two LXX texts and other witnesses render $\sqrt{\text{אָהַב}}$ with ἀγαπάω elsewhere: in 1:6, 1:8, and 2:3, V, 407, and some Latin manuscripts (La^{SW}) have the same variant;⁴⁶ (3) no motivation for a Pauline change of ἠλεημένην to ἠγαπημένην presents itself. Stanley therefore concludes, "That Paul's text of Hos 2.25 read $\text{ἀγαπήσω . . . ἠγαπημένην}$ with B V et al. seems assured."⁴⁷

However, a closer look at the evidence suggests otherwise.⁴⁸ First, B and the Ethiopic translation should be dismissed, since they attest Paul's ἀγαπάω in 2:25 alone, and translate $\sqrt{\text{אָהַב}}$ with the corresponding forms of ἐλέω in 1:6, 8; 2:3. It is therefore more likely that they have been influenced by Paul rather than the other way around. The Catena MS 239 also has ἠγαπημένην for ἠλεημένην , but only in 2:3 and the conflated reading in 2:25, not in 1:6, 8. These three witnesses suggest what Stanley claims is

⁴⁵ MS 239, from the Catena group, has both in a clear conflation $\text{ελεησω την ουκ ηλεημενην και την ουκ ηγαπημενην}$.

⁴⁶ Stanley's case could actually be presented more strongly, since he neglects to mention the Coptic translation and, for 2:1 alone, the Catena MS 239. Both share the same reading.

⁴⁷ Stanley, *Language*, 112. The same position is adopted by Stanley and Headlam (*Romans*, 264), Koch (*Schrift*, 55 n. 34), Moo (tentatively; *Romans*, 612 n. 9), Fuss (*Zeit*, 175-76), and Grindheim (*Crux*, 148).

⁴⁸ The following arguments are my own, based on my reading of the Göttingen LXX apparatus. I was pleased to find them anticipated in Wagner, *Heralds*, 81-82 n. 120.

unlikely, that at least some of the LXX texts have been influenced by Paul. Otherwise they would not switch from ἐλεέω to ἀγαπάω where Paul quotes from the prophet and (except for 2:3 in Catena MS 239) nowhere else.⁴⁹

Manuscripts V, 407, the Coptic, and La^{SW} are more consistent in their preference for ἀγαπάω when translating אַחַר. However, this translation decision has *only* affected those occurrences where אַחַר is used as a proper noun signifying the symbolically-named daughter. In other words, the textual witnesses supporting Paul’s text do *not* reflect a consistent translation technique but an otherwise arbitrary shift from their more normal use of ἐλεέω for אַחַר.⁵⁰

It is therefore much more plausible that Paul has influenced the transmission of the LXX here than the reverse. Vaticanus shows how this alignment began: only the actual verse quoted by Paul was altered. V and 407 indicate a more thorough reworking which, however, touched only those occurrences where אַחַר is used as a proper noun. The confections in Catena MS 239 reflect the incorporation of both traditions. Only this hypothesis explains the decision to use ἀγαπάω exclusively when אַחַר refers to a named personage but ἐλεέω everywhere else.⁵¹

⁴⁹ There is the additional consideration, passed over in Stanley’s discussion, that B and V are both witnesses to the Hexaplaric recension, which qualifies their value as witnesses to the LXX—a point stressed by James Barr, though without reference to this specific passage (“Paul and the LXX,” 600).

⁵⁰ In 1:6, for example, God declares, “Call her name Not pitied (לֹא רַחֲמָהּ), for I will no more have pity (אֲרַחֵם) on the house of Israel.” While the manuscripts Stanley cites read ηγαπημενη for the *name* of Hosea’s daughter, no witnesses carry this through to describe God’s act that her name symbolizes. Ελεησαι stands as the uncontested translation for אַחַר. The same holds true for אַחַר in 1:7, 2:21, and 14:4. In none of these instances does a cognate of ἀγαπάω appear anywhere in the textual tradition. Ἐλεέω is used every time.

⁵¹ Though not decisive, it is worth mentioning that the LXX variant which allegedly influenced Paul left no trace whatsoever in the manuscript tradition at 1 Pet 2:9, which quotes the key terms from Hos 2:25 as the received text has it: οἱ ποτε οὐ λαὸς νῦν δὲ λαὸς θεοῦ, οἱ οὐκ ἠλεημένοι νῦν δὲ ἐλεηθέντες.

What of Stanley's final argument, that a Pauline alteration lacks any evident motivation? Actually, a reason is not difficult to discern. By modifying his quotation, Paul overturns Malachi's prior announcement of Esau's disselection. Whereas in former times God announced a love for Jacob extending to him only, a love so concentrated on its sole object that nothing remained for not-Jacob but divine hatred, on Paul's reading Hosea predicts a time when *Not-loved* will be "christened" *Beloved*.

Mal 1:2-3a

Ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς, λέγει κύριος. καὶ εἶπατε Ἐν τίνι ἠγάπησας ἡμᾶς; οὐκ ἀδελφὸς ἦν Ἡσαῦ τοῦ Ἰακώβ; λέγει κύριος· καὶ ἠγάπησα τὸν Ἰακώβ, τὸν δὲ Ἡσαῦ ἐμίσησα.⁵²

Hos 2:25 (Eng.: 2:23) as quoted in Rom 9:25

ὥς καὶ ἐν τῷ Ὠσηὲ λέγει, καλέσω τὸν οὐ λαὸν μου λαὸν μου καὶ τὴν οὐκ ἠγαπημένην ἠγαπημένην.⁵³

In Paul's hands, Hos 2:25 becomes a direct response to the announcement of divine hatred set forth in Mal 1:2-3.⁵⁴ Because Malachi itself summarizes the exposition of patriarchal election in Rom 9:6-12, the substitution of ἠγαπημένην for ἠλεημένην places Hosea in the same exegetical orbit. Not only do these two prophetic testimonies engage in critical dialogue with one another, they also compete as divinely authoritative voices asserting divergent conclusions to the labyrinthine tale of Israel's election.

The link Paul forges between Hos 2:25 = Rom 9:25 and Genesis may be reinforced by a final consideration. The term ἀγαπάω does not only allude to the quotation from Malachi, it also reflects the traditional use of *beloved* as a title of the

⁵² "I loved you, says the Lord. And you said, 'How did you love us?' Was not Esau Jacob's brother? says the Lord. And I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau."

⁵³ "As indeed he says in Hosea, 'Those who were not my people I will call "my people," and her who was not beloved I will call "my beloved."'"

⁵⁴ Recent exegesis has come to the same conclusion (Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 129 n. 57; Wagner, *Heralds*, 82; Jewett, *Romans*, 600; Kowalski, "Funktion," 724).

patriarchs, particularly Abraham.⁵⁵ Paul himself employs this ascription in Rom 11:28. Concerning the relation of his Gentile hearers to Israel, he says: “As regards the gospel they are enemies of God, for your sake; but as regards election (τὴν ἐκλογὴν) they are *beloved* (ἀγαπητοί) for the sake of the forefathers (διὰ τοὺς πατέρας)” (11:28). He combines election, patriarchal descent, and the status of being “beloved” in one conceptual package. The proposal that Paul explicitly brings his quotation from Hosea into dialogue with Malachi and so with Genesis rests on solid ground.

To summarize: Paul indicates the presence of an exegetical substructure in the two alterations he makes to Hos 2:25. He substitutes καλέω for λέγω and ἀγαπάω for ἐλεέω. Both changes draw Hos 2:25 into the interpretation of Genesis undertaken in 9:7-13.

4.2.2. ISAIAH 10:22-23 IN ROMANS 9:27-28

Paul makes a number of changes to Isa 10:22-23 that are difficult to explain. It appears at first that he has done some drastic “cutting off” of his own. A synoptic diagram illustrates the relation between the LXX and Paul’s text:

⁵⁵ See the LXX translation of Isa 41:8 and 2 Chron 20:7 (both linking *seed* with Abraham the *beloved*); Pr Azar 1:12-13 (which adds *mercy* to this pair); CD III, 2-3; Jas 2:23 and 1 Clem. 10:1; 17:2 (both writings using φίλος).

Isa 10:22-23	Rom 9:27-28
<p>καὶ ἐὰν γένηται ὁ λαὸς Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸ <u>κατάλειμμα αὐτῶν</u> σωθήσεται.⁵⁶ λόγον γὰρ συντελῶν καὶ συντέμων</p> <p>ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ὅτι λόγον συντετημένον ποιήσει ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ οἰκουμένῃ ὅλῃ.⁵⁷</p>	<p>ἐὰν ἦ ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸ <u>ὑπόλειμμα</u> σωθήσεται· λόγον γὰρ συντελῶν καὶ συντέμων</p> <p>ποιήσει <u>κύριος</u> ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.⁵⁸</p>

Some differences have little exegetical significance. Probably the least important involves the change in the subjunctive verb γίνομαι to εἰμί.⁵⁹ The presence of ὑπόλειμμα rather than κατάλειμμα also amounts to little, since they can be used synonymously, as indeed Paul does in Rom 11:3-4.⁶⁰ The more significant variations from the LXX are as follows: (1) ἦ ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν appears instead of γένηται ὁ λαός; (2) ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ὅτι λόγον συντετημένον is absent; (3) κύριος, not ὁ θεός, performs the action; and (4) ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς concludes the quotation rather than ἐν τῇ οἰκουμένῃ ὅλῃ.

⁵⁶ Happily for Paul (or, as he would no doubt prefer, providentially), the LXX translates כּוֹס with σφῶζω only here. This fortunate choice provides a firm connection between Isa 10:22 and Rom 10-11, in which Paul returns to the hope of Israel's salvation several times (10:1; 11:14, 26; see also 10:10-13).

⁵⁷ “And if the people of Israel become like the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved, for he is completing and cutting short a reckoning with righteousness, because God will perform a shortened reckoning in the whole world.”

⁵⁸ “And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: ‘Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved; for the Lord will perform [his] word quickly and certainly upon the earth’ ” (RSV, modified).

⁵⁹ Stanley, *Language*, 115-16; Fuss, *Zeit*, 180. The Hebrew has the impf. הִיָּהוּ.

⁶⁰ Moo, *Romans*, 614 n. 19; Fuss, *Zeit*, 180; Wagner, *Heralds*, 95-96. The variant κατάλειμμα in several manuscripts is most likely an assimilation to the LXX. The semantic equivalence between κατάλειμμα and ὑπόλειμμα (and their verbal cognates) is evident in Gen 45:7; Isa 4:2-3; 1 Kgdms 19:14, 18; Rom 11:3-4 (quoting the verses just listed). Their interchangeable use refutes Jewett's suggestion, already questionable on linguistic grounds, that Paul deliberately avoids κατάλειμμα in referring to the remnant because κατά, meaning “down,” might imply a judgmental quality to the remnant idea (*Romans*, 602).

Items (2) and (3) can be dealt with quickly. I find most plausible for both the suggestion that Paul followed his received text. Concerning (3), considerable support for κύριος exists in the manuscript tradition. Paul's reading may reflect an early variation or even the original LXX.⁶¹

As for (2), the material omitted from Isa 10:23 probably fell out due to the similarity of συντέμνων and συντετμημένον, as Dietrich-Alex Koch has argued, especially if at some point the similar words both ended a line of text:

λόγον γὰρ συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων
ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ὅτι λόγον συντετμημένον

⁶¹ Important Hexaplaric (B, V, 109, 736) and Alexandrian (Q^{mrg}, Syro-Palestinian) texts provide evidence for κύριος as an distinct LXX reading. Paul's text may reflect an early revision (so Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 38) or even the authentic LXX text from which ὁ θεός is a corruption (Koch, *Schrift*, 50, 93; Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-12: A Commentary* [trans. Thomas H. Trapp; CC; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991], 434; Stanley, *Language*, 118). For several reasons it is unlikely that Paul's text represents a revision towards the Hebrew (entertained inconclusively in Shiu-Lun Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans: A Comparative Study of Paul's Letter to the Romans and the Sibylline and Qumran Sectarian Texts* [WUNT 2 / 156; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002], 211): (1) Paul lacks the full phrase לַיהוָה צְבָאוֹת ; influence from the Hebrew would have produced something like κυριος κυριος δυναμεων (in the Hexaplaric text 88 and several Catena texts), κυριος των δυναμεων στρατειων (Aquila), or simply κυριος δυναμεων (the Syro-Hexaplaric translation, Symmachus, and Theodotion); (2) he agrees with the LXX in placing the verb ποιήσει before the subject, while the Hebrew places the corresponding יַשֵּׁל after it; (3) both Paul and the LXX have future forms of the verb, while the Hebrew employs a participle.

Stanley argues that Paul's text can be explained by the influence of the LXX of Isa 28:22. This verse could explain the change from ὁ θεός to κύριος; the substitution of ἐπί for ἐν; and the lack of ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ὅτι λόγον συντετμημένον in Paul's quotation (*Language*, 119; similarly Wagner, *Heralds*, 97-100; Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah*, 210-11 [with hesitation]; Pablo T. Gadenz, "The Lord Will Accomplish His Word": Paul's Argumentation and Use of Scripture in Romans 9:24-29," *Letter & Spirit* 2 [2006]: 152). However, this explanation fails to provide substantial motivation for these changes and does not account for the ways that Paul diverges from Isa 28:22 (e.g., the lack of πᾶσαν and the use of the genitive following ἐπί instead of the accusative). The omission of ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ remains puzzling. Why would Paul omit such a relevant expression in favor of a text, Isa 28:22, he is not quoting? This hypothesis would seem likely only if it could be established that Paul was quoting from memory.

Jewett argues that, despite Paul's thematic claim in 9:6, οἷον δὲ ὅτι ἐκπέπωκεν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, here he has deviated from a text which stresses the manner by which ὁ θεός enacts his λόγος and substituted for it κύριος (*Romans*, 603). But these designations tend to have distinct referents in Paul (the Father and the risen Christ, respectively), making this change also unlikely to have stemmed from the apostle himself.

A scribe may have moved inadvertently from συντέμνων to the similar συντετμημένον and proceeded from there.⁶²

This leaves (1) the reading of ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ instead of ὁ λαὸς Ἰσραὴλ in Isa 10:22 = Rom 9:27 and (4) the substitution of ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς for ἐν τῇ οἰκουμένῃ ὅλη in Isa 10:23 = Rom 9:28. Concerning both, I would claim (1) that they carry exegetical significance; (2) that they migrated to Paul's quotation from the symbolic universe of Genesis; and (3) that they made this journey through Hosea.

The immediate source of Paul's expanded sobriquet for Israel is clearly Hos 2:1. It shares with Isa 10:22 the phrase Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης. On this basis, Paul produced a fused text, suggesting that he interprets these passages in light of each other (*gezera shawa*). Moreover, as pointed out above (§4.1.3.), these verses both recall the promises made to Abraham recorded in Genesis:

Hos 2:1 (Eng.: 1:10)

καὶ ἦν ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης.

Isa 10:22

καὶ ἐὰν γένηται ὁ λαὸς Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης, κτλ.

Isa 10:22 as quoted in Rom 9:27

ἐὰν ἦ ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης, κτλ.

⁶² Koch, *Schrift*, 82; also Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 38; Fuss, *Zeit*, 172; Wagner, *Heralds*, 96 (tentatively). I find Stanley's attempted rebuttal unconvincing (*Language*, 117). A haplography occurring in the Hebrew text is far less likely; although the corresponding terms are both derived from גרר, their forms are much more distinct: גרר and גררני, respectively.

The addition of ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ὅτι λόγον συντετμημένον to Rom 9:28, despite its widespread support (ⲛ² D F G Ψ 33 ℳ lat sy^b), undoubtedly occurred under the influence of the LXX. It is difficult to accept that Paul would knowingly skip over Isaiah's emphasis on God's acting ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, a central motif in Romans, and indeed the central concept in the letter's thesis (Rom 1:16-17; see also 2:5; 3:4-5, 21-22, 25-26; 9:14; 10:3). Jewett argues that Paul intentionally dropped "in righteousness" because it would carry over a judicial nuance from the context of Isaiah (*Romans*, 602-3; similarly Wilckens, *Röm*, 207; Stanley, *Language*, 117). However, there is no reason for Paul to have attributed any sense to δικαιοσύνη other than his normal one.

This juxtaposition, I will argue in §5.2.2.1., has major implications for how Paul's exegetical substructure should be understood.⁶³

The concluding phrase of Paul's quotation, ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, has been attributed to both a revision towards the Hebrew and to the influence of Isa 28:22.⁶⁴ These explanations are unlikely.⁶⁵ Koch proposes that Paul uses the more modest γῆ rather than the expansive οἰκουμένη ὅλη because he wants to emphasize Israel's reduction to a paltry shadow of its former state, and Jewett speculates that Paul avoids a reference to the οἰκουμένη in order to keep the focus on Israel rather than the various nations of the earth.⁶⁶ Neither suggestion fits Paul's argument well.

I suggest an avenue, so far unexplored, that takes the investigation once more into the narrative world projected by Genesis. Verse 7 of Gen 45 not only states God's intention to preserve a remnant of Abraham's family (§4.1.5.), it also promises that he will ensure its existence ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. This phrase links Gen 45:7 and Isa 10:23 = Rom 9:28 to Hos 2:25, which contains the same phrase. Hosea 2:25 in turn brings in its wake

⁶³ Koch's explanation that Paul wanted to avoid attributing the title λαός to Israel is not persuasive (*Schrift*, 171; followed by Gadenz ["Paul's Argumentation," 149]; Kowalski ["Funktion," 725]).

⁶⁴ Stanley, *Language*, 118-19; Wagner, *Heralds*, 97-100.

⁶⁵ Correctly, Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 52 n. 7. The alleged influence of Isa 28:22 was discussed above. As for a Hebraizing revision, ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς is indeed a common translation of בְּקֶרֶב הָאָרֶץ (used in half of its ten occurrences: Gen 45:6; 48:16; Isa 5:8; 6:12; 7:22); however, here the LXX is actually quite faithful to its parent text, since it needs to find an equivalent for בְּקֶרֶב כָּל הָאָרֶץ, "in the midst of all the earth." While idiosyncratic, ἐν τῇ οἰκουμένη ὅλη renders the sense aptly and in its retention of an equivalent of כָּל is closer to the Hebrew than to Paul. By contrast, the results of a Hebraizing translation can be seen in Symmachus and Theodotion: both read ἐν μεσῶ πασης της γης, not ἐπι της γης.

⁶⁶ Koch, *Schrift*, 167-68; Jewett, *Romans*, 604. Paul has already placed the discourse in a universalistic horizon (9:17, quoting Exod 9:16; implied in the use of ἐνδείκνυμι in v. 22 and γνωρίζω in v. 23; so too Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 52 n. 10), so it is unlikely that he wants to exclude other nations from view. Seifrid claims that Paul's "upon the earth" both strengthens the note of judgment by using *upon* and broadens the scope beyond "in the midst of all the earth" (MT) or "in all the inhabited earth" (LXX); I find both suggestions unpersuasive ("Romans," 649).

Isa 1:9, since both contain the key word σπέρμα. For convenience, the Greek text of the relevant passages are provided once again:

Gen 45:7

ἀπέστειλεν γάρ με ὁ θεὸς ἔμπροσθεν ὑμῶν, ὑπολείπεσθαι ὑμῶν κατάλειμμα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐκθρέψαι ὑμῶν κατάλειψιν μεγάλην.

Hos 2:25

καὶ σπερῶ αὐτήν ἐμαυτῷ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, κτλ.⁶⁷

Isa 10:22-23 as quoted in Rom 9:27-28

Ἐάν ᾗ ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σωθήσεται· λόγον γὰρ συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων ποιήσει κύριος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

Isa 1:9

καὶ εἰ μὴ κύριος σαβαὼθ ἐγκατέλιπεν ἡμῖν σπέρμα, ὡς Σοδομα ἂν καὶ ὡς Γομορρα ἂν ὁμοιώθημεν.

Genesis 45:7 is the only place in the LXX that speaks positively of a remnant (ῥεῖμα) being preserved ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. In Hos 2:25, God says, σπερῶ . . . ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. In the entire NT, only Rom 9:27-28 gives a corresponding assurance that a remnant will be saved because God will do a λόγον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. And Isa 1:9 assures that a σπέρμα will be “remnanted” (ἐγκατέλιπεν) for Israel. The texts Paul quotes and their adaptations to his argument evince too many links with Gen 45:7 for these to be dismissed as coincidental.

To summarize: Paul reshapes the text of Isa 10:22-23 in two significant ways. Both signal the influence of Genesis mediated through Hosea. First, Paul expands the evocation of innumerable seed with the phrase ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ from Hos 2:1. Second, Paul describes the arena in which God accomplishes his word as ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, under the influence of Gen 45:7 and Hos 2:25. In the entire Greek Bible, only Gen 45:7

⁶⁷ Wilk also recognizes the influence of Hos 2:25 on the form ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς in Isa 10:22, though he does not suggest any influence from Gen 45:7 (*Bedeutung*, 52, 187).

and Rom 9:27-28 promise that a remnant will be preserved *on the earth*. Paul actively shapes the content of his quotations after the pattern provided by Genesis.⁶⁸

4.3. THEMATIC CONNECTIONS: ELECTION, EXCLUSION, AND REVERSALS IN THE SCRIPTURES OF ISRAEL

The evidence so far adduced for an exegetical substructure beneath Rom 9 has been largely verbal, consisting of explicit quotations or common terms shared by Paul and his OT predecessors. I now wish to show that Paul was a reader sensitive to narrative contexts and theological patterns. Drawing from texts that have thematic as well as terminological correspondences, Paul works from analogies according to the technique referred to as *heqesh* by the rabbis (§1.3.2.). He brings into interpretive construct passages that uniformly express the ambiguity inherent in the election of Abraham's family.

4.3.1. ELECTION AND REVERSAL IN GENESIS

The theology of election in Genesis is inseparable from the patriarchal narratives as the founding myth of Israel. This etiology is composed of a cycle of stories shaped by patterns of sibling rivalry and divine favoritism.⁶⁹ Beginning with Cain and Abel,

⁶⁸ If these conclusions are valid, Aageson's claim that Paul argues from Scripture in an ad hoc, impressionistic manner, seeking out (mere) correspondences that have no organic connection between past and present is an inadequate way of characterizing Paul's use of Scripture in Rom 9 ("Scripture and Structure in the Development of the Argument in Romans 9-11," *CBQ* 48 [1986]: 265-89; *ibid.*, "Typology," *passim*). The text forms of Paul's quotations indicate an exegesis of Genesis aiming to extend its story into the present, not a spur-of-the-moment string of metaphors.

⁶⁹ In writing this section, the text most helpful to me has been Jon D. Levenson's *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*. I have also relied on Goldin, "The Youngest Son;" Devora Steinmetz, *From Father to Son: Kinship, Conflict, and Continuity in Genesis* (Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster / John Knox, 1991); Roger Syrén, *The Forsaken Firstborn: A Study of a Recurrent Motif in the Patriarchal Narratives* (JSOTSup 133; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993); Dicou, *Edom*; Thielman, "Unexpected Mercy"; Grindheim, *Crux*, chs. 1 and 2; Joel S. Kaminsky, *Yet I Loved Jacob: Reclaiming the Biblical Concept of Election* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2007). Of course, I alone am responsible for the argument expressed here.

successive generations see a younger son is elevated to the status of “firstborn.” This movement entails the elder sibling’s expulsion from his place of privilege. With the introduction of Abraham, this revocation of primogeniture brings with it an exclusive claim to inherit the divine promises announced in Gen 12 and expanded at regular intervals throughout—12:1-3; 13:14-16; 15:1, 18-21; 17:1-8, 10, 14; 22:17-18; 25:23; 26:1-5, 24; 28:4, 13-15; 31:3; 35:10-12. Isaac is designated the son of promise, Ishmael exiled with his forlorn mother (chs. 16, 21); Jacob steals the blessing, while Esau is left with his porridge and his tears (25:27-34; ch. 27); Joseph ascends to power over his brothers, while they unwittingly fulfill his prophecy of preeminence (chs. 37-46).⁷⁰

However, the younger son’s ascension is far from being an unmitigated blessing. In a further reversal, he must experience in his own person that fate which his favored status forced on the less fortunate sibling. Through a real or symbolic death, he suffers a dereliction analogous to that endured by the brother he replaces. Only after this trial can the chosen son secure his inheritance and claim the promise of blessing, seed, and land.

In yet another irony, this misfortune brings the formerly superseded brother into ascendancy and the favored child into a corresponding humiliation or even loss of life. Abel falls when Cain “rises up” against him (4:8); Isaac eclipses Ishmael but himself goes under the knife (ch. 22); Jacob runs for his life from Esau and later falls prostrate before him seven times (27:42-45; 33:3); and Joseph is cast into a pit by his brothers, who sell him as a slave to the sons of Ishmael (37:18-28). This pattern of ironies and reversals elucidates the underside of election: exclusion, exile, fratricide, betrayal,

⁷⁰ Other less developed fraternal pairs are entangled in this pattern: on Abraham and Lot, see Gen 11:27; 12:1-3; 13:11, and Kaminsky, *Jacob*, 29-30; on Reuben and Judah, see Gen 35:22; 49:4, 10; 1 Chron 5:1-2; on Ephraim and Manasseh, see Gen 48:19-20.

displacement, separation. The beloved son is subjected to death before he can be raised up to ensure his family's survival.

The words of Jacob concerning Joseph graphically illustrate this homology between exile, exclusion, and death, on the one hand, and reconciliation, integration, and life, on the other. Wrongly believing his son to be dead, he laments, "I will go down to Sheol, to my son, mourning" (37:35). With these remarks, the narrative juxtaposes Joseph's expulsion with the experience of death endured by Abel (literally) and Isaac (symbolically).⁷¹ When Jacob finally hears that his lost son is both alive and administering Egypt's internal affairs, he nearly dies from shock and announces: "My son Joseph is still alive" (45:28). The firstborn son assumes his leading role among his brothers only after death and exile have prepared him for it. When he and his brothers are reunited, all Jacob's children dwell together in Goshen. This is the only time in Genesis where the problem of feuding brothers is not solved by a final separation. The construction of a symbolic space sufficiently large to accommodate the twelve brothers terminates the repeated excisions within Abraham's family.⁷² Joseph in his privileged position as Egyptian vizier secures its livelihood. The beloved son's journey through death to life makes possible the preservation of Jacob's house (Gen 45:7).

The theme of exclusion and reversal is not limited to fraternal opposites. Traces of this motif affect the sisters who vie for Jacob's affections (29:31-30:24; 35:16-21). The antagonism between the elder, fertile, but homely Leah and her younger, more

⁷¹ As Levenson remarks, "[T]he first-born or beloved son undergoes a symbolic death. . . . Justice is not done to the complicated role of the first-born son if we fail to note both his exalted status and the precariousness of his very life. The beloved son is marked for both exaltation and for humiliation. In his life the two are seldom far apart" (*Beloved Son*, 59).

⁷² Peter D. Miscall, "The Jacob and Joseph Stories as Analogies," *JSOT* 6 (1978): 38.

attractive, but barren sister Rachel does not involve the issues of election and inheritance that characterize the rivalry between Jacob and Esau, but it does display parallel ironies.⁷³ Leah gains prestige at her sister's expense on account of her ability to bear children, yet she never attains the affections her husband reserves for Rachel. For her part, Rachel chafes under the humiliation brought by her barren womb, but never loses her preferred position in Jacob's heart. The names they give their actual and surrogate children reflect this conflict.⁷⁴ When Rachel finally has children of her own, it costs her her life. The struggle of these two sister-wives extends the themes of displacement, exclusion, and death beyond the agonistic relations of contrasting brothers to embrace the domestic warfare of embittered sisters—with tragic results (§5.2.3.).

Genesis thus employs a deep and serious irony in its portrayal of election. The destiny of segregation, exile, and death inheres in the privileged status of the firstborn. The displacers who attain favor and inheritance over the prior claims of their elder siblings do not enter into those benefits without suffering the same reversal they imposed by their exaltation. Election favors the beloved child and excludes other claimants, but always turns on itself so that the chosen and rejected brothers each experience the other's fate.

⁷³ For example, Laban justifies his act of deceiving Jacob into marrying Leah with the nonplussed comment, “It is not so done in our country, to give the younger (הצעירה) before the firstborn (הבכירה)” (29:26). צעיר was used of the prenatal Jacob in the oracle of 25:23.

⁷⁴ This is especially true of the two sons born to Rachel by her maid Bilah: Dan, “because the Lord has vindicated me” (30:6) and Naphtali, because “I have wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed” (30:8; Samuel Dresner, “Rachel and Leah: Sibling Tragedy or the Triumph of Piety and Compassion?” in *Abraham and Family: New Insights into the Patriarchal Narratives* [ed. Hershel Shanks; Washington, D.C.: Biblical Archaeology Society, 2000], 165; see also Steinmetz, *Father*, 193 n. 22.

The Pauline emphasis on exclusion and reversal in Rom 9, and the logical reversals which typify his argument, are therefore fundamental elements of Genesis itself. The privilege of election embraces its opposite.⁷⁵

4.3.2. EXILED AND RESTORED CHILDREN: NARRATIVE PATTERNS IN HOSEA

A parallel narrative of election and its loss opens the book of Hosea. Each of its first three chapters recapitulates a sordid tale of domestic ruin (1:2-2:3; 2:4-2:25; 3:1-5). These vignettes, when juxtaposed against each other, illustrate the fate of Israel via symbolic acts, oracular prophecy, and literary metaphor. Key actors in the drama include not only Hosea and his wife of ill repute but also their offspring, “Jezreel,” “No-Mercy,” and “Not-My-People,” children whose unfortunate monikers brand them living witnesses to election revoked. Through them, Hosea announces in the public sphere, and enacts in the domestic one, God’s complete repudiation of his covenantal relationship with Israel.⁷⁶

Yet this sentence of national death is in all three episodes transformed into a promised restoration attaining worldwide proportions.⁷⁷ The anticipation of deliverance

⁷⁵ There are, in my judgment, clear and important Christological implications to Paul’s reading of these narratives. However, in order to keep the focus on the problems delineated above (§1.1.3.), I have resisted the temptation to explore these and have forced myself to be content with some remarks in the conclusion (§3).

⁷⁶ The covenantal background of Hos 1-3 is an manifest feature of the text in its present form (Gary W. Light, “The New Covenant in the Book of Hosea,” *RevExp* 90 [1993]: 219-38). However, it has suffered from a considerable lack of attention on the part of contemporary interpreters. The exhaustive survey of modern scholarship on Hos 1-3 by Brad E. Kelle mentions this aspect only twice (“Hosea 1-3 in Twentieth Century Scholarship,” *CBR* 7 [2009]: 196, 203).

⁷⁷ The redactional history of these chapters is quite complex. A clear process of de-historicization has affected the transmission. The oracles have left their historical moorings as their message was interpreted within an increasingly eschatological context. The asyndeton of 2:1 (despite its clear connections with 1:2-9), the twofold **ביום ההוא** (2:18, 23), and vague temporal notation which begins 3:5 all point to a thoroughgoing process of reinterpretation. My own study of parallels between Hosea and 1-2 Chronicles has led me to date their final redaction, to which much of the salvation promises in chs. 1-3 belong, to the postexilic period (similar conclusions are offered in Gale A. Yee, *Composition and Tradition*

and restoration in 2:1-3 responds to the message of judgment in 1:2-9; the picture of national and cosmic renewal in 2:16-25 answers the shocking infidelity—and its brutal punishment—in 2:4-15; and finally, the messianic promise in 3:5 reverses the political devastation portrayed in 3:1-4. This threefold reversal brings to Hosea’s drama a dialectic of doom and deliverance. God disowns his people—and yet his coming will bring salvation to Israel. God initiates this renewal by transforming the names of Hosea’s children. “Not-My-People” is called “My-People,” “No-Mercied,” is renamed “Mercied,” and “Jezreel” now signifies not desolation but fertility (2:1-3, 24-25). The multifaceted story of a faithless wife and her outcast children turns into a comedy in which, by a sudden unveiling, the main characters are healed, forgiven, and restored to their proper place in God’s affections.

