

Romans Chapter 9

Before we begin studying Romans chapter 9, please review what we learned in Romans chapter 8 by circling the correct answers.

1. Romans 8:4 - How is the righteousness of the law fulfilled in us? **a.** By us keeping the law, **b.** By us doing good works for the church, **c.** By the indwelling Spirit giving us power over sin, **d.** By the indwelling Christ living His life through us, Galatians 2:20.
2. Romans 8:5 - How can we tell when someone is, walking after the flesh? **a.** They will be flesh oriented, **b.** They will be selfish, **c.** They will exhibit fake spirituality, **d.** They will talk the talk but not walk the walk, **e.** All of the above.
3. When God predestinated people in the Bible, does the Bible say, God predestinated unsaved people to get saved? Yes. No. Did God predestinate saved people to receive a new, glorified body, at some point in the future, Romans 8:23? _____
4. Romans 8:29 - What does the Bible say God predestinated people to? **a.** To get saved, **b.** To be conformed to the image of His Son, **c.** To the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, Ephesians 1:5, **d.** To obtain an inheritance, Ephesians 1:11, **e.** to get a custom built mansion, next door to Jesus.

VI. Consternation: Israel's Rejection of God's Righteousness (9:1–11:36) **a. 9:1-33 - Why faithless Israel rejected God's righteousness**

Introduction to Romans chapter 9

What was the situation in AD 58, when Paul wrote Romans? As we begin Romans chapter 9, God is in the process of dumping Israel on the ash heap of history, because of his (Romans 11:7) unbelief and lack of faith, Romans 9:32. The key verse, which explains Romans 9 is verse 32. Paul offers Israel yet another opportunity to get right with God and receive Messiah, to become a vessel of mercy, if he will. Paul warns that, if Israel continues to reject Messiah Jesus, God will treat faithless, unbelieving Israel like He treated faithless, unbelieving Esau and Pharaoh. For Paul and his evangelistic ministry, the issue is always: What will you do with Jesus?

To understand Romans, it helps to understand the biblical, cultural, historical and religious situation at the time Paul wrote Romans.

1. Remember, when Paul is writing Romans, it is about 25 years after the resurrection of Christ. Calvary and the resurrection of Christ still exert powerful influence in the minds of people in Paul's world. Because we are 2000 years removed from events surrounding Calvary, and because today, there are no eyewitnesses to the resurrection of Christ, those events seem distant to us.
2. Jews had been expelled from Rome by edict of the Roman Emperor, Claudius, AD 49, Acts 18:1-2. They had to leave Rome and live somewhere else.
 - a. Roman churches which had once been Jewish, are, in AD 57-58, mostly Gentile, when Paul writes Romans.
 - b. When Jews started returning to Rome after Emperor Claudius died in AD 54, [they had to try to fit into Gentile churches](#), which were quite different from Jewish Christian churches, because Gentile churches were oriented toward grace, not as oriented toward the law of Moses, Acts 15.
3. No one had a personal copy of the OT or the NT to read and study at home. For that reason, they could only go by memory of what was read and preached to them. There were no CDs or DVDs or mp3s of sermons, which they could listen to, to refresh their memory.
4. A good part of the NT hadn't been written yet, when Paul wrote Romans in the winter of AD 57 - spring of AD 58. Luke, Ephesians, Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, Acts, 1 Timothy, Titus, 1 Peter, 2 Timothy, 2 Peter, Hebrews, Jude, Gospel of John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John and Revelation, were all written, after Paul wrote Romans. That's 152 chapters of the NT (out of 260), which hadn't yet been written and were not available to anyone in AD 58.
5. Paul writes in a way that helps saved Jews returning to Rome, after 5 years in exile abroad, to understand the changes that happened while they were gone. He encourages them to fit into the new paradigm of Roman churches led by Gentiles, and the new doctrinal paradigm, focused on NT grace instead of OT law.
6. Saved Gentiles in Roman churches were listening to the reading of the OT and trying to understand how to be NT Christians, based on the oral instruction of their pastors. That's why Paul quotes the OT so much in Romans, because the saved Gentiles were familiar with it. For example, he quotes Isaiah 19 times in Romans. Saved Gentiles desperately needed Paul's NT teaching about grace.
7. Paul asks 85 questions in the book of Romans, to get his readers thinking, to help them follow his reasoning, to help them arrive at answers to their own questions and to point out how Gentiles are part of God's plan of salvation.

8. In Romans chapter 8, Paul has been reassuring us of God's great love for His people. Paul's evangelistic purpose is to provoke unsaved Israel to jealousy of the blessings of God upon saved Gentiles. He hopes, that jealousy will cause Israel to believe on Jesus as her Messiah. Now, he begins Romans 9, by honestly expressing his sorrow at the rebellious stubbornness of faithless Israel, who continues to reject Jesus as her Messiah.

1. Is all scripture given by inspiration of God, 2 Timothy 3:16? _____
2. Is the book of Romans scripture? _____
3. Is the book of Romans given by inspiration of God? _____
4. Is what Paul writes in Romans 9 given by inspiration of God? _____
5. Was Paul being honest in Romans 9, especially verses 2-4? _____

Romans 9:1 - I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, - What Paul writes here is absolutely true and given by inspiration of God, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Psalm 119:160. There is no false sentimentality in Romans and there is no lying. What Paul writes is honest and truthful. That means Paul is presenting God's infallible truth, as God wanted us to have it. Paul is writing to saved Jews and Gentiles, Romans 1:7-8 but Romans also has truth for unsaved Jews and Gentiles, if they will read it.

Paul is the apostle to the Gentiles but his commission from God also includes going to the Jews, Acts 9:15-16. He has just spent chapters 6, 7 and 8, teaching about and contrasting the flesh and the spirit. He has explained that the flesh cannot save anyone and that God's plan for Christians is, they must live in the Spirit. Now, in Romans 9, 10 and 11, Paul explains how God deals with the nation of Israel at the beginning of the church age and again, Paul does it by contrasting flesh and spirit.

Esau represents the flesh, Romans 9:8. Esau rejects the birthright (meaning, Esau rejected being part of God's promise to Abraham about Messiah and the truth that Abraham's descendants through Isaac, are part of the genealogy of Christ). God responds by rejecting Esau and his faithless, flesh-centered unbelief. Those events happened in Genesis chapters 25-27. In an odd way, Esau's rejection of his place in the genealogy of Christ and God's rejection of Esau, mirrors what is happening in Romans 9, when faithless Israel rejects Messiah Jesus, and God rejects Israel.

Jacob represents the spirit and, the children of the promise, Romans 9:8. Jacob wants the Abrahamic birthright. He is one of *the children of the promise*

and he wants to be in the genealogy of Christ, so God responds by accepting Jacob and sending the line of Christ through Jacob.

Paul is the apostle to the Gentiles, Romans 11:13, 15:16. We could title Romans chapter 9 - Israel's Place Under A Gentile Gospel (meaning, the gospel will be sent to the Gentiles, if Israel rejects it), or, Israel's Place During The Church Age. Previously in Romans chapters 1-8, Paul mentions Jew or Jews 11 times but never mentions Israel. In Romans chapters 9-11, Paul mentions Israel 12 times and only mentions Jews one time, Romans 9:24, and Jew one time, Romans 10:12. That is important because it indicates that, in Romans 9, 10 and 11, Paul is focused on covenant Israel, as God's elect nation and her rejection of Jesus as Messiah.

If we were to summarize Romans 9 with a short slogan on a bumper sticker, it would say: GET RIGHT or GET LEFT! Israel did not get right with God and believe on Jesus as her Messiah. Because faithless Israel rejected Jesus, God rejected Israel, left her on the ash heap of history for 2000 years, Romans 11:21-25, and turned to the Gentiles. The church age began when Jesus died on Calvary, Matthew 27:50, Hebrews 9:16-17, and resurrected three days later, Matthew 28:1-6, Ephesians 2:13-18. God's intention was that Jews and Gentiles would be one body, the church, the body of Christ, instead of Jews and Gentiles being in separate groups, at odds with each other.

And yet, Paul tells the truth in Romans, that faithless Israel is God's chosen, elect people. Israel didn't have to, was not compelled or forced to, reject Jesus as her Messiah,. He could have accepted Him because everyone in Israel had freewill, Leviticus 22:18, 21, 23, Numbers 15:3, 29:39, Deuteronomy 12:6, 17, 16:10, 23:23, 2 Chronicles 31:14, Ezra 1:4, 3:5, 7:13, 7:16, 8:28, Psalm 119:108.

By virtue of having free will, all Israelites were capable of obeying God's commands to seek Him and of obeying God's call to salvation, Isaiah 45:22. Many thousands of Israelites did joyfully accept Jesus, Acts 2:41, 4:4, 6:7, 21:20, and lived in the grace of God in the first century AD. Paul wants all Israel to become Jews for Jesus, Romans 1:16, 10:1, 13.

In Romans, we are no longer in the OT, on the law side of Calvary. In the NT, on the grace side of Calvary, Paul presents the grace of God as: **1.** Far superior to OT law, and, **2.** Paul teaches that NT grace has actually replaced OT law.

*"For sin shall not have dominion over you:
for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Romans 6:14.*

Christians are "dead to the law." Romans 7:4.

"If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law" Galatians 5:18.

Christians are "delivered from the law." Romans 7:6.

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" [the law]. Galatians 3:24-25.

For Christians, the Law is "that which is done away." 2 Corinthians 3:11.

For Christians, the Law is "that which is abolished." 2 Corinthians 3:13.

For Christians, Jesus, on the Cross, was "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us." Colossians 2:14.

Concerning the Law, God "took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;" Colossians 2:14.

"When God speaks of a new [covenant or agreement], He makes the first one obsolete (out of use). And what is obsolete (out of use and annulled because of age) is ripe for disappearance and to be dispensed with altogether." Hebrews 8:13, The Amplified Version

"And after that he said, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. Thus he put an end to the first in order to establish the second." Hebrews 10:9, Lamsa Translation

"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Romans 10:4.

In the first century AD, every Israelite worth his salt is wrestling with Paul's new truth about grace, trying to get his mind and heart around what it means, that grace has replaced law. So Paul begins Romans 9 by saying: "Guys, I'm telling you God's honest truth; I'm not lying to you."

Romans 9 explains why God rejected Israel

Why did God reject Israel? Because Israel rejected Jesus, Luke 19:14, 23:21, and refused to put their faith in the Messiah, Romans 9:32. They preferred to trust their righteousness instead of trusting Christ's righteousness. That rejection and the staggering consequences Israel suffered, for her willful rejection and lack of faith, are highlighted in scripture. By the leading of the Holy Spirit, God's glorious gospel of salvation in Christ alone, went to Israel first, Acts 1:8, Romans

1:16. God did everything right concerning Israel, by making Israel's salvation His first priority and still, faithless Israel rejected Him.

Notice that Paul doesn't blame Israel's rejection of Jesus on God. Paul doesn't tell us, it's all because of unconditional election in eternity past and therefore, God planned for and caused Israel to reject Jesus. Paul is upset precisely because Jesus did die for all Israel, 1 Timothy 2:4-6, and God wanted all Israel to be saved, 2 Peter 3:9, and Israel rejected God's salvation anyway.

Romans chapter 9 is not about God, in eternity past, unconditionally electing some individuals to get saved and leaving everyone else unconditionally unelected and headed for hell, with no possibility of getting saved. The illustrations Paul uses in Romans chapter 9 are intended to convey two startling truths. **1.** Israel had a legitimate freewill choice to believe on Messiah Jesus. **2.** God can and will reject Israel for her freewill choice, her unbelief, her lack of faith, her rejection of Messiah, Romans 9:32. Romans 9 is Paul's explanation of why God rejected His chosen, elect nation, Isaiah 45:4.

Paul is explaining that the OT law is over and done away, 2 Corinthians 3:3-13, (written by Paul around AD 55, three years before Paul wrote Romans), an explanation that the nation of Israel struggled to accept. Paul argues that, even though Israel is God's elect, God will reject Israel, like He rejected Esau and Pharaoh, if Israel rejects Jesus as her Messiah. That is God's honest truth - *I lie not*. God never promised to save Israel because they are biologically descended from Abraham or because male Israelites were circumcised as a sign of God's covenant with Israel. Every individual Israelite must have the faith of Abraham and that was the sticking point.

"Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;" Romans 9:32.

my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, - Paul is intensely focused on having a clean conscience. He mentions the conscience 27 times in the NT. The purpose of your conscience is to convict you of sin, John 8:9. Your conscience testifies to you, or bears witness, Romans 2:15, 9:1. Do you listen to and obey your conscience when it bears witness to you? _____

If you were a juror in a trial court, the judge would expect you to pay careful attention to the testimony because that is your duty and responsibility and helps you make the right decision. It would be a serious mistake if you, as a juror, ignored the testimony. In the same way, you should always pay attention to your conscience. Paying attention to your conscience, will keep you out of trouble. Paying attention to your conscience is your duty and responsibility. If you ignore

the testimony of your conscience, that is a serious mistake which will have life changing, negative consequences for you.

When your conscience convicts you of sin, you have two choices. You can respond by obeying your conscience and getting right with God, or you can slink away or, Go and sin some more. Jesus commands, *Go and sin no more*, John 8:11, but you know how people are when they reject the prodding of conscience - they become cold, remorseless, conscienceless.

Our conscience is inside us, where Christ and the Holy Spirit dwell. When you make a habit of rejecting the prodding of your conscience, you are resisting the particular method God ordained, to keep you on the straight and narrow, to help you walk in *paths of righteousness for His Name's sake*, to help you live a victorious Christian life. Please list some possible consequences of ignoring your conscience. _____

Paul is saying: "I'm telling you what God has laid on my heart; what God has shown me in my conscience, is true." Paul's burdened conscience is from the indwelling Holy Ghost. Paul is troubled by the resistance he has encountered from Israelites wherever he preached the truth that Jesus is Messiah. Faithless Israel is ignoring her collective conscience. Paul's conscience is troubled and stirred up by the Holy Ghost. Do you see that as you read Romans 9:1? _____

Remember the vicious reaction of the Jews, to Paul's preaching, which Paul describes in Acts 16:22-23, 2 Corinthians 6:5, 11:23-24. Stripes were a Jewish punishment for things like, perceived or real, blasphemy and false teaching, often ordered by the ruler of the synagogue, Deuteronomy 25:1-3.

In many cities, Paul started his evangelistic ministry by teaching in the Jewish synagogues, because he had a dual commission, to Gentiles and Jews, Acts 9:15. By teaching in the synagogues, Paul was putting himself under the authority of the ruler of the synagogue, Acts 9:20, 13:5,14,15, 14:1, 17:17; 18:4. He opened himself to punishment if he preached something the ruler of the synagogue didn't like. Five times, Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 11:24, I received stripes, probably by scourging with a whip. Three other times, Paul says, I was beaten with rods, Psalm 89:32, 2 Corinthians 11:25, Acts 16:22, 1 Thessalonians 2:2.

The harsh physical persecution Paul endured in his missionary ministry was the result of the truths he taught and indicates how mightily the children of Israel struggled against the grace message and how courageous, grace-filled and resilient the apostle Paul was, under harsh persecution. He loved his Israelite brethren and wanted to see them believe on their Messiah and receive the

forgiveness and grace he had received. Adam Clark's commentary on 2 Corinthians says this about scourging, citing Mishna, fol. 22.2.

"The two hands of the criminal are bound to a post, and then the servant of the synagogue either pulls or tears off his clothes till he leaves his breast and shoulders bare. A stone or block is placed behind him on which the servant stands; he holds in his hands a scourge made of leather, divided into three tails. He who scourges lays one third on the criminal's breast, another third on his right shoulder, and another on his left. The man who receives the punishment is neither sitting nor standing, but all the while stooping; and the man smites with all his strength, with one hand."

Johann Albrecht Bengel, 1687-1752, the Lutheran commentator, in Exegetical Annotations on the New Testament, says, the forty save one method, 2 Corinthians 11:24, employed a triple whip, used thirteen times, each of the three tails of the whip inflicting one stripe.

2 - That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. - Who is the source, according to Romans 9:1, of the *great heaviness and continual sorrow* in Paul's heart, that he mentions here? _____ As we study Romans 9, we need to remember Paul's mindset and purpose in writing this portion of Romans. Paul had a genuine burden for his brethren Israel, his kinsmen according to the flesh. He longs to see them saved. That burden for Israel came to Paul's conscience from the Holy Ghost. Paul's burden for Israel is like Jeremiah's burden for Israel, genuinely heart-felt and genuinely from God.