Election in Hosea thus moves from its own repudiation to its ultimate reprimation. In doing so, it follows a pattern similar to that which characterizes Genesis. Hosea’s dual message of judgment and promise, symbolically announced by the names he gives his sons and daughter, corresponds to the reiterated plot device in Genesis of children suffering exile, exclusion, and reinstatement—and Hos 2:1 explicitly connects Israel’s destiny to the promises vouchsafed to Abraham (§4.1.3).

Yet on most conventional readings of Hosea, the story of the prophet’s forlorn children lacks an important feature typical of Genesis: a set of contrasting siblings whose oppositional relation throws into relief Jewish identity and destiny. It would seem that the thematic parallel suggested here between Hosea and Genesis does not extend to this crucial element. However, Paul’s application of certain phrases from Hos 2 to Gentile

in the Book of Hosea: A Redaction Critical Investigation [SBLDS 102; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987]; R. E. Clements, “Understanding the Book of Hosea,” *RevExp* 72 [2001]: 405-23).

believers suggests that he has discovered the hermeneutical resources for reading Abraham's elect as well as his excluded children into Hosea's prophecies. Chapter 5 will show how he does this.

4.3.3. PRUNING THE VINE: RESTRICTING ELECTION IN ISAIAH

The story of Hosea's children illustrates one possible route ancient interpreters could take in applying the symbolic resources of election to the anticipated destiny of their nation. The redefinition of Israel as a remnant of fidelity amidst a sea of apostasy represents another. This is the path taken by at least some of those responsible for the editing of Isaiah into its present form. Like Hos 1-3, the composition of Isa 1 and 10 draws on certain pentateuchal themes to articulate its understanding of election. This reinterpretation limits *Israel* to a congregation of penitents and excludes the religiously disqualified.⁷⁸ Election is in this way turned against the nation as a whole and redirected towards the faithful.

4.3.3.1. *The Returning Remnant in Isaiah 10:20-23*

A remnant that is separate and distinct from Israel as a whole appears in Isa 10. The bulk of this discourse (10:5-19, 24-27), though not free of redactional additions, presents a unified prophetic denouncement of royal hubris directed against the Assyrian king.⁷⁹ The

⁷⁸ In ch. 6 I will evaluate the oft-heard claim that "remnant" in Isaiah guarantees salvation for the entire nation, but the exegesis of the present section will permit some critical soundings.

⁷⁹ Scholars who assume the unity of this passage and its *Sitz im Leben* in the life of the eighth-century prophet Isaiah naturally interpret *Israel* to signify the northern kingdom (so H. H. Rowley, *The Biblical Doctrine of Election* [London: Lutterworth, 1952], 74; Ronald E. Clements, "'A Remnant Chosen By Grace' (Romans 11:5): The Old Testament Background and Origin of the Remnant Concept," in *Pauline Studies*, 106-21; J. J. M. Roberts, "Isaiah 2 and the Prophet's Message to the North," *JQR* 75 [1985]: 295-98; John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33* [WBC 24; Waco, Tex.: Word, 1985], 153). However, I find the evidence for interpretive redaction more persuasive (Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-12*, 435-46; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB 19; New York: Doubleday, 2000], 257-58).

Isaianic voice reduces his military power to a mere utensil in God's hands for the purpose of Israel's chastisement. The king, arrogantly presuming to have subdued all nations by his own strength, does not recognize his instrumental role for Israel's ultimate benefit.

The transition from depicting Assyria's impudence to announcing its downfall occurs twice, first in v. 16 and then in v. 24. In both verses a messenger formula introduces corresponding announcements of Assyrian doom (vv. 16-19) and Zion's deliverance (vv. 24-27).⁸⁰ These oracles anticipate an imminent intervention by which God will destroy Israel's oppressor and deliver the entire nation.

Between these two passages appear three interrelated additions (vv. 20, 21, 22-23), each of which noticeably restricts the scope of Israel's salvation.⁸¹ Several features indicate that these verses were composed on the basis of the broader as well as the immediate context; they therefore suggest a conscious attempt to resignify the surrounding material.⁸² Verse 20 anticipates v. 24 and guides its interpretation: both

⁸⁰ The transition is hinted at first in v. 12, but not immediately developed; vv. 13-14 return to the king's haughty monologue (vv. 10-12 are intrusive and may be redactional). Both vv. 16-19 and vv. 24-27 are introduced with לָכֵן, but the first should be described, in terms of form, as an announcement of destruction, the second as an oracle of salvation. On these forms, see Gene M. Tucker, *Form Criticism of the Old Testament* (GBS; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 61-65; Claus Westermann, *Prophetic Oracles of Salvation in the Old Testament* (trans. Keith Crim; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster / John Knox, 1991), 80-81, 97-98, 197-98; Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39, with an Introduction to Prophetic Literature* (FOTL 16; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 23-27, 199-200, 202-3.

⁸¹ Vv. 20-23 may have all come from the same hand, but their unity is not certain (Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-12*, 435).

⁸² Several elements in 10:20-23 recall items appearing elsewhere in Isaiah, especially in chs. 7-11, which develops an explicit theology of the remnant. Isa 10:21 recalls Isaiah's son, Shearjashub (7:3) as well as the announcement in 10:19 (which retains the older, wholly negative notion of remnant, on which see Lev 26:39; Deut 2:34; 3:3; 28:62; Josh 8:22; 10:28-40; 11:8; 2 Kgs 10:11; Amos 1:8; 3:11-12 [without specific "remnant" terms]). The title "the Holy One of Israel," which appears in v. 20, is used almost exclusively in Isaiah. As for the immediate context, the promise that Israel "will no more lean upon *him that smote them*" (מַכְהוּ; v. 20) anticipates v. 24: "O my people, . . . do not be afraid of the Assyrians when they smite" (יִכְכְּהוּ; both from the root נָכַה). The ascription "the LORD, Yahweh of hosts" (v. 23), while not unknown, is rare in Isaiah, yet it occurs several times in Isa 10 (vv. 16, 24, 33; only three appearances elsewhere: 3:1; 19:4; 22:14). The emphasis on the remnant's escape from destruction (vv. 20, 22, 23) and its return / restoration (vv. 21, 22) presuppose the scenario described elsewhere in the chapter, not only in

describe Assyria's action as one of "striking" (נכה), but while v. 24 speaks to "my people," v. 20 proleptically identifies the addressees as "the remnant (שאר) of Israel and the survivors (פליטה) of the house of Jacob." What characterizes this band of escapees is their dependence on God: they will lean (Niphal שען) on him alone באמת, "in truth." This grammatically awkward prepositional phrase should not be eliminated as an accretion. It emphasizes the distinction between those who rely on the Lord falsely and those sincere in their dependence (30:12; 31:1; see also Mic 3:11).⁸³ God does not save Israel from his (viz., Israel's; note the masc. sg. suf. attached to מכהו in v. 20) enemy without regard for Israel's spiritual state. Verse 20 inserts an editorial comment that predicates divine deliverance on a corresponding spiritual renewal, a point lacking in the original prophecy.

In the event that an obtuse reader might fail to understand this narrowed sphere of deliverance, v. 21 reiterates: "A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob." The object of deliverance is reinterpreted in the same direction as in v. 20. In both cases, "those dwelling in Zion" (v. 24) are being pared down to a faithful enclave which truly depends on God. Should these circumscriptions prove too ambiguous, a final addition in vv. 22-23 leaves no doubt. It contrasts the narrow escape of a tiny minority and the pervasive disaster falling on the whole of Israel.

By picturing the nation's numerical expanse metaphorically as the sea's sands in v. 22, the redactor draws attention to the patriarchal promises recorded in Gen 22:17,

vv. 5-19, 24-27, but also in vv. 28-32, which depicts the devastating invasion of Assyrian armies (Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 256-58).

⁸³ Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, 153; Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-12*, 437.

32:13 (Eng.: 32:12) and declares them fulfilled. This allusion suggests a rather ominous understanding of national election and its limits. God has discharged his promises and remains under no further obligation to guarantee the survival of Abraham's uncountable offspring in the face of their persistent disobedience.⁸⁴ However numerous Israel has grown, a complete and predetermined destruction awaits the nation; the remnant will alone perpetuate the legitimate community of Israel.⁸⁵

The concluding phrase of v. 22, כְּלִיּוֹן חֲרוֹץ שׁוֹטֵף צְדָקָה, indicates a thorough destruction in store for the “non-remnant” people of Israel.⁸⁶ The opening words of v.

⁸⁴ A grammatical peculiarity in v. 22a reinforces this religious-social demarcation: שָׂאֵר יָשׁוּב בּוֹ; literally, “a remnant will return *in it*.” This unusual use of the preposition -בְּ carries a partitive meaning, rendered in most translations “a remnant *of them*” (RSV, NRSV, ESV, ASV, NAB, NJB, KJV, NKJV, NASB: “a remnant *with them*”). However, rather than changing the Hebrew pronominal suf. from masc. sg. to an English pl., perhaps it would be better to acknowledge an inner-Hebrew shift in voice from the 2d per., “your people, O Israel” to 3d per.: “a remnant *of him*” (cf. the JPS: “a remnant *of it*,” note also v. 20, mentioned above: “the one who struck *him*”). The antecedent of the pronoun is the single nation *Israel*: judgment entails numerical diminution if it is to bring about spiritual purification (Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, 152-53; Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-13*, 434).

⁸⁵ Blenkinsopp brings out the effects that vv. 20-23 have on the overall interpretation of Isa 10: “The few who survived the judgment of exile with their faith intact, the prophetic remnant of Israel, now take the place of the people as numerous as the sands of the sea, a clear echo of the Abrahamic promise (Gen 22:17; 32:12 [MT 13]). They also serve as an anticipation of the final convulsive judgment ‘in the midst of the earth’ which only the few, the eschatological remnant, will survive. Implied is a radical reinterpretation of the Abrahamic promise” (*Judaism*, 43). See also Dunn, *Romans*, 2:575; Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster / John Knox, 2001), 94-95.

⁸⁶ The phrase is very difficult to interpret. The term כְּלִיּוֹן occurs only twice in the HB. Here it apparently bears the meaning “annihilation, strictly decided” (BDB, s.v.). For its other appearance, Deut 28:65, BDB gives a very different sense: “failing of eyes, i.e., in longing,” though DCH subsumes both occurrences under “destruction, annihilation, failure” (s.v.; its appearance in the very fragmentary 4Q Festival Prayers^c 242 I, 1 has no context and is of no help). Its morphological similarity to כָּלָה, “be complete, at an end, finished, accomplished, spent” (BDB, s.v.), together with the overall context, perhaps accounts for BDB’s definition “annihilation.” חָרַץ means (among other things) “decide, determine, fix” (BDB, s.v.). The noun חֲרוֹץ signifies “strict decision” (BDB, s.v.; DCH, s.v.). Given the fact that כְּלִיּוֹן occurs only two times in the OT with little discernable connection between either usage, one wonders if the appearance of the phrase כְּלִיּוֹן חֲרוֹץ in Isa 10:22 has not influenced the glosses for כְּלִיּוֹן “annihilation, *strictly decided*” (BDB, s.v.; italics added) and “be determined” (DCH, s.v.).

Almost all translations take כְּלִיּוֹן חֲרוֹץ as “destruction is decreed.” The following words, שׁוֹטֵף צְדָקָה, indicate that this impending judgment is “overflowing with righteousness” (RSV). The context suggests that here צְדָקָה refers to a strict standard of rectitude against which the non-remnant people of Israel have failed to measure. This meaning, although not common, does appear elsewhere (Isa 5:16; Zech

23, כלה ונחרצה, should probably be understood as a hendiadys, the participle acting as a noun, and the entire clause meaning something like “the decisively-decreed destruction.” In the final phrase of 10:23, בקרב כל הארץ, the reference to ארץ most likely retains its normal meaning, “land,” not the more expansive “earth.” The expectation of Israel’s destruction remains in focus: though numerous as the sea’s sand, the people of Israel face a “quickly executed decree of destruction” which God will unleash “in the midst of all the land,” that is, Palestine.⁸⁷ Only the remnant will survive this eschatological doom (as suggested by the apocalypticizing “in that day” of v. 20 and again in v. 27).

The transformation of the original prophecy is complete. The earlier announcement proclaimed that God would at any moment deliver his people, the nation as a whole, from the Assyrian menace and visit on that power its own violence. But the interpretive additions insist that the devastation prefigured in the Assyrian invasion will in fact overtake the entire nation of Israel; only a penitent faction will survive. Each of the expansions in 10:20-23 reiterates this austere transformation of Israel’s national heritage. Salvation is confined to the faithful few, destruction appointed for the majority. Abraham’s rebellious children face not deliverance but death. The text from which Paul quotes in Rom 9:27-28 develops the notion of Israel’s election precisely in order to eliminate *Israel* itself from the elect people.⁸⁸

3:5; see B. Johnson, “צדק,” *TDOT* 12:244-45; Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, 152). The NAB translation captures this nuance: “their destruction is decreed, as overwhelming justice demands.” JPS is similar, though it uses an independent clause connected asyndetically: “retribution comes like a flood.”

⁸⁷ Against Blenkinsopp, who considers that the general apocalyptic orientation of the passage favors a universalizing “in the midst of the earth” (*Isaiah 1-39*, 258; similarly, Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-12*, 438).

⁸⁸ Against John Paul Heil, “From Remnant to Seed of Hope for Israel: Romans 9:27-29,” *CBQ* 64 (2002): 710; Wagner, *Heralds*, 106.

The LXX of vv. 22-23 contains further difficulties. Many of its puzzling translation decisions are probably due to the difficult Hebrew rather than a deliberate shift in meaning.⁸⁹ Yet in one instance, whether by intention or ineptitude, the LXX rendering transforms a message of doom into an obscure statement that can be read as a promise of salvation. In the redirection of judgment from Assyria to Israel in Isa 10:20-23, the most damning note of judgment occurs in v. 22b: “Destruction is decreed, overflowing with righteousness.” But the LXX version has λόγον γὰρ συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων ἐν δικαιοσύνη.⁹⁰ Here λόγος refers back to the announcement of the remnant’s *salvation* made immediately before.⁹¹ Συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων should probably be taken, like the

⁸⁹ According to Isac Leo Seeligmann, these changes are rooted in the translator’s intention to push the meaning of his text from threat to promise (*The Septuagint Version of Isaiah and Cognate Studies* [ed. Robert Hanhart and Hermann Spieckermann; FAT 40; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004] 284-84, 288; so too Wagner, *Heralds*, 100-106). But if so, these changes are exceedingly subtle: (1) in v. 20, the implied contrast between those who rely on God falsely and those who rely on him “in truth” is weakened by the use of the dative, τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, which would stress the *mode* of relying rather than the criterion for distinguishing those who will be delivered from those marked for judgment; Seeligmann places great semantic weight on this slight change; (2) in v. 22, several manuscripts lack a term corresponding to the partitive כִּי; again, Seeligmann assigns too much importance to a negligible feature. Those manuscripts which do supply the equivalent αὐτῶν cannot decide on which side of σωθησεται it belongs (preceding: S B V 88 109 736 Q^{mg} Syh, the Lucianic tradition, several Catena and mixed texts; following: 710 and again several Catena and mixed texts) suggesting that uncertainty concerning the Hebrew sense explains the translation rather than a desire to avoid the partitive and hence condemnatory nuance. To be sure, LXX Isaiah does display a willingness to transform announcements of doom into offers of salvation (e.g., at 8:14), but it seems rash for Seeligmann to attribute a coherent theological agenda to what is evidently a haphazard paraphrase. As C. E. B. Cranfield notes concerning v. 23, “The Hebrew . . . is difficult, and the LXX translators were apparently baffled by the details” (*Romans*, 2:502; similarly, Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 265; Koch, *Schrift*, 146-47; and see the general caution in McLay, *Use of the Septuagint*, 96). In 28:22, where the Hebrew is similar and the Greek as periphrastic as in the present passage, the note of judgment sounded against apostate Israel in the Hebrew is clearly discernable in the Greek. The conclusion that the LXX undertook an intentional reworking of the entire passage appears unjustified. The complexities of these verses are treated in greater detail in R. R. Ottley, *The Book of Isaiah according to the Septuagint (Codex Alexandrinus)* (2 vols.; 2n ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906-1909), 2:243-44; Koch, *Schrift*, 147, 147 n. 26; Ronald L. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation: The Strategies of the Translator of the Septuagint of Isaiah* (SupJSJ 124; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 283-86.

⁹⁰ In v. 22, the Hebrew word which apparently refers to destruction, כִּלְיִן, is evidently translated twice: λόγον γὰρ συντελῶν, with λόγος being retained for the morphologically similar כִּלְיִן in v. 23, whereas συντελέω is used for כִּלְיִן in the parallel phrase in 28:22.

⁹¹ Gadenz, “Paul’s Argumentation,” 153.

underlying Hebrew, as a hendiadys.⁹² The combined phrase does not likely carry the full semantic weight of each individual term; συντέμνω here need not signify “to cut short *prematurely*” but probably means something more like “bring about *swiftly*.”⁹³ The meaning would then be not “to bring to an end” in the sense of destroy, but “to carry out, to bring about,” with quickness or finality.⁹⁴ As a genitive absolute, its relation to the surrounding context is somewhat hazy, but seems to have adverbial force describing the manner with which the λόγος is carried out. The phrase insists that the promised salvation will certainly come to the remnant.⁹⁵

However, despite dropping the reiteration of Israel’s doom in v. 22b, this transformation does not entail an incipient hope for the salvation of “all Israel.”⁹⁶ Nothing in the LXX version, any more than in the Hebrew, attenuates the drastic reduction of Israel that was already announced in vv. 20-22a. The LXX provides for the possibility

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Koch, *Schrift*, 147 n. 33; Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 186.

⁹⁴ Koch, *Schrift*, 147-48, 148 n. 35; Moo, *Romans*, 615 n. 25. This sense fits the closely parallel phrases in Isa 28:22; Dan 5:26; Dan 9:27 Theodotion. The LXX of Dan 5:26 shows the influence of LXX Isaiah (Seeligmann, *Septuagint Version*, 229; Arie van der Kooij, “Isaiah and Daniel in the Septuagint: How are These Two Books Related?” in *Florilegium Lovaniense: Studies in Septuagint and Textual Criticism in Honour of Florentino García Martínez* [ed. H. Ausloos, B. Lemmelijn, and M. Vervenne; BETL 224; Louvain: Peeters, 2008], 468-69, 472; and does not prove the existence of an independent apocalyptic formula, as Käsemann claims (*Romans*, 275).

Most translations of Isa 10:22 LXX retain the distinct lexical meaning of συντέμνω, “cut short” (e.g., Brenton, Ottley, NETS; also Stanley, *Language*, 117 n. 100). The use of συντέμνω to indicate the shortening of a speech by omitting material or the shortening of available time (LSJ, s.v. II, III) might have facilitated the meaning of “bring about swiftly” for συντελέω καὶ συντέμνω.

⁹⁵ Koch, *Schrift*, 146-48 (while conceding that the sense of the Hebrew was only partially grasped by the LXX translator).

⁹⁶ Jewett writes, “Whether intentionally or not, the LXX translated a somewhat baffling MT in such a way as to weaken the link between Israel’s destruction and the completion of God’s word.” But this holds good only for the change in v. 22b, which refers to the remnant. Similarly, Heil (“Remnant,” 713-16) and Wagner (*Heralds*, 100-106) have seen that the LXX of Isa 10:22 offers a promise of salvation to the remnant, but concluded from this, wrongly, in my judgment, that the remnant necessarily functions as a pledge for the entire nation; see further §6.2. below.

of reading Isa 10:22b positively, as a hope vouchsafed for the *remnant*. It does not guarantee the salvation of the entire nation.

4.3.3.2. *The Survivors of Israel in Isaiah 1:9*

A similar limit on the extent of salvation occurs in Isa 1. Although composed of diverse material, this chapter in its current form possesses a consistent, conscious organization. The introduction of Yahweh's lawsuit (v. 2) and the summons to arbitration (v. 18) present the intervening material (and its conclusion in vv. 19-20) as an announcement of accusation against the people.⁹⁷ The focus narrows to Jerusalem itself in v. 21, which, despite its wickedness (particularly of the city's corrupt leaders), will be purified (vv. 26-28) when the persistently rebellious are eliminated (vv. 29-31).⁹⁸ Three features of this text are noteworthy.

First, the rhetorical progression from judgment to redemption recalls Israel's self-understanding as a chosen people. The opening allegory portrays Israel as the sons of God who have gone to ruin (בְּנֵי מִשְׁחִיתִים; vv. 2-4; see Exod 4:22). The LXX reorients this accusation towards Israel's failure to practice torah faithfully: they are υἱοὶ ἄνομοι. The same verses indicate that other symbols of election have gone awry:⁹⁹ as a nation (גֹּי, ἔθνος), a people (עַם, λαός), and seed (זֶרַע, σπέρμα), God's children have become

⁹⁷ On the lawsuit formula, see G. E. Mendenhall, "Ancient Oriental and Biblical Law," *BA* 17 (1954): 26-46; idem, "Covenant Forms in Israelite Tradition," *BA* 17 (1954): 50-76; Herbert B. Huffmon, "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets," *JBL* 78 (1959): 285-95; J. Harvey, "Le 'Rib-pattern,' réquisitoire prophétique sur la rupture de l'alliance," *Bib* 43 (1962): 172-96; D. R. Daniels, "Is There a 'Prophetic Lawsuit' Genre?" *ZAW* 99 (1987): 339-60; Westermann, *Basic Forms*, 199-201; Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39*, 27-28.

⁹⁸ Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39*, 63-71.

⁹⁹ Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, 18; Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-12*, 14-17.

encumbered by sin (ἁμαρτία, ἁμαρτωλός), iniquity (ἰνομία, πλήρης ἁμαρτιῶν), and wickedness (ἠσέβεια, πονηρός); they have collectively abandoned (ἐγκαταλείπω) and spurned (παρωργίζω) the Lord.

This reproach places the nation under the covenantal curses announced in Deut 28. Several allusions equate Israel's impending doom with the judgment predicted by Moses.¹⁰⁰ Isaiah 1:9 specifically recollects Deut 28:62:

Deut 28:62

וּנְשָׂאֲרָתָם בְּמַתִּי מֵעַט תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר הֵייתֶם כְּכֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם לְרַב כִּי לֹא שָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ¹⁰¹

Isa 1:9

לְוַלֵּי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הֹוֹתִיר לָנוּ שְׂרִיד כְּמֵעַט כִּסְדָּם הֵיינוּ לְעֵמְרָה דְּמִינוּ¹⁰²

In addition to the shared term *מעט*, both texts contain language typically related to the remnant (Niphal *שאר*; *יתר*). Both affirm that however great in number Israel becomes, persistent rebellion will bring about a drastic diminution. Both use language recalling the patriarchal stories: numbering as the stars in the heaven (Deut 28:62; see Gen 15:5; 22:17; 26:4) and Sodom and Gomorrah (Isa 1:9).

¹⁰⁰ Verse 7 alludes to the curses of Deut 28 as descriptions of Israel's current spiritual state: the land is a waste (Deut 28:21, 24), the cities are desecrated (Deut 28:52), and the land's produce is devoured by foreign enemies (Deut 28:30, 33, 51). A further allusion occurs in v. 15, where God's threat to turn his eyes away from his petitioning people both recalls a similar threat in Deut 31:17 and 32:20 and anticipates a theme which surfaces elsewhere in Isaiah (8:17; 30:20; 45:15; see also Christiaan H. W. Brekelmans, "Deuteronomistic Influence in Isaiah 1-12," in *The Book of Isaiah / Le livre d'Isaïe: Les oracles et leurs relectures unité et complexité de l'ouvrage* [ed. Jacques Vermeulen; BETL 81; Louvain: Peeters, 1989], 167-76; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 181). Here I only claim that the final redaction of Isa 1 occurred under the influence of an ideology similar to that expressed in Deut 28, but there is evidence that Deut 32 has also influenced Isa 1 (cf. Deut 32:1 and Isa 1:2a; Deut 32:6 and Isa 1:3; see also Ronald Bergey, "The Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32.1-43) and Isaianic Prophecies: A Case for Intertextuality?" *JSOT* 28 [2003]: 39-42).

¹⁰¹ "Whereas you were as the stars of heaven for multitude, you shall be left few in number; because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God." A parallel prediction occurs in Deut 4:27.

¹⁰² "If the LORD of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we should have been like Sodom, and become like Gomorrah."

Thus Isaiah 1:9 joins other contextual indications to affirm that Israel has indeed been judged so severely that without its divinely preserved remnant the nation would have ceased.¹⁰³ Thus, both by emphasizing Israel's symbols of election (sonship, nation, people, seed) and by placing Israel under the Mosaic indictment as Deuteronomy anticipated, Isa 1 portrays a nation whose covenantal heritage has run aground.

Second, the redactional shape of Isa 1 imbues it with a dualistic orientation. The final editorial statements in vv. 18-20 (the conclusion of the first half of the chapter) and vv. 27-28 (the conclusion of the second) divide the nation according to how people respond to the message of guilt and repentance.¹⁰⁴ The captives / repentant ones (שׁוֹבִיִּים) in Zion will have their sins washed white (v. 18), eat the land's abundance (v. 19), and be redeemed (הִפְדָּו; LXX: σωζω; v. 27), while those who rebel will fall by the sword (v. 20) and be consumed (v. 28). This dichotomy reinforces the opposition—already present in the earlier material—between the survivors (v. 9) and the slag (v. 25), and circumscribes the promised redemption to the repentant community. Those preserved by God in v. 9 present not a promise available for the population at large but the affirmation that salvation occurs only for those who separate themselves from the lawlessness of their nation.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, 19. Incidentally, Deut 28:62 alludes to the patriarchal promises of Gen 15:5, 22:17, and 26:4 in a manner strikingly parallel to Isa 10:20-23.

¹⁰⁴ On the late date of these verses, see Sweeney, *Isaiah*, 81-83, 86-87; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 187.

¹⁰⁵ Verses 27-28 do not have terminology relating explicitly to the remnant, but the language of returning / repenting, שׁוֹבִיִּים, immediately ties these verses to the remnant motif as expressed in 7:3 and 10:20-21. Thus, even if it is historically significant that 1:9 on its own carries no mention of repentance or any other spiritual condition (so Rowley, *Election*, 73; Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-12*, 29) the larger literary context homogenizes this verse with other appearances of the remnant and the call to repentance. As Grindheim points out, vv. 2, 8-9, 21, 26-27 all develop the theme of renewal, which is predicated only of the penitent remnant, not Israel as a whole (*Crux*, 30).

Finally, the LXX translation of 1:9 introduces material whether fortuitously or deliberately which accentuates the allusion to Genesis already given with the names Sodom and Gomorrah. In Hebrew, the paltry number constituting the remnant is expressed with שרִיִּד כַּמֵּעֹט. The connection with Deut 28:62 has already been noted, where the few survivors of God's judgment explicitly contrasts with the promise that Israel will surpass the number of stars in heaven, a direct allusion to Genesis. It may be that the Greek translator of Isa 1:9 chose σπέρμα as a translation of מֵעֹט simply because σπέρμα appears in the context (v. 4), but this is unlikely. מֵעֹט occurs seven other times in Isaiah and is correctly translated in every case with μικρός or ὀλίγος. The translator may therefore have used σπέρμα because he followed the allusions occurring in the Hebrew to Deut 28 and ultimately back to Genesis itself. God promised Abraham seed numbering as the stars above (Gen 15:5) but without divine intervention to spare a remnant these descendents would have become—like Sodom and Gomorrah—a smoking desolation (Gen 19:28).

4.3.4. SUMMARY

The three major biblical antecedents behind Rom 9 are interconnected on the thematic and not merely the verbal level. Exclusion and reversal characterize Paul's discussion of election in Rom 9:7-13; these motifs also typify the patriarchal narratives, the story of Hosea's family, and the fate of Israel in Isaiah.

In Genesis, election—and the Abrahamic inheritance that it brings—does not pass from one generation to the next in a straightforward manner. It manifests itself in a consistent but surprising reversal: a chosen second born replaces his elder brother in

status and excludes him from the covenantal family. The irony of election lies in the requirement that the favored child subsequently endure the humiliation his own elevation forced on the rejected sibling. To inherit Abraham's election means that one is called to suffer its negation.

The ironic potential of election is exploited, in different ways, by the passages in Hosea and Isaiah from which Paul quotes. In their prophecies, Israel's election resembles not a socially-given, reified institution, but a tumultuous movement of God's people in and out of divine favor, under judgment and promise, reduced to a remnant and eventually brought back into God's mercy on the other side of national death. Hosea tells the story of Israel's election as the disownment and reintegration of Yahweh's children, who endure the covenantal rupture only to experience its renewal on the far side of judgment. Isaiah declares that Israel's election can be turned against Israel itself and redirected towards a community of faithful penitents. Both evoke the Abrahamic promise of innumerable seed and thereby extend the story of favored and excluded children from Genesis into their day. It remains for Paul to complete that story in his.

4.4. CONCLUSIONS

It appears that Paul's quotations from the prophets in Rom 9:25-29 were generated by his reading of Genesis. Three lines of evidence substantiate this conclusion. First, an extensive network of terminological links connect Hos 1-3, Isa 1, and Isa 10, as well as Mal 1, to the patriarchal narratives. Second, Paul makes several changes to his quotations from Hos 2:25 and Isa 10:22-23, all of which accentuate the allusions to Genesis already present. Finally, the irony of election which structures the plot of

Genesis is developed in unique ways in Hosea, in Isaiah, and finally in Paul's letter to the Romans.

The direction of influence, however, is dialectic. Genesis leads Paul to the prophets. The texts he finds there clarify the meaning of Genesis. I propose that this nexus of Torah and prophets constitutes the interpreted narrative, or in Dodd's term the substructure, beneath Rom 9. In the following chapters I will attempt to reconstruct how Paul understands and interprets Hosea and Isaiah in light of his interpretation of Genesis in Rom 9:7-13. I will contend that he uses his prophetic texts not as independent prophecies arbitrarily selected but as hermeneutical lenses which reveal the mystery of Abraham's family and the ultimate fate of its Jewish and Gentile branches.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EXCLUDED OTHER BECOMES US: HOSEA AND THE INVERSION OF ELECTION IN ROMANS 9:25-26

Scholarly preoccupation with Isaiah as the source behind Paul's argument in Rom 9-11 has not only eclipsed Moses' more fundamental contribution, it has also overlooked Hosea as a text worthy of the apostle's exegetical skill. The investigations of Wagner, Shum, Wilk, and others often imply Paul derived his theological vision largely—if not entirely—from Isaiah, while Hosea offers at best secondary confirmation and perhaps some rhetorically effective phrases.