"But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive." Jeremiah 13:17.

Jeremiah is the weeping prophet, the prophet of the captivity. In the OT context of Jeremiah, God is about to send Judah into captivity for her idolatry and sin. Paul is in a situation similar to Jeremiah. In Romans 9, God is already in the process of cutting off Israel, removing her from the place of blessing and grafting in the Gentiles. Both Jeremiah and Paul had a heart burden for Israel and Judah.

Beyond that, Paul also had a specific tactic he intended to employ in winning Israel to Christ. Paul's tactic was to provoke Israel to jealousy, to make them jealous of the blessings God was pouring out upon the Gentiles, who were receiving the blessings of God because they believed on Jesus as their Savior, Ephesians 1:3.

“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.” Romans 10:1.

“If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.” Romans 11:14.

“To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” 1 Corinthians 9:22.

“But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile.” 2 Corinthians 2:16.

1. When you read Romans 9:2, which conclusion do you reach? **a.** Paul has a great burden to see Israel saved, **b.** Paul is neutral about Israel getting saved.
2. From whom did Paul get his burden for Israel? **a.** The Bible doesn't give us that answer, **b.** Paul's burden for lost and unsaved Israel came from, God the Holy Ghost, Romans 9:1.
3. If God, in eternity past, elected only a few people to salvation, and left the rest unelected, unatoned, unpropitiated and unsaved, does it make sense that God would then burden Paul's heart for non-elect people for whom Jesus didn't die? **a.** Well, Yes, that does seem kind of strange to me, **b.** No, that doesn't make sense because the sentiment Paul expresses in Romans 9:2 contradicts the teaching of Calvinism, that Jesus only died for a few.
4. Would the Holy Spirit cause Paul to write Romans 9:3, if Calvinism is true and Christ didn't elect, die for or intend to save, *whosoever will*, of Israel? _____

3 - For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: - If Calvinism is true, Paul, in Romans 9, is talking like a madman. Calvinism says: God unconditionally elected a few people to salvation. Those elect few WILL be saved by Irresistible Grace, without them having any say in the matter. According to Calvinism, the elect few cannot resist God's saving grace because it is Irresistible. They have to get saved. If that is true, why does Paul begin Romans 9 by saying:

“That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: Who are Israelites...” Romans 9:2-4.

If Calvinism is God's truth, why does Paul say, *I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart*? According to Calvinism, all of God's elect WILL be saved by Irresistible Grace. None of the elect can possibly be lost. What Paul writes makes no sense if Calvinism is true. Calvinism claims to get its TULIP teaching from Paul yet Paul seems to think everyone in Israel could get saved.

Why could Paul wish himself *accursed from Christ* for his unsaved Jewish brethren if: **1.** The people God elected to be saved WILL be saved, by Irresistible Grace, and, **2.** the ones God elected not to be saved, don't have a snowball's chance of ever getting saved, because Jesus didn't die for them according to Calvinism's teaching of Limited Atonement - Christ's Atonement is Limited to the elect. We believe that Paul wrote what he wrote in Romans 9, precisely because he is not a Calvinist and was not teaching Calvinism, was not teaching unconditional election and was not teaching irresistible grace.

In the context of Romans 9, Paul is talking about Israel and Israelites, Romans 9:4. Paul is serious about the longing of his heart to see his brethren get saved because Jesus did die for all Israel and everyone in Israel could have believed on Jesus as Messiah. Paul is a *whosoever will*, kind of guy, Romans 10:13, and, an *everyone that believeth*, kind of guy, Romans 1:16. Paul's burden to see his fellow Israelites get saved is from the Holy Ghost. Therefore God the Holy Ghost is not a Calvinist and Paul is not a Calvinist. Do you understand how, what Paul writes in Romans 9:2-4, contradicts Calvinism? Please explain how Romans 9:2-4 contradicts the Calvinist teaching of Unconditional Election and Irresistible Grace. _____

For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ - Paul's burden for his fellow Israelites is genuine. If we take his words literally, Paul is not saying, I would go to hell if it meant Israel would get saved. Logically and theologically, Paul knows that going to hell will not cause his brethren to get saved. Jesus already did that - went to hell, Acts 2:31. Remember, Paul just taught us, in Romans 8:38-39, that nothing *shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*. Paul doesn't say, I wish. He says: *I could wish*.

for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: - Paul's burden for Israel is real yet Paul knows that the propitiating sacrifice of Christ on Calvary is God's only way of salvation. As much as they loved Israel, neither Moses in the OT, Exodus 32:31-32, nor Paul, here, could be the sinless sacrifice. Jesus was God's sinless sacrifice, doing what Moses and Paul could not do, propitiating or appeasing the wrath of God against our sins. Therefore, Paul's heartfelt statement, *I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren*, is

hyperbole - an exaggerated statement, meant to get Israel's attention but not meant to be taken literally. Paul is expressing his human frustration with Israel's lack of faith.

1. Since Paul's burden to see all Israel saved, came from the Holy Spirit, would God elect some to get saved and many to not get saved? _____
2. Is Romans chapter 11 given by inspiration of God? _____
3. Are Romans 11:26, 32, given by inspiration of God? _____
4. Calvinism teaches that God elected a few to be saved. Is that what Paul teaches in the opening verses of Romans 9 or in Romans 11:26, 32? _____
5. Which fits best with Romans 9:1-3? **a.** Calvinism, which says that only a few will be saved, or, **b.** the Bible, which says: Jesus died for all, 1 Timothy 2:3-6, God wants all to be saved, 2 Peter 3:9, and, all Israel, meaning the end times remnant, will be saved, Romans 9:27, 11:5, 11:26, 32?
6. Since all Israel didn't get saved in the first century AD, what does that mean?
a. God was wrong, **b.** Paul was wrong, **c.** The Bible was wrong, **d.** God will save all the remnant of Israel at some point in the future, **e.** People who believe God, Paul and the Bible were wrong, need to do more Bible study, instead of doubting God and the Bible.

4 - Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;

Who are Israelites; - This sets the context of Romans 9. Paul is talking about Israelites or, the nation of Israel. His use of *Israelites* emphasizes Israel as God's covenant, elect people, descendants of Abraham (through Isaac and Jacob), with whom God established an everlasting covenant and, through whom, came Messiah Jesus. And that is the tragedy. As Paul writes Romans 9, God's elect people, Israel, have rejected God, rejected Messiah Jesus and rejected God's election of them.

Notice in Romans 9:4, Paul isn't teaching the heresy of British Israelism, the weird belief that the people of the British Isles are, genetically, linguistically and racially, direct descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel, so that, white, Anglo-Saxon Britons and Americans are the real people of God's covenant with Abraham. That foolishness was popularized in America by Herbert W. Armstrong, 1892-1986, and Garner Ted Armstrong, 1930-2003, and the Worldwide Church of God. That group has now changed their beliefs, embraced salvation by grace through faith in Christ, and rejected much of what Herbert W. Armstrong taught.

The word, Israelites, occurs 18 times in the Bible. It always refers to biological descendants of Jacob/Israel, meaning, the twelve tribes of Israel. Israelites is an exclusive term and does not include descendants of Abraham outside the Isaac, Jacob line, and of course, Israelites does not include Gentiles and does not include the descendants of Esau, meaning, the people of Edom. Israelites are biological Jews descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Paul isn't talking about spiritual Jews or spiritual Israelites here. That is the context Paul sets in Romans 9. He's getting ready to describe the blessings of God upon ancient Israel, much like he did in Romans 3:1ff.

to whom pertaineth the adoption, - There is something spectacular and awe inspiring about God's faithful love for Israel. Paul lists the splendid blessings with which God graced Israel, appealing to their sense of pride, appealing to their belief that Messiah would come. Messiah had come and God's elect nation, Israel, rejected Him.

There is, in these verses, a broken hearted pathos, a spiritual misery deep in the heart of the great apostle, at the spiritual blindness of his people. If Paul had believed Calvinism is true, he would not have talked this way. His heart wouldn't have been sorrowful for lost Israel if God had not chosen Israel to salvation. Paul's sorrow comes from his knowledge that Jesus did die for all Israel and all Israel could get saved, if they believed on Messiah.