I propose the opposite hypothesis. *Hosea* holds the key for Paul's reinterpretation of *Genesis*, and it is this reading of Genesis (not Isaiah!) that unlocks the mystery of Israel, the Gentiles, and their mutual relation in God's covenantal family. To substantiate this claim, I attempt in this chapter to reconstruct Paul's exegesis of Hosea. An introductory section will summarize my understanding of Rom 9:14-24. I will then hypothesize a Pauline exegesis of Hosea that can solve two outstanding problems. First, the question concerning the rationale, if any, for Paul's application of Hos 2:1 and 2:25 to Gentile Christians is answered by considering how he might apply contemporary exegetical techniques to Hos 1-3. Second, the question as to the emphasis on the topography of salvation in Hos 2:1 = Rom 9:26 is answered by appealing to the (apocalyptically-reinterpreted) promise of *land* which Abraham's Gentile children will inherit. The reconfigured patriarchal family encompasses the nations and therefore requires a territorial inheritance expansive enough to accommodate its universal scope.¹

¹ Conclusions established in the previous chapters will be presumed here: Paul is attracted to narrative passages of Scripture, especially those found in the Pentateuch; he frequently uses prophetic texts

5.1. POWER AND PROVIDENCE IN ROMANS 9:14-23 AND 9:24

Paul's presentation of election in Rom 9:7-13 does not correspond to the thesis expressed in v. 6b (§3.2., §3.6.). Although he intimates that the answer to whether God's word has failed requires a semantic limitation of *Israel*, he instead defends God's fidelity by rehearsing a largely conventional account of Israel's origin. The proposed clarification never materializes and Paul adopts an unexceptional definition: Israel is the divinely blessed covenanted people who descend from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Romans 9:14-23 supports this interpretation. In these verses, Paul moves his discussion from Israel's origin in election and calling in Genesis to its foundation in redemption and deliverance in Exodus.² Structurally, this material is subservient to the previous section.³ Its emphasis on divine sovereignty supports the unilateral election of Israel set forth in vv. 7-13. Paul deduces from Genesis that God's election discriminates among the children of Abraham (9:7, 13), and from Exodus that God possesses the authority not only to elect in this way but also to harden (9:15-18). This leads to a fuller statement of divine power (9:19-23) before a sudden reintroduction of "mercy" (used four times in vv. 15-18 but absent in vv. 19-23). In both vv. 14-18 and vv. 19-23, two elements reinforce the interpretation of vv. 7-13 offered in ch. 3: the rhetorical questions in vv. 14 and 19 and the binary contrasts that shape Paul's response.

to interpret them; he employs a rhetoric of exclusion and reversal in his survey of patriarchal history (9:7-13); he both introduces and discovers verbal and thematic links connecting Genesis, Hosea, and Isaiah.

² Although Paul moves forward in the chronology of his ethno-cultural mythomoteur, the exodus events from which he theologizes evince in their own way a concern with how election relates to the identity of the firstborn son. God's favor towards Israel *his* firstborn (Exod 4:22-23) has its reflex in the destruction of *Pharaoh's* firstborn (Exod 11:4-5; 12:12, 29; 13:2, 13-15; see also the cultic stipulations in 22:29; 34:20).

³ Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 247; Käsemann, *Romans*, 269; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:550-51.

In v. 14, Paul imagines a hostile rejoinder to the argument just presented. The riposte objects to *Israel's election itself*. It does *not* respond to the redefinition of Israel implied in v. 6. The question implies that by God's choice of and love for *Jacob* over against *not-Jacob*, he has displayed ἀδικία, the quality of injustice or, more concretely, an act that violates standards of conduct (BDAG, s.v.). Therefore the viewpoint expressed is not a Jewish one.⁴ It is animated by moral convictions that are almost the opposite of those behind Paul's declaration in v. 6a. In the latter, the point of contention is, How can God's word to Israel be reliable in light of the very different terms for covenantal standing that (according to Paul) obtain since the advent of Israel's Messiah (§3.1.)? In the former, the disputed issue is, How can God's particular regard for a single people accord with general intuitions of divine fairness?

This objection presents Paul with an occasion to tone down the robustly ethnocentric conclusion of v. 13. He refuses to take it.⁵ Instead, in vv. 15-18 he carries forward the antinomies developed from the patriarchal stories. Using the figures of Moses and Pharaoh, he extends the contrast between Jacob and Esau found in Malachi. Moses and his ministry affirm God's right to proclaim "Jacob I have loved," while the case of Pharaoh resumes the divine hostility expressed in "Esau I have hated."⁶ A set of contrasting actions is aligned with each figure. Moses signifies God's act of mercy

⁴ Gaston, *Torah*, 93-94; Räisänen, "Römer," 2902; Barrett, *Romans*, 175; Byrne, *Romans*, 298; Jewett, *Romans*, 581; against Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 257; Wilckens, *Röm*, 199; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:551, 554, 557, 564; Kim, *God, Israel, and the Gentiles*, 126. The aspects of 9:7-13 that, from a Jewish perspective, would sound most controversial (the relativization of circumcision and Torah) are precisely those features that the rhetorical question *does not* address.

⁵ Käsemann, *Romans*, 265; Moo, *Romans*, 590; Byrne, *Romans*, 296-97.

⁶ Lambrecht, "Israel's Future," in *Studies*, 37; Moo, *Romans*, 593; Byrne, *Romans*, 296.

(ἐλεέω, v. 15), and this correlation is set against Pharaoh and God's act of hardening (σκληρύνω, v. 18).

The antithesis in v. 16 between human willing and running on the one hand (θέλων, τρέχων) and the merciful God on the other (ὁ ἐλεῶν θεός) restates the antithesis from v. 11 between human working (πράσσων) and the divine election (ἡ κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ θεοῦ). Both contrasts show that God retains the prerogative to act as he sees fit in bringing praise to his name, even to the point of orchestrating human resistance for the sake of his greater glory (v. 17).⁷

In vv. 19-23, Paul does not draw back from the severe conclusions of vv. 14-18. On the contrary, he pushes them as far as they can go. The same two elements supporting my exegesis of 9:7-13 recur here: an objection which demands an account of God's equity in view of his propensity to play favorites (from the interlocutor's perspective), and the rhetorical use of contrasting pairs dividing the elect from the excluded.⁸

⁷ Concerning Paul's use of Exod 33:19, Sanday and Headlam correctly state that "the point of the words in the original context is rather the certainty of divine grace for those whom God has selected; the point which Paul wishes to prove is *the independence and freedom of the Divine choice*" (254; emphasis added; similarly, Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 564).

⁸ In these verses, "the statements are sharpened, not softened" (Käsemann, *Romans*, 267; see also *ibid.*, 269). "While in vs. 15-16, God's mercy is stressed, the next verses go down the other path" (Räisänen, "Römer," 2902; similarly, Moo, *Romans*, 598). The actual question posed in v. 19 shows that the emphasis in vv. 14-18 falls not on God's sovereign *mercy* but on his *sovereign* mercy (against Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:483-84; Campbell, *Paul's Gospel*, 46; Gager, *Reinventing Paul*, 131-32; Jewett, *Romans*, 581-82; correctly, Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 266; Byrne, *Romans*, 301). Many commentators focus on mercy in order to blunt the unpalatable conclusions that naturally flow from the argument in vv. 7-13, despite the fact that Paul seems rather intent not on qualifying but on *exacerbating* them. Using 9:14-18 in this way can only come at a high exegetical price. It requires Jewett, for example, to downplay the arbitrary element activating mercy in v. 16, to ignore the equal emphasis on divine hardening in vv. 17-18, and to group unpersuasively 9:14-18 together with 9:6-13 rather than 9:19-24, when 9:14-24 reads more naturally as a single discourse on the theme of divine power which 9:6-13 provoked.

By introducing this critical voice, Paul gives himself a second occasion to qualify the extreme predestinarian position his argument appears to be leading him towards. The interlocutor accuses God (as he is presented by Paul) of acting arbitrarily towards and then condemning the very people he uses for his glory.⁹

Paul dismisses the question with a brisk retort, in effect conceding that the objection is accurate if impudent. As creator, he claims, God possesses the right to dispose of his creatures as a potter does his clay. This metaphor allows Paul to develop further contrasts: as the same lump can be fashioned for honorable and dishonorable uses, so too the creature may be destined for glory or for destruction. Objects of wrath and objects of glory both serve God's greater purposes.¹⁰

Paul's responds to the question posed in different ways in vv. 14 and 19 with an assertion of God's supreme right. Against the *non-Jewish* objection concerning God's equity, he sets a thoroughly Jewish rationale for Israel's election. Although the answer Paul gives is a minority position,—most interpreters of Genesis looked for some moral characteristic that might explain Jacob's favor and Esau's rejection—it follows a clear interpretive tradition.

The fountainhead of this approach is Deuteronomy, which affirms that God selected the Israelites not because of any righteousness they possessed but because of

⁹ Again, the objector does not speak on behalf of Jewish covenantal theology against Paul's alleged transgression of it. As Jewett concedes, he "identifies himself with Pharaoh, who seemed to suffer an arbitrary fate in 9:17-18" (*Romans*, 589 n. 5; similarly, Barrett, *Romans*, 175; Charles H. Cosgrove, "Rhetorical Suspense in Romans 9-11: A Study in Polyvalence and Hermeneutical Election," *JBL* 115 [1996]: 273; against Dunn, *Romans*, 2:555; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 568).

¹⁰ Although I do not agree with Räisänen's overall assessment of ch. 9, his jaundiced comments do correctly assess the thrust of Paul's argument here: "The manner and way in which Paul justifies the ways of God with humans may not convince all too many modern readers, because the presentation of his case has hardly repulsed with any effectiveness the accusation of 'injustice,' of despotism, of tyranny, *Sultanhaften*" ("Römer," 2906).

God's love for them (7:7-8) and for the patriarchs (4:37; 9:4-6; see also 8:17-18; 9:7, 13-14, 24; 31:27). This position is reiterated by Sirach (33:13; the language is especially close to Rom 9) and the Dead Sea community (CD II, 2-13; 1QS III, 13-IV, 24; 4Q186).¹¹ These texts locate the motivation for God's choice entirely within his inscrutable counsel.

As 9:14-23 shows, Paul embraces this understanding of election. In God's choice of Jacob over his elder brother Paul finds the outworking of an absolute power, apparently disregarding human freedom in the process. The single phrase from Gen 25:23 which Paul quotes in v. 12 emphasizes precisely the pattern articulated in Deuteronomy: God has chosen the lesser and exalted it over the greater in order to demonstrate his prerogative as Creator (see also 1 Cor 1:25-29). Election both reverses human expectations and discriminates without moral justification.¹²

With this line of reasoning, Paul *appears* to digress. It seems that the trajectory of the argument is becoming entangled in obtuse speculation that is abruptly dropped at v.

¹¹ 2 Bar. 47 comes close to the same position (47:6, 20a) but does not go as far as Paul (cf. 47:20b). On predestination and determinism in the Dead Sea Scrolls, see Phillip S. Alexander, "Predestination and Free Will in the Theology of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment* (ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole; LNTS 335; London: T&T Clark, 2006), 27-49.

¹² *Up to this point*, Paul has said nothing in Rom 9 which would indicate that contemporary, non-believing Jews correspond to Ishmael, Esau, or Pharaoh (contra Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:485; Räisänen, "Römer," 2900-2901, 2902-3; both of whom make this connection earlier than Paul does). As Dunn's comments on v. 22 correctly state, "In the context of the preceding argument, 'objects of wrath' would most naturally be understood with reference to Esau and Pharaoh, those who suffer the negative corollary of Israel's election. But *Paul is about to make it clear* that the 'objects of wrath' are the covenant people themselves, or more precisely, the bulk of the covenant people who have rejected the continuity / fulfillment of the covenant in the gospel" (*Romans*, 2:567; emphasis added; see also Wilckens, *Röm*, 196, 202-3; Johnson, *Function*, 148; Meeks, "Trusting," 110; Barrett, *Romans*, 174; Esler, *Conflict*, 281; Watson, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 317; Jewett, *Romans*, 584).

24.¹³ In terms of both syntax and subject matter, the sudden declaration of v. 24 that God has called both Jews and Gentiles bursts into the argument with little preparation.¹⁴

Despite initial appearances, it is the theology of unilateral election in vv. 14-23 that provides the warrant for God's surprising work announced in v. 24.¹⁵ By incorporating the rhetorical questions that he did, Paul directs the discussion towards increasingly strong articulations of God's absolute freedom and power. It is this unconstrained aspect of his character that ultimately subverts the initial conclusion provided by Malachi and protects God's freedom to act in a new way since the Messiah's coming.¹⁶ God's sovereign right to elect Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob establishes his freedom to reverse election, to limit its preservation to the Israel within Israel, and to extend it to Gentile peoples. Paul corroborates these claims by appealing to Hosea.

¹³ This was perceived by Dodd. Although he did not provide an adequate reason for turn he saw in v. 17, he did realize that "Paul takes [what] *seems to be* a false step," only to "come back to the point of vital interest" in v. 24 (*Romans*, 157, 159; emphasis added; see also Moo, *Romans*, 610).

¹⁴ So Räisänen, "Römer," 2905. I agree with Cranfield that the most natural way of reading v. 24's opening is to take οὗς καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς as a relative clause dependent on σκευὴ ἐλέους in v. 23 (Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:498; so too Barrett, *Romans*, 176). Materially, however, a new thought is introduced abruptly. As Sanday and Headlam notice, Paul introduces the calling of the Gentiles "*not because it was a difficulty St. Paul was discussing*, but because . . . the calling of the Gentiles had come through the rejection of the Jews" (*Romans*, 263; emphasis added; also Seifrid, "Romans," 646).

¹⁵ Paul later applies this same theology to the remnant in 11:1-10. Cf. especially 11:6-7 (where grace, χάρις, characterizes the remnant but works, ἔργα, and being hardened, πωρόω, typify "the rest") with the parallel ideas in ch. 9 (showing mercy, ἐλεέω [vv. 15, 16, 18, 23]; doing works, παράσσω [v. 11]; and being hardened, σκληρύνω [v. 18]; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:555). Many commentators force Paul's argument ahead of itself by reading Rom 9 not in light of its natural conclusion in 11:1-10 but in view of the more congenial affirmations in 11:11-32. Neither Cranfield (*Romans*, 2:447-48, 481-97) nor Jewett (*Romans*, 581-98) can resist the temptation to interpret 9:14-23 in light of Paul's final conclusions, though for different reasons (the former because of a commitment to a Barthian understanding of election, the latter an enthusiasm for the politics of identity).

¹⁶ Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 248; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:566; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 572; Byrne, *Romans*, 290; Watson, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 314.

5.2. TRANSFORMED CHILDREN: ABRAHAM'S GENTILE DESCENDANTS IN HOSEA

The most difficult question of 9:25-26 is why these verses are here at all. Paul quotes from Hosea predictions of Israel's restoration but he applies them to Gentile membership in God's family. Does he have an exegetical warrant for this reassignment?

Many scholars would answer, No. Dodd famously thought it "strange that Paul has not observed that this prophecy referred to Israel," and he wondered why Paul did not place these verses at the end of ch. 11, where "it would have fitted so admirably the doctrine of the restoration of Israel which he is to expound" there.¹⁷ Terrence Donaldson cites Rom 9:25-26 as evidence that, because Paul's claims cannot be derived from OT, the source of his theology must lie elsewhere.¹⁸

But neither Dodd nor Donaldson discuss the possibility that Paul reads Hos 2:1 and 2:25 not as isolated prophecies but as part of a larger biblical matrix. In this section, I seek to establish Paul's framework for interpreting these verses. I will argue that Paul brings Genesis and Hosea together in order to decipher the eschatological mystery that Gentiles have become children of Abraham.¹⁹ If this perspective is accurate, then Paul wrestles with the meaning of Hosea on a level more profound than is usually acknowledged.

¹⁷ Dodd, *Romans*, 160.

¹⁸ Donaldson, *Gentiles*, 100-104.

¹⁹ To paraphrase Morna D. Hooker, for Paul it is axiomatic that the true meaning of Scripture has been hidden, and only with Christ's appearance can it be discovered. The apostle's hermeneutical project is the task of deciphering Scripture's true meaning in light of God's revelation in Christ ("Beyond the Things that are Written? St Paul's Use of Scripture," in *From Adam to Christ: Essays on Paul* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990], 151; repr. from *NTS* 27 [1981]; see also Robert M. Grant, *The Spirit and the Letter* [New York: Macmillan, 1957], 50; Marshall, "Assessment," 14; Smith, "Pauline Literature," 281; Martin Hengel, "The Scriptures and Their Interpretation in Second Temple Judaism," in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in Their Historical Context* [ed. D. R. G. Beattie and M. J. McNamara; JSOTSup 166; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994], 170).

5.2.1. ABUSING SCRIPTURE? EXPLOITING CHILDREN? THE PROBLEM OF HOSEA IN ROMANS 9:25-26

Paul's decision to quote Hos 2:1 and 2:25 as promises of God's salvific calling addressed to Gentiles strikes many commentators as forced.²⁰ He appears to seize them with little regard for their original context, doing violence to the text and forcing Hosea's children to serve as ciphers for his own mission.²¹

Confronted with this incongruity between prophet and apostle, but traditionally chary of accusing Paul of hermeneutical ineptitude, scholars have often sought for some clue to account for this tour de force. A widespread solution is that Hosea does not really provide Paul with a *prophecy* but an underlying *theological principle*: the sovereign God is free to accept those once rejected. What matters to Paul are not the details of Hosea's prediction but the way it preserves God's freedom to extend mercy to nations once under judgment.²²

²⁰ With most interpreters, I understand Paul's quotations from Hosea in Rom 9:25-26 to refer exclusively to Gentiles, and not to both Jews and Gentiles (with Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 265; Dodd, *Romans*, 160; Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 72-73; Wilckens, *Röm*, 198, 205; Käsemann, *Romans*, 274; Watson, *Sociological Approach*, 162; idem, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 320; Aageson, "Typology," 71 n. 48; Moo, *Romans*, 611; Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 130; Fuss, *Zeit*, 173, 184; Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah*, 208; Tobin, *Paul's Rhetoric*, 336-37; Grindheim, *Crux*, 148; Gadenz, "Paul's Argumentation," 144; Jewett, *Romans*, 589, 599; Kowalski, "Funktion," 725; Moyise, "Minor Prophets," 104; pace Dahl, "Future of Israel," in *Studies*, 145-46; Campbell, *Paul's Gospel*, 48; Getty, "Salvation," 460, 465; Barrett, *Romans*, 178; Jewett, *Romans*, 600 [!]). First, the assertion itself, οὐ μόνον ἐξ Ἰουδαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ἐθνῶν, is phrased in such a way as to indicate that the more audacious claim, and hence the one more in need of scriptural justification, is the calling of the Gentiles. Second, there is a chiasmic structure in vv. 24-29 that should not be dismissed: Jew (v. 24a)-Gentile (v.24b)-Gentile (vv. 25-26)-Jew (vv. 27-29; BDF §477). Third, Paul introduces the Isaianic texts by explicitly referring them to Israel alone and introducing them with δέ. The implied contrast suggests that the quoted Hosean prophecies concern only Gentiles. Finally, if Hos 2:25 refers to Israel, then Paul calls the remnant "Not-My-People," which seems unlikely (so Räisänen, "Römer," 2905 n. 79; Wilk *Bedeutung*, 129).

²¹ Chilton, "Dialogue," 29; Fuss, *Zeit*, 184; Kowalski, "Funktion," 727.

²² Gould, "Romans IX-XI," 29; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 264; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:499-500; Aageson, "Typology," 61-62; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:571, 575; Johnson, *Function*, 150; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 573; Craig A. Evans, " 'It is Not as Though the Word of God Had Failed': An Introduction to Paul and the Scriptures of Israel," in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, 14-15; Tobin, *Paul's Rhetoric*, 338; Grindheim, *Crux*, 148. W. Edward Glenny shows that the supposition of an application by analogy suffers from several shortcomings ("The 'People of God' in Romans 9:25-26," *BibSac* 152 [1995]: 49); he himself

Others posit a more direct connection between prophecy and fulfillment: Paul takes Hosea as a prophecy of *True* [or, *New*] *Israel*, a church body inclusive of Jewish and Gentile believers alike.²³ A more recent, non-supersessionist version drops the label *True Israel* in favor of an inclusive body that neither confounds Israel with the Gentiles nor replaces it with the church.²⁴ A distinct minority is willing to claim that Paul reads Hosea according to an “eschatological hermeneutic” which does not consider the original sense at all.²⁵ Others appeal to a “hermeneutic of reversal,” which is an apt description of what Paul does but not an explanation for why he does it.²⁶ For those less disposed to grant Paul’s arguments theological validity, his alleged misappropriation of Hosea offers not a reason for embarrassment but grounds for accusation: Paul argues incoherently or even exploits his audience’s ignorance in order to provide his claims with a divine authority they clearly do not merit.²⁷

decides for a dual fulfillment: a preliminary, typological application in Paul’s day and an eschatological, literal fulfillment in the future (ibid., 51-52, 55-59; in different ways Cranfield [*Romans*, 2:500], Dunn [*Romans*, 2:571], Wagner [*Heralds*, 86], and Seifrid [“Romans,” 648] approach this view).

²³ Dodd, *Romans*, 155, 160; Erich Dinkler, “The Historical and the Eschatological Israel in Romans Chapters 9-11: A Contribution to the Problem of Predestination and Individual Responsibility,” *JR* (1956): 114, 126 n. 26; Schoeps, *Paul*, 241-42 (though in the end Schoeps considers Paul’s exegesis to be arbitrary; *Paul*, 244); Ellis, *Paul’s Use of the Old Testament*, 122 n. 6; Moo, *Romans*, 613.

²⁴ Dahl, “Future of Israel,” in *Studies*, 145-46; Campbell, *Paul’s Gospel*, 48; Getty, “Salvation,” 460, 465; Hays, *Echoes*, 67; Jewett, *Romans*, 600.

²⁵ Käsemann, *Romans*, 274; Sneed, “Root,” 401.

²⁶ Wagner, *Heralds*, 82-83; Seifrid, “Romans,” 614; Moyise, “Minor Prophets,” 104.

²⁷ Räisänen, “Römer,” 2906 and passim; Stanley, *Arguing*, 155-60, 171, 173, 181-83.

A novel though not very convincing solution was proposed by John A. Battle. He argued that Paul does not intend to refer to Gentiles in Hosea at all. Rather, he quotes the prophecy as a prediction of Israel’s judgment (fulfilled in Paul’s own day) and eventual salvation (to be fulfilled with the advent of the deliverer as in 11:26; “Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9:25-26,” *GTJ* 2 [1981]: 115-29). Similar proposals have been advanced in Gadenz, “Paul’s Argumentation,” 146 n. 24, 148-49 (tentatively); Campbell, *Creation*, 130 (though I cannot discern from Campbell’s brief and not lucid discussion whether he belongs here or in the “theological principle” camp).

Amidst all of these proposals, it is curious to find so few willing to take Paul's use of Hosea seriously. The following statement by Richard Hays calls out for more serious consideration: "Paul is *not* arguing by analogy that just as God extended mercy to Israel even when Israel was unworthy so also he will extend grace to Gentiles. Instead, Paul is arguing that *God was speaking through the prophet Hosea to declare his intention to call Gentiles to be his own people.*"²⁸

In Paul's day, the meaning of Hos 2:1 and 2:25 was less self-evident than it appears to modern interpreters. The prevailing hermeneutical assumptions allowed for greater freedom in handling biblical texts, and diverse interpretive interests claimed support from Hos 2.²⁹ Paul's interpretation was not necessarily outside the bounds of plausibility by contemporary standards.

Ironically, the rabbis seem to have considered his argument more worthy of a sober response than many modern scholars. The discussion of Hos 1-3 in *b. Pesah. 87a-b* almost demands to be read as a rejoinder to an interpretation like that found in Rom 9:25-26. In this retelling of Hosea's story, the prophet appears as the first advocate—of Gentile supersessionism! He attempts to persuade God to replace Israel with another nation because of Israel's many sins. God rejoins by affirming his mercy towards Israel and providing a blessing for Hosea's children. The blessing, derived from Hos 2:1-2, 25, explicitly counters the suggestion that God might reject his chosen people. It is difficult

²⁸ Hays, *Echoes*, 67 (first emphasis original, second added). This statement seems, to me at least, somewhat undercut by Hays's belief, stated on the same page and referred to above, that Paul includes both Jews and Gentiles in the Hosean prophecy.

²⁹ A wide variety of examples occur in *Jub.* 1:25; *Jos. Asen.* 19:8; *b. Pesah. 87b*; *b. Yoma 22b*; *Pes. rab Kah.* 2.8; *Exod. Rab.* 13.1 (on Exod 10:1); 39.1 (on Exod 30:12); 48.6 (on Exod 35:30); *Lev. Rab.* 32.5 (on Lev 24:10); *Num. Rab.* 2.12-18 (on Num 2:32); 9.48 (on Num 5:23); 19.3 (on Num 19:2); 20.25 (on Num 25:7); *Song Rab.* 7:3 §7.

to avoid the impression that this haggadic exercise has some relation, direct or otherwise, to the apostate rabbi whose own understanding of these same verses matches so closely that attributed to Hosea. If in the Talmud this prophet can suggest that God transfer his election from Israel to the nations, then perhaps Paul's "strong misreading" deserves a second look.³⁰

5.2.2. ISRAEL AND THE NATIONS IN HOSEA 2:1 AND 2:25

Paul does not give an account of the exegetical route that led him from biblical text to epistolary performance. But he does supply coordinates with which his path may be charted: his interlocking biblical quotations, the deliberate changes he makes to them, and the claims that he supports with them. These may be supplemented with methods of interpretation current in his intellectual environment—an important factor in establishing the historical plausibility of the pre-epistolary exegesis that I propose (§1.1.3.). From these fixed elements, I will attempt to plot the course from Mosaic text, through prophetic announcement, to the Pauline conclusion that God calls Gentiles, "My People."

5.2.2.1. *The Mystery of the Inclusion of the Gentile in Hosea 2:1 and 2:25*

In their original context, the lines from Hos 2:1 quoted by Paul open a compact, three-verse salvation oracle. This text offers a convenient place to begin my attempt to retrace Paul's exegesis. I suggest that he applies to this verse two exegetical techniques.

First, Paul applies to Hos 2:1 an *atomizing reading*. The atomizing exegesis of a biblical text was a widely-employed practice in ancient Judaism (§1.3.3.). Interpreters often decoupled synonymous terms or phrases and provided each with a

³⁰ "Strong misreading" is Wagner's characterization (*Heralds*, 83, 86), though he borrows it from Hays (*Echoes*, 66-68).

distinct referent. A particularly relevant example appears in Rom 10:20-21. Here, Paul quotes Isa 65:1-2, a text which provides parallel descriptions of Israel—and Israel alone—as a people not only uninterested in God’s proffered salvation but actively resisting his open invitation:

I became visible to those who were not seeking me;
 I was found by those who were not inquiring about me;
 I said, “Here I am,” to the nation (τῷ ἔθνει) that did not call my name.
 I stretched out my hands all day long to a disobedient and contrary people (λαόν),
 who did not walk in a true way but after their own sins.

In Paul’s hands, this divine testament becomes a two-pronged prophecy referring to Israel and the Gentile nations in turn:

Then Isaiah is so bold as to say,
 “I have been found by those who did not seek me;
 I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.”

But of Israel he says,
 “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people (λαόν).”

Although he does not quote the third line of Isa 65:1-2, it is probably fair to claim that the textual feature which permitted this dual application consists in the distinction between the ἔθνος and the λαός: two terms, two referents, two peoples.

Moreover, it is not likely that Paul fortuitously stumbled on these distinct words and was struck by their exegetical potential. The context of the quotation in Romans indicates that he derived this hermeneutical possibility, once again, from his reading of Torah (§1.3.1.). Immediately before citing Isa 65:1-2 in Rom 10:20-21, Paul quotes from Deut 32:21 in 10:19. In this verse, Moses distinguishes between “you,” the children of Israel being addressed, and those “not a nation” (οὐκ ἔθνος) and “a foolish nation” (ἔθνος ἄσύνετος) by whom God will provoke Israel to jealousy (παραζηλώω). Paul’s quotation

of this verse anticipates the jealousy motif he develops in 11:11-14, where it connects the unbelief of Israel with the salvation of the Gentiles.³¹ The importance of Deut 32 throughout Rom 9-11 confirms its relevance for interpreting Isa 65:1-2. Beginning with Moses' disturbing prediction, Paul forays into the prophets looking for explanations that might elucidate the jealousy-ridden relationship between Israel and the nations. He finds what he is looking for in Isa 65:1-2.³²

I posit a parallel operation behind Rom 9:26 and its quotation of Hos 2:1. The pentateuchal allusions in Hosea point to Genesis rather than Deuteronomy as the matrix from which Paul proceeded in this instance.³³ The specific verbal links can be located in the words "Israel" and "like the sand of the sea," recalling the patriarchal promises in Gen 22:17 and 32:13 (Eng.: 32:12; §4.1.3.). On the basis of this connection, Paul simply assigns to each half of the verse a distinct referent. Thus:

³¹ Deuteronomy and Paul's letters contain half the occurrences of παραζηλώω in the Greek Bible (Deut 32:21 [2x]; Rom 10:19; 11:11, 14; 1 Cor 10:22; 6 out of 12 total). Deut 32 appears to have been an important text for Paul. He quotes or alludes to it in several places: v. 4 in Rom 9:14; v. 5 in Phil 2:15; v. 17 in 1 Cor 10:20; v. 21 in 1 Cor 10:22 and Rom 10:19; v. 35 in Rom 12:19; v. 43 in Rom 15:10. Moreover, a combination of Deut 32:15 and Isa 6:10 (linked by the rare term παχύνομαι) may lie behind Rom 11:7. On Paul's use of Deuteronomy, see Richard H. Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy: The Origin of the Jealousy Motif in Romans 9-11* (WUNT 2 / 63; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994); Guy Prentiss Waters, *The End of Deuteronomy in the Epistles of Paul* (WUNT 2 / 221; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006); Roy E. Ciampa, "Deuteronomy in Galatians and Romans," in *Deuteronomy in the New Testament* (ed. Steven Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken; LNTS 358; London: Continuum, 2007), 99-117; Brian S. Rosner, "Deuteronomy in 1 and 2 Corinthians," in *Deuteronomy in the New Testament*, 118-35; David Lincicum, "Paul's Engagement with Deuteronomy: Snapshots and Signposts," *CBR* 7 (2008): 37-67; idem, *Paul and the Early Jewish Encounter with Deuteronomy* (WUNT 2 / 284; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010).

³² Rom 15:10 provides additional support for the claim that Deut 32 influenced on Paul's epistle to the Romans. In this verse, Paul quotes from Deut 32:43: εὐφράνθητε, ἔθνη, μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ. The semantic opposition of ἔθνη and λαός corresponds precisely to the dual referent which characterizes Paul's atomizing exegesis of Isa 65:1-2.

³³ In the Hebrew, there is a terminological connection between Deut 32:21, where God provokes Israel "by a no-people," בְּלֹא עַם, and לֹא עַמִּי, the name of Hosea's son (Greek: οὐκ ἔθνη and οὐ λαός, respectively).

And the number of the people of *Israel* was like the sand of the sea, which can be neither measured nor numbered;

and in the place where it was said *to them*, “You are not my people,” it shall be said to them, “Sons of the living God.”

The possibility that Paul carried out an atomizing exegesis does not rest only on the analogy with Isa 65:12 in Rom 10:20-21. Individually or together, three peculiarities in Hos 2:1-3 may have indicated to Paul a contrasting signification in each half verse.

First, as the above quotation indicates by its italics, the collective *singular* Ἰσραήλ contrasts with the dative *plural* αὐτοῖς, providing Paul with a textual warrant for reading τὰ ἔθνη—a plural noun as the pronoun’s antecedent. No specific identification in 2:1-3 resists this interpretation. “Not-My-People” and “Not-Mercied” are not in these verses explicitly equated with a group clearly identified as Jews.

Second, the verb tenses introducing each part of the verse differ. In the Hebrew, both are identical in form: הִיהוּ preceded by a *vav* consecutive, a construction normally used for future events. In 2:1b, the LXX translator has conventionally rendered this καὶ ἔσται (fut. tense), hence: καὶ ἔσται . . . ἐπρέθη αὐτοῖς. However, he translated 2:1a differently, using for καὶ ἦν and thereby introducing a temporal distinction not present in the Hebrew: past and future respectively.³⁴ Israel *was* as numerous as the sands of the sea, those called “Not-My-People” *will be* called “Sons of the living God.”

Third, Hos 2:3 implies that an entity distinct from ethnic Jews participates in their restoration. The prophetic voice issues a command to address “your brother” as “My-People,” and “your sister” as “Mercied.” The closest subject for εἴπατε (pl. impv.; אָמַרְוּ)

³⁴ Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 185. This unusual translation may have been an attempt to indicate a distinction between the two different ways הִיהוּ is used (in the first instance it is an impersonal, “and it will be”; in the second it is the verb of the subject בני ישראל).

is οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰούδα καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραήλ just mentioned in v. 2.³⁵ Hence, *the sons of Judah and Israel* will address *their brother and sister* as “My-People” and “Mercied.” The parallel with v. 1 and its distinction between “*Israel*” and “*them*” is striking. Paul has apparently perceived a textual distinction between the Israelites and Judahites on the one hand, and their newly-found fraternal and sisterly relations on the other.

Therefore, in addition to the analogy of Isa 65:1-2 in Rom 10:20-21, at least three textual peculiarities in Hos 2:1-3 may have led Paul to conclude that *distinct groups* are being referred to, Israel in the first half of Hos 2:1, but “Not-My-People,” that is, the nations collectively subsumed under the label τὰ ἔθνη, in the second.

If this conclusion is valid, how then does Hos 2:1 portray *Israel's* fate? If Paul does understand each half-verse as suggested here, the first line is left dangling: “And the number of the people of Israel was like the sand of the sea, which can be neither measured nor numbered”—what? I posit that a second exegetical technique answers this question, *gezera shawa* (§1.3.2.). Hosea 2:1 and Isa 10:22 both allude to patriarchal promises that God would provide Abraham with seed as numerous as the sands of the sea (Gen 22:17; 32:13 [Eng.: 32:12]). In Rom 9:27, Paul splices into his quotation of Isa 10:22 the phrase ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ from Hos 2:1. This compound quotation provides objective textual evidence that Paul reads Hos 2:1 and Isa 10:22 as mutually interpreting. He connects their “intended” signification to explain that God has

³⁵ The Heb. imperative is plural, corresponding to בני יהוה ובני ישראל. The addressees referred to in the command are also plural, אהיכם, אהותיכם, but singular in Gk., τῷ ἀδελφῷ ὑμῶν, τῇ ἀδελφῇ ὑμῶν.

discharged the Abrahamic promise in a surprising, paradoxical manner.³⁶ The result might look something like this:

And the number of the people of Israel was (ἦν) like the sand of the sea, which can be neither measured nor numbered—a remnant of them will be saved (σωθήσεται)!

By means of this exegetical maneuver Paul is able discern Israel’s current status which was otherwise left unspecified. From the limitless expanse of Abraham’s people God will save a remnant, as Isaiah foretold.

Paul’s other quotation from Hos 2 can yield a similar conclusion. Verse 25 concludes a three-verse oracle which itself ends a series of promises (vv. 18-19, 20-22, 23-25). The final prediction in vv. 23-25 repeats the new names of Hosea’s children given in 2:1-3 and proclaims that “No-Mercy” and “Not-My-People” will be incorporated into God’s covenant family (2:25b; Jezreel is also alluded to in a wordplay involving עֲרֵעַ).

Paul can read these children as Gentiles entering God’s covenant simply by carrying forward the meaning he derived from 2:1-3. Nothing in 2:23-25 prohibits this identification. The entities symbolized by these names are not specified as Israelites. The way is open to apply the exegetical conclusions obtained from Hos 2:1-3: in “Not-Pitied” and “Not-My-People” are encoded the Gentile nations as a totality. Hosea predicts a day when Yahweh and “Not-My-People” will exchange the covenantal formulae, signifying the transformation of Gentile status from pagan nations destined for destruction to a people of God’s possession destined for God’s mercy.³⁷

³⁶ Against Fuss (*Zeit*, 178-80), who argues for a purely stylistic motivation.

³⁷ The NRSV and Paul, I suspect, are on different pages when the former translates 2:20 (Eng.: 2:18) with, “Then I shall make a covenant *on Israel’s behalf* with the wild beasts.” Likewise, in v. 25

5.2.2.2. *Reversing Election*

If Paul's claim that "Not-My-People" and "Not-Mercied" in Hos 2:1 and 2:25 refer to the Gentile nations is taken seriously, and if it is recognized that neither in Hos 2:1-3 nor in 2:23-25 are these epithets explicitly applied to the Jewish people—who appear with the titles "sons of Judah" and "sons of Israel" (2:2; cf. 3:4-5)—then Hos 1-3 offers hitherto overlooked possibilities for locating the source and logic behind Paul's argument. The following features of Rom 9-11 are all anticipated in Hos 1-3 when read as suggested by Paul's use of 2:1 and 2:25: the reversal of election, the correlation of Esau and the Gentiles, the partition of Israel, and the eschatological restoration of all parties into a single, multiethnic family. I will discuss these in turn.

First, the reversal and reassignment of election. According to Rom 9:25-26, Paul considers "Not-My-People" and "Not-Mercied" to be collective names for the Gentile believers. In Hos 2:1-3, neither of these appellations refers explicitly to Israel; vv. 2-3 even appear to contrast Israel and Judah with their heretofore estranged siblings. However, in Hos 1 it is the "house of *Israel*" who bears the titles signifying divine punishment and expulsion from the covenant (v. 4). The elimination of the future tense in 2:1a LXX allows Paul to read Hos 1 and Hos 2:1 as occurring simultaneously: Israel becomes "Not-My-People" and "Not-Mercied," (vv. 6, 9), whereas in 2:1, those who had once been named "Not-My-People"—the Gentiles, on Paul's reading—miraculously become God's children. Israel thus finds itself standing in the position *formerly occupied by Gentiles*, while the Gentile peoples obtain the covenantal relation that was previously

(Eng.: 2:23) it expands on the RSV's mistranslation of וזרעתייה, "And I will sow *him*," with the even more inaccurate, "*Israel* will be my new sowing in the land."

*the sole prerogative of Israel.*³⁸ The historical reality and eschatological destiny of Jews and of Gentiles are inversely related: each group endures the other's exclusion, and each shares the other's blessing. The irony of Jacob's election reappears in Paul's interpretation of Hosea.

This dynamic recurs in Hos 2:25. The same (Gentile) persons reappear: "Not-My-People" and "Not-Mercied" receive divine favor which reverses their status before God (2:25). There immediately follows a description of the spiritual quiescence characterizing "the sons of Israel" (3:1-4). On Paul's reading, 1:2-2:1 and 2:25-3:4 provide parallel accounts. Israel's loses its covenantal relation which is transferred to those formerly excluded. In both passages, "Not-My-People" and "Not-Mercied" enter into God's family from the outside, while "the sons of Israel" tread the same path in the opposite direction, from belonging to disownment.

This paradoxical destiny of Israel recapitulates the story of election as given narrative form in Genesis. As expressed by Jon Levenson, "The exaltation of the chosen brother—Isaac over Ishmael, Joseph over the tribes—has its costs: it entails the chosen's experience of the bitter reality of the unchosen's life. Such is the humiliation that attends the exaltation of the beloved son."³⁹ The fate of the beloved son in Genesis is to bear the pain of the one whose rejection he precipitated. According to Paul, Hosea predicts the outworking of this harsh irony in the eschatological era. The loved and the hated children have traded places.

³⁸ Seifrid, "Romans," 648.

³⁹ Levenson, *Beloved Son*, 96.

5.2.2.3. *Esau and the Gentiles in Rom 9*

This interpretive matrix provides Paul with a distinct way to read Gentile Christ-believers into the patriarchal narratives. In Galatians, he attributes to them an Abrahamic lineage on the basis of their faith and their reception of the Spirit, realities which unite believers with Christ, Abraham's single seed (Gal 3:16, 22, 29; see §2.2.1.). In Rom 4, Paul makes Abraham the father of *two* groups—those who believe and are circumcised and those who believe and are uncircumcised—by assigning to each the pattern of Abrahamic faith relevant to them (Rom 4:11-13; see §2.2.3.).

In Rom 9, Paul carries through this genealogical realignment by using Hos 2:1 and 2:25 to overturn a previous exclusion from Abraham's family of those outside the Isaac-Jacob line of descent. His adaptation of Hos 2:25 and its subversion of Mal 1:2-3 suggests that these Gentiles enter Abraham's family not only by the Spirit and by faith but also by means of a *hermeneutical identification with Esau*. In Paul's reading, the nations symbolized by his disownment find themselves the unexpected objects of divine love. The Gentiles he prefigures are now incorporated into God's family. By reenfranchising the formerly discarded children, Paul secures for them the Abrahamic goods such as the promised Spirit (Gal 3:29), the cosmos (Rom 4:13), and in Rom 9:25-26 the covenantal relation implied by the newly-bestowed honorifics, "Loved," "My People," and "Sons of the Living God."

5.2.2.4. *The Remnant of the House of Judah*

Hosea 1-3 may also have contributed to Paul's theology of the remnant. Whatever the ultimate source for Paul's understanding of the remnant (§4.1.5.; §6.2.3.), Hosea makes a distinction within Israel parallel to that made in Isa 10:20-23. In Hos 1:6-7, the expulsion

from God's family predicated of *Israel* is explicitly contrasted with the situation characterizing "the house of *Judah*." This latter entity receives from God assurances of *mercy* (ἐλεεῖν) and *deliverance* (σώζειν). The combined text of Hos 2:1 and Isa 10:22 in Rom 9:27 makes this same distinction: an innumerable people of Israel, on the one hand, and the remnant that will be saved (σωθήσεται), on the other (cf. 11:14). The use of ἐλεέω in Rom 9:15-23—where it and its cognate noun occur five times—implies that the remnant is characterized by mercy as well as salvation. Hosea predicts that though the nation as a whole is relieved of its covenantal standing, God will ensure mercy and salvation for a distinct body. The appearance of these same terms and ideas in Rom 9 suggests that Paul has carefully attended to his biblical text.

5.2.2.5. *From Etiology to Eschatology: Abraham's Family Reunited*

Finally, Hosea may have supplied the salvation-historical sequence that appears in Rom 9-11 and nowhere else. If, on Paul's understanding, Hos 1:2-2:1 and 2:23-3:4 parallel each other in their nullification of Israel's elect status and in the transfer of that privilege to Gentile believers, then 2:2-3 and 3:5 anticipate a restored family in which *both* the houses of Israel and of Judah embrace their Gentile relations. These two verses promise Israel's repentance, the reconstitution of Judah and Israel as a single people, the ascendancy of a Davidic scion to lead them, and the return to Zion for the worship of Yahweh. How might Paul relate these events to the other transformations described by Hosea?

The LXX translation provides a clue. Its temporal distinction in 2:1 distinguished between the promise of abundant seed that has been fulfilled in the past and the adoption of "Not-My-People" into God's family that is projected into the future (§5.2.2.1.).

fulfillment of
the promise to
multiply seed → adoption of
Gentile nations

Likewise, Hos 2:23-3:5 assigns distinct temporal indicators to the transformation of “Not-My-People” and “Not-Mercied” and to the eventual restoration of “the sons of Israel.”

The incorporation of the excluded ἔθνη takes place at some future point (καὶ ἔσται ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ; וְהָיָה בַיּוֹם הַהוּא, 2:23). By contrast, the restoration of Israel will transpire “after these things” (μετὰ ταῦτα; אַחֲרָי, 3:5)—that is, after it loses its elect status and trades places with the Gentiles as described (on Paul’s reading) in 2:23-3:4.

adoption of
Gentile nations → restoration of both
houses of Israel
and Judah

Paul sees his own apostleship as occurring at the midpoint of these events: through his missionary work the time to include Gentiles in God’s family has arrived (9:24).⁴⁰

These temporal markers provide an axis on which the other events prophesied by Hosea may be plotted. As a prophecy extending the story of Abraham’s children into the eschaton, Hosea may have catalyzed Paul’s theology of Israel that appears only in Romans (§2.2., esp. §2.2.3.). His reiterated promises can be arranged into a coherent picture of eschatological redemption that aligns with the expectations Paul sets out in Rom 9-11.⁴¹

⁴⁰ As Wilk notes, the combination of Hos 2:1a and Isa 10:22 shows that “the proclaimed ‘salvation of the remnant’ belongs together in time as well as content with the calling of the Gentile Christians” (*Bedeutung*, 186).

⁴¹ Paul may have been assisted by additional texts, though their influence cannot be proven. For example, Jer 23 promises the following: God will restore a remnant (v. 3); a Davidic Messiah will reign (v. 5); Judah and Israel will be united, the former expressly said to be *saved* (v.6); the *house of Israel* will return (v. 7). Further on, Jerusalem is likened to Sodom and Gomorrah (23:14). This text contains several

Hos 2:1-3	Hos 2:23-3:5	Rom 9-11
	Cosmic Reconciliation; 2:23-24	(Cosmic Reconciliation; 8:19-25, 28, 32?)
Israel reduced to a remnant; 2:1a; see also Isa 10:22 and division between <i>Judah</i> and <i>Israel</i> in Hos 1:7		Israel reduced to a remnant; 9:27-29
Gentile Inclusion; 2:1b	Gentile Inclusion “in that day;” 2:23, 25	Gentile Inclusion; 9:24-26
Present destitution of Israel, announced in 1:2-9	Present destitution of Israel; 3:1-4	Present destitution of Israel; 9:3; 9:31-10:3; 10:21; 11:7b-10, 12, 15, 17
Restoration of Israel; 2:2a	Restoration of Israel “in the latter days;” 3:5a	Restoration of Israel; 11:12, 15-16, 23-24, 26
Single Ruler; 2:2b	Davidic Messiah; 3:5b	Deliverer from Zion; 11:26
Renewal of Covenant; 2:3	Renewal of Covenant; 3:5c	Renewal of Covenant; 11:27
Israel addresses the Gentiles as brothers and sisters; 2:3		Israel and the Gentiles part of one (Abrahamic) family; 11:17, 24, cf. 4:11

The theology of Israel in Rom 9-11 is unique among Paul’s letters. Only here does the apostle describe the sequential and even causal connection between the (present) rejection of Israel, the inclusion of the Gentiles, and all Israel’s final salvation. The factors accounting for this perspective need not be reduced to a single cause, but Paul’s exegetical reflection on Hos 1-3 likely made some contribution. The tight correspondence between these chapters, when read in light of the indications he provides, and the scenario envisioned in Rom 9-11 provide evidence that Hosea influenced and possibly generated the expectations for Israel Paul expresses only here.

items that also appear in Hos 1-3 (reunification of Judah and Israel, messiah, “the house of Israel”) and Rom 9 (remnant, Sodom and Gomorrah).

5.2.3. EXCURSUS: A TRANSGENDERED ESAU?

One feature of Paul’s quotations might appear to present a significant obstacle to my reconstruction. The argument hinges on the patterned antagonism between two *brothers* woven through the fabric of Genesis. By means of Hos 2:25 and 2:1 Paul announces that the *hated, unloved son* Esau (cf. Mal 1:2-3 in Rom 9:13) undergoes a transformation—*he* is now the *beloved son*. But as one can readily see, the participles in both Hos 2:25 and Rom 9:25 are *feminine*. לֹא רָחֵמָה / οὐκ ἠγαπημένη is, of course, Hosea’s *daughter*. If her gender as well as her symbolism has been applied to Esau, then Esau has undergone a transformation indeed!

A clue to Paul’s intent may be found—again—in Genesis. Of all the elder siblings overshadowed by a privileged second-born, there is only one in the who, like Esau in Mal 1:3, is said to be *hated*: Leah. In fact the two share several similarities, as the following texts suggest:

Gen 25:23

And the Lord said to her, “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from your uterus shall be divided, and a people shall excel over a people, and the greater (ὁ μείζων) shall be subject to the lesser.”

Gen 27:11

But Jacob said to his mother Rebecca, “My brother Esau is a hairy man, while I am a smooth man.”

Gen 29:16-17

Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the bigger (τῆ μείζονι) was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. And Leah’s eyes were weak, but Rachel was shapely in figure and lovely in appearance.

Gen 29:26

And Laban said, “It is not possible thus in our locality to give the younger before the elder (τὴν πρεσβυτέραν).”

Gen 29:31-33

Now when the Lord saw that Leah was hated (μισεῖται), he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. And Leah conceived and bore a son to Jacob, and she called his name Rueben, saying, “Inasmuch as the Lord has seen my humiliation, now it is me my husband will love.” And Leah conceived again and bore a second son to Jacob and said, “Because the Lord has heard that I am hated (μισοῦμαι), he has also in addition given this one too,” and she called his name Simeon.

Mal 1:2-3

Was not Esau Jacob’s brothers? says the Lord. And I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau (ἐμίσησα).

Both Esau and Leah are hated. Both have a certain legal priority as firstborn, yet are pushed aside in favor of a sibling who receives the honor, love, and blessing denied to them. Both compare unfavorably with their younger, more comely, counterparts. Both find themselves on the losing side of a competitive struggle: in Esau’s case a battle of wits (for which he is sorely unqualified); in Leah’s case a contest of fertility (in which even her success leave her disconsolate). Both make desperate attempts at some kind of vindication but are ultimately half-successful at best: despite his tears, Esau cannot attain the kind of fraternal intimacy he desires (Gen 33:4-16; §7.2.); despite her fecundity, Leah cannot attain the kind of domestic acknowledgment she craves. And both suffer rejection from the same man. Jacob wants only distance from Esau and children from Leah. He is not interested in showing affection towards either (§4.3.1.).

These considerations suggest an entirely plausible explanation for Paul’s decision to retain the *feminine* participle in his quotation from Hos 2:25, even while altering it to overturn Malachi’s condemnation of *Esau*.⁴² What Paul seeks to invert is the pattern of exclusion by which the younger sibling ousts the elder. Although Genesis devotes most

⁴² I believe this solution to be more compelling than that of Seifrid, who suggests that Paul, by using τὴν οὐκ ἠγαπημένην, summarizes and applies the story of the adulterous wife in Hos 1-3, a symbol of God’s people (“Romans,” 647). “Unloved” is never used of the wife in Hosea; indeed, 3:1 suggests the opposite: she is loved even in her harlotry, just as Israel is loved by God even in Israel’s idolatry.

of its attention to this theme as it affects the relationship between brothers, its pattern of reversal and exclusion does not discriminate according to gender. Hosea's proclamation indicates that not only Esau but also Leah finally receive a long-denied recognition. In Hos 2:3, it may be remembered, the restored sons of Israel and Judah are to call out to their brother and their *sister*.⁴³

5.2.4. SUMMARY

In Rom 9:25-26, Paul quotes prophecies originally referring to Israel in order to vindicate the inclusion of Gentile Christ-believers in God's family. His warrant for doing so is not obvious. The firmest indication that he has one is the network of verbal and thematic links which connect his quotations and their context to Paul's interpretation of Genesis in vv. 7-13. It appears that Paul read Hos 2:1 in an atomizing fashion and applied one half

⁴³That Paul extended biblical promises of covenantal renewal to both genders may find confirmation in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1. Unfortunately the Pauline origin of this passage is fiercely contested. Hans Dieter Betz ("2 Cor 6:14-7:1: An Anti-Pauline Fragment?" *JBL* 92 [1973]: 88-108) and Joseph Fitzmyer ("Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph in 2 Cor 6:14-17," in *The Semitic Background of the New Testament* [BRS; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997], 205-17; repr. from *CBQ* 23 [1961]), among others, have argued that these verses are a non-Pauline or even anti-Pauline interpolation. Nevertheless, several scholars have accepted their authenticity (F. F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians* [NCB; London: Oliphants, 1971], 213-14; C. K. Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* [BNTC; London: A&C Black, 1973], 193-94; Gregory K. Beale, "The Old Testament Background of Reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5-7 and Its Bearing on the Literary Problem of 2 Corinthians 6.14-7.1," *NTS* 35 [1989]: 550-81; Margaret E. Thrall, *2 Corinthians 1-7* [ICC; London: T&T Clark, 1994], 25-36), and William J. Webb in particular provides convincing arguments showing that the passage is integral to 2 Corinthians (*Returning Home: New Covenant and Second Exodus as the Context for 2 Corinthians 6.14-7.1* [JSNTSup 85; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993]). The important aspect for present purposes is the reproduction of 2 Sam 7:14, ἀντὸς ἔσται μοι εἰς υἱόν, in 2 Cor 6:18 as ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθέ μοι εἰς υἱοὺς καὶ θυγατέρας. Not only is the Davidic covenant "democratized" and applied to the entire community (perhaps under the influence of Isa 55:1-5; see Otto Eissfeldt, "The Promises of Grace to David in Isaiah 55:1-5," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenberg* [ed. Bernhard W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson; New York: Harper, 1962], 196-207), the application to both sons and daughters is made explicit. Isaiah's restoration texts may have played a role in this: 43:6, 45:11, 49:22, and 60:4 all announce a regathering of Israel's exiled sons and daughters; 45:11 is particularly interesting. The Hebrew, "will you ask me about things to come עַל בְּנֵי" is translated with περὶ τῶν υἱῶν μου καὶ περὶ τῶν θυγατέρων μου. This addition to 1 Sam 7:14 in 2 Cor 6:18 emphasizes that the Davidic promises extend to all members of the community, regardless of gender. I believe that a similar motive might explain why Paul adapted his quotation from Hosea to undo Micah's execration of Esau while retaining the feminine form. God calls not only from among Jews and Gentiles, but also from among male and female (Gal 3:28), the not-loved and not-enfranchised of all nations and both genders.

of the verse to Israel and the other to the Gentiles. He then reads the first half referring to Israel in light of Isa 10:22-23 (*gezera shawa*). These hermeneutical moves allow Paul to find in Hos 1-3 new resources for interpreting the Abrahamic mythomoteur in the era inaugurated by Christ.

On Paul's reading, Hosea extends the story of Israel's election as the experience of exclusion and reversal to his contemporaries. Their Abrahamic status has been determined by God's calling issued through the gospel. The Gentile nations prefigured in Esau's rejection have now gained the ascendancy. The children of Jacob are divided into a minority, the house of Judah to whom God provides salvation and mercy, and a majority, the house of Israel who forfeit their membership in the covenant. Only when the Davidic messiah reunites both houses and the Gentile believers will all Abraham's family receive its promised inheritance.

Therefore, the proposed exegetical substructure can account for Paul's interpretation of Hos 2:1 and 2:25 as prophecies that God will call Gentiles into his family. Its plausibility rests on the extent to which this account is deemed credible.

5.3. PROMISED LAND AND RESTORATION ESCHATOLOGY IN PAUL

The change of names announced in Hos 2:1 = Rom 9:26 occurs at some unspecified locale: ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ . . . ἔκει. This phrase has puzzled exegetes. What significance, if any, attaches to it?

Evidence for an answer is sparse; confidence in putting one forward must be correspondingly modest. However, Paul has already shown in Rom 4 a greater willingness to take *the land* seriously as a constitutive aspect of God's promise to Abraham than he did in Galatians (§2.2.3.2.). Paul appropriates this promise of land as it

had been reinterpreted according to universalizing tendencies common in Jewish eschatological expectations. The same background can explain the topography of salvation in 9:26. I propose that Paul understands ὁ τόπος and ἡ γῆ as the apocalyptically-redefined patrimony of Abraham's seed, inclusive of believing Gentiles.

5.3.1. ACCOUNTING FOR ἘΚΕῖ

The term ἐκεῖ seems to have entered into the LXX text Paul used as a revision towards the Hebrew (§4.2.). Combined with ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ it noticeably stresses the *place* where God's call occurs. As W. D. Davies points out, the phrase is “very emphatic in the text as Paul understood it; it is unlikely that Paul is merely quoting loosely.”⁴⁴ If so, it is worth asking what sense he might have given to these words. Scholarly debate has entertained three possibilities.

Davies himself read ἐκεῖ as a reference to Jerusalem, “the centre of the world, the symbol of the land itself and the focal point for the Messianic Age.” Paul held this conception of the city prior to his conversion, and “[t]he likelihood is that, *at first at least*, it occupied the same place in his life as a Christian.”⁴⁵ Yet this position has not

⁴⁴ Davies, *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 196.

⁴⁵ Davies, *Land*, 198; emphasis added. The qualification is significant, because Davies also argues that Paul's commitment to Jerusalem as the city of eschatological salvation had significantly waned by the time he wrote Romans, lingering only as an emotional attachment without theological substance (*ibid.*, 208). Other writers who accept Jerusalem or alternatively Palestine as the referent include Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 72; *idem*, *Salvation*, 282-308; Dahl, “Future of Israel,” in *Studies*, 146; Roger D. Aus, “Paul's Travel Plans to Spain and the ‘Full Number of the Gentiles’ of Rom. 11:25,” *NovT* 21 (1979): 232-62; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 573 (though Fitzmyer judges that ἐκεῖ has no relevance for Paul; it is only a residual term in the quotation); James M. Scott, *Paul and the Nations: The Old Testament and Jewish Background of Paul's Mission to the Nations with Special Reference to the Destination of Galatians* (WUNT 84; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 133; Frey, “Identity,” 302-4. Sanday and Headlam incline towards this view (*Romans*, 264, 337, tentatively).

Moo, like Davies, suggests that Paul retains the original sense, but for Moo ἐκεῖ in the quotation means not the promise land but the place of exile (*Romans*, 613-14).

gone uncontested. A contrary approach is exemplified by Käsemann, who claimed that Paul, “with great audacity,” strips ἐκεῖ of its original reference to Israel’s territorial promises and relates it to the sphere of his missionary work.⁴⁶

The most common interpretation avoids any spatial reference at all. This understanding takes ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ as an expression devoid of geographical significance. Not “in the place where” but “instead of” is Cranfield’s translation, buttressed by an appeal to the original Hebrew. He writes, “It is quite likely that in Hos 1.10 (MT: 2.1) *bim’ḵôm* ^a*šer yē’ āmēr* should be translated ‘instead of its being said’ and not unlikely that Paul’s Greek should be understood similarly.”⁴⁷

Despite its widespread acceptance, this approach can account for neither the other geographic references in Rom 9 (§4.1.4.) nor the presence of ἐκεῖ.⁴⁸ The combination of

⁴⁶ Käsemann, *Romans*, 274; similarly Wagner, *Heralds*, 84-85. Seifrid takes an all-inclusive approach: ἐκεῖ refers to the desolation of the land during Israel’s exile, the promise of its restoration, and the place where Gentiles turn to God in all the earth (“Romans,” 648).

⁴⁷ Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:501. He cites two witnesses to support this understanding of τόπος: Bauer’s lexicon and the historian Herodian. BDAG provides only one example of this use, Achmes’s *Oneirocriton*, a 9th-century Christian reworking of a Greco-Roman text (s.v.τόπος), and Cranfield himself notes that Herodian wrote in the third century C.E. In view of these late dates, the examples have questionable relevance.

LSJ, in addition to “place, region” (and related meanings), provides two further definitions: “topic, common-place” (e.g., in rhetoric), and, in metaphorical usage, “opening, occasion, opportunity,” e.g., Rom 12:19; Eph 4:27; Heb 12:17; Sir 4:5; Thucydides 6.54; Polybius 1.88.2; Plutarch 2.462b; Heliodorus 6.13. (The LSJ supplement adds “rank, position.”) All of these examples indicate a metaphorical sense of “place,” such as, “give no τόπον to the devil” (Eph 4:27), rather than anything approaching “instead of.” Given the paucity of evidence, Cranfield may be relying too heavily on the underlying Hebrew. Nevertheless, this understanding of ἐν τῷ τόπῳ κτλ. is accepted by many (Wilckens, *Röm*, 206; Käsemann, *Romans*, 274 [who sets this solution alongside the previous one], Dunn, *Romans*, 2:572; Jewett, *Romans*, 601).

Those scholars who consider that already in Paul the territorial promises had been spiritualized are committed to either the second (“wherever Gentiles believe”) or the third (“instead of”) alternatives, whether they address Rom 9:26 or not (e.g., Paul S. Minear, “Holy People, Holy Land, Holy City: The Genesis and Genius of Christian Attitudes,” *Int* 37 [1983]: 18-31, esp. p. 28; P. W. L. Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City: New Testament Perspectives on Jerusalem* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996], 113-60; Gary M. Burge, “Land,” *NIDB* 3:570-75; idem, *Jesus and the Land: The New Testament Challenge to “Holy Land” Theology* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010], 73-94).

⁴⁸ It is even more difficult to derive a metaphorical meaning for ἐκεῖ than τόπος. LSJ has “there, in that place,” followed by “as euphem. for ἐν Ἀιδου,” “in the intelligible world,” “thither,” “rarely, of

τόπος, οὗ, and ἐκεῖ makes a spatial reference very likely. If so, where is it that God adopts “Not-My-People” into his family?

Three points discussed above may provide some guidance. First, in Rom 4:13 Paul interprets God’s promise of land to Abraham as a promise of ὁ κόσμος. Second, several OT verses quoted or alluded to in Rom 9 (and 10:18) refer to *the earth* as the theater of God’s saving acts.⁴⁹ Third, the quotations from Hosea recall the patriarchal stories in Genesis. In light of these factors, I will attempt in what follows to combine the first interpretation (ἐκεῖ = Jerusalem / Palestine) with the second (ἐκεῖ = the area of Paul’s missionary work). God’s call makes Gentiles children of Abraham and therefore heirs of the world.

5.3.2. ABRAHAM’S WORLDWIDE PATRIMONY

In the HB, the land symbolizes the place of promise, conquest, national inheritance, and future glory. As a remembered and hoped-for homeland, or in Anthony Smith’s term, ethnoscape, it demonstrates an elasticity that in eschatological contexts could envelope the world.⁵⁰ In the HB itself, the term יְרֵאֲחָד , like its LXX equivalent ἡ γῆ, can be translated

Time, *then*,” and, in the supplement, “perh. *in that matter*,” for which it cites SEG 30.568.6 (from Macedon, 1st cent. CE). Only this final example could support the reading of ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ to mean, “instead of,” but even then the result is more than a little awkward: “and instead of it being said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ in this matter they shall be called, ‘sons of the living God.’”

⁴⁹ Exod 9:16 in Rom 9:17; Hos 2:25 (Eng.: 2:23) in 9:25; Hos 2:1 (Eng.: 1:10) in Rom 9:26; Isa 10:23 in Rom 9:28; Isa 1:9 in Rom 9:29; Ps 18:5 (Heb.: 19:5, Eng.: 19:4) in Rom 10:18. These verses are quoted in §4.1.4.

⁵⁰ The multivalent religious and political symbolism of the land is explored in Norman C. Habel, *The Land is Mine: Six Biblical Land Ideologies* (OBT; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995); Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith* (2d ed.; OBT; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002).

either *the land*, i.e., Canaan, or *the earth*, the entire inhabited creation.⁵¹ In Genesis, where the territory God granted to Abraham comes with relatively clear boundaries (15:8; 17:8; cf. 12:7; 13:15), the first definition applies.