Adoption is never mentioned in the OT and no verse of scripture in the OT, says that God adopted Israel. Adoption is a NT blessing, not an OT phenomenon. Adoption was God's plan for Israel, if they had received Jesus as Messiah. Adoption is one of the blessings Paul mentioned in Romans 8:15, 23, to provoke Israel to jealousy of the saved Gentiles. Because Israel rejected Messiah Jesus, God broke off Israel, from the olive tree, Jeremiah 11:16, Hosea 14:6, and grafted in believing Gentiles, Romans 11:17.

Historically, the nation of Israel in the OT, was God's son. Egypt wasn't God's son. The Canaanites were not God's son. Babylon was not God's son. The Edomites were not God's son. Americans were not God's son.

*“And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD,
Israel is my son, even my firstborn:” Exodus 4:22*

Compare Romans 8:29. *“For whom he did foreknow,
he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son,
that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”*

*“When Israel was a child, then I loved him,
and called my son out of Egypt.” Hosea 11:1.*

Everything God gave to saved Gentiles, after the resurrection of Christ, could have and would have been given to Israel, if they had received Messiah Jesus. Adoption in the NT, is possible because of the gospel. In order to be adopted as an individual, into the family of God, one must believe on the resurrected Christ. Believing the gospel, or, believing on Jesus, results in you receiving the Spirit of adoption, as one of the blessings of being saved, Romans 8:15.

**Before the resurrection of Christ,
no one was adopted into the family of God.**

Adoption of individuals who believed on Jesus, was God’s intention for *Israel, mine elect*, Isaiah 45:4. To her enduring shame, God’s elect nation rejected God’s election and refused to believe on their Messiah, Jesus. The word, adoption, occurs only five times in the NT (never in the OT), twice in Romans 8:15, 23, once in Romans 9:4, and once each in Galatians 4:5 and Ephesians 1:5. Paul is the only human author of the Bible who uses the word, adoption, in the Bible. Note what Paul said. The adoption pertains to Israelites but Paul never says God adopted the nation of Israel.

to whom pertaineth the adoption - *Pertain* means: connected to, part of, related to or intended for. God’s plan was that, when Messiah came, the Israelites, as individuals, would believe on Him and God would adopt them into His family - *to whom pertaineth the adoption*. With God, salvation is always linked to the personal choice of the individual, Romans 10:9-10, 13. Salvation is never a group thing, never a law-keeping thing, never a “gotta live it to earn it” thing. Being born Jewish never saved anyone, just as being circumcised never saved anyone, just as joining the church never saved anyone.

Here is what the apostle Paul taught

Here is Paul’s teaching, given by inspiration of God, 2 Timothy 3:16. Paul’s teaching lines up with the teaching of Jesus. **1.** Everyone is unsaved until he gets saved. In plainer words, no one was in Christ before the foundation of the world, Ephesians 1:4. **2.** Everyone is under the wrath of God until he gets saved, John 3:36, Romans 1:18, 2:8, 4:15, Ephesians 2:3, 2:12-13. **3.** Being under the wrath of God, everyone is a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction until he believes on Jesus and gets in Christ. **4.** In Christ, he is no longer a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction.

5. In Christ, he is now a vessel of mercy, Romans 9:21-23. 6. The only way to change from being a vessel of wrath to a vessel of mercy is to obey the gospel and get saved, so that you are, in Christ.

Pharaoh could have exercised his freewill and obeyed God. Had he done that, he would have become a vessel of mercy by his obedience (letting Israel go). 7. Salvation or, getting in Christ, is never through unconditional election to salvation, in eternity past. That is never even mentioned in the Bible. Salvation is always through the freewill choice of the individual, to believe and obey God and the gospel, or as Paul says: the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, *to everyone that believeth*, Romans 1:16.

God never promised to save any of Abraham's descendants, just because they were Abraham's seed. It was all about faith and believing for Abraham and it's all about faith and believing for all of Abraham's descendants. Abraham didn't get saved without faith and no Israelite descendant of Abraham ever got saved without faith. Paul points out that Israel and the Israelites are God's chosen, when he writes: *to whom pertaineth the adoption*.

God chose the nation of Israel, instead of choosing Ireland, England, Edom, France, Saudi Arabia, China, Zimbabwe and America. That truth accentuates God's special love and plans for Israel, His son, Deuteronomy 7:6-7. Yet those plans are conditioned upon Israel believing on Christ Jesus or Messiah Jesus, by faith. Rejecting Jesus as Messiah is a guaranteed way to get kicked to the curb by God Himself. God intended to adopt, into His family, every Israelite who believed on Jesus. God had no intention of adopting, into His family, any Israelite who rejected Messiah Jesus.

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Romans 4:3.

"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."
Romans 4:13.

"Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;" Romans 9:32.

Paul is talking about the nation of Israel and God's intentions for His elect nation - *to whom pertaineth the adoption*. Paul may have had in mind, Deuteronomy 7:1-11, as he wrote Romans 9:4. This emphasizes that Paul is talking about Israel as a nation. He is not talking about or supplying a proof text for, a decree

of Unconditional Election in eternity past, to elect a few Jews and Gentiles to get saved and leave all the rest headed for hell, without any chance of salvation.

So that no one misses his point, Paul proceeds to list blessings that set the nation of Israel apart from the Gentile nations. Can you imagine any nation receiving the blessings Paul lists here and then, refusing to believe on Jesus their promised Messiah? _____ This list of blessings demonstrates God's incredible grace toward Israel, from the beginning, and the expectation that God's blessings would cause Israel to receive Jesus as her Messiah. Unfortunately, faithless Israel did not receive Him.

1. Romans 9:4, was the adoption, for Israel, in the OT or is adoption a NT blessing, after the resurrection of Christ? _____
2. Were people in the OT adopted into the family of God before the resurrection of Christ? _____
3. Was anyone in Christ, before the foundation of the world? _____
4. Is everyone a vessel of wrath, before he gets saved? _____
5. Is everyone potentially, a vessel of mercy? _____
6. How does one stop being a vessel of wrath? _____
7. How does one become a vessel of mercy? _____
8. Does obedience to God and believing the gospel play a part in a vessel of wrath becoming a vessel of mercy? _____
9. Jews didn't have to do anything except be a biological descendant of Abraham, to get saved. T or F
10. What must Israelites do to get saved? _____
11. Faith is wonderful but people who do good works can get saved by their works. T or F

and the glory, - Paul uses the word, glory, 18 times in Romans. The glory was the glory of God, meaning, the presence of God. This wasn't a secret presence. God's glory was evident time after time. What set Israel apart from the Gentile nations in the OT was the abiding presence (the glory) of God, Exodus 8:9, 13:21-22, 16:7, 10, 24:16-17, 29:43, 40:34-35, 1 Kings 8:11.

The glory Paul mentions is the same glory of God, in heaven, Ezekiel 1:28. When Israel sinned against God, the earthly manifestation of God's glory departed, 1 Samuel 4:21-22. No Gentile nation in the OT or NT and no Gentile nation from then to the twenty first century, ever had the glory of God upon it but Israel experienced the glory of the LORD, up close and personal. In Romans chapter 9, Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, Acts 9:15, is focused like a laser beam, on the nation of Israel.

On the grace side of Calvary, every born again Christian in the church age is permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Because we are indwelt, we have the glory of the LORD, permanently dwelling within our fleshly temple, because of the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, and the indwelling Christ, Colossians 1:27. Doctrinally, that is not what Paul is talking about here. No OT Israelite or OT Gentile ever had the indwelling Christ or the permanently indwelling Holy Spirit, Psalm 51:11, Numbers 24:2, 1 Samuel 16:13-14, 18:12, 28:15.

As Christians, we have the glory of God dwelling in us.

Have you recognized this startling truth, that Christians have the glory of God dwelling in us, 1 Cor 6:19-20, Col 1:27? _____ On the grace side of Calvary, after the resurrection of Christ, we are in a better, safer, more blessed position than OT Israel. We can exalt that, *Christ in us is the hope of glory*, Colossians 1:27. We are permanently, unalterably sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption, Ephesians 1:13-14. To us, God says:

“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”
Hebrews 13:5.