In time, however, the conviction arose that God would not limit his people to so confined a space. This development began with Second Isaiah at the latest. In his prophecies, a new kind of monotheism emerged, combative and ready to confront the gods of other nations on their own territory. The scope of ארץ expands accordingly from Canaan to the entire cosmos.⁵² Several psalms show the same development, intimating that, in their authors' view, Israel's inheritance could not be contained within the boundaries of Canaan.⁵³ This is especially true of the royal or so-called messianic psalms.⁵⁴ Likewise, several prophetic texts announce a coming deliverer whose rule will encompass the nations (Isa 9:2-7; 11:1-10; Zech 9:9-10).⁵⁵ The rise of cosmic eschatology in various apocalyptic movements pushed in the same direction (e.g., Isa 26:15; Dan 2:35, 44; 7:14, 27; *1 En.* 5:7; *2 Bar.* 14:13; 51:3).

⁵¹ BDB, s.v. ארץ 1, 2e; DCH, s.v. ארץ 1, 2; BDAG, s.v. γῆ 1, 3; Brueggemann, *Land*, xiii.

⁵² Carroll Stuhlmueller, "Deutero-Isaiah: Major Transitions in the Prophet's Theology and in Contemporary Scholarship," *CBQ* 42 (1980): 1-29.

⁵³ Pss 22:28-32 (Gk.: 21:28-32; Eng.: 22:27-31); 47:3-4, 8-9 (Gk. 46: 3-4, 8-9; Eng.: 47:2-3, 7-8); 66:5 (Gk.: 65:5); 67:3-8 (Gk.: 66:3-8; Eng.: 67:2-7); 86:9 (Gk.: 85:9); 97:1, 5, 9 (Gk.: 96:1, 5, 9); 98:2-4, 9 (Gk.: 98:2-4, 9); 100:1-2 (Gk.: 99:1-2); 102:16, 23 (Gk.: 101:16, 23; Eng.: 102:15, 22); 113:4-5 (Gk.: 112:4-5); 117:1 (Gk.: 116:1); 148:7.

⁵⁴ Pss 2:8-9; 18:47 (Gk.: 17:47); 110:1-2, 6 (Gk.: 109:1-2, 6); 118:10 (Gk. 117:10). Pss 72 and 105 (Gk.: Pss 71 and 104) are particularly relevant. Ps 72 reinterprets Gen 12:2-3 and 27:29 in Davidic and universal terms, extending Abraham's inheritance "from sea to sea, and from the River [=Euphrates] to the ends of the earth" (v. 8; see also vv. 5, 8, 11, 17; Scott, *Nations*, 64). In Ps 105:42-44, because God remembers his word to Abraham, he gives his people "the lands of the nations" (ארצות גוים; χώρας ἐθνῶν).

⁵⁵ Zech 9:10 provides the same boundaries as Ps 72:8: from sea to sea and from the Euphrates to the world's end.

Especially relevant are those postbiblical passages in which Abraham's *seed* inherits a territory that encompasses the entire world. *Jubilees* 32:18-19, Sir 44:21, and CD II, 11-12 all bear witness to this development.⁵⁶ In these examples, the worldwide scope of the expected Israelite occupation rests firmly on the Abrahamic territorial promises. A similar reinterpretation likely lies behind an allegorical reworking in Philo (*Som.* 1.175 [interpreting Gen 28:14]; *Mos.* 1.157). The author of *4 Ezra* can take this expansive understanding of Abraham's promise for granted, though to him it seems less like a living hope than a cruel disappointment: "If the world has indeed been created for us [viz., Israel, God's 'firstborn and only begotten,' v. 58], why do we not possess our world as an inheritance?" (6:59). These examples show that many Jews felt the world lay before them by virtue of their Abrahamic inheritance.

5.3.3. THE THEOLOGICAL GEOGRAPHY OF ROMANS 9 AND ITS ANTECEDENTS IN HOSEA

Romans 4:13, the geographic references in Rom 9, and the cosmic reinterpretation of Abraham's bequest in Jewish literature, all suggest that ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ . . . ἐκεῖ does not indicate a de-territorialized "instead of." The remaining two interpretations have wrongly been posited as antithetical perspectives: *either* Paul continued to maintain Jewish expectations in a literal Gentile pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where they would worship

⁵⁶ *Jub.* 17:3, 19:21, and 22:14 are ambiguous—they may refer only to Palestine. In 17:3, Isaac rejoices because "the Lord had given him seed upon the *earth* so that they might inherit the *land*." The same Ethiopic word is used both times (VanderKam, *Critical Text*, 103). Both Wintermute and VanderKam translate the relevant phrases in 19:21 and 22:14 "all of the earth." The original referent may be only Palestine. However, 32:19 clearly has a wider area in view, and nudges these earlier passages in a universalist direction. Sir 44:21 repeats the same borders as those given in Ps 72:18, Zech 9:10.

In two papers delivered to regional SBL conferences in 2008, I argued that a similar process can be seen in the editorial history of the *War Scroll* and related documents, whose latest redactional passages transform a localized battle for the liberation of Palestine into a global crusade. A similar argument has been recently advanced by Brian Schultz (*Conquering the World: The War Scroll (IQM) Reconsidered* [STJD 76; Leiden: Brill, 2009], 236-39).

God in Jerusalem (so Munck, Scott); *or* he spiritualized the territorial dimensions of God's promises and substituted for them a Christo-ecclesial reality (so Käsemann).

The Hosean context of Paul's quoted verses suggests a solution that synthesizes both approaches. The salvation oracles recorded there possess a dual characteristic that corresponds to these conflicting interpretations of ἐκεῖ: they are cosmic in scope yet anticipate a return to Jerusalem.

A universalist impulse clearly animates Hos 2:20, where God dissolves the hostility between humanity and the animal creation. He does this by effecting a covenant that reprimates the ideal creation of Gen 1. It embraces the beasts of the field (הַשָּׂדֶה תִּהְיֶה; θηρία τοῦ ἀγροῦ) the birds of the air (עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם; πετεινοὶ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ), and creeping things of the ground (רֶמְשׂוֹת הָאֲדָמָה; ἕρπεντα τῆς γῆς; cf. Gen 1:26, 30). This γῆ on which the creeping things crawl must therefore refer to the entire world. The spread of peace as a result of God's new order is similarly comprehensive in scope: God will break the weapons of war מִן הַאֲרֵי; ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς (Hos 2:18; cf. 1:7). This cosmic rejuvenation continues to unfold in vv. 23-24, where Creator and creation—the heavens, the earth, the earth's produce, and the Jezreel valley—combine in antiphonal celebration of God's eschatological salvation. Hosea's prediction of worldwide festivities correspond to the universalistic and eschatological framework within which Paul situates the promise that Abraham's seed would inherit the earth.

In addition to this perspective oriented toward *creation*, Hos 2:2 and 3:5 both portray a return of God's people to *Jerusalem*. The former verse promises a return from slavery: a unified and restored Israel will "go up from the land" (וַעֲלֶה מִן הָאֲרֶץ; ἀναβήσονται ἐκ τῆς γῆς), an expression evoking Egypt as the symbolic place of slavery,

as 2:17 makes explicit.⁵⁷ According to 3:5, the sons of Israel will return (יָשׁוּבוּ; ἐπιστρέψουσιν) and seek (יִשְׁקָבוּ; ἐπιζητήσουσιν) their God and come trembling (יִפְחָדוּ; ἐκστήσονται) to the Lord. This language strongly implies that a worshipping assembly is in view.⁵⁸

The very few passages where Paul refers to the heavenly Jerusalem suggest how he may have read these predictions. The only place where he invokes a prophecy of Jerusalem's resettlement occurs in the allegory in Gal 4. Paul presents Sarah, the mother of Abraham's true children, as the textual representation of the Heavenly Jerusalem (v. 26). He applies to this transcendent city the eschatological ingathering of God's children from their exile (Isa 54:1-2 in v. 27), now reapplied to Gentiles who, as incorporated into the one heir (Gal 3:16), have become children of Abraham (Gal 3:29; see §2.2.1.).

A second reference to the heavenly Jerusalem probably occurs in Rom 11:26, where Paul speaks of the Deliverer proceeding from *Zion*.⁵⁹ Despite the controversy surrounding this verse, I consider a reference to Christ descending from his heavenly residence to be the most persuasive understanding.⁶⁰ Hence, both Gal 4:26-27 (certainly) and Rom 11:26 (probably) refer to Jerusalem as a heavenly entity.

⁵⁷ See also the language of "going up" (i.e., from Egypt) in Gen 50:24; Exod 1:10; 3:8; 13:18; 32:1, 4, 7, 8, 23; 33:1; Lev 11:45; Num 16:13; Deut 20:1; Josh 24:17; Judg 2:1; 11:13; 19:30; 1 Sam 12:6; 1 Kgs 12:28; 2 Kgs 17:7, 36; Ps 81:10; Isa 11:16; Jer 2:6; 11:17 (not in LXX); 16:14, 15; 23:7, 8; 50:9 (LXX 27:9); 51:16 (LXX 28:16); Amos 2:10; 3:1; 9:7; Mic 6:4.

⁵⁸ Similar cultic language occurs in Exod 34:24; 1 Sam 1:3; 10:3; Isa 2:3; Jer 31:6.

⁵⁹ Sanday and Headlam speculate that ἐκ Σιών in Rom 11:26 might shed light on ἐκεῖ in 9:26, but incline towards the view that in both cases Paul is speaking of terrestrial Jerusalem and / or Palestine (*Romans*, 337).

⁶⁰ Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:578; Käsemann, *Romans*, 314; Davies, "Israel," in *Studies*, 141-42; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:682 (who actually vacillates between this understanding and Christ's appearing in / from the earthly Jerusalem); Esler, *Conflict*, 306; Tobin, *Paul's Rhetoric*, 374; Jewett, *Romans*, 704. I find this suggestion more plausible than a dual reference to the earthly and heavenly Zion (Dahl, "Future of Israel,"

Thus, Galatians indicates that Paul understood the biblical promises of a restored Zion as a transcendental reality, and Romans suggests both that Paul maintained this view even while placing next to it a complementary conviction that Abraham's territorial bequest would encompass the physical creation. This cosmological duality (not *dualism*) coheres well with Paul's description of the heavenly realm in Philippians: believers are citizens of the heavenly city *now*, even while awaiting the arrival *from there* of the ascended Lord (3:20-21), who will then exercise dominion over all creation (2:9-11).⁶¹

It is not, I hope, overly speculative to apply the same metaphysical framework to Paul's reading of Hos 2:1-3, 3:5. The location indicated by ἐκεῖ is the territorial promise fulfilled as Abraham's Gentile children throughout the world enter the messianic community. As the reenfranchised seed of Abraham, they become citizens of the Holy City (cf. Isa 54:1 in Gal 4:27) and concurrently take possession of the territorial promise that they have inherited.

When "all Israel" eventually turns to its deliverer (Rom 11:26), it too will make a pilgrimage, as predicted in Hos 2:2 and 3:5. The former describes this movement with the phrase ἀναβαίνων ἐκ τῆς γῆς (2:2), which can be translated "ascending from the earth."⁶² This phrase permits Paul to read this as a journey with simultaneous heavenly

in *Studies*, 153 n. 47; Aageson, "Scripture," 285; Bell, *Irrevocable Call*, 378-79), a textual corruption from εἰς Ζιὼν (Berndt Schaller, "HXEI EK ZIWN O RUOMENOS: Zur Textgestalt von Jes 59:20f in Röm 11:26f," in *De Septuaginta: Studies in Honour of John William Wevers on His Sixty-fifth Birthday* [ed. Albert Pietersma and Claude Cox; Mississauga, Ont.: Benben, 1984], 203; Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 39-40), a pre-Pauline adaptation (Koch, *Schrift*, 176; Stanley, *Language*, 166-68; idem, "The Redeemer will Come ἐκ Σιων": Romans 11.26-27 Revisited," in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, 118-42), or a vague use of *Zion* as metonymy for the Jewish people in general (Räsänen, "Römer," 2920; Johnson, *Function*, 162-63; Reidar Hvalvik, "A 'Sonderweg' for Israel: A Critical Examination of a Current Interpretation of Romans 11.25-29," *JSNT* 38 [1990]: 94-95 [tentatively]; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 625).

⁶¹ A parallel cosmology occurs in the Epistle to the Hebrews; see 11:10, 13-16; 12:22-23; 13:13-14; and also Minear, "Holy People," 26-27.

⁶² The noun form ἀνάβασις in 2:17 would support the same interpretation.

and earthly dimensions. Received into the Jerusalem above, Israel discovers Gentile brothers and sisters (Hos 2:3). Yet these transcendental realities do not erase the tangible fulfillment of God's promise on earth (Rom 4:13). Paul envisions a heavenly, spiritual Jerusalem entered into *ἐκ τῆς γῆς* (Hos 2:2) even while the pilgrims claim Abraham's inheritance *ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς* (cf. Rom 9:28).⁶³

5.3.4. SUMMARY

The hypothesis that Paul rests his argument in Rom 9 on a pre-epistolary exegesis of Genesis as read through Hosea is capable of answering a textual peculiarity in Rom 9:26: the extension of God's call to Gentile believers occurs at a place described with the emphatic phrase *ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ . . . ἔκει*. Paul does not explain what he means by this, but a plausible answer can be assembled from several expressions of the Jewish ethnoscape: the territorial promise to Abraham, the restoration predicted in Hosea, the apocalyptic universalizing of Abraham's inheritance, and Paul's references to the heavenly Jerusalem elsewhere. From these, it appears that *the place* where God summons Gentiles to join his family is the *whole earth* reinterpreted as the territory promised to Abraham's seed. They claim their patrimony in conjunction with their spiritual entry into the heavenly Jerusalem, as also implied in Gal 4:26.

⁶³ Several interpreters appear to reach a similar conclusion though by very different routes. Scott, for example, suggests that Gentile believers enter the heavenly city in and through Paul's missionary work (*Nations*, 134, despite his attempt to retain the centrality of empirical Jerusalem in Paul's missiological and eschatological convictions). See also Davies, "People of Israel," in *Studies*, 351-52 n. 70; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:682, 692-93; Lambrecht, "Israel's Future" in *Studies*, 46-47 (discussing 11:25-27); Glenny, "People of God," 54.

5.4. CONCLUSIONS

Hosea's contribution to Paul's argument in Rom 9-11 goes far beyond what most interpreters acknowledge. The evidence suggests that the Hosean prophecies give Paul not only rhetorically effective language but resources for imagining how the Abrahamic mythomoteur can embrace Gentile believers in Christ.

The quotation from Mal 1:2-3 in Rom 9:13 provokes two objections (vv. 14, 19) which require Paul to justify the Creator's right to act in the way he describes. In defending God's election of Jacob and his repudiation of Esau, Paul resorts to a unilateral monergism that appears to lead him off topic. In reality, he is preparing for the ironic undoing of his own argument: God's absolute prerogative as Creator not only justifies his right to love Jacob and hate Esau, it also vindicates his calling of Gentiles and Jews, even while rejecting Israel as a whole (see further §6.1.2., §6.2.1.).

By the time Paul introduces his prophetic quotations, he seems to have left Genesis far behind. However, the lexical and thematic connections that link it to Hosea and Isaiah (and Malachi) indicate the contrary (ch. 4 above). I have attempted to show that Paul reads Hos 1-3 as prophecies that, when properly decoded, reveal the fate of Abraham's diverse children. This approach made it possible to answer two exegetical questions. First, Paul uses these quotations to support his claim that God calls Gentiles because he correlates the characters in Hosea with outcast Esau on the one hand and Gentile Christians on the other. Second, he retains the phrase that emphasizes the *place* of God's calling because this confirms—for Paul—that the patriarch's newly reconstituted (Gentile) seed share in his territorial possession.

In this way, the tumultuous story of Hosea's children offers a conclusion to the story of Abraham's descendants remarkably different from that given by Malachi. Hatred is traded for hope and partisan love is exchanged for paradoxical mercy which excludes all the children in turn, so that all may be brought back in the end (Rom 11:32). Speaking a fresh word through apostolic interpretation, Hosea proclaims the inclusion of cast-out Ishmael, hated Esau, and despised Leah, the salvation-historical debris which formerly littered the hinterland of Israel's election.

CHAPTER SIX

READING THE REMNANT: THE GENESIS OF A SOTERIOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION

In his three-verse quotation from Isaiah, Paul evokes the patriarchal stories several times:

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

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

It would be difficult to achieve a thicker concentration of Genesis-related elements in so short a space.¹ These allusions suggest that Isa 1:9 and 10:22-23 play a derivative rather than an independent role in Rom 9. Paul's reading of Genesis led to these verses, and in their light he reinterprets Genesis.

In the previous chapters, I moved from the intertextual links between Paul's pentateuchal and prophetic texts (ch. 4) to a reconstruction of how Paul reads and uses Hosea (ch. 5). In the present chapter I will turn to Isaiah and attempt the same. I will argue that Paul relies on Isaiah in order to clarify the Abrahamic identities of Jews who do and who do not believe in Jesus, and I will support this perspective by endeavoring to solve two exegetical problems: the difficulty of deriving a clear meaning from v. 28, and question as to the origin and significance of the concept of the remnant.

¹ On these allusions to Genesis see §4.1.2.-§4.1.6., §4.2.2.

Once these issues are resolved, the apparent turns in logic that characterize Rom 9 can be accounted for as well (§3.6., §5.1.). These also have their explanation in the narratives of Genesis. Its pattern of election and reversal has influenced not only the substance of Paul's theology but also the shape of his argument.²

6.1. A CERTAIN AND SALVIFIC WORD

Until recently, most interpreters have agreed that Isa 10:22-23 in Rom 9:27-28 announces a severe judgment against Israel.³ But an increasing number of scholars find in them not condemnation but the implied assurance of all Israel's eventual salvation. By reading these verses against 9:6-13, I hope to move beyond these stark alternatives. It is my contention that Paul derives from Genesis an ironic understanding of Israel's election, which in turn provides the proper framework for interpreting his quotations from Isaiah. These texts confirm that God's word has not failed by redefining Israel as the remnant on whom his promises devolve.

6.1.1. AN INDECISIVE WORD? ΛΟΓΟΣ ΣΥΝΤΕΛΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝΤΕΜΝΩΝ IN ROM 9:28

At least two obstacles have prevented many commentators from arriving at a satisfactory interpretation of Rom 9:27-28. They frequently read these verses as an announcement of judgment against Israel and they often give συντέμνω in the phrase συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων its full lexical force of "cut short, limit" (BDAG). This meaning requires

² The following exegesis of Rom 9:27-28 presupposes conclusions reached in §4.2.2. and §4.3.3.1.: Paul inherited a shortened LXX text; this text, whether due to an intentional *tendenz* of the translator or not, emphasizes the salvation of the remnant; the participles in the phrase συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων form a hendiadys indicating the swiftness with which God accomplishes his word.

³ Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 252-53, 265; Käsemann, *Romans*, 275; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:501; Wilckens, *Rom*, 206-8; Byrne, *Romans*, 304; Watson, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 321.

some entity that could be so described, forcing interpreters either to find distinct items to which both συντελέω and συντέμνω could be individually applied or to allow the meaning of συντέμνω, “limit” to eclipse the normal definition of συντελέω, “fulfill, complete.”

For example, several scholars apply συντελέω to God’s word and συντέμνω to Israel itself: God will *fulfill* his purpose and *reduce* Israel to a remnant.⁴ But even if Paul’s quotation implies such a limitation, it is unlikely that the participles, joined by a conjunction and situated between a verb and its object, can be syntactically split this way. Others understand συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων to limit the time allotted for Israel’s repentance.⁵ Occasionally, commentators take λόγος as God’s promise, which he will “cut short” by “fulfilling” it in a drastically reduced form.

One prevalent interpretation also relates συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων to λόγος, now understood as a judicial sentence (apparently influenced by the Hebrew of Isa 10:22, כְּלִי־חַרְוֹן, “destruction is decreed”).⁶ Cranfield prefers this reading, and the resulting problems are instructive. He presents his understanding in this way (all brackets are added):

[1] His completing and abridging His sentence, [2] i.e., accomplishing it completely and decisively ([3] indicating the thoroughness and dispatch with which it is executed). [This interpretation], which comes near to the probable meaning of the Hebrew . . . is the only one which is really probable. We may

⁴ Wilckens, *Röm*, 207; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:569; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 574; Byrne, *Romans*, 306.

⁵ Johnson, *Function*, 150 n. 125; NIV, NASB.

⁶ Most translations construe the meaning in this way. Using *sentence* for λόγος (RSV, NRSV, ESV, NIV, NAB, NJB) and / or *execute* for ποιήσει (RSV, NRSV, NASB, ASV, NAB, NJB), they cast a menacing pall over Paul’s quotation (e.g., “the Lord will execute his sentence,” RSV). In this case, συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων is usually taken in an adverbial sense, translated either with a prepositional phrase (e.g., “with rigor and dispatch,” RSV) or with adverbs (e.g., “quickly and decisively,” NRSV). Commentators who accept this position include Sanday and Headlam (*Romans*, 265) and Moo (*Romans*, 615).

translate v. 28, then in some such way as the following: {a} “for a sentence complete and decisive will the Lord accomplish upon the earth” (literally: {b} “for a sentence, completing and abridging it, will the Lord accomplish upon the earth.”). It explains [4] how it will come about that only a remnant of Israel will be saved (v. 27).⁷

In these four sentences, Cranfield offers two translations (marked with letters) and four glosses (marked with numbers), and it is not clear that these all amount to the same thing. Particularly telling is his indecision as to whether an *abridged* sentence is spoken of {b} or a sentence accomplished *completely* [2] and *thoroughly* [3]. Further, the hesitation to decide if the participles are best translated as adjectives {a}, nouns [3], adverbs [2], or participles whose verbal idea has λόγος for its object [1], {b}, shows the uncertainty which results from taking the quotation from Isaiah as a prediction of Israel’s judgment.

These various explanations share several inadequacies. First, few fit Paul’s context well (a problem also for the translations based on them).⁸ The announcement that God will “execute a sentence,” for example, or that he will “cut repentance short,” has little connection to the surrounding passage. Scholars looking for something that can be limited have had to bring extraneous or even conflicting ideas into the context, such as God’s decision to limit the time available for repentance or the diminished fulfillment of his promise.

First, the lexical meaning of συντέμνω, “cut short,” has unduly constrained the discussion. In the LXX, συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων functions as a hendiadys indicating an impending but not yet manifest action of God (§4.3.3.1). In any case, there is no evident

⁷ Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:502.

⁸ Naturally, Paul may reproduce material from his OT texts beyond the specific item that contributes to his argument. But an interpretation that accounts for the full quotation should receive relatively greater consideration.

reason why the semantic force of συντέμνω should overwhelm that of συντελέω, forcing the exegete to posit some object that can be so described, whether “Israel,” the time allotted for repentance, or some other entity.

Second, this overreliance on συντέμνω as an indication of some kind of limitation has forced many scholars to bring extraneous or even conflicting ideas into the discussion, such as the announcement that God will “execute a sentence,” “cut repentance short,” or “fulfill a promise only in reduced form.” All of these notions have no basis in the context and would seem to undo the very thesis that Paul is arguing for (see 9:6).⁹

Third, the object of the participles has a clear but often overlooked grammatical referent, ποιῆν λόγον. In Paul, as in Isaiah, they probably have an adverbial sense, explaining the manner in which God carries out his word (§4.3.3.1.).¹⁰

Fourth, commentators too often allow the underlying Hebrew to determine how they interpret the very different Greek.¹¹

Finally, commentators who understand these verses in a condemnatory sense ignore the way that 9:27-28 takes up themes and vocabulary that has already played a major role in Paul’s discussion.¹² A compelling understanding of these verses must allow Paul’s context to set the interpretive bearings.

⁹ A point stressed by Wilckens, *Röm*, 207; Koch, *Schrift*, 148.

¹⁰ Koch, *Schrift*, 147; Heil, “Remnant,” 713; Jewett, *Romans*, 603. If they were adjectival, they would likely be in the accusative case, corresponding to λόγον, rather than the genitive.

¹¹ E.g., many translations, and also Cranfield (*Romans*, 2:502) and Moo (*Romans*, 615), both of whom explicitly appeal to the Hebrew of Isa 10:22-23 to determine the meaning of Rom 9:27-28.

¹² E.g., Käsemann, who argues that *because* συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων imply judgment, λόγος in v. 28 *cannot* refer to v. 6 (*Romans*, 275). Other interpreters acknowledge such links but make little of them. Both Wilckens and Dunn, for example, mention in passing that v. 28 recalls v. 6a, but this awareness plays no role in their exposition (Wilckens, *Röm*, 207; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:573). Even scholars attempting to shift the emphasis from judgment to hope show only moderate interest in pursuing them, e.g., Paul E. Dinter,

6.1.2. WORD AND SALVATION IN ROMANS 9:27-29

Recently, interpreters have attempted to circumvent these pitfalls by reading the quotation not as condemnation but as promise. Normally, advocates first revise the interpretation of Isa 10:22-23 = Rom 9:27-28 as a promise of salvation for the remnant, and then interpret the remnant itself as a guarantee that God will restore the entire nation.

This understanding of the remnant deserves critical scrutiny which I undertake below (§6.2.2.). However, the argument that Isaiah's prophecy announces the remnant's salvation holds more promise. The LXX translation itself points in this direction (§4.3.3.1.). Additional evidence lies in the connections that link these quotations and their introduction in v. 24 to the exposition of patriarchal election in Rom 9:6-13. It is this intersection of foundational story and prophetic interpretation that will best clarify Paul's intention in 9:27-28. Although these were noticed in the past, exegetes have not acknowledged their full interpretive potential.

The Isaianic quotations resume three elements from 9:6-13: the reliability of God's word, the inner-Israel division, and the effectiveness of God's calling. In the opening thesis Paul affirms the integrity of God's word and posits a discrimination between Israel and Israel, which, however, he neglects to develop (v. 6). Verses 7 and 12 draw attention to God's calling, first of Isaac, then of Jacob. Verse 9 brings this calling into close connection with "the word of promise" that defines Abraham's seed (§3.4.2., §3.4.4.) Thus, in Paul's summary of patriarchal history (9:6-13), God's *word* to Abraham becomes effective through his *calling* of Abraham's children, but how this divine action

"Paul and the Prophet Isaiah," *BTB* 13 (1983): 49; Heil, "Remnant," 713; Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 185; Wagner, *Heralds*, 104 n. 194; Gadenz, "Paul's Argumentation," 151; Jewett, *Romans*, 602-3

relates to the *distinction* between *all those from Israel* and *those who are Israel* remains unspecified.

Paul returns to these themes in v. 24. Here he introduces his prophetic quotations with the declaration that God has “*called us*,” the vessels of mercy. Just as Paul uses the Hosean verses to support the calling of Gentiles, so too the texts from Isaiah return to the calling of “us . . . from the Jews.” As Wilckens points out, “In Rom 9:24 the calling issued to Christians actualizes the word given to the fathers of Israel (v. 6).”¹³ This statement extends God’s election of the patriarchs to the present and prepares for quotations that follow.¹⁴

Having established Isaiah as a witness that God calls from among the Jews, in vv. 27-28 Paul returns to the themes of God’s word and Israel’s division. At this point he deploys the perhaps garbled LXX translation to great theological effect (§4.3.3.1.). The transformation of a judgment against Israel into a promise of the remnant’s salvation allows him to give a powerful biblical proof supporting his opening thesis. Verses 6 and 27-28 in fact make identical claims. According to 9:6, God’s *word* has not failed because (γάρ) not *all those from Israel* are *those who are Israel*; likewise, in 9:27-28, a *remnant*, distinct from the “number of the sons of Israel,” will be saved because (γάρ) God will certainly perform his *word*.¹⁵

¹³ *Röm*, 206; also Lambrecht, “Israel’s Future,” in *Studies*, 38; Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 129, 186; Gadenz, “Paul’s Argumentation,” 150

¹⁴ As Wagner says, “Only a reading that ignores Paul’s plain interpretive statement in 9:24 can maintain that Isaiah 10:22-23 functions in Romans 9 as an announcement of condemnation on Israel and a grim declaration that ‘only’ a remnant will be saved” (*Heralds*, 107; similarly Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 129 n. 51).

¹⁵ Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 128; Kowalski, “Funktion,” 725.

The participial phrase *συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων* reinforces Paul's claim. It indicates a certain and perhaps swift completion and implies that God's word is fulfilled in terms of his salvific intent but yet stands poised at the brink of historical actualization. The words do not heap judgment on Israel but assure the remnant that God can be relied on to carry out the salvation he has pledged.

Isaiah 1:9 = Rom 9:29 equates *seed* and *remnant* through the use of *ἐγκαταλείπω*, a verbal cognate of *ὑπόλειμμα / κατάλειμμα*: "Had the Lord of Host not 'remnanted' to us seed . . ." (my translation). This identification recalls the question posed in v. 7 concerning Abraham's seed, its true identity, and its potential to establish God's reliability. The *σπέρμα* of Abraham *is* the *ὑπόλειμμα* whom God *ἐγκαταλείπει* and by so doing fulfills his *λόγος*.

With this appeal to Isaiah, Paul finally removes the studied ambiguity surrounding the meaning of *Israel*. In 9:27-29, the exegetical claim of v. 7a ("not all the children of Abraham count as his seed") is for the first time explicitly applied to the distinction in v. 6b (*all those from Israel vs. those who are Israel*). Paul's argument concerning God's fidelity to the fathers is entirely predicated on the remnant's survival. God's word to Israel has not failed (*οὐχ ἐκπέπτωκεν*) and will be performed (*ποιήσεται*) because Isaiah 10:22-23 and 1:9 *redefine what counts as Israel*.¹⁶ The Israel to whom God is faithful *is* the remnant.

The intervening passage, Rom 9:14-23, initially appears to be a circuitous theological speculation on God's sovereign right to elect whom he will. But Paul's closing statements reveal that they laid the foundation on which his conclusion stands

¹⁶ Against Wagner, who claims, "God's preservation of Israel's 'seed' vouchsafes the ultimate restoration of the whole nation" (*Heralds*, 112).

(§5.1.). The consistent exclusionary effect of divine election and its proclivity to reverse human expectations does not merely clarify the processes by which God broke off non-Israelite peoples from Abraham's family in times past; it also persists into Paul's own day to explain the inner-Israelite rift provoked by his gospel proclamation.¹⁷ If Hos 2:1 subverts Malachi's announcement of divine hatred towards the Gentiles (§5.2.2.3.), Isa 1:9 and 10:22-23 produce a similar transformation by redefining Jacob, the initial recipient of God's electing love.

To summarize: by quoting Isa 10:22-23 and 1:9, Paul finally sets forth the restriction of Israel intimated in 9:6b. These verses show how God's calling as expressed in Genesis (vv. 7-13), the theological basis of that calling (vv. 14-23), and its present activity (v. 24), relate to the reliability of God's word (v. 6a) and the semantic restriction of *Israel* (v. 6b). God's word to Abraham has not failed because *those who are Israel are* the seed that God "remnanted." The significance of the remnant now needs further clarification.

6.2. FROM RESIDUAL SEED TO ALL ISRAEL

The recent move towards reinterpreting Rom 9:27-29 as a promise of salvation seldom stops, as Paul does, with the remnant. Many commentators claim that the idea of a remnant necessarily brings with it an assurance for the entire nation.¹⁸ The problems

¹⁷ "St. Paul analyzes the principles on which this one race was chosen and the other rejected and shows that the very same principles would perfectly justify God's action in further dealing with it. God might choose some of them and reject others, just as he had originally chosen them and not the other descendants of Abraham" (Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 248; similarly, Watson, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 320-21).