It wasn't like that in the OT. God was married to and then, divorced and left OT Israel when she wallowed in a centuries long, tsunami of sin, Isaiah 50:1, Jeremiah 3:8-9, 6:2, 7:28-31. But, God will never leave, forsake or divorce those of us who are saved and born again Christians. Is that rubber meets the road Bible truth enough to put you on shouting ground? _____

and the covenants, - There are seven biblical covenants, which cover the span of human history and reach out into eternity future.

Covenants are the backbone of the biblical story.

1. The Edenic Covenant - with unfallen Adam, Gen 1:28-31, 2:15-17, Hosea 6:7.
2. The Adamic Covenant - with fallen Adam, Genesis 3:14-19.
3. The Noahic Covenant - with Noah, Genesis 9:1-17.
4. The Abrahamic Covenant - with Abraham, Genesis 12:1-3, 7, 13:14-17.
5. The Mosaic Covenant - with Moses, Exodus 19:5-7.
6. The Davidic Covenant - with David, 2 Samuel 7:8-11.
7. The New Covenant - with Israel, Jer 31:31-34, Matt 26:28, Hebrews 9:15.

Paul may have had all seven covenants in mind when he wrote Romans 9:4. He probably had in mind, two covenants in particular, the Abrahamic Covenant, which was an everlasting covenant and the Mosaic Covenant, which was a

temporary covenant, lasting from about 1450 BC, when God gave it to Moses on Mount Sinai, until Matthew 27:50, when Messiah Jesus died on the cross, for the sins of the world, John 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:4-6, Hebrews 9:16-17.

The Abrahamic Covenant was made with Abraham, Genesis 15:18, 17:1-8, Isaac, Genesis 17:19-21, and Jacob, Genesis 28:13-21. It was all about the line of Christ and God fulfilling his promise to Abraham, of a Messiah, Jesus, who will bless all nations, Genesis 18:18. How does God bless all nations through Abraham? He does it through Christ, being descended from Abraham. Galatians chapter 3:8, 14-16, explains that truth in exquisite detail.

and the giving of the law, - This law is the law of Moses, given on Mt. Sinai, in Exodus 19-20, around 1450 BC. *“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”* John 1:17. The law of Moses was preparatory, paving the way for Messiah to come, eventually. In God’s plan, Messiah could not come until the law was given. The sacrifices in the law pictured and pointed to, the once for all sacrifice Messiah would make when He came, Hebrews 9-10.

1. The law was given to Israel, who was its God-appointed custodian, Romans 3:1-2, Psalm 147:19. It was not given to the Gentiles in written form, Romans 2:15. As Jews grew up, knowing God’s Law and having an obligation to keep and live the law, so Gentiles who grew up with the law written on their hearts, had an obligation to follow or obey, their God-given conscience.

2. Israel’s relationship with God as recipients of the law, was a source of pride to them, Romans 2:23, 3:1-2. They reveled in the exclusivity of being God’s chosen people and receiving the abundant blessings of God.

3. Israel knew God’s will for them was holiness because the daily sacrifices and the scriptures taught them that truth. Their males were physically circumcised but not spiritually circumcised, therefore they struggled with their unsaved flesh.

4. Israelites viewed themselves as superior to Gentiles because they knew God’s will, Romans 2:18, were confident in the law, Romans 2:19, and they tried to keep the law or parts of it, Romans 2:25.

They boasted that they didn’t live like dirty Gentiles, at least not openly. Outwardly, Israel had a flashy type of spirituality. They put on a colorful religious show, and it looked good, but in the first century AD, Jewish religion was only skin deep. It was for appearances. The Jews didn’t believe what Moses wrote, John 5:45-47, and they didn’t personally keep the law, John 7:19. Their religious show had no heart or at best, a wicked heart, Ezekiel 8. Their religious show

over the centuries, didn't fool God. Micah 3:8-12 warns that God will judge Israel for her wickedness.

and the service of God, - This refers to the OT Jewish priesthood, under the law of Moses, serving God in the temple. Because there was no personal, born again experience in the OT and no personal regeneration in the OT and no personal Holy Spirit baptism into the body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 12:13, in the OT, God's people approached God through the priesthood and the temple.

In the NT, after the resurrection of Christ, we have incredible blessings no one had in the OT. We are born again, saved and regenerated. We are baptized into the body of Christ, by the Holy Spirit, (no water involved). We do not need a priest or temple ceremonies and animal sacrifices to approach God because Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, Colossians 1:25-27, and we are the temple. The glory of God's presence is within us, meaning, within every Christian.

There is a warning here for everyone who reads Romans chapter 9. The Jews in the OT, had the blessing of God upon them as a nation. What did they do with that blessing? They squandered it by rejecting God and living like pagans. They rejected God's word and became devil worshiping idolators, 1 Corinthians 10:18-21. Modern Christians have the overflowing blessings of God upon us and the glory of God within us. *The service of God* is now given to us as Christians. What are we doing with those blessings and that responsibility? _____

and the promises; - The Messianic promises that pertain to Messiah and His coming, are what Paul has in mind here. The promises of God had their fulfillment in Christ. That Israel was now rejecting: **a.** their election and, **b.** their Messiah and, **c.** God's evangelistic plan for them, was a tragedy of colossal proportions. Ephesians 1:3 tells us that saved people have the spiritual blessings of God. What are you doing with the spiritual blessings God has given you? _____

The first promises of God, for Israel, are found in Genesis 3:15 and 12:3. Those are promises about Messiah Jesus. Messiah, when accepted by Israel, will usher in the glorious kingdom. Paul appeals to Jewish hearts, in order to turn the hearts of the people of Israel to their Messiah. Paul expands on that theme in Galatians 3.

The promises and blessings Christians have, in Christ, all revolve around us being, in Christ. Our blessings and promises are centered on Christ Jesus. The better you get to know Jesus, the better you will understand and appreciate His promises to you. God doesn't bless you just to make you happy. God blesses

you to make you a better Christian, so you can serve God and others. God's blessings upon you are not so you can be a celebrity or so you can buy a big house or drive a new car. God blesses you so you can serve God.

5 - Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

Whose are the fathers, - The promises are the OT promises, given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (the fathers), and to the nation of Israel. The promises were not given to Ishmael and Esau. There is no universal Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man found in the Bible. If you want to be part of God's family, you need to get saved. The adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God and the promises - all belonged to the fathers, meaning Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and those descended from them through that line. The genealogies in Matthew 1:1-16 and Luke 3:23-38, list some of the fathers, by name, that God wanted us to know.

and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, - Jesus was the Jewish Messiah, biologically descended from Abraham. Paul is arguing that Jesus was an Israelite. No one but an Israelite descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob could be God's Messiah. This is a reference to the genealogy of Christ. The nation of Israel was as legitimate in her biological descent from Abraham as Christ was.

That makes the tragedy of Israel's faithless unbelief all the more jarring. Israel, the blood-related family of Jesus, rejected Him. Because God gave the oracles of God to the Jews, Romans 3:1-2, it should not be a stretch for any Israelite to believe on Jesus as his Messiah. It only takes an act of one's freewill to believe on Jesus - *Whosoever will* may come, Revelation 22:17. Every Israelite ought to believe on Jesus because that was always God's plan, 1 Timothy 2:3-6, 4:10, 2 Peter 3:9.

Neither God nor Paul is making an outrageous demand of Israel. At some point, all of us are confronted with the same dilemma Israel faced. We revel in the blessings of God and then decide to use those blessings to please ourselves, instead of using our blessings to serve God. If we claim to worship God and then reject Jesus and His will for our life, that is a spiritual dead end. Israel cannot biblically or logically reject Jesus, and still claim to follow God, and neither can Gentiles.

God requires everyone who professes to worship Him, to believe on and hear, Jesus, Matthew 17:5, John 6:68, 14:6, Acts 4:12. A modern iteration of this

phenomenon is all the people who reject Jesus as God in the flesh and Savior but still consider themselves saved because, they are “spiritual but not religious.” That dog won’t hunt. If you are not, in Christ, and are resisting getting saved, there is nothing spiritual about you.

who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. - In scripture, Christ *is over all, God blessed for ever*. Paul is saying: You profess to worship God and He placed Jesus over all, so why are you rejecting Jesus your Messiah and clinging to the law of Moses? You cannot love and worship God the Father, as Israel professed to do, if you reject Jesus as your Messiah, because Jesus is over all of creation, because Jesus is the Creator of all of creation, John 1:3, Colossians 1:13-16.

6 - Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. - Here’s the problem. God gave His word, the OT, to the Jews, Romans 3:1-3, 9:4. Even as Paul writes Romans, that process of giving His word to and through Jewish men, was ongoing, as the NT was being written by Jewish men. God’s elect nation, Israel, should have joyfully embraced Jesus as her Messiah, Deuteronomy 28:47. Had they done that, the word of God would have gone out from Jerusalem, to the whole world, with the Jews as God’s missionaries, Isaiah 45:22.

Do you view yourself as a missionary for Jesus? _____

In Romans 9:6, Paul answers a question which must have troubled some Jews and some Christians. Since Israel rejected Jesus as her Messiah, does that mean, *the word of God hath taken none effect*? Is God’s plan kaput? Because Israel rejected God’s election of them, has the word of God failed? The answer is, No, the word of God has not failed.

For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: - In plainer words, Paul says: “Most of you Israelites are not saved!” In Romans 9, the context is the chosen nation of Israel (and the genealogy of Christ). Paul repeats what he said in Romans 2. You’re not saved just because you’re descended from Abraham or because you’re born into a Jewish family. You’re not saved just because you’re a circumcised Jew.

Many Israelites thought they were saved because they were Jewish, biological, circumcised descendants of Abraham, Romans 2:25-29. They were trusting those things instead of trusting Jesus. Paul kicks that false belief to the curb

without an apology or a second thought. *For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.* What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

7 - Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.

Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: - God had Paul mention this because many Israelites were trusting their descent from Abraham instead of trusting Jesus. Being biologically descended from Abraham doesn't get you anywhere. Ishmael and Esau were biological descendants and blood relatives of Abraham. *The flesh profiteth nothing.* The flesh doesn't get you saved, your genealogy doesn't get you saved and doesn't guarantee you'll go to heaven. God would have saved Ishmael and Esau and the sons of Keturah, if they had had the faith of Abraham.

The line of Messiah went through Isaac and Jacob, not through Ishmael, not through Esau and not through Abraham's other sons by Keturah. But even biological descendants of Abraham, from the Isaac and Jacob line, were not guaranteed salvation. Each had to personally, individually believe on Jesus as Messiah. No one ever got into heaven because his mama and daddy were Christians or Israelites.

but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. - Paul argues that Messiah did not come from the line of Ishmael, Abraham's first son, with Hagar, Genesis 16:1-3, 11-12. The line of Christ went through Abraham's second son, Isaac, just as the line of Christ went through Isaac's second son, Jacob, not through Esau, his firstborn. This recognizes that Abraham had other sons but the line of Messiah did not go through any of Abraham's other sons, Genesis 25:1-6. In a normal situation, the Jews should have been shouting, "Amen Paul! Preach it brother!" But instead of agreeing with the truth Paul preached, they continued in faithless unbelief.

8 - That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: - "*And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.*" Genesis 25:23. Esau represents the flesh and Jacob represents the spirit. Do you remember what Jesus said to Nicodemus, one of the rulers of the Jews, in John 3:6-7?

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” John 3:6-7.

Your fleshly birth isn't good enough to get you to heaven. That was the message of Jesus and that is the message of Paul. Esau represents the flesh, and a nation and Jacob represents the spirit, and a nation, Genesis 25:23. Paul said in Romans 6, that sin and the flesh would not have dominion over you. Fleshly Esau will not have dominion over spiritual Jacob. God's spiritual purpose will be achieved. Paul gives the Jews three warnings here.

1. Christ came through the line of Isaac, Jacob and Judah, not through the fleshly line of Abraham's other sons, like Ishmael and Esau, like Keturah's kids, Genesis 25:1-6, and like any other sons Abraham may have had who are not mentioned in the Bible.

2. God's blessings come by faith, Romans 9:32, through believing on Messiah Jesus, not through biological descent from Abraham, like Esau; not from being born Jewish, not from being religious and not from being circumcised.

3. *“And he (Abraham) believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”* Genesis 15:6. Israelites didn't believe what their own scriptures said about Messiah, John 5:44-47, and they didn't believe what Abraham believed. Israelites in the first century AD were radically different from Abraham; they had no faith in God.

This is helpful instruction for everyone else on earth. You are not a Christian because your mom and dad are saved or because you grew up in church or because you got baptized or catechized. You're not saved because you are religious or because you regard yourself as “spiritual but not religious.” Just like Jews had to believe on Jesus as their Messiah, so too, if you want to be saved, you need to believe on Jesus. You are not grandfathered in because of your parents or their faith, anymore than Jews were grandfathered in because they were descended from Abraham. God expected Israel to have the faith of Abraham.

but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. - Galatians 3:6-9 explains Romans 9:9. So there is no confusion, Abraham's biological sons, Ishmael and Esau, are not counted among the children of the promise because they didn't have faith. Neither are the children Abraham had with Keturah, Genesis 25:1-6, counted among the children of the promise. The line of Messiah only went through Jacob, not through his brother Esau. It's not Ishmael, it's Isaac. It's not Esau, it's Jacob. The second born son gets the blessing.

The children of the promise refers to people in the line of Christ. From the NT perspective, we are focused on Israelites who believe on Jesus as Messiah. The children of the promise, in a NT sense, were people who had believed on Messiah Jesus, people who had faith in Messiah Jesus. If you're biologically descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob but you reject Jesus as Messiah, you're out of the running.

It's not enough to have Abraham's DNA. You also need Abraham's faith. The Lord Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah. No Jew anywhere could reject the faith of Abraham, and Messiah Jesus, and still be accepted by God. It's really that simple. It's God's way or the highway. God set things up so that anyone can get God's love, mercy, grace and salvation, at Calvary. It is also true that no one can get saved, apart from Calvary. Don't follow unbelieving Israel to hell. Trust the risen, Lord Jesus Christ and get saved today.

9 - For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.

For this is the word of promise, - Paul takes pains to point out to the Jews, how careful God was to preserve and protect them and to send the Messianic line through Abraham and Sarah, then through Isaac, Jacob and Judah. We hear in Paul's argument, an echo of Romans 11:11, 14. Paul intends to provoke Israel to emulation (to equal or excel others) and jealousy, so they will get saved. "Since God went to all this trouble to make you His chosen people, and since, if you reject Jesus as your Messiah, God is going to reject you and graft in the Gentiles in your place, you should believe on Jesus as your Messiah. Don't let all of God's best blessings go to the Gentiles."

1. The promise is direct from God.
2. The promise has the blessing of heaven upon it.
3. The promise is absolute and unchangeable.
4. God always keeps every promise He makes.
5. You can stake your eternity on God's promise.
6. God's promise requires you to have faith in Him alone.

At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. - The word of promise did not include Hagar, Genesis 16:1-3. It's possible to have the right genealogy and not be saved. The Jews had the right genealogy and they were elect and chosen by God, and yet, they were not saved, and frankly, they rejected their election. Even though they were God's elect, they rejected Jesus as their Messiah, Matthew 23:37-39. Have you spent any time thinking about the implications of that dramatic truth? _____

God's elect rejected Him! The Messianic line went through Sarah and Abraham, not Hagar and Abraham. Sarah's son was Isaac, therefore the Messianic line would go through one of Isaac and Rebecca's twin boys, not through both of their sons. The topic here is the line of Messiah. Moses and Paul are not talking about anyone, before the foundation of the world, being unconditionally elected to salvation. There is not even a hint of that man-made philosophy being taught by Paul, here in Romans chapter 9.

10 - And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; -

And not only this; - Romans 9:10-23 is Calvinism's favorite proof text to support their TULIP teaching, even though this passage never mentions any of the five distinctive teachings of TULIP Calvinism. They read their teachings into the text (that's called eisogesis - **ice-so-gee-siss**), because the text doesn't mention them.

Romans 9:10-13 deals with Esau and Jacob. Calvinists use these verses as a proof text for their false teaching about predestination and unconditional election. However, when they do that, they make a serious contextual error. Jacob and Esau's individual salvation is not being discussed in Genesis 25 (which Paul quotes) or in Romans 9 (which Paul writes). Honest hermeneutics (the way we interpret the Bible), requires us to examine the context of Genesis 25 before we determine the correct biblical context in Romans chapter 9.