¹⁸ "To designate the small number of converted Jews as a 'Remnant' is therefore, for Paul, to affirm already the future conversion of the people as such" (Stanislas, *Études*, 272); see also Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 108; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:472, 2:544, 2:547-48; Dahl, "Future of Israel," in *Studies*, 149; J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress,

with this view are considerable. First, advocates seldom clarify whether this implicit hope is a feature of Paul's rhetoric that he expects his audiences to recognize or whether it can only be appreciated from a knowledge of Isaiah's original texts.¹⁹ Second, the significance of the remnant itself—in Isaiah and elsewhere—is not nearly so unambiguously positive as these interpreters suppose (§6.2.2.). Finally, this alleged promise is nowhere evident in Paul's argument until after he assumes a very different line of reasoning in 11:11-32, provoking the question, Why does he wait so long to clarify the remnant's promissory role these exegetes claim for it?

In the ensuing discussion, I propose that Genesis rather than Isaiah inspires and informs the use Paul makes of the remnant concept in Rom 9-11. To do this, I shall make a number of controversial claims: (1) that Paul uses the remnant in 9:27-29 to exclude "all Israel" from salvation; (2) that he has solid precedent in early Judaism for doing so; (3) that Genesis, not Isaiah, provides the exegetical rationale for this restriction—as well as the guarantee of salvation it brings Rom 11; (4) that Isaiah provides not the comprehensive assurance frequently claimed for the remnant but the distinguishing mark that *separates* it from Israel as a whole.

1980), 335; Davies, "Israel," in *Studies*, 132; Getty, "Salvation," 465-66; Chilton, "Romans 9-11," 33; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:645-46 (but in some tension with 2:574-75); Hays, *Echoes*, 68; Campbell, "Israel," *DPE* 444; idem, *Creation*, 110, 114, 127-29; Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 301-2; Byrne, *Romans*, 305; Mark D. Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 260; Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 185-90; Gager, *Reinventing Paul*, 132; Heil, "Remnant," 718-19; Wagner, *Heralds*, 94, 109, 112, 115-16; Frey, "Identity," 290; Jewett, *Romans*, 601-4, 658; Seifrid, "Romans," 649-50. This tendency contrasts significantly with older interpretations, e.g., Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 313.

¹⁹ This is an ambivalence that Wagner's argument suffers from in particular (*Heralds*, passim).

6.2.1. THE REMNANT, FROM ISAIAH TO PAUL

The survey in ch. 2 showed that Paul's reinterpretation of the Abrahamic mythomoteur reconfigures Israel around the person of the crucified and risen Messiah. Paul conceives of the messianic community, whether composed of ethnic Jews or Gentiles, as God's new creation (2 Cor 5:17) on whom "the end of the ages has come" (1 Cor 10:11). It is not clear that *remnant*, implying a community self-consciously aware of its minority status, is a label naturally suited to this religious self-understanding. Perhaps for this reason Paul nowhere employs it outside of Rom 9-11.²⁰

In these chapters, however, the remnant plays an important theological role. Although Paul introduces it by means of his Isaianic quotations, his use of Isaiah at this point is limited in both rhetorical function and soteriological scope. He does not subpoena the prophet to witness on behalf of Israel's nationwide deliverance. On the contrary, these quotations reinforce the division posed in 9:6b rather than overcome it. Three considerations indicate that they redefine Israel so as to exclude the majority from salvation: the explicit statements they express; the role they play explaining the inner-Israel division stated in v. 6 and preparing for its further development in 11:1-10; and the contribution they make to the antinomies of ch. 9.²¹

²⁰ Donaldson attempts to establish that Paul maintained an understanding of the Jewish Christian community as the remnant throughout his career, but I find the argument unpersuasive (*Gentiles*, 178-81). He himself admits that "outside of Romans, remnant ideas are more elusive" (*ibid.*, 180).

²¹ Paul introduces Isa 10:22-23 with ὑπέρ, which in other contexts in Romans carries the positive connotation, "for salvation." Many interpreters find the same significance here (Hays, *Echoes*, 68; Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 302; Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 128-29, 185-86; Heil, "Remnant," 705, 707; Wagner, *Heralds*, 93; Jewett, *Romans*, 601). They may be correct, but I remain doubtful. First, Paul can speak of his own intercession ὑπέρ his kinsmen in a context which implies that the nation is in fact *anathema* (9:3; Cranford, "Election," 30). Second, to the extent that the preposition does signal a positive assurance of salvation, the ensuing quotation connects it to the remnant alone.

First, there is the content of the quotations themselves. Isaiah 10:22-23 = Rom 9:27-28 lacks any indication of a future salvation that extends beyond the remnant. In this, Paul's use of these verses concurs with their original signification. The transformation of meaning Isa 10:22-23 brought about by the LXX does not undo the judgment sounded in 10:20-23 as a whole.

The same holds true for Isa 1:9. Only the persistence of a seed preserved by God's intervention separates Zion from a destruction as thorough as that visited upon Sodom and Gomorrah. The εἰ μή formulation does not demand any salvific correlation between the remnant and the remainder of Israel. It implies nothing more than that without the preserved seed, the destruction of Israel *would* be as complete as Sodom and Gomorrah's.²² By enlisting these texts as promises for the remnant, Paul sets *all those from Israel* outside of salvation (σωτηρία, v. 27) and aligns them with the devastated cities.²³

Second, the way Paul employs his quotations to resume the inner-Israel division mentioned in 9:6b and to prepare the way for its explication in 11:1-10 also shows the

²² The second class conditional form assumes the untruth of the protasis, εἰ μή indicating “unless, except (that)” (Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, §2302-3; BDF §376; Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996], 694-95): “Except that the Lord had ‘remnanted’ us seed,” or more idiomatically, “If the Lord had not left us seed (though he did).” This preservation of seed is the *only* condition necessary to prevent the apodosis from becoming a reality. It does not require a salvation that includes all Jews (rightly, Grindheim, *Crux*, 155). As Cranford states, “The fact that Israel was not elected as an ethnic group does not invalidate God's historic promises to Israel . . . Covenant privileges continue to be associated with ethnic Israel now as they always have—through the believing remnant” (“Election,” 37 n. 39; similarly, Dahl, “Future,” in *Studies*, 149; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 562).

²³ Wilckens, *Rom*, 207; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 575; Byrne, *Romans*, 305. This lack of salvation characterizing Israel as a whole is sufficient to strain severely any interpretation of Rom 9-11 that identifies the “misstep of the Jews” with “resistance to Paul's Gentile mission” (as claimed in Gaston, *Paul and Torah*, 135-50). The σωτηρία which the Jews lack (10:1) consists of that which the Gentiles have obtained (11:11); it comes through belief in and confession of Christ (10:9-10); and it has as its goal a future deliverance from wrath (5:9-10) and bestowal of eschatological life (1:16-17; 8:23-24; 11:26; 13:11). “Resistance to the Gentile mission” does not fit the context in Rom 9-11 or elsewhere.

restricted sphere of salvation. The relation between 9:6 and 9:27-29 was explored above, and need only be referred to here (§6.1.2.). The same exclusionary potential of language related to the remnant resurfaces in Rom 11:1-10. Interpreters frequently cite 11:1 as proof that Israel's election is, for Paul, unproblematic, self-evident, and non-transferable: "Has God rejected his people? Μὴ γένοιτο!"²⁴ Yet immediately after this ringing affirmation, Paul defines this people as the remnant whose existence God has always guaranteed. He uses terms that recall the election of the patriarchs described in 9:10-11: it is a remnant elect by grace, κατ' ἐκλογὴν χάριτος γέγονεν (11:5), and apart from works, οὐκέτι ἐξ ἔργων (11:6). The seed of Abraham whom God has not rejected is the remnant.

By contrast, the remainder (i.e., the majority) face unrelenting divine opposition. In 11:7, Paul contrasts the Israel who did not acquire what it sought (righteousness, evidently, in light of 9:30-32) and the remnant that did. The language of hardening, πωρόω, makes the analogy between οἱ λοιποὶ and Pharaoh explicit (9:18).²⁵ These non-remnant "leftovers" face only a punitive stupor. God himself acts to harden, blind, deafen, and humiliate them (11:8-10). Isaiah 1:9 and 10:22-23 provides the bridge between the division hinted at in 9:6 and this sobering contrast in 11:1-10.

Finally, the Isaian quotations extend Paul's antinomies, perpetuating the pattern of exclusion and reversal that characterizes Rom 9 as a whole and reach into 11:1-10. These

²⁴ E.g., Gaston, *Paul and Torah*, 92, 140; Getty, "Salvation of Israel," 464; Campbell, *Paul's Gospel*, 52; Watson, *Sociological Approach*, 168; idem, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 335; Hays, *Echoes*, 68.

²⁵ Paul chooses a different word for "hardening" in this context, likely because he is influenced by a non-LXX version of Isa 6:10 that uses this term (cf. Mark 6:52; John 12:40; 2 Cor 3:14; Stockhausen, *Moses' Veil*, 136-40; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:640-41).

oppositions both take up the fissure within Israel from v. 6 and develop the potter's twofold purpose in vv. 21-23. They can be laid out schematically:

πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ τέκνα τὰ τέκνα τῆς σαρκός [τὰ τέκνα τῆς σαρκός]	οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ σπέρμα τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας
σκεύη ὀργῆς εἰς ἀτιμίαν εἰς ἀπώλειαν	σκεύη ἐλέους εἰς τιμὴν εἰς δόξαν
ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ ἡμῶν Σόδομα καὶ Γόμορρα	τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σπέρμα σωτήρια
Ἰσραήλ λοιποὶ πορόω	λεῖμμα ἐκλογή ἐπιτυγχάνω

The column on the left associates πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ with the negatively valued children of the flesh, “the rest,” and those hardened. On the right, the category οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ is aligned with the remnant, promise, and therefore salvation. Just as God, by his promise, reckons (λογίζεται) Abraham’s child as seed (σπέρμα), so too God “remnants” (ἐγκατέλιπεν) a seed in Israel and promises it salvation (σωθήσεται). Paul ends where he began: like the family of *Abraham* in days past (9:6-7), so too the house of *Israel* has in the present encountered rupture, exclusion, and exile (9:27-29).

It is exceedingly difficult to find in 9:6-11:10 any hope for the “non-remnant” majority of Israel κατὰ σάρκα.²⁶ Instead, the logic of election which had previously

²⁶ Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 73-74; Koch, *Schrift*, 148; Räisänen, “Römer,” 2905-6; Westerholm, “Paul and the Law,” 221; Esler, *Conflict*, 278; Tobin, *Paul’s Rhetoric*, 338; Grindheim, *Cruz*, 151. There is simply no basis in Paul’s quotations for setting Isa 10:22-23 (“threat”) against Isa 1:9 (“promise”; so Meeks, “Trusting,” 113); nor the claim that σπέρμα and ὑπόλειμμα / λεῖμμα carry distinct meanings (unbelieving Israel and the Jewish Christians, respectively; so Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 130-31, 185; Heil, “Remnant,” 704 n. 3, 708). This last interpretation requires Heil unpersuasively to sever ἐκάλεσεν ὑμᾶς οὐ μόνον ἐξ Ἰουδαίων in 9:24 from its connection to 9:27-29 and to disconnect the remnant in 9:27-29 from that in 11:1-10. Nor are there grounds for alleging that the remnant in Isa 10:22-23, 1:9 = Rom 9:27-29

dispensed with Ishmael and Esau now recoils on Israel. Although Paul confirms the (past) calling of Israel in 9:7-23, he does so in such a way that its operating principles, God's power and sovereignty, become the basis for Israel's un-election in the present.²⁷ The irony of election that typifies the narratives of Genesis is being recapitulated in the Israel contemporary with Paul. For this reason he brings his discussion concerning his non-Christian compatriots, as Wilckens put it, to a "very gloomy" end:

[Israel] is excluded from salvation (vv. 27f.), the fate of Sodom and Gomorra stands before it (v. 29). Only the Jewish Christians are accepted as the promised remnant of Israel, to whom alone God makes effective the given word of promise for the vessels of his mercy . . . while he will execute his right on the unbelieving Israel as the vessels of his wrath, and will destroy them.²⁸

God's people have gone the salvation-historical path of Ishmael, Esau, Pharaoh, and the vessels of wrath.²⁹ The elect and the non-elect peoples have traded places.

involves a "threat" to all Israel, while in 11:1-10 it involves a "promise" (Munck, *Romans 9-11*, 110; Dahl, "Future of Israel," in *Studies*, 149; an exegesis apparently encouraged by the unfortunate insertion of a chapter break between 10:21 and 11:1).

²⁷ Rom 9:33-10:4, 10:17 suggest that this "diselection" occurred at Christ's coming and Israel's subsequent rejection of the gospel. However, this new phase in God's relation with the heretofore covenanted nation is not without its precedents, as Paul shows in 11:1-4.

²⁸ Wilckens, *Röm*, 2:207. I disagree with N. T. Wright's claim that for Paul, Israel's exile has come to an end with the death and resurrection of the Messiah (*Climax*, 151-52, 245, 250; *Fresh Perspective*, 138-40). At least as far as the argument of Rom 9-11 is concerned, only with Israel's refusal to accept the messianic gospel does its exile begin. I venture to speculate that Paul would consider the "historical exile" of the sixth century B.C.E. a mere anticipation of Israel's true exile, which became a reality when it failed to believe in Christ (a point made by Mark Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Justification* [NSBT 9; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2000], 168-69; idem, "The 'New Perspective on Paul' and Its Problems," *Themelios* 25 [2000]: 10-12; idem, "Romans," 648).

²⁹ Dahl, "Future of Israel," in *Studies*, 145; Evans, "Paul and the Hermeneutics of 'True Prophecy': A Study of Romans 9-11," *Biblica* 65 [1984]: 570; idem, "Paul and the Prophets," 124; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:559, 567; Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah*, 208-9; Bell, *Irrevocable Call*, 233; Jewett, *Romans*, 586.

To those who deny this identification of Israel and Israel's enemies (e.g., Wagner [*Heralds*, 75-77]), the remarks of Charles Cosgrove are pertinent: "To eliminate what is provocative [in 9:22ff], by purporting to establish, for example, that Paul is not lumping Israel together with the enemy of Israel, Pharaoh, that he is not suggesting that Israel and Pharaoh might be like two pieces of clay worked up for immolation in a vast display of divine wrath and power—to rule out from deliberation the entertainment of such possibilities is to ignore what Paul's language *does* here, the way it encourages the reader down a track that, arguably, turns out to be false but is not arguably false except on the basis of a particular interpretation of 11:11-36" ("Rhetorical Suspense," 281; emphasis original).

6.2.2. THE REMNANT IN SECOND TEMPLE POLEMICS

Interpreters desiring to expand the promise of salvation beyond the remnant to all Israel cannot claim direct evidence from Rom 9. Many, therefore, supplement their case with comparative material from the Second Temple period.

The terminology associated with *remnant* originally signified the residual population that lingered after a major catastrophe. In time it evolved into a theological discourse by which a group could claim to preserve the traditions of the past through a time of crisis.³⁰ Many texts present the remnant as the locus of Israel's authentic heritage and the hope for a pan-Israelite renewal.³¹ Hence, several commentators have claimed that the mere appearance of ὑπόλειμμα in Rom 9:27 invokes this tradition and anticipates the eventual salvation of all Israel (Rom 11:26).³²

Yet this promissory character, though evident in several texts, does not exhaust the remnant's symbolism. The language related to it expanded in other ways as well. Alongside ecumenical hopes of national deliverance appeared less inclusive visions.

³⁰ Gerhard Hasel, *The Remnant: The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1972); idem, "Remnant," *IDBSup*, 735-36; E. Jenni, "Remnant," *IDB* 4:32-33; Clements, "Chosen," 106-21; idem, "שְׂאֵר, šā'ar," *TDOT* 14:272-286; Lester V. Meyer, "Remnant," *ABD* 5:669-71; Edgar W. Conrad, "Remnant," *NIDB* 4:761-62. The roots of this development evidently go as far back as 8th-century Isaiah (see 1:9; 4:2-6; 6:12-13; 7:3; 11:11-16; 28:5-6; 37:30-35), though at least some of the relevant material attributed to him is editorial.

The earlier, doom-laden sense is evident in 2 Kings 21:14; Isa 14:22, 30; Jer 6:9; 44:14; Ezek 5:10.

³¹ 2 Kings 19:31; Isa 7:3; 8:16-18; Jer 23:3; 31:7; Mic 4:7; 5:7-8; Hag 1:12-14; 2:2; Zach 8:6, 11-12; Zeph 3:11-13; 44:17; Sir 47:21-22; 1 Macc 3:35; *1 En.* 83:8; 84:5-6; *4 Ezra* 12:34; ch. 13 (the sixth vision), esp. vv. 16-20, 23-35, 39-40, 46-49; *2 Bar.* 40:1-4. Zech 8:6-13 should possibly be included, on which see Sara Japhet, "The Concept of the Remnant in the Restoration Period: On the Vocabulary of Self-Definition," in *From the Rivers of Babylon to the Highlands of Judah: Collected Studies on the Restoration Period* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 436-37; repr. from *Das Manna fällt auch heute noch: Beiträge zur Geschichte und Theologie des Alten, Ersten Testaments: Festschrift für Erich Zenger* (ed. Erich Zenger, Frank-Lothar Hossfeld, and Ludger Schwienhorst-Schönberger; Freiburg: Herder, 2004).

³² This statement is claimed or implied in many of the works already referred to, but is most thoroughly argued for in Wagner, *Heralds*, 106-16.

When conflicting parties claimed to embody exclusively Israel's traditions, the language of the remnant became a polemical tool for delegitimizing opponents. If the specific point of contention involved identifying Abraham's authentic lineage, factions could easily invoke the rhetoric of the remnant to bastardize unwelcome relatives.

These controversies left their mark on numerous writings. In the final form of Isaiah, for example, the limitation of Israel's salvation in 10:20-23 appears to be part of a systematic redaction of the entire work. Several passages in Isa 1-55 both give evidence of editorial origin and also cohere theologically with the sectarian perspective articulated in chs. 56-66. These accretions, in the words of Joseph Blenkinsopp, "nudged Isaiah in the direction of [an] apocalyptic worldview."³³ Significantly, they also evince a deep concern to align Abraham's seed with the community responsible for the book's composition:

Isa 6:13

And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains standing when it is felled. The holy seed (זרע קדש) is its stump.³⁴

Isa 48:17-19

Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: ". . . O that you had hearkened to my commandments! Then . . . your offspring (זרעך) would have been like the sand, and your descendants like its grains; their name would never be cut off or destroyed from before me."

Isa 51:1

Hearken to me, you who pursue deliverance, you who seek the LORD; look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were digged.

³³ Blenkinsopp, *Opening the Sealed Book*, 98.

³⁴ The last phrase of Isa 6:13 is widely acknowledged to be a later addition, though its original *Sitz im Leben* continues to be debated (Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-12*, 274-75; Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39*, 138; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 226). In my judgment, the verse originally predicted destruction for even the initial survivors of the coming catastrophe (either referring to the events of 701 or 587 B.C.E.), whereas the identification of *stump* and *holy seed* suggests that the stump will remain and even sprout again. It does *not* contain a promise for the lopped-off and already burnt tree.

Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for when he was but one I called him, and I blessed him and made him many.

Isa 65:8-9

Thus says the LORD: “As the wine is found in the cluster, and they say, ‘Do not destroy it, for there is a blessing in it,’ so I will do for my servants’ sake, and not destroy them all. I will bring forth descendants (צִרְיָהוּ) from Jacob, and from Judah inheritors of my mountains; my chosen shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.”

In this last example, the “servants” who stand behind Third Isaiah and the “seed from Jacob” constitute a single group for whose sake God will refrain from destroying *all* of the apostate nation (65:9; cf. the perspective in Isa 1:9). When judgment falls, they alone remain to inherit “the mountains of Judah.” Once the Judean ethnoscape has been cleansed of its apostasy, the sectarians will emerge to claim it.

In a similar way, the book of Ezra-Nehemiah portrays a theocratic community appropriating the religious traditions of Israel and presenting themselves as the sole legitimate bearers of religious and social continuity (§2.1.).³⁵ To this end it makes generous use of remnant-related discourse.³⁶ By identifying the returnees, Abraham’s children (cf. Neh 9:7-8, 28), and the “holy seed” (Ezra 9:2), Ezra-Nehemiah presents its own community as the exclusive heirs of preexilic Israel. By contrast, the non-deportees are assimilated to Israel’s traditional enemies (the Canaanites, Moabites, etc.) and an undifferentiated “people of the land” (9:1). Ezra’s prayer in particular demonstrates the exclusionary possibilities inherent in a discourse centered on the remnant (Ezra 9). As

³⁵ This agenda can be seen in the various epithets the returnees apply to themselves, in their organization into groups of twelve, and in their resettlement of the traditional homeland (Ezra 2:70; ch. 8; Neh 7:73).

³⁶ The ideology of remnant is not the only feature Ezra-Nehemiah shares with Third Isaiah. Other aspects bring these books into close proximity: *holy seed* occurs only in Ezra 9:2 and Isa 6:13 in the HB, and “the tremblers at God’s word,” figure prominently in both (Isa 66:2, 5; Ezra 9:4; 10:3).

Sara Japhet notes, “The context of Ezra 9-10 does not recognize any other Jews except the returning exiles.”³⁷ And Blenkinsopp explains:

[T]he terminology in Ezra-Nehemiah [“Israel,” “golah,” “remnant,” etc.] for the group in whose name and on whose behalf the book was composed implies a collective self-understanding without precedent. The claim to be the Israel which inherits the promises, commitments, and privileges to which the traditions testify was now limited to members of the *golah* who subscribed to its theology, its interpretation of the laws, and its religious practices. All other claims, including those of the inhabitants of Samaria, the Judeans who had never left the land, and presumably those elsewhere in the diaspora whose religious beliefs and practices differed from those of the *golah* leadership, were excluded.³⁸

Isaiah and Ezra-Nehemiah show that the discourse of remnant gained currency in the postexilic era precisely as a means of defining Jews (or Judeans, or Yahwists) *out of* “all Israel.”³⁹

Similar bids for religious hegemony appear in writings left by the Qumran community. The *Damascus Document*, despite its composite nature, consistently and repeatedly distinguishes rebellious Israel from the faithful remnant. The opening lines read:

For when they were unfaithful in forsaking him, he hid his face from Israel and from his sanctuary and delivered them (וִיתַנֵּם) up to the sword. But when he remembered the covenant with the forefathers (רֵאשִׁימִים; lit.: “heads”), he saved (הִשְׁאִיר) a remnant (שְׂאִירִית) for Israel and did not deliver (וְלֹא נָתַנְם) them up to destruction (I, 3-5).

The wicked face the sword, not a promise of salvation implicit in the remnant’s existence.

³⁷ Japhet, “Remnant,” 441.

³⁸ Blenkinsopp, *Judaism*, 37.

³⁹ Japhet and Blenkinsopp actually differ over how the language of remnant was used in the Restoration period, but their respective understandings intersect in how they interpret Ezra 9-10. The policy of the returnees is discussed briefly in §2.1. above.

The ensuing columns organize all history according to a moral dualism. God raises up a group of survivors (פליטה) to preserve the true knowledge of his law, to inhabit the land, to fill the whole world with their seed, and to receive the holy spirit (II, 11-13). This party refers to itself as those “remnanted” from others (נותרו מהם; III, 12-13) and the elect of Israel (בחיירי ישראל; IV, 3-4). They preserve the righteous lineage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, outside of which there is only apostasy. Philip Davies summarizes this ideology as follows:

Old Israel (now represented by Judaism outside the CD covenant) . . . has, in fact, been abandoned to Belial by God, and allowed to stray. . . . One of the central themes of CD as a whole is the presentation of a remnant group as the Israel with whom God is presently dealing. The rest of “Israel” has been and is rejected, subject to the covenant vengeance of God.⁴⁰

This ideology provided Qumran with the conceptual means of assigning non-sectarian Judaism to the machinations of Belial (IV, 13-15) while claiming for itself exclusive continuity with Abraham’s righteous seed.

This discourse of self-legitimation coheres with what can be gathered from the fragmentary Qumran *peshet* on Isa 10:20-23, which appears to identify Isaiah’s promised remnant with the sect itself. Similar claims occur in the *War Scroll* (XIII, 8-9; XIV, 8-9), in the *Hodayot* (XIII, 7-8), 4QFlor (I, 19-II, 2), and other sectarian documents. Thus Joel Willitts, in a recent essay on the remnant in the DSS, concludes that while the eschatological expectations of the sect presuppose but one people of God, they anticipate two distinct ends for its members: salvation for adherents, destruction for everyone else.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Davies, *The Damascus Covenant: An Interpretation of the “Damascus Document”* (JSNTSup 25; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983), 54, 71. See also Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “An Essene Missionary Document? CD II, 14-VI, 1,” *RB* 77 (1970): 227.

⁴¹ “The Remnant of Israel in 4QpIsaiah^a (4Q161) and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *JJS* 57 (2006): 11-25; similarly Jean Duhaime, “La rédaction de 1 QM XIII et l’évolution du dualisme a Qumrân,” *RB* 84 (1977):

According to early Christian memory, John the Baptist made a similar bifurcation within Israel, and refused to grant legitimacy to physical descent from Abraham.

Although there is no indication that he employed terminology related to the remnant, in Luke's account of his ministry he imposed additional requirements on the community expecting eschatological deliverance beyond Abrahamic paternity (Luke 3:7-9).⁴²

To summarize: in these ideologies of the Second Temple period, the rhetoric of remnant serves to isolate God's favor within the confines of the faithful rather than to ensure the salvation of a larger body.⁴³ While evidence exists that in many Jewish traditions the remnant signified the vanguard of a much more expansive restoration, the examples just surveyed indicate a parallel struggle to restrict Abraham's seed to a limited sphere of authentic religious expression.⁴⁴

This semantic ambivalence makes it problematic to maintain, in the face of Paul's express statement to the contrary, that the mere presence of remnant language in Rom 9:27-29 aligns him with the "guarantee of national redemption" framework and not the "enclave of sectarian exclusivity" one.⁴⁵ Paul evokes the remnant for the same boundary-

210-38; *pace* John J. Collins, "The Construction of Israel in the Sectarian Rule Books," in *Theory of Israel* (ed. Alan J. Avery-Peck, Jacob Neusner, and Bruce D. Chilton; vol. 1 of *The Judaism of Qumran: A Systemic Reading of the Dead Sea Scrolls*; ed. Alan J. Avery-Peck, Jacob Neusner, and Bruce D. Chilton; part 5 of *Judaism in Late Antiquity*; ed. Alan J. Avery-Peck, Jacob Neusner, and Bruce D. Chilton; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 25-42; Gundran Holtz, "Inclusivism at Qumran," *DSD* 16 (2009): 22-54.

⁴² Carl R. Kazmierski, "The Stones of Abraham: John the Baptist and the End of Torah," *Bib* 68 (1987): 22-40; *idem*, *John the Baptist: Prophet and Evangelist* (Zacchaeus Studies; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1996), 112-13; Robert L. Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet: A Social-Historical Study* (JSNTSup 62; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 49; Stegemann, *Library*, 214.

⁴³ A point also made in Grindheim, *Crux*, 34.

⁴⁴ See Rowley, *Election*, 70, where the ambiguity latent in the concept is noted.

⁴⁵ If J. Ross Wagner is indeed correct that "the words [of Isaiah] in Romans [9:27-28] function as they do in their context in Isaiah," it does not follow, as he claims, that the hope and promise those words offer extends beyond the remnant to embrace an apostate people (*Heralds*, 107). Cf. the unintentionally ironic evaluation of Hans Wildberger: "In Rom. 9:29, Paul quotes Isa. 1:9 as evidence for the fact that God

demarcating purposes it served when used by exclusionary parties. As a tool of social-theological polemic, it contracts the spectrum of Jewish diversity to a much smaller nucleus and identifies *that* community as the representation of true Israel.

The sole exegetical basis for interpreting Rom 9:27-29 as a promise to the entire people is its ability to save the two halves of Paul's argument (9:6-11:10 and 11:11-32) from appearing inconsistent (§7.1.). If an eschatological pattern exists that can elucidate the diverse ways the remnant operates in Rom 9-11, it must account for *both* the complete exclusion of Israel from any hope of salvation (implied in 9:27-29 and explicitly stated in 11:8-10) *and* the contrary claim that as the firstfruits sanctify the harvest (11:16), so the remnant ensures that all Israel will be saved (11:26). Neither the content of Isaiah nor the literature of the Second Temple period can resolve this tension. Scholars looking for a theology of remnant that bridges the two halves of Paul's argument must find an alternative precedent or abandon the effort altogether.

6.2.3. LOCATING THE REMNANT IN GENESIS

The language of remnant in Genesis supplies what Isaiah lacks. As R. E. Clements noted, "Once the political and sociological weight of the claim to the status of a remnant acquired central significance in the religious life of the Jews, earlier narrative traditions could be reinterpreted in light of this development."⁴⁶ The appearance of remnant-related

had not rejected Israel. Isaiah does not speak of that here; the question of Israel's continued existence is an open one for him" (*Isaiah 1-12*, 32).

⁴⁶ Clements, "שָׂאֵר, šā'ar," 274; however, in his article on the OT background to use of the remnant in Rom 9-11, he makes no mention of Genesis beyond a passing reference to Gen 12:2 and 17:5-6 ("Chosen," 116).

language in Genesis invited such reinterpretation.⁴⁷ In the patriarchal narratives, *terminology or motifs related to the remnant appear in exactly those three episodes evoked by Paul's quotations from Isaiah—and only in those three episodes: Gen 18; 32:9 (Eng.: v. 8); 45:7 (§4.1.5.-§4.1.6).*⁴⁸ In what follows I will argue that Paul has assembled these texts and read them in light of Isa 10 to arrive at the portrayal of Israel's fate that he presents in Rom 9-11.

The first of these occurs in Gen 18 and the exchange between Abraham and God concerning the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah.⁴⁹ Yahweh begins by revealing his intention to destroy these cities and all of their inhabitants. In response, Abraham queries the judicial rectitude of a God willing to eradicate whole populations in whose midst a righteous minority still lives.

Then Abraham drew near and said, “Will you indeed destroy the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous who are in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” And the LORD answered, “If I find within the city of Sodom fifty

⁴⁷ The relevant texts were examined in detail by Gerhard Hasel in *The Remnant*, still the most extensive treatment in English. His approach is not always adequate, however, since he tends to overemphasize the principle of unbroken continuity. For example, writing on the flood episode, he concludes, “The remnant motif links human existence in the past in an unbroken chain with human existence in the present and the future” (*Remnant*, 140). This assessment hardly captures the radical break that occurs when God eliminates the human race almost in its entirety. If this understanding were applied to the postexilic era (Hasel ends his study with Isaiah), it would not be able to clarify discourse connected to the remnant as a strategy for legitimation and delegitimation.

⁴⁸ The notion of a righteous minority delivered from or through an otherwise annihilating judgment appeared already in the story of the flood. Because of humanity's wickedness, God sends a cataclysmic, cleansing deluge on the earth (Gen 6:5-7). Only righteous Noah “was left (נִשְׁאַר); κατελείφθη), and those that were with him in the ark” (7:23; see also Sir 44:17, which uses the same language). A mere eight people preserve humanity in the face of an otherwise terminal judgment.

⁴⁹ Wilk is a rare voice who has noticed the relevance of Gen 18:23-33 for understanding Isa 1:9 in Rom 9:29 (*Bedeutung*, 189). By contrast, Kowalski implies that there is no reference through Isaiah to Genesis in Paul's mention of Sodom and Gomorrah (“Funktion,” 729). I disagree.

innocent ones, I will forgive the whole place for their sake (ונשאתי לכל המקום) בבעבורם; ἀφήσω πάντα τὸν τόπον δι' αὐτούς) (Gen 18:23-26).

Probing divine justice, Abraham discovers that God will endure an outcry against the wicked in order to guarantee that the innocent among them are not swept away in an indiscriminate judgment.