“And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.” Genesis 25:23.

Genesis 25:23 presents the context clearly and unequivocally. There is nothing mysterious or hard to understand here. We don't need to act like Gnostics, seeking a secret message from God. When God speaks to Rebekah in Genesis 25:23, He speaks plainly. Esau and Jacob are presented as nations, not as individuals. There is absolutely no discussion about and no mention of, unconditional election, or, whom God elected, before the foundation of the world, to salvation or damnation. The point is, God does not mention those things and we have no right to read them into the text of scripture.

The focus is not on Esau and Jacob as individuals, but rather, is on the two nations of people who would descend from them. God told Rebecca that she had two nations in her womb, Two nations are in thy womb, and that two

peoples would proceed from her, with one being stronger than the other and one serving the other. This is nation serving nation, Edom as a nation, is serving Israel as a nation, not Esau as an individual serving Jacob as an individual.

God told Rebekah that Esau, the elder, would serve Jacob, the younger, Genesis 25:23. God viewed Rebekah's baby boys as representing the nations who would descend from them. The Edomite nation, which descended from Esau, would serve the nation of Israel, which descended from Jacob. There we have it then, direct from God, plain and simple, easy to understand.

Service is not salvation.

The story of Esau and Jacob is about service, one nation serving another. There is no secret, hidden, unstated meaning of unconditional election to salvation or damnation. In the Bible, the main things are the plain things and the plain things are the main things. If unconditional election to salvation or damnation was a main thing or a plain thing, it would be clearly mentioned and clearly taught in the Bible. Because unconditional election to salvation before the foundation of the world is never mentioned in the Bible, it is not a main thing from God or a plain thing from God. Is that a reasonable conclusion? _____

Romans 9 is not about God, before the foundation of the world, unconditionally electing people to salvation or damnation. How do we know that? Because the the Bible never mentions unconditional election of individuals to salvation or damnation. Can anyone find, in Genesis 25 and Romans 9, where God mentions Unconditional Election to salvation or damnation? _____ If you see Unconditional Election in those chapters, please list the verses. _____

1. Do any verses in Genesis 25 or Romans 9, say that God elected Jacob to get saved? _____ 2. Do any verses in Genesis 25 or Romans 9, say that God elected Esau to be damned? _____ 3. Since those verses don't mention unconditional election to salvation or damnation, is it biblical to use them as proof texts for unconditional election? _____

when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; - Paul words it in a way, *conceived by one*, that makes clear, Isaac is the sole father, of both boys. Isaac and Rebecca's sons were Jacob and Esau, Genesis 25:21-26. God sent the line of Messiah through Isaac because of His promise to Abraham in Genesis 17:19. No other man on earth but Isaac was qualified to be in the Messianic line. God singled out Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Judah to be in the line of Christ. Ishmael and Esau were not part of the Messianic line.

It is interesting to note that Abraham lived for 15 years after Esau and Jacob were born, Genesis 21:5, 25:7-8, 25. He had the privilege of watching his grandsons grow into their teenage years. What do you think of that? _____
Did you already know that Bible truth? _____

11 - (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, - Calvinists use this part of Romans 9:11, as their main proof text, to teach that God's Unconditional Election to salvation is not based on foreknowledge, because of the phrase: *neither having done any good or evil*. They teach this passage as God, in eternity past, choosing and electing Jacob to get saved, and Esau, in eternity past, being left unchosen, rejected and unelected, without any regard to what each would or wouldn't do. Sovereignty is God's ability to make any decision He wants to make, for any reason or for no reason. The root error here, is the false meaning Calvinism infuses into the word, election. Does the Bible ever mention people getting elected to salvation? _____

Here are two unchangeable Bible truths

1. In the Bible, election is never unconditional and, 2. election is never to salvation. Of course, when we read Romans 9:12, we discover that the election Paul is talking about is, election to serve, not election to salvation. Esau the elder shall serve Jacob the younger. Romans 9:11 has nothing to do with anyone being elected to salvation. Is that clear to you now, based on Romans 9:12? _____ Is it honest to take Romans 9:12, about being elected to serve and insisting it is really talking about, election to salvation? _____

It is about being elected to serve. How do we know that? Because that is what Romans 9:12 says. It's pretty simple when we believe what the Bible says, instead of trying to figure out, what it is presumed to teach. Beyond the issue of election being about serving, not salvation, is another Bible truth about election. The Bible tells us that election is based on foreknowledge, regardless that Calvinism says, election is not based on foreknowledge.

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." 1 Peter 1:2.

It is false teaching to say, Romans 9:11-12 is about unconditional election to salvation. The unconditional election view is at odds with God's truth because 1 Peter 1:2 tells us, election is based on foreknowledge (foreknowledge is a condition), and Romans 8:29 tells us, predestination is based on foreknowledge.

Paul words it this way in Romans 9:11, because God spoke to Rebekah in Genesis 25:23, before her sons were born, and told her: *The elder (Esau) shall serve the younger (Jacob)*. God's message to Rebecca was not: "I'm going to unconditionally elect and save Jacob but I hate Esau, so I won't elect or save him." God was talking about serve, not salvation.

Paul is saying that God told Rebecca, before her sons were born, that the elder would serve the younger and this statement was made in the context of nations serving and being served, Genesis 25:23. The nation of Edom, represented by Esau, will serve the nation of Israel, represented by Jacob. Paul isn't making a doctrinal statement about election to salvation or endorsing the false teaching of unconditional election.

Remember, there is no mention of Unconditional Election to salvation in Genesis 25 or Romans 9, or anywhere else in the Bible. The phrase, unconditional election, is never found in the Bible. Be careful how you interpret these verses. If you read this passage like a Calvinist reads it, you may end up with God hating Esau before he was born, for no rational reason. *The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil*. Don't make the mistake of viewing God as having unconditional hatred for an unborn baby. There's no reason to hitch a ride on the crazy train here, especially in light of Jeremiah 1:5 and 2 Peter 3:9.

Based on Calvinism's false teaching about Romans 9, that Jacob's salvation and Esau's damnation, were decided by God's Unconditional Election before the foundation the world, in eternity past, some people might conclude that God hated Esau before he was born. That interpretation portrays God as the engineer on the crazy train, and it certainly isn't Paul's purpose to portray God as crazy. The bottom line is: In Romans 9, Paul is not teaching the fantasy false teaching of Unconditional Election to salvation. Anyone who knows the difference between serve and salvation, knows that. What is the difference between serve and salvation? _____

Things to keep in mind as we study Romans 9:11

First, In the Bible, election is never to salvation; never, ever, anywhere. The Bible never says anyone is elected to salvation. In the Bible, no one is elect until he is saved. You're only elect, in Christ. If you're not in Christ, then you're not elect and you're not saved. Only in Calvinism's false philosophy could election be to

salvation, because, in the Bible, election is never to salvation. If it were, the Bible would clearly say so. Second, In the Bible, election is based on foreknowledge.

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.” 1 Peter 1:2.

**God's foreknowledge is foreknowledge
of events which happen in time, not in eternity.**

1. 1 Peter 1:2. Their election was according to the foreknowledge of God.

That rules out them being Unconditionally Elected to salvation in eternity past, because their election was according to the foreknowledge of God. God's foreknowledge is foreknowledge of events which happen in time. In eternity past, there was no creation, no humans, no earth, no salvation. The election of people was foreknown before it took place, therefore they were not elected from all eternity. They were elected in time, at the time when they believed the gospel and got saved, and not one minute before.

2. Their election was through sanctification of the Spirit, not through Unconditional Election in eternity past, therefore their election happened in time, not in eternity. The Spirit wasn't sanctifying anyone before the foundation of the world because none of us existed before the foundation of the world.

3. Their election was unto obedience. Obedience is the result of the sanctifying work of the Spirit. The Spirit sanctifies through the truth of the word of God, John 17:17 and the truth of the gospel, Ephesians 1:13. When men hear the sanctifying truth of the gospel and obey the gospel, Romans 10:16, that is salvation. Their election is only as old as their obedience to the gospel; i.e., their election occurred in time, at precisely the point when they believed the gospel, not in eternity past.