When God grants that fifty righteous people would suffice, Abraham incrementally decreases the number to an eventual ten. Sensing that he has pushed his luck far enough (18:27, 30, 32), and perhaps assuming (wrongly) that there must be at least ten tolerably decent citizens in Sodom, Abraham declines to pursue the issue further. In the end, Sodom and Gomorrah meet their doom. Angelic visitors compel the four righteous citizens (before the tragedy of Lot's wife) to flee. The conclusion thus bears a strong similarity to the fate of humanity during the flood: utter destruction from which only a few are delivered. Yet in Abraham's debate with God, the possibility surfaces that a righteous remnant might guarantee the survival of its parent body. It is this more positive role that appears in two further episodes.

In Gen 32, Jacob's frantic ploy to save his family from Esau's wrath leads him to divide the members of his household into two groups. At least one, he hopes, will live through the anticipated onslaught. In v. 9 (Eng.: v. 8), Jacob surmises that if Esau manages to destroy one of his camps, the other will "be 'remnanted' for an escape" (לפליטה הנשאר; εἰς τὸ σῶζεσθαι). Likewise, in ch. 45, Jacob's son Joseph finally relinquishes the ruse he perpetuates on his brothers and reveals his true identity. He assures them that God has utilized him, in the language of the LXX, "to 'remnant' for you a remnant on the earth and to nourish for you a great remnant" (לשום לכם שארית בארץ)

כּחַם וּלְהַחְיִיתָ לָכֵן; ὕπολείπεσθαι ὑμῶν κατάλειμμα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐκθρέψαι ὑμῶν κατάλειψιν μεγάλην; v. 7, my translation).

In this way, the narrative brings the motif of the remnant into close connection with its portrayal of Israel's election. At stake in both episodes is the viability of the divine promise to make Abraham a great people when the vagaries of history throw it's survival into question. Each recalls God's pledge to Abraham: Jacob expressly invokes the promise to make his seed as numerous as the sands of the sea (Gen 32:13 [Eng: 32:12], referring to Gen 28:14);⁵⁰ Joseph also, if more obliquely, affirms his faith that God has providentially made possible the continued existence of his father's house (Gen 45:5-7). In each case, Abraham's family is broken, "remnanted," and delivered. The favored son restores his family *after* its rupture *through the loss of his favored status*: the partitioning of Jacob's family before Esau's menacing arrival and the betrayal of Joseph by his brothers results in the humiliation of each and the (temporary) exaltation of their respective siblings—the chosen and the rejection sons have traded places.⁵¹ Genesis 32:9 and 45:7 take up the idea broached in 18:26 and with it pierce Abraham's family. On the far side of domestic fracture it survives because God, through the agency of the beloved son, preserves it.

Isaiah replays the dissolution of Abraham's seed as a rupture within salvation history. The quotations as they appear in Paul recall just these moments. The reference

⁵⁰ Hasel writes, "This prayer, then, is extremely significant not only for connecting for the first time the election tradition, i.e., the promise to the fathers, with the remnant motif, but it reveals once more that the remnant can escape judgment only through God's grace. . . . The narrative, thus, shows that the preservation of Jacob and his clan is a prototype of the preservation of Israel as a whole" (*Remnant*, 154; see also 153, 158-59).

⁵¹ On the exegesis of Hosea I postulated for Paul in ch. 5, an identical exchange of roles occurs between the house of Israel and Not-My-People (=Gentiles) in Hos 1:2-2:3 (§5.2.2.2).

to Sodom and Gomorrah in Isa 1:9 = Rom 9:29 is explicit, but Isa 10:22-23 = Rom 9:27-28 reflect both the language and the pattern of the chosen son's suffering. In Gen 32, at the moment of Esau's exaltation and Jacob's humiliation, Jacob makes arraignments to insure that a remnant (הַנִּשְׁאָר; σόζειν). In ch. 45, Joseph assures his brothers, all sons of Israel and members of Jacob's house, that God has guaranteed a remnant (תִּירָאשׁ; κατάλειμμα) will escape (הִטִּיף) on the earth (יְרֵאֲבָ; ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς). In Isa 10:20, Israel will have a remnant (רֵאשׁ, τὸ καταλείφθην), the house of Jacob will escape (הִטִּיף, οἱ σωθέντες). Paul's quotation expands the connections already present in his sources: a *remnant* will be saved *on the earth* (Rom 9:27-28; τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σωθήσεται . . . ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς).⁵²

Isaiah clarifies the present in light of Genesis, but it is Genesis that provides Paul with the soteriological significance of the remnant. In the way Abraham pleads with God's mercy to spare Sodom and Gomorrah in behalf of its righteous inhabitants, in Jacob's desperate decision to split his family and save at least some, and in Joseph's perception that God banished him to ensure the survival of his relatives "on the earth," lies the connection between Paul's limitation of God's saving call to a remnant (9:24) and his ultimate conviction that "all Israel will be saved" (11:26). Only as Abraham's divided family follows the firstborn son into exile does it find the seed for its eventual salvation.

⁵² In the entire Greek Bible, only Gen 45:7 and Rom 9:27-28 speak of the survival of a remnant ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς (§4.1.4., §4.2.2.).

6.2.4. A REMNANT BY FAITH

What Isaiah does provide Paul with is not an implied promise linking the remnant's salvation with that of all Israel but the characteristic that *distinguishes* the remnant from its parent body. In Isaiah, the remnant is set apart by its thorough dependence on Yahweh. According to Isa 10:20, the remnant will trust (πεποιθότες) in God alone.⁵³ The semantic range of πεῖθω in the pf. tense includes “depend on, trust in” (BDAG, s. v. 2b). It therefore overlaps considerably with πιστεύω, “to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one’s trust; to entrust oneself to an entity in complete confidence” (BDAG, s.v. 1, 2).

The semantic similarity between πεῖθω and πιστεύω can be seen by comparing Isa 10:20, 8:14, and 28:16:

Isa 8:14

καὶ ἐὰν ἐπ’ αὐτῷ πεποιθὼς ᾖς, ἔσται σοι εἰς ἀγίασμα, καὶ οὐχ ὡς λίθου προσκόμματι.⁵⁴

Isa 10:20

Καὶ ἔσται ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ οὐκέτι προστεθήσεται τὸ καταλειφθὲν Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ οἱ σωθέντες τοῦ Ἰακώβ οὐκέτι μὴ πεποιθότες ᾖσιν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀδικήσαντας αὐτούς, ἀλλὰ ἔσονται πεποιθότες ἐπὶ τὸν θεὸν τὸν ἅγιον τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ.⁵⁵

Isa 28:16

Ἴδου ἐγὼ ἐμβαλῶ εἰς τὰ θεμέλια Σιών λίθον πολυτελεῖ . . . καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνοθῆ.⁵⁶

⁵³ The Greek translates יָצַו, a verb used in the Niphal stem to mean “lean, support oneself.” Outside of Romans, Paul occasionally uses πεῖθω in a theological sense similar to how it is used in Isa 10:20 (2 Cor 1:9; Phil 3:3).

⁵⁴ “If you trust in him, he will become your holy precinct, and you will not encounter him as a stumbling caused by a stone.” The underlined text is uncontested in the manuscript tradition, though it represents a LXX plus with respect to the Hebrew.

⁵⁵ “And it shall be on that day that what remains of Israel will no more be added, and those of Jacob who have been saved will no more trust in those who have wronged them but will trust in God, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.”

⁵⁶ “See, I will lay for the foundations of Zion a precious stone . . . and the one who believes in him will not be put to shame.” Several texts, mostly in the Hexaplaric tradition, omit ἐπ’ αὐτῷ, which is likely

Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16 are conflated in Rom 9:33, making it likely that Paul understood $\pi\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\theta\omega$ and $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omega$ synonymously.

In this light, Isa 10:20-23 not only prophecies a day when the Jacob's house will be reduced from an innumerable expanse to a remnant, it also provides a standard for distinguishing the faithful from the apostate that is easily translatable into Paul's own understanding of faith as the criterion for membership in God's people.⁵⁷ Precisely those described as $\pi\epsilon\pi\omicron\iota\theta\acute{o}\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ or $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omicron\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ will be saved (cf. Rom 10:9-10). The perspectives of Isa 10 and Rom 9:6-11:10 mesh: the divine promises wrongly assumed to belong to Israel as a whole have become, for now, the exclusive possession of the believing remnant—and the Gentile believers who share their Abrahamic paternity.⁵⁸

6.3. A CERTAIN SALVATION—BUT NOT FOR ALL: REVERSING ELECTION IN ROMANS 9

On several occasions throughout this study, I have observed that Paul's argument progresses in fits and reversals. While some have taken these rough contours as evidence of conceptual ineptitude, a few recent interpreters have alleged that Paul makes deliberate

a "correction" towards the Hebrew, in accordance with the tendency of the Hexapla. The words could represent a Christian insertion on the basis of Rom 9:33, but internal evidence suggests the tendency of the LXX translator (cf. 8:17, 12:2, where $\acute{\epsilon}\pi' \alpha\upsilon\tau\tilde{\omega}$ also occurs).

⁵⁷ Clements comes to a similar conclusion, though his main Isaianic text is 7:9: "If you will not believe ($\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\eta\tau\epsilon$), you shall not be established" ("Chosen," 119).

⁵⁸ Paul does not explicitly apply the language of faith to the remnant in 9:27-29, 11:1-10, since his emphasis on divine monergism leaves little room for it (Räsänen, "Römer," 2899; idem, "Faith, Works and Election in Romans 9: A Response to Stephen Westerholm," in *Paul and the Mosaic Law*, 240-41). However, 9:30-10:21 clearly presupposes that the majority of Israel has fallen into dire straits precisely because of its failure to have faith in God's Messiah (9:32-33; 10:9-10, 14, 16-17; see also 11:20, 23; similarly, Evans, "Paul and the Prophets," 125).

use of cunning, ambiguity, and even duplicity.⁵⁹ Wayne Meeks argues that Paul’s argument in Rom 9-10 “tricks” the reader into thinking that God has abandoned Israel, in order to force (Christian Gentile) readers to confront their own certainty in a God who has “tricked” Israel, and that on two levels—first leading Israel to believe that it can trust God unconditionally, and then revealing that Israel *can* trust God unconditionally.⁶⁰

Charles Cosgrove concurs—to a point. He points out that this “trick” depends on a certain interpretation of 11:26 which itself is not certain. He writes:

To show that there is a surprising peripeteia [reversal] in Romans 11, one must do two things: (a) defend as very plausible the deceived reader’s reading up to the point of disclosure and (b) defend an interpretation of 11:25-29 that shows it to be a surprise reversal of this deceived reader’s reading. The first of these tasks is not difficult. But to the extent we succeed at it, we also strengthen the grounds for suspecting that the “surprise” in chap. 11 may be a mirage.⁶¹

If 11:25-29 so clearly subverts what precedes it, then perhaps interpreters have misread Rom 9-11. Or perhaps 11:25-29 is not so clear after all.

Cosgrove moves from the ambiguity of Paul’s understanding of Israel’s election (the companion book to his article is entitled *Elusive Israel: The Puzzle of Election in Romans*) to the legitimacy of competing interpretations in the face of textual indeterminacy. I prefer to answer his challenge by appealing to the substructure set forth

⁵⁹ E.g., J. Paul Sampley, “The Weak and the Strong: Paul’s Careful and Crafty Rhetorical Strategy in Romans 14:1-15:13,” in *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks* (ed. L. Michael White and O. Larry Yarbrough; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 40-52; Mark D. Given, *Paul’s True Rhetoric: Ambiguity, Cunning and Deception in Greece and Rome* (ESEC; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 2001), 123, 181, and passim; Stanley, *Arguing*, 148, 153, 169-70, and passim; Johan S. Vos, “‘To Make the Weaker Argument Defeat the Stronger’: Sophistical Argumentation in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” in *Rhetorical Argumentation in Biblical Texts: Essays from the Lund 2000 Conference* (ed. Anders Eriksson, Thomas H. Olbricht and Walter Übelacker; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 2007), 217-31.

⁶⁰ Meeks, “Trusting,” 108-10.

⁶¹ Cosgrove, “Rhetorical Suspense,” 277.

above. In this final section, I will venture to account for Paul's rhetorical turns in Rom 9 on the basis of his engagement with Genesis.⁶²

Paul opens Rom 9 with an affirmation of Israel's privileges, but this is already placed in question by his implication in v. 3 that Israel is at present anathema. There follows in v. 6 the intimation that God's fidelity to his people can only be maintained by a redefinition of the term *Israel* that removes contrary evidence (i.e., the anathematized, non-Christ-following Jews) out of its semantic scope. However, as the chapter continues, Paul drops this strategy in favor of a conventional understanding of what *Israel* means: it is the nation that emerged from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, an elect people distinguished from the Gentiles / nations surrounding it by God's call (vv. 7-13). He asserts this understanding of election over hypothetical objections raised against God's fairness and criticizes the imagined riposte for its arrogant tone even while acknowledging its substance (vv. 14-23).

Paul then declares that God's call *does* incorporate the Gentiles / nations, and uses Hosea to prove his case (9:24-26)—a development not obviously prepared for by the discussion to that point. He returns to the rupture within Israel, stated in v. 6 but not developed, by quoting verses from Isaiah which, both in their original context and in Paul's argument, divide the remnant from apostate Israel and assign salvation exclusively to the former (9:27-29).

This pattern of reversals makes for a very tortuous argument. But its origin and purpose should by now be clear. In the biblical tradition, God elects Israel to be his

⁶² I owe the idea expressed in this section to Carol Stockhausen.

firstborn son.⁶³ This theological conviction finds narrative expression in the stories of Genesis, which articulate Israel's election as the revocation of primogeniture. The younger son receives the status of "firstborn," but as the one chosen to obtain favor and replace his elder brother, he must in his turn endure an expulsion, an exile, and a real or symbolic death. The mythomoteur of Israel's origin expresses an ideology of election characterized by its own negation: the elect status of the firstborn son imposes on him his brother's exclusion.

Paul applies this irony of election to the relation between Jew and Gentile in the messianic era, and *his own rhetoric simulates the same pattern of reversals*. As in Galatians, where the Deuteronomic curses and blessings recur in the epistolary rhetoric, so also in Rom 9, the ebb and flow of his argument *instantiates* the dialectic of the story he has been reading. The precarious nature of election has become a literary feature of Paul's own discourse. He forces his reader through the same loss and recovery that he posits for Israel as a whole and recreates in the reading experience the solidarity that he expects for all God's children in the eschaton.

6.4. CONCLUSIONS

I have proposed that behind Paul's quotations from Isaiah lies his interpretation of Genesis. He applies the prophets to Moses in order to decipher the mystery of why Israel refused the Messiah and to answer the question this refusal places against God's faithfulness to his people.

⁶³ Exod 4:22; Deut 14:1-2; Isa 63:16; 64:8; Jer 31:9; Hos 11:1; Mal 1:6; 2:10. Υιοθεσία in Rom 9:4 summarized this tradition (Barrett, *Romans*, 166; Moo, *Romans*, 562).

By reading Rom 9:27-29 in this way, two interpretive obstacles can be overcome. First, Isaiah 10:22-23 can be given a coherent place in Paul's argument. These verses finally unveil the true meaning of Israel withheld since v. 6b: *those who are Israel* exist as a called remnant. Paul's quotations place the accent on the positive note of the remnant's salvation. However, he clearly implies that those not called are excluded from Abraham's seed and therefore God's family. They fill the typological role formerly played by Ishmael, Esau, Pharaoh, Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Gentiles, all non-chosen objects of God's wrath.

Second, Paul derives his theology of the remnant from Genesis, and not, as is commonly thought, from Isaiah. Language integral to the remnant occurs at critical junctures in Genesis's narrative. The family of Abraham survives in and through its dissolution by means of a favored son who must trade his superior status for the exclusion previously imposed on his elder brother / s. What is true of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob also holds good for their seed, and by recapitulating their fathers' story of exile, death, and resurrection, the descendants authenticate their paternity.

Although Isaiah's prophecies do not inspire Paul's theology of the remnant, they do provide him with the remnant's distinguishing feature. It is composed of those who trust (πέποιθα, Isa 8:14; 10:20) or believe in (πιστεύω, Isa 28:16) God (Rom 9:30-33; 10:4-5, 8-11, 14, 16). *Those who are Israel* are known by their faith.

Paul leads his audience down a path which takes them through many apparent backtrackings and dead ends. But the route is intentional. It reenacts the paradoxical election that Paul finds in Genesis, which has now become a characteristic of his own expression.

CHAPTER SEVEN

BEYOND CHAPTER 9: ELECTION AND ITS REVERSAL IN ROMANS

If a pre-epistolary interpretation of Genesis does support Paul's argument in Rom 9, as I have proposed, can its existence be detected in other parts of the epistle? The answer, in my estimation, is, Not directly.

However, evidence from elsewhere in Paul's corpus suggests that he frequently makes a claim based on unexpressed exegetical reasoning. For example, his leap from Gen 15:5 to "the seed is Christ" (Gal 3:16) reads as though it were a non sequitur, yet beneath it lies a profound piece of biblical interpretation (§2.2.1.3.).

Similarly, the value of attributing to Paul an interest in "narrative" is its ability to bring a coherence to his letters otherwise difficult to obtain, given their contingent circumstances. As Bruce W. Longenecker expressed it:

Interest in narrative aspects of Paul's letters has risen as part of a move to identify pre-textual ingredients that factored into and influenced Paul's reflections at any given point alongside . . . other matters. The prospect of Paul being a narrative theologian seems to offer the prospect of a fresh evaluation of Paul's theological prowess and probity, and as such holds great attraction for many.¹

Likewise, the exegetical substructure that I have argued for may indirectly testify to its presence by supplying to other passages in Romans an intelligibility absent from their surface. In this chapter, I seek to corroborate my thesis by attempting to meet the final goal laid out in ch. 1: the proposed exegesis will have explanatory power that extends beyond the exegetical difficulties of the specific passage under investigation (§1.1.3.).

¹ Longenecker, "The Narrative Approach to Paul: An Early Retrospective," *CBR* 1 [2002]: 89.

I submit that the exegetical substructure reconstructed in this study might contribute to resolving at least three conflicting or internally inconsistent arguments in Romans: (1) the divergent arguments supporting the thesis in 9:6a given in 9:6b-11:10 and in 11:11-32; (2) the peculiar argument in Rom 11 that Gentile salvation depends causally on Jewish unbelief; and (3) the discord within Paul's contention that the gospel shows no partiality but is nevertheless for the Jews first. All these topics have been addressed implicitly at various stages of this study. It remains to draw together the disparate threads in a series of brief proposals.

7.1. GOD'S WORD TO "ISRAEL" HAS NOT FAILED— NOR HAS HIS WORD TO ISRAEL

In Rom 9-11 Paul puts forward a defense of God's righteousness that is both inconsistent, because he provides separate theodicies predicated on distinct understandings of Israel, and lacking in logic, because he posits a *causal* connection between the rejection of Israel and the salvation of the Gentiles that is neither self-evident nor justified. I will treat the first problem in this section.

To answer the question as to whether God's word has failed (9:6a), Paul employs divergent notions of election, which correspond to separate definitions of *Israel*. In 9:6b-11:10, he apparently limits election to a remnant and eliminates physical kinship with Abraham as an affiliation guaranteeing or even facilitating elect status. Not fleshly descent but divine calling establishes Israel's identity (9:8). Yet in 11:11-32, Paul evidently presupposes the inviolable election of Israel as an ethnic entity. The distinction between πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ / οἱ λοιποὶ ἐπωρώθησαν on the one hand (9:6; 11:7), and οὗτοι Ἰσραὴλ / λεῖμμα κατ' ἐκλογὴν (9:6; 11:5) on the other, which had made Paul's argument possible, vanishes in favor of an undifferentiated πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ facing not bent backs and blind eyes (11:8-10), but the assurance of a coming deliverer (11:26-27).² By v. 28 this promise sits comfortably on that very σῶμα that Paul had previously

² With most interpreters I understand Rom 11:26-27 as a reference to Christ's return, which will in some unspecified way effect the conversion of unbelieving Israel (probably in a manner analogous to

decoupled from Abrahamic paternity and disposed of as impotent before God's sovereign call. Further, the remnant assumes a promissory function that it earlier lacked (vv. 16-17). Romans 11:11-32 therefore contains an entirely distinct argument composed of elements either unanticipated or having an unanticipated role. Nowhere does Paul indicate how these divergent attempts to vindicate God's word relate to each other.

With reason, then, Francis Watson charges that in ch. 11 Paul reverts to the very theology of Israel he had previously rejected.³ Likewise, Heikki Räisänen draws attention to this volte face in his typically trenchant style. Critically evaluating claims that Paul's attitude towards Israel in Romans have matured from the condemnatory tone struck in previous epistles, he writes as follows:

The negative judgment on the people of Israel and the negation of their positive position in Rom 9 agrees with the view of 1 Thessalonians and Galatians. . . . If one reckons with a direct development, then one should for the sake of consistency place the turning point between Rom 9 and Rom 11, or perhaps even between Rom 11:10 and 11:11!⁴

Several other exegetes have concurred.⁵

Paul's own conversion; so Hofius, "All Israel," 37; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:683; Bell, *Irrevocable Call*, 270). What many are less willing to accept is that this view almost demands taking *καὶ οὕτως* in v. 26 either as temporal, "then" (Pieter W. van der Horst, "Only Then Will All Israel Be Saved": A Short Note on the Meaning of *καὶ οὕτως* in Romans 11:26," *JBL* 119 [2000]: 521-25) or as correlative with the *καθὼς γέγραπται* that follows, despite the unnatural formulation. The salvation breaking in from above in vv. 26-27 is clearly distinct in manner and effect from the provocation-through-jealousy program that Paul has just summarized in v. 25, making a modal interpretation awkward (see also vv. 14, 23-24; Watson, *Beyond the New Perspective*, 338-39; against Bell, *Irrevocable Call*, 253-54). The eschatological salvation of all Israel is *hinted at* in vv. 12, 15 but only explicitly stated in v. 26.

³ Watson, *Sociological Approach*, 168, 170, 172-73.

⁴ Räisänen, "Römer," 2929, 2932; see also 2893, 2906, 2916, 2920; idem, "Paul, God, and Israel: Romans 9-11 in Recent Research," in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism* (ed. Jacob Neusner et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 178-206.

⁵ Donaldson provides a succinct statement of the problem (*Gentiles*, 176-77). Similar conclusions have been drawn by Dodd (*Romans*, 179, 182-83); Dinkler ("Eschatological Israel," 116-17); Wilckens (*Röm*, 185); J. Christiaan Beker ("Romans 9-11 in the Context of the Early Church," *PSBSupl* 1 [1990]: 45); Hofius ("All Israel," 31); Lambrecht ("Israel's Future," in *Studies*, 35, 48-49); Thielman ("Unexpected Mercy," 169); Cosgrove ("Rhetorical Suspense," 273-75, 277, 281-82; idem, *Elusive Israel: The Puzzle of Election in Romans* [Louisville, Ky.: Westminster / John Knox, 1997]); Westerholm ("Paul and the Law," 219).

Attempts to answer this difficulty are numerous, and many of the following (only a representative list!) can be combined with each other in different ways: Paul arrived at the mystery unveiled in Rom

The problem of relating *Israel* in 9:6-11:10 to *Israel* in 11:11-32 is therefore parallel to the problem of finding consistency within Rom 9:6-29: the argument seems to reverse on itself and lead the reader down false avenues.⁶ The difference is that 9:24-29 was anticipated already by the phrases ἐξ Ἰσραήλ and οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ in 9:6 and that the theology of election expressed in 9:7-23 can be seen upon reflection to justify the redefinition of Israel that Paul makes in 9:24-29. By contrast, nothing in 9:6-11:10 anticipates the turn made in 11:11, and certainly not the conclusion in 11:26-27. If Paul's two attempts to establish God's word to Israel cohere, its internal unity lies beyond the text of Romans.

11:26-27 in the process of composing these chapters, whether through a direct revelation (Otto Glombitza, Bent Noack), or by means of working through various scriptural passages as he was writing (James W. Aageson); the dilemma does not exist because "all Israel" refers exclusively to either the community of Jewish and Gentile Christians (N. T. Wright) or to the elect Jews throughout history (Ben L. Merkle, Christopher Zoccali); the dilemma does not exist because Paul maintains Israel's salvation and special privilege throughout Rom 9-11 (the two-covenant view of Lloyd Gaston, John Gager, Marry Ann Getty); the dilemma does not exist because 11:26-27 were not part of the original epistle (Christoph Plag); the dilemma does not exist because "contradiction" can be relabeled "dynamic tension" and grounded in the Apostle's theology proper (E. Elizabeth Johnson); Paul's shift in argument is understandable in light of the remnant tradition (see §6.2.); Paul's shift in argument is understandable in light of the "hermeneutics of true prophecy" (Craig A. Evans); Paul's shift in argument is understandable in light of a revised Gentile pilgrimage scenario (Dale C. Allison Jr.); Paul's shift in argument is understandable in light of the "deuteronomic tradition" (James M. Scott, Richard H. Bell; building on the work of Joseph Klausner, Odil H. Steck, and Anders Hultgård); Paul's shift in argument can be explained by his use of intentionally misleading rhetoric and the trope of the "unreliable author" (Stowers, Gager).

These proposals may be found in the following: Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel From Its Beginning to the Completion of the Mishnah* (trans. William F. Stinespring; 3d ed.; New York: Macmillan, 1955); Glombitza, "Apostolische Sorge: Welche Sorge treibt den Apostel Paulus zu den Sätzen Röm. xi 25ff?" *NovT* 7 (1964-1965), 312-18; Noack, "Current and Backwater in the Epistle to the Romans," *Studia Theologica* 19 (1965): 166; Steck, *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten: Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung des deuteronomistischen Geschichtsbildes im Alten Testament, Spätjudentum und Urchristentum* (WMAT 23; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1967); Plag, *Israels Wege zum Heil: Eine Untersuchung zu Römer 9 bis 11* (AzTh 40; Stuttgart: Calwer, 1969); Hultgård, *L'eschatologie des "Testaments des Douze Patriarches"* (2 vols.; Historia Religionum 6-7; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1977-1982), 1:82-199; Evans, "True Prophecy," 560-70; idem, "Paul and the Prophets," 115-28; Allison, "Romans 11:11-15: A Suggestion," *PRSt* 12 (1985): 23-30; Aageson, "Scripture and Structure in the Development of the Argument in Romans 9-11," *CBQ* 48 (1986): 277-78, 280; Gaston, *Paul and Torah*, 96-97; Getty, "Salvation," 465; Johnson, *Function*, 146; Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 298-99; Gager, *Reinventing Paul*, 134, 151-52; Wright, "Christ, the Law, and the People of God: The Problem of Romans 9-11," in *Climax*, 249-51; Scott, "Paul's Use of Deuteronomic Tradition," *JBL* 112 (1993): 645-65; Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 200-285.

⁶ §3.6., §6.3. See also Cosgrove, "Suspense," 277; idem, *Elusive Israel*, 31-32, where in my judgment this point is established conclusively.

Some scholars have appealed to Paul's hermeneutic of reversal to ease this tension. Paul understands God's action to operate paradoxically: he gives life to the dead and calls into being those things which are not (Rom 4:17), so that Israel, once rejected, stands in precisely the position required for a new divine calling.⁷ However, this approach is insufficient to address the problem at hand. "Logic of reversal" is a formal category with little material content and therefore limited explanatory power. Paul's paradoxical way of interpreting God's calling as reversal is evident already in 1 Cor 1-4, but only in Romans does he indicate that it applies to Israel with the results described in 11:26-27.

A decisive step towards solving this difficulty is taken by Frank Thielman in his article, "Unexpected Mercy: Echoes of a Biblical Motif in Romans 9-11." Following Paul's quotations in Rom 9:6-13 back to their source in Genesis, Thielman perceives that the "logic of reversal" in Romans has its roots in a cycle of stories that repeatedly depicts an elder brother who loses his firstborn status to a younger sibling.⁸ Paul follows this pattern until it comes back full circle.

Thielman elaborates:

The motif which Paul has echoed in 9:6-13 contains within it the possibilities which Paul explains in 11:11-32, and which reach a climax in . . . 11:26. Since God is not bound by ethnic and cultural expectations . . . he can and will include ethnic Israel within his newly constituted people (11:23-31).⁹

Once Gentile believers have received this mercy, they themselves need to hear both the warnings Paul delivers in 11:21-22 and the reminder that the Jews, *because* they have lost their covenantal status, are ironically now ideal candidates for a renewed extension of God's unexpected mercy.

⁷ Käsemann, *Romans*, 263, 274; Grindheim, *Crux*, 9, 32, 139, 161. Those cited in §5.2.1. as applying the logic of reversal to Rom 9:25-26 can also be mentioned here: Wagner, *Heralds*, 82-83; Seifrid, "Romans," 614; Moyise, "Minor Prophets," 104.

⁸ "Unexpected Mercy," 177.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 180.

Thielman's solution clearly has much in common with my own reading of Rom 9-11.¹⁰ However, on his reading Paul recovers from Genesis primarily a pattern of divine action. I suggest that Paul finds not only a principle of election but also a pattern of typology. As the vehicle for the Hebrew mythomoteur, Genesis *defines* Israel by the dialectic of exile and return, exclusion and restoration, death and resurrection (§2.1., §4.3.1.), an identity Paul sees confirmed in the present state of his fellow Jews. So Paul recapitulates in his discourse what Genesis expresses through narrative portrayal: Israel exists simultaneously as one chosen and rejected; as an integrated kinship group and a fractured set of fraternal adversaries; as a divinely guaranteed seed and a remnant whose survival has been thrown into doubt. The vicissitudes of Paul's exposition enact the paradoxical definition of Israel that he finds in Genesis.

7.2. TRADING PLACES WITH ESAU

Perhaps because Thielman concentrates his essay on Genesis's narrative pattern as it relates to God, he leaves its horizontal elements underdeveloped. But in its depiction of the agonistic relation between competing brothers, I suggest, lies the rationale for the strange argument in Rom 11:11-32.

Throughout Rom 9-10, Paul maintains that Gentiles and Jews—the remnant excepted—have traded places. Israel, defined as an ethnic entity, has assumed the position formerly held by Ishmael, Esau, Pharaoh, and the vessels of wrath (§6.2.1.); it has failed to win the law of righteousness, though Gentiles have attained righteousness without trying (9:30-33); and it lacks the salvation that, in the present, has gone to the Gentiles (10:1).

Paul continues to expound this reversal after 11:11. Israel suffers rejection while the Gentiles enjoy acceptance (11:11-12, 15) and they are cut off from the olive tree while the

¹⁰ I first encountered Thielman's article at a late stage of writing the present study. I agree with him that Genesis has left its trace on the shape of Paul's argument, but I seriously doubt that this influence was recognizable to the letter's initial readers / hearers, as Thielman maintains. Its presence is too subtle to play a determinative role at the communicative and rhetorical levels.

Gentiles are grafted in (11:17-21). The entire discourse closes with a clear delineation of how in God's plan Israel and the nations have been transposed: "Just as you [Gentiles] were once disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, so they [the Jews] have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may receive mercy" (11:30-31; see also vv. 28-29).

Despite this continuity, Paul introduces a new element. Here he relates the temporary rejection of Israel to Gentile salvation *causally*. Paul contends that God desires the salvation of all Israel. To bring this about, God *hardens* Israel (vv. 7, 25). He does this *so that* they will *not* accept the gospel (vv. 8-10). God wills this nonacceptance *so that* the gospel will proceed to the Gentiles (v. 11). This transference is necessary *so that*, provoked to jealousy by Gentile acceptance of the gospel—and God's attendant acceptance of the Gentiles—Israel *will* accept the gospel (v. 14). Israel's rejection of the gospel is explained by the necessity for it to be proclaimed among the nations. But the necessity for it to be proclaimed among the nations is explained by its instrumentality in provoking Israel to believe in the gospel.

The road to all Israel's salvation seems to involve many extraneous steps. If God were truly as sovereign as Paul declares in these chapters, why would it be necessary for God to *cause Israel's disbelief* for any reason, whether *in order* to include Gentiles in his salvation, or *in order* to lead Israel circuitously through provocation *back to belief*?

That Paul has argued himself into an impasse has not gone unnoticed. C. H. Dodd calls the discussion "roundabout" and "tortuous."¹¹ Lloyd Gaston writes, "Why did Paul think God had to trip Israel in order to make manifest his new act of righteousness for Gentiles? Since Paul does not give an answer one can only speculate."¹² James Dunn wonders, "Was the casting off of Israel really necessary at this stage in salvation-history? Why could not the Gentiles have come

¹¹ Dodd, *Romans*, 177.

¹² Gaston, *Paul*, 149; so too Gager, *Reinventing Paul*, 139.

in without the bulk of the Jews being thrown out, albeit temporarily?”¹³ It would seem that the apostle’s struggle to account for Israel’s rejection of the Messiah has only produced further difficulties.¹⁴

The requirement that Israel lose its salvation so that the Gentiles may gain it has an analogue in the relation between the chosen and the rejected sons. Genesis narrates the story of Israel’s election by means of a twofold literary motif. Primogeniture is transferred from the elder to the younger son, but the favored son’s resulting preeminence is reversed by the exaltation of his non-elect brother. Cain rises up over Abel, Ishmael carries away an enslaved Joseph, Esau receives the submission of Jacob, and Joseph’s brothers gloat over him from the edge of the ditch.

¹³ Dunn, *Romans*, 2:670.

¹⁴ Commentators have proffered numerous solutions, some of which overlap with those mentioned above in connection with the problem of relating 9:6-11:10 and 11:11-32, and which, like them, are not all mutually exclusive: Israel’s hardness is necessary to prevent the Jews’ “spiritual pride” and “narrowness” from overwhelming the church (E. P. Gould; similarly, H. L. Ellison); to bring about the crucifixion of the Messiah (C. E. B. Cranfield); to preserve the legitimacy of Paul’s Gentile mission against the belief of Peter that Gentiles would be converted only *after* Israel’s restoration (Lloyd Gaston); to trigger Gentile salvation in a revised Jewish restoration → Gentile pilgrimage scenario (Dale C. Allison Jr.); to deflate Jewish nationalism (James D. G. Dunn; Mark Nanos adopted a similar view but later repudiated it); to conform to the deuteronomic pattern (James M. Scott, Richard H. Bell); to create a temporal window of opportunity for Gentile conversion (Terrence L. Donaldson; N. T. Wright; Robert Jewett—though I cannot see how Jewett squares this approach and its emphasis on the coming Parousia with his overall anti-apocalyptic interpretation of Rom 11:11-16).

For these arguments, the references are as follows: Gould, “Romans,” 36; Ellison, *The Mystery of Israel: An Exposition of Romans 9-11* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 81-82; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:556; Gaston, *Paul and Torah*, 149; Allison, “Suggestion,” 23-30; Dunn, *Romans*, 2:670-71; Wright, *Climax*, 249; Donaldson, “‘Riches for the Gentiles’ (Rom 11:12): Israel’s Rejection and Paul’s Gentile Mission,” *JBL* 112 (1993): 81-98; idem, *Gentiles*, 236-48; Scott, “Deuteronomic Tradition,” 645-65; Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 200-285; Nanos, *Mystery*, 286; idem, “Response,” *CRBR* 11 (1998): 169; Jewett, *Romans*, 674.

Those who accept the historical reliability of Acts tend to see in Rom 11 a reflection of Paul’s missionary pattern as presented there (Barrett, *Romans*, 197; James C. Miller, “The Jewish Context of Paul’s Gentile Mission,” *TynBul* 58 [2007]: 101-15).

Some offer no solution but repeat Paul’s affirmations. E. Elizabeth Johnson may be taken as representative: “If God has blinded Israel and continually ‘bends their neck’ (11:10), is this a permanent condition? Of course not, since Israel’s very hardening has meant the Gentiles’ salvation, which will itself result in Israel’s” (*Function*, 161; so too Grindheim, *Crux*, 162 n. 99). But the question is this: If what *prevents* Israel’s salvation is its current hardening by divine action, then why should Paul have recourse to such hardening *for the purpose* of bringing about Israel’s salvation?

Dahl understands Paul’s description as a *ex post facto* rationalization. He writes: “Paul interprets what has actually happened”; the cause-and-effect relation Paul argues for represents an attempt to explain theologically what has in fact occurred (“Future of Israel,” in *Studies*, 150; see also Campbell, *Paul’s Gospel*, 89-91). Most interpreters, whatever else they may say about these chapters, would acknowledge at least some truth to this claim, myself included.

It is the fate of the firstborn son to lose his exalted position before receiving his inheritance, so that only as one who has endured exile and death does he realize the meaning of election (§4.3.1.).

I attempted to show in ch. 5 that Paul has applied the paradox of election to the people of Israel through an exegesis of Hosea (§5.2.2.2.-§5.2.2.5.). As Jacob attains his inheritance only after experiencing Esau's—temporary—exaltation over him, so too Israel gains its promise only after being replaced by Esau's typological heirs. The chosen son suffers rejection because only by sharing his brother's exclusion can he deliver a remnant of his family and thereby preserve Abraham's seed (§6.2.3.). By submitting to the exaltation of the formerly cast-off sibling the firstborn attains his own election—and bring his family with him.

I contend that in Rom 11, Paul carries forward his correlation of Gentile believers with Esau and applies to them and to Israel this dialectic of election and its reversal. God hardens his people in order to bring about the salvation of the Gentiles, so that he may ultimately bring salvation back to Israel—simply because this paradoxical operation corresponds to the fate of the chosen son as rendered in Genesis. Paul's rationale for this depiction is only that it corresponds to the mythomoteur on which it is based.

This proposal may be substantiated by a brief look at Gen 32-33. This passage narrates Jacob's return to Palestine, a turning point in his story. In exile he has suffered the fate of Cain (4:12, 14, 16), Lot (19:30), and Ishmael (21:8-21); in his return he shares the fate of Esau. Jacob grovels before his brother seven times (33:3, 10) and proclaims himself Esau's servant (32:21 [Eng: v. 20]; 33:5, 14). This obeisance reverses the divine oracle of 25:23 and the patriarchal blessing of 27:29 (see also 27:37). Jacob insists on giving Esau atoning gifts (אֲכַפְרָה פָּנָיו) בְּמִנְחָה; 32:21 [Eng: v. 20]) and offers a blessing to compensate for the one he stole (33:11).¹⁵

¹⁵ Brett, *Genesis*, 98. According to several interpreters, Jacob in fact returns *the* blessing, the very one taken in 27:28-29 (Steinmetz, *Fathers*, 111; Levenson, *Beloved Son*, 64-65; Syrén, *Forsaken*, 106; Dicou, *Edom*, 123).

Jacob's return from exile brings about not his exaltation but his abasement. By contrast, Esau—once duped, humiliated, robbed of his blessing and birthright, and destined since birth to fraternal servitude—suddenly reappears not only as a powerful chieftain but even resembling the face of God (33:10).¹⁶

If Paul transplants Gentiles into the Abrahamic family by aligning them with excluded and outcast Esau, then his admonition in Rom 11 can be accounted for without resorting to speculative hypotheses concerning interethnic hostilities in Rome. He exhorts the Gentiles to humility in the face of Israel's current position because they are to demonstrate the conciliatory, loving, and fraternal attitude towards Jacob that Esau displayed in Gen 33. The parallels between Jacob and Esau on the one hand and Israel and the Gentiles on the other can be illustrated schematically:

Jacob and Esau in Gen 33	Israel and the Gentiles in Rom 9-11
Jacob is the son chosen by God's election.	Israel is the son chosen by God's election.
Jacob strives for the blessing, yet loses it.	Israel strives for righteousness, yet loses it.
Jacob splits his family to preserve a remnant.	Israel is split to preserve a remnant.
Jacob and Esau exchange places.	Israel and the Gentiles exchange places.
Jacob's humiliation means gifts for Esau.	Israel's exclusion means riches for the Gentiles.
Esau receives Jacob's blessing.	Gentiles share in the Jews' blessing (15:27).
Esau is not bitter.	The Gentiles should not be arrogant.

¹⁶ This episode is frequently—and wrongly—referred to as the reconciliation between Jacob and Esau (e.g., Levenson, *Beloved Son*, 64, 65, 225; Syrén, *Forsaken*, 107, 109; Dicou, *Edom*, 16, 116, 159; Kaminsky, *Jacob*, 54-56 [with qualifications]). In fact, Jacob's return is riddled with ambiguity. He offers atoning gifts for his past, but Esau in the rush to "bear hug" his brother brushes these aside. They kiss and weep in each other's arms, yet Esau's persistent attempts to reestablish fraternal ties are met with diffidence; Jacob quickly becomes aloof. Esau showers him with affection while Jacob seeks to put a good bit of distance between them. Esau insists that they spend some time together, but Jacob repeatedly demurs. He eventually promises to come at some convenient time, a pledge which turns out to be Jacob's final deceit (33:14). The "reconciliation" depicted is entirely one-sided (George W. Coats, "Strife without Reconciliation: A Narrative Theme in the Jacob Traditions," in *Werden und Wirken des Alten Testaments: Festschrift für Claus Westermann zum 70. Geburtstag* [ed. Rainer Albertz et al.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980], 82-106; Walters, "Narrative," 605).

If Paul sees the eschatological relation between Jews and Gentiles according to the intertwined fates of favored and rejected sons in Genesis, in Rom 11 he conforms his argument to the pattern of Gen 32-33. Esau's heirs have forced out (the majority of) Jacob's. The logic of this position is not strictly theoretical but exegetical and theological: each must suffer the fate of the other, so that God's mercy may fall equally on all (Rom 11:32).

7.3. THE PRIORITY OF ISRAEL AND THE EQUALITY OF GENTILES

Perhaps *the crux interpretum* in Romans is Paul's affirmation that the gospel is available to all without distinction even while he maintains Israel's priority in salvation history. The gospel is for all who believe, yet remains for the Jew first (1:16). The Jews have priority in judgment as well as salvation (2:9-10); they have received privileges unique among the nations (3:1; 9:1-5); they retain their election on the basis of the fathers (11:32); they beheld the Messiah whose mission was to confirm their promises (15:8); and they possess spiritual blessings, so that Gentiles who share in them are placed in their debt (15:27).

Yet the gospel address the problem of universal sin (3:22) and announces a universally attainable faith (10:12) in both cases without distinction: οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν διαστολή. No human can be justified by works of the law (3:20), because the one God of Jews and Gentiles justifies circumcised and uncircumcised on the basis of faith (3:29-30; see also 4:16; 10:13).

Again, several interpreters have detected this incongruity. W. D. Davies expressed the problem in this way:

Paul's quandary was precisely this: how to do justice to the historical role of his own people without thereby, ipso facto, elevating their ethnic character to a position of special privilege. This is why the tortuous discussion in Romans 9-11 . . . ends in a paradox: in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek and yet a continued place for the Jewish people as such.¹⁷

E. Elizabeth Johnson summarizes:

¹⁷ Davies, "Israel," in *Studies*, 147.

The extended discussion of Israel's place in the economy of salvation is the final resolution of a tension inherent in the letter from the very statement of its theme (1:16): God is absolutely impartial in judgment and salvation, but Israel nevertheless has a salvation-historical advantage. This tension in Paul's argument between God's impartiality and faithfulness to Israel provides the conceptual framework for the whole letter. God's impartial treatment of all can never be seen as abandonment of God's elect, but neither can God's faithfulness to Israel be construed as partiality.¹⁸

And Charles H. Cosgrove writes: "Although a majority of scholars now think that 'all Israel' is the Jewish nation as a whole, whose election is irrevocable, no satisfactory answer has been given to the objection that this makes God partial in a way that contradicts the whole tenor of the first ten chapters of Romans."¹⁹ Israel is privileged, yet the gospel gives Israel no advantage. If all Israel is saved, it has retained its primacy, and yet neither the gospel nor God's mercy which supplies it can show favoritism.

The exegetical substructure I have posited for Rom 9 can address this dilemma as well. To sketch an answer very briefly: When Israel's priority as God's firstborn son (Exod 4:22; Rom 9:4) is seen against the narrative pattern of Genesis (§4.3.1.), the paradox of Romans dissolves. Israel can be both preeminent and equal because the favored child trades his dignity to partake of his brother's reproach. It is the privilege of Israel to relinquish its priority so that others may share in its blessings (see Rom 15:27). This is not a destiny freely assumed but one divinely imposed. Paul assigns this operation a theological cause: God locks up all in disobedience so that he may have mercy on all (Rom 11:32). It is not any heroism found in Israel, much less that present among the nations, which accounts for this preeminence-in-suffering. It is the irreducible

¹⁸ Johnson, *Function*, 120. Despite claiming that Rom 9-11 is the "final resolution" of a tension present in Paul's letter since 1:16, Johnson realizes that Rom 9-11 does not, on its surface, provide a resolution at all: "[In Rom 11:28-32, Paul sets] God's irrevocable election of Israel directly beside his impartial judgment and redemption of all, *without resolving the tension*" (ibid., 146; emphasis added). See also Seifrid, "Romans," 638: the open proclamation of the gospel to all, Jew and Gentile alike, is a characteristic of salvation in the present age that will eventually come to an end. Then, God will exercise his prerogative to act "in all particularity" and save Israel.

¹⁹ Cosgrove, *Elusive Israel*, 31-32; see also idem, "Suspense," 277; J. Christiaan Beker, "The Faithfulness of God and the Priority of Israel in Paul's Letter to the Romans," in *The Romans Debate*, 327-32; repr. from *Christians Among Jews and Gentiles: Essays in Honor Krister Stendahl on His 65th Birthday* (ed. George W. E. Nickelsburg with George W. MacRae; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986); Grindheim, *Crux*, 136; Campbell, *Creation*, 127.

meaning of divine election, mediated through narratives and finding ultimate expression in the Son who is *the* firstborn. I will return to this ultimate Christological basis in the conclusion.

7.4. CONCLUSIONS

The exegetical substructure that I have derived from Rom 9 has the potential to untangle some of the most perplexing knots in the epistle. In every case, Paul's interpretation of Genesis reconstructed from Rom 9:6-13, 24-29 proved capable of meeting fundamental interpretive challenges.

The tension between Israel defined as a remnant (9:6-11:10) and Israel defined as an ethnic entity descended from Abraham (11:11-11:32) is resolved in the paradoxical identity of Israel articulated in Genesis, where the beloved son proves his election by sharing in the fate of his excluded brother. The peculiar causal relation between the rejection of Israel and the salvation of the nations (11:11-12, 17-19, 28-32) likewise has its ground in the same ironic portrayal, because the chosen son experiences his rejection in and through the elder brother's temporary reclamation of his lost preeminence. Finally, the tension between Israel's priority (2:9-10; 3:1; 9:1-5; 11:26-27; 15:8, 27) and the gospel's impartiality (3:22-23, 29-30; 4:16; 10:12) also corresponds to Genesis's narrative pattern. Israel is privileged to surrender its own place for the benefit of another.

Therefore, the Pauline exegesis reconstructed above is supported by more than its ability to solve the interpretive problems inherent in Rom 9. It appears to have shaped major elements composing the epistle's theological visions. If there is a need to account for the unique convictions that Paul expresses only in Romans, I submit that a fresh exegesis of the Bible's first book undertaken prior to writing this letter offers an answer that is not only plausible but compelling. Scholars will debate whether the meaning of "the righteousness of God" is located in Isaiah, Psalms, Proverbs, or somewhere else. But the ability of that righteousness to pacify antagonistic relations among estranged brothers is revealed in Genesis.

CONCLUSIONS

In Rom 9, Paul reconfigures the identity of God's people through an extensive reinterpretation of his inherited mythomoteur. He does this neither by "troping" abstracted narratives of God's righteousness (so Hays) nor by exerting his will to power over a mute text (so Stanley). Rather, Paul reads his biblical texts closely, looking for clues to the mystery of Jew and Gentile in the messianic era. In Romans he offers a theology of Israel that is unique among his letters. This new departure suggests that, however much theological convictions and rhetorical exigencies guide his interpretation of Scripture, they do not determine it in advance. He finds in Genesis the story of election bestowed, annulled, and reconstituted, and he discerns in Hosea and Isaiah the means to apply that story to the salvation-historical events unfolding before him. In Israel's etiology Paul discovers its eschatology.

This conclusion affords me an opportunity to summarize my results, to assess the relative importance of Genesis and Isaiah for Paul, to mention some christological implications, and to propose further study in the relation between Paul's Scriptural interpretation and an aspect of the Jesus tradition.

1. SUMMARY OF THIS STUDY

In the introduction, I presented my thesis that beneath Paul's arguments, assertions, and biblical quotations in Rom 9 lies his prior interpretation of Genesis, and I suggested that

this hypothesis might account for many of the tensions between the disparate arguments in Rom 9-11.

In ch. 1, I laid out the methodological bases on which the present study rests. I dealt with three issues that must be addressed in any attempt to reconstruct Paul's scriptural exegesis after him. First, because of its hypothetical nature this enterprise requires that it meet firm criteria if its results are to be persuasive. Second, because it relies on adaptations that Paul allegedly makes to his biblical quotations, it needs compelling standards to evaluate whether these are intentional, and those standards must take into consideration the textual plurality of the Second Temple period. Finally, because this study aims to recover Paul's own exegesis, the methods attributed to him must make sense within the interpretive practices of early Judaism.

Therefore I proposed criteria to deal with each of these issues. A reconstructed pre-epistolary exegesis has merit to the extent that it (1) is rooted in the Pauline text through specific vocabulary, thematic overlap, and especially specific quotations; (2) makes use of hermeneutical techniques known to have been available to Paul in his intellectual milieu; (3) solves problems in the text; and (4) has an explanatory power that reaches beyond the passage that generated the hypothesis.

Further, an intentional, exegetically significant change to the quoted text is probable to the extent that the variation (1) has its earliest extant witness in Paul (insofar as this can be established on text-critical grounds); (2) is integrated into his argument; (3) has some connection to the context of other texts that he quotes; and (4) cannot be explained as a revision towards the Hebrew.

Lastly, examples of those exegetical techniques important for this study were shown to be common to various forms of Jewish reading practices. These consist of the use of prophetic texts to interpret the Torah, *gezera shawa*, and atomizing exegesis.

In ch. 2, I assembled a threefold frame of reference for the exegesis of Rom 9 I undertake in subsequent chapters. First, I derived a theoretical model from Anthony D. Smith's ethno-symbolic approach to narrative and identity, an approach summarized in the concept of a *mythomoteur*. Second, I located the ideological and theological background in those Jewish writings that use Abraham as a symbol of Jewish identity. Finally, I surveyed passages in Paul's letters where he relates Gentile believers to Israel via Abrahamic traditions. I concluded that Rom 4 pioneers new ground. Rather than subsuming Gentiles under the label *Israel* in an undifferentiated Abrahamic unity, here for the first time Paul places Jewish and Gentile believers next to each other as separate branches of a single Abrahamic tree. This perspective reappears in Rom 9.

In ch. 3, I began a detailed examination of Rom 9 by exegeting vv. 6-13. I argued that Paul defends the viability of (what his gospel implies about) God's word, and he turns to the patriarchal narratives to do so. He bases on them an understanding of election that operates without regard for circumcision or Torah observance. It is instead characterized by a reversal of primogeniture and an exclusionary reflex: the election of the younger son as Abraham's seed entails the expulsion of his elder brother.

I further argued that Paul lays out his case in a manner that appears to rupture the logic of his own persuasive goals. He does this in two ways. First, he so strongly emphasizes the absolute freedom of God that he leaves undeveloped his opening distinction between *all those from Israel* and *those who are Israel*. Second, Paul seems

to follow a reading of the Jewish mythomoteur that limits God's love to the chosen people and that rejects any divine solicitude for non-Jewish nations, a position inconsistent with the conclusion stated in 9:24-29.

In ch. 4, I demonstrated that the prophetic texts quoted in Rom 9:25-29 have numerous connections with the patriarchal narratives, particularly as Paul interprets them in 9:6-13. His quotations from Malachi, Hosea, and Isaiah all show significant verbal links with Genesis. These occur at every level: in the portions Paul quotes, in the adaptations that he makes to them, and in their surrounding context. Furthermore, Hosea and Isaiah display the same ironic pattern of election and its reversal that characterizes Genesis. This network of intertextual connections indicates that an exegetical substructure undergirds Rom 9.

In ch. 5, I attempted to reconstruct Paul's interpretation of Hosea as a conclusion to the story of Abraham's children found in Genesis. I began with an exegesis of Rom 9:14-24 that confirmed my interpretation of 9:6-13: Paul is not (explicitly) pursuing the question of Israel's division from Israel (v. 6a) but providing a defense of Jewish election (vv. 6b-13), which he eventually overturns (vv. 27-29). Concerning Paul's reading of Hosea, two exegetical problems set the agenda: Why does Paul quote Hosea's promise that Israel will be restored to God's covenant as proof that Gentiles are currently being included in it? and, What meaning might he attribute to the words in his quoted text that emphasize the *place* where Gentiles are included?

I argued that Paul atomizes the parallel phrases in Hos 2:2 and reads them in light of Isa 10:22 (*gezera shewa*). By these maneuvers, he accomplishes two goals. First, he creates in Hosea textual space for Gentile children of Abraham: they are the excluded

children typologically identified with Esau, whose (temporary) period of ascendancy has begun. Second, he locates the remnant in Hosea's predictions: it is the house of Judah, temporarily estranged from the house of Israel. On this basis, I argued that the series of prophecies in Hos 1-3 closely parallels Paul's eschatological scenario in Rom 9-11, and may therefore have played a role in its formulation. I also concluded that Paul understands the *place* where Gentiles are included to be the cosmically-reinterpreted territory promised to Abraham's seed.

In ch. 6, I moved from Hosea to Isaiah and continued to reconstruct Paul's pre-epistolary exegesis. As in ch. 5, two questions framed the discussion: What is the meaning of Paul's quotation from Isa 10:22-23? and, What is the origin and significance of the remnant?

I showed that Paul interprets Isaiah's oracle as a *promise*, but as one that applies exclusively to the remnant. He does not quote Isaiah to express hope for all Israel's salvation. On the contrary, by means of these verses Paul for the first time explicitly applies to Abraham's family the division in 9:6b between *those of Israel* and *that which is Israel*. Isaiah effects this rupture, which in God's power had always been possible (9:14-23), and expressly states that *faith* distinguishes those rejected from those who remain.

The remnant itself is therefore an ambiguous theological symbol. Attempts to read it as a guarantee of salvation for the entire people of Israel run against the obstacle that it has this function neither in Isaiah nor Rom 9:6-11:10. If, within the context of Paul's argument, the concept of the remnant contains a promise for all Israel, it most

likely derives from Genesis, where remnant language is applied to Abraham's family in order to describe its paradoxical deliverance through dissolution.

In ch. 6, I also addressed the several surprising turns in Paul's argument noted throughout this study. These can also be understood in light of his narrative precursor. The dialectic of election expressed in Genesis as a literary feature is recapitulated in Paul's epistle as a subtle, almost subterranean, element of his rhetoric.

In ch. 7, I proposed that the exegetical substructure I have reconstructed can resolve several antinomies in the epistle to the Romans. The tension between Paul's different solutions to the problem behind 9:6a (9:6b-11:10 and 11:11-32), the necessary connection he posits between Israel's rejection and the nations' inclusion, and the apparent conflict between particularity and universality throughout the letter, all grow out of Paul's abiding commitment to the Abrahamic mythomoteur, even as he drastically reconfigures it.

2. GENESIS AND ISAIAH IN ROMANS

Throughout this study, I have sought to show that Genesis is Paul's base text and that Hosea is at least as important as Isaiah in applying what he interprets there to his contemporary situation. I hope thereby to correct an imbalance among Pauline interpreters. Several recent monographs have argued that Isaiah supplies Paul with the necessary theological tools and rhetorical arguments for constructing his epistle to the Romans.¹ Florian Wilk goes so far as to postulate that Paul, prior to writing Romans, undertook a fresh and thorough engagement with Isaiah, resulting in this letter's distinctive theological emphases, particularly in chs. 9-11. Only here and

¹ Wilk, *Bedeutung*; Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah*; Wagner, *Heralds*. Exegetes who agree that Isaiah is the major biblical source of Paul's theology in Romans include Paul E. Dinter and Jörg Frey (Dinter, "Paul and the Prophet Isaiah," 48-52; Frey, "Identity," 300). Seifrid suggests that behind Paul's interpretation of Genesis in Rom 9:6-13 lies his reading of Isaiah—precisely the opposite of what I argue here ("Romans," 639, 640; similarly Wagner, *Heralds*, 43, 47).

in Rom 15:8 does Jesus Christ confirm God's fidelity to the people of Israel. Romans therefore represents something of a hermeneutical breakthrough in Paul's theology of Israel, and it is occasioned, according to Wilk, by the apostle's newfound willingness to take Isaiah at his word.²

I have no desire to detract from Isaiah's importance to Paul or indeed to early Christian readers of Scripture in general. And I would concur with Wilk that Paul's fresh engagement with Scripture is one of the reasons for this letter's theological uniqueness. Yet I cannot help but think that Isaiah's importance for Romans has been overstated to the detriment of other, equally or more compelling sources of Paul's theological reasoning. Romans 9-11 opens (9:7) and closes (11:28) with Paul's appeal to the patriarchs. I hope to have shown that much of what occurs in between proceeds from the same point of reference. Too many exegetes of Rom 9 make greater claims for Isaiah than can be sustained. This misplaced focus, one might say, has caused interpreters to trip over the Isaianic stumbling stone, a stone which, ironically, should have led them back to Torah.

3. THE FIRSTBORN OF MANY BROTHERS

If there is a bedrock beneath the exegetical substructure I have proposed, it is the apostle's Christology. I have avoided entanglements in this area, because the subject is vast and would quickly lead away from Rom 9. But in my judgment it is not possible to appreciate fully Paul's exegetical and typological accomplishment without recognizing its christological foundation. The suffering borne by the firstborn son enacts the journey from death to life endured by *the Son*, the firstborn of many whose siblings find salvation in their conformity to the pattern of his death-for-others (Rom 8:17, 29, 32). The parallel between Rom 8:17 and 11:32 is difficult to ignore. In Paul's understanding, all those

² Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 41-42, 140, 159, 362-63.

who experience salvation do so by sharing in Christ's death and so attaining the resurrection (see also Phil 3:8-11). If all Israel is to be saved and yet refuses to believe, God must impose on it the form of Christ in the same unilateral way as, according to Paul's description in Rom 9, he imposes his election.

I therefore consider my proposal to be compatible, at the deepest level, with N. T. Wright's christological interpretation of Rom 11: Israel shares in the destiny of the Messiah who himself recapitulates the story of Israel. As Wright puts it: "Israel . . . is cast away, as was her Messiah, so that the world might be brought into the family of God."³ If both groups are to participate in the eschatological life of Christ, both must be conformed to his suffering and resurrection. In the Abrahamic mythomoteur, reinterpreted in light of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, Paul has discovered *the resources for a theology of Israel's election that entails its own repudiation-for-others*.

The paradox between the priority of Israel's election and the universality of the gospel can be revisited from this angle. Ultimately, Israel can be preeminent and also without advantage because the Son is both lord and servant (Rom 1:4, 15:8; see also Phil 2:5-11), both first and last (cf. Mark 9:35; 10:31, 44).

4. PROPOSAL FOR FURTHER STUDY

Paul has reappropriated the mythomoteur embedded in Genesis to understand how Israel and the nations relate to each other and to God in the era begun with the Messiah's death

³ Wright, *Climax*, 246; see also 243, 248-49; idem, "Adam, Israel, and the Messiah," in *Climax*, 18-40; idem, *NIB* 10:471-72, 682-84; idem, *Justification*, 125, 130-31, 244. I regard it an additional strength that my interpretation allows what Wright's does not: an ethnic interpretation of πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ and a real correspondence between Christ's resurrection, Israel's restoration, and a universal, non-metaphorical resurrection in Rom 11:15. Grindheim criticizes Wright's christological interpretation of Israel's stumbling but come very close to it himself: "The people of Israel are instrumental in bringing salvation to the Gentiles not through their glorification but through their humiliation" (*Crux*, 165).

and resurrection, and he reenacts its story of election's ironies in his own mode of expression.⁴ This mode of expression is discursive, theoretical, and frequently opaque. Though attracted to biblical stories, Paul does not in his epistles reveal himself as a *storyteller*. But if he were, he might translate the complex analysis in Rom 9-11 into a simple narrative that begin with, "There was a man who had two sons. . . ."

In fact, Luke's parable of the prodigal (Luke 15:11-32) resonates with the narrative of Abraham's two sons in ways remarkably similar to the evocations present in Paul's exegetical argument.⁵ James L. Kugel has shown that rabbinic midrash sometimes produced stories that, once abstracted from the interpretive activity giving them birth, attain a life of their own.⁶ Given the prevalence of exegetical debates between Jews and Christians over the true lineage of Abraham (John 8:37-59; Jas 2:21-24; Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho* 11.1-5; 23.3-4; 80.4; 119.3-6; 120.2; see also ch. 2 above), it would be fruitful to investigate whether Paul's pre-epistolary exegesis has any connection with the Jesus tradition recorded in Luke 15, and if so, to discover in what direction the influence lies.⁷ The question of Paul's influence on Mark's Gospel has received renewed attention of

⁴ For what follows, I am indebted to conversations with Carol Stockhausen.

⁵ The intertextual relations between the story of Jacob, the traditions of exile and return, and the parable of the prodigal son have been demonstrated in Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (vol. 2 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God*; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 124-44; Kenneth E. Bailey, *Jacob and the Prodigal: How Jesus Retold Israel's Story* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2003).

⁶ Kugel, "Two Introductions to Midrash," in *Midrash and Literature* (ed. Geoffrey H. Hartman and Sanford Budick; New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1986), 95-100.

⁷ On Abraham as a contested figure between Jews and Christians, see Robert L. Wilken, "The Christianizing of Abraham: The Interpretation of Abraham in Early Christianity," *CTM* 43 (1972): 723-31; Roy Bowen Ward, "Abraham Traditions in Early Christianity," in *Studies on the Testament of Abraham* (ed. George W. E. Nickelsburg and Robert A. Kraft; SCS 6; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1976), 173-84; Jeffrey S. Siker, "From Gentile Inclusion to Jewish Exclusion: Abraham in Early Christian Controversy with Jews," *BTB* 19 (1989): 30-36; idem, *Disinheriting*; Jon D. Levenson, *Abraham between Torah and Gospel* (Père Marquette Lecture in Theology 42; Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2011).

late; perhaps, given Paul's central role in the Acts, it is time to ask whether he had an effect on Luke's Gospel as well.⁸

⁸ On the presence of Pauline influence in the gospel of Mark, see Joel Marcus, "Mark—Interpreter of Paul," *NTS* 46 (2000): 473-87; Francis Watson, "'I Received from the Lord . . .': Paul, Jesus, and the Last Supper," in *Jesus and Paul Reconnected* (ed. Todd D. Still; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 103-24.

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