4. They were elected “unto the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” *The sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*, which is a metaphor for salvation, is always and only, received by faith. Their election could not have taken place before, but took place at the time they had faith in Christ and believed on Christ, after hearing the gospel preached. In plainer words, election didn't occur in eternity past. It occurred in time. In the NT sense of election, you are elect when you believe the gospel. If you haven't believed the gospel yet, then you are not elect yet. You must get in Christ to be elect.

5. Notice 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 - They were called by the gospel. When Paul preached the truth of the gospel to them, that is when they were called. They were called by the gospel. When they believed and obeyed the gospel and got in Christ, that is when they were saved and that is when they were chosen and that is when they were elected.

“But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14. (The beginning of Paul’s witnessing and preaching ministry to them.)

6. They were elected or chosen through *belief of the truth*. People believe the truth in time, not before the foundation of the world and not in eternity past. How do we know that? Because people didn’t exist in eternity past. God’s foreknowledge about human beings, is foreknowledge of events which happen in time. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 again. You are elect through sanctification of the Spirit and *belief of the truth*. If you haven’t believed the gospel truth yet, you are not elect yet. You are not chosen or elect, except through *belief of the truth*. That is genuine Bible truth from the apostle Paul.

7. God calls all of us through the gospel, to believe the truth of the gospel, which is, God’s truth about salvation. *Belief of the truth*, is God’s requirement for salvation. No one ever gets saved until he or she believes God’s truth. When we believe the gospel and get saved, that is when we are in Christ and that is when we are elect. We noted in our comments on Romans 8:29, that no one is predestinated until he gets in Christ. Predestination applies to saved people, not to unsaved people. In the same way, election applies to saved people, not to unsaved people. You are not elect until you get in Christ. Once you believe God’s truth and get saved, you are in Christ, and in Christ, you are elect.

According to the apostle Paul, in 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, the means of election are: **1.** Sanctification of the Spirit and, **2.** belief of the truth. Election occurs in time, when a man responds obediently to the gospel. God’s plan is that everyone who gets in Christ, is chosen and elect, Ephesians 1:4. Once you get in Christ, you are saved and you are eternally secure, in Christ. Election is not an arbitrary decision made by God before the foundation of the world, that some can get saved and most can’t get saved.

Here is another plain verse, 2 Peter 3:9. Every Christian should memorize this verse so that, you have it in your spiritual arsenal. 2 Peter 3:9 makes it clear that God wants everyone to get saved. Therefore, it makes no sense to teach that

God wants everyone saved but He didn't elect most people to get saved. Would you agree that Jesus was pretty clear about what He wants, Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, John 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:4-6? _____

Outside of Christ no one is elect. It is only in Christ that election and all the blessings of salvation are found. Just as the one who is not in Christ is unsaved and unjustified, so he is un-elect. And just as the man who is in Christ is saved and justified, so, in Christ, he is elect, chosen of God, a vessel of mercy, saved.

Biblically speaking, a man cannot be chosen of God, elect and saved, and at the same time, be condemned and without hope, Ephesians 2:12-13. As justification is by faith and sanctification is by faith, so election is through faith. You are elect through *belief of the truth*. No one was in Christ before the foundation of the world. No one was in Christ in eternity past because no one existed in eternity past. You're not in Christ until you get in Christ, through *belief of the truth*, by believing the gospel, by believing on Jesus.

Belief happens in time, not in eternity past. That was the problem with Israel in Paul's day. They were faithless and didn't believe the truth of the gospel. When you believe the truth of the gospel and get saved, then you are elect. God's truth is that, Jesus died for all and rose from the dead for all and is willing to save all who call upon Him, Romans 10:13, 16, Psalm 145:18.

Think about it this way. Paul writes in Romans 16:7, that some were in Christ before me. That could not possibly be true if the group known as the elect were always in Christ, from before the foundation of the world, or, in eternity past. Paul phrases it that way in Romans 16:7, because no one on the grace side of Calvary, was chosen or elect until he got in Christ, by believing the gospel - *through belief of the truth*. Some people were, in Christ, before Paul, because they believed the gospel and got saved, before Paul got saved. The Lord Jesus Christ was God's elect, Isaiah 42:1, and Israel was God's elect, Isaiah 45:4, but those verses are not talking about election of individuals to salvation.

No individuals in the OT or NT were elected to salvation, in eternity past or before the foundation of the world. No individuals in the OT or NT were in Christ, in eternity past or before the foundation of the world. Those statements can be disproved by citing verses which say that individuals in the OT and NT, were elected to salvation in eternity past or were in Christ in eternity past. On the grace side of Calvary, you have to get in Christ, by belief of the truth or believing the gospel or believing on Jesus, if you want to be elect. You are elect once you are in Christ. Outside of Christ, you are a vessel of wrath, Romans 9:22. In Christ, you are a vessel of mercy, Romans 9:23.

You are not elect until you get in Christ.

You are not elect outside of Christ. And think about this. Because you have freewill, you can elect yourself, by obeying the truth of the gospel and getting saved through the power of the gospel, Romans 1:16. God put marvelous saving power in the glorious gospel of Christ so that you can elect yourself by believing on Jesus and getting saved. That puts you in Christ and being in Christ makes you elect and you are a vessel of mercy.

8. 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5 - It is evident that it is by believing and receiving the *word of truth, the gospel of your salvation*, Ephesians 1:13, that believers become, the elect of God. Paul links election, 1 Thessalonians 1:4, with the gospel, 1 Thessalonians 1:5. God's chosen, God's elect, are simply, those who believe the gospel. The evidence that they are elect is their belief of the gospel. Election comes *through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*. You are not elect until you believe the truth of the gospel. When you believe the truth of the gospel, God saves you, and the Holy Spirit puts you in Christ, by Spirit baptism (no water involved), 1 Corinthians 12:13, and that makes you one of God's elect.

Do you see how plain and simple Paul makes it? On the grace side of Calvary, no one ever gets saved until he believes the gospel. Calvinism says: God saves you before you believe the gospel. Calvinism says, You cannot believe the gospel until God regenerates you. So, Calvinism has people getting saved or regenerated, without believing on Jesus, without believing the gospel. How crazy is that? Paul says the opposite of Calvinism in 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14. The gospel is the God-ordained way that people get saved. *“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”* Mark 16:15.

Calvinists (aka, Reformed folks) disagree

“In historic Reformation thought, the notion is this: regeneration precedes faith.” R.C. Sproul, August 25, 2017, Article, TULIP and Reformed Theology: Irresistible Grace. Precede means: to come before.

“The reformed view of predestination teaches that before a person can choose Christ his heart must be changed. He must be born again... one does not first believe, then become reborn... In regeneration, God changes our hearts. He gives us a new disposition, a new inclination. He plants a desire for Christ in our hearts. We can never trust Christ for our salvation unless we first desire Him. This is why we said earlier that regeneration precedes faith.” R.C. Sproul, 1939-2017, Chosen By God, pp. 72, 118.

Does the Bible ever say that regeneration precedes faith? _____ If you answered, Yes, where does the Bible say that? _____

“We can say, first, that regeneration is the cause of faith... Having been born of God results in our believing. Our believing is the immediate evidence of God’s begetting.” John Piper, March 2, 2008, Online sermon.

Does the Bible ever say that, regeneration is the cause of faith? _____
Does the Bible say that, Having been born of God results in our believing? _____
Does the Bible ever say that, Our believing is the immediate evidence of God’s begetting? _____ If you answered Yes, where does it say that? _____

“A man is not regenerated because he has first believed in Christ, but he believes in Christ because he has been regenerated.” A.W. Pink, 1886-1952, The Sovereignty of God.

Does the Bible say that regeneration comes before faith? _____
Does the Bible ever say you have to be regenerated before you can believe on Christ? _____ Does the Bible say you have to get saved before you can believe on Christ? _____ If you answered, Yes, where does the Bible say that? _____

According to Reformed and Calvinist teaching, only after God regenerates you (or saves you) by irresistible grace, apart from repentance, apart from faith in Christ, apart from belief on Christ and apart from believing the gospel, then and only then are you capable of having faith to believe on Christ. In plainer words, they teach that you have to get saved and regenerated before you can believe on Christ as your Savior. Have you ever read any verse(s) in the Bible, which say that? _____ If Yes, which verses? _____

Evidently Peter, like Paul and like Jesus, was not a Calvinist. In spite of 1 Peter 1:2, Calvinists insist God's election is not based on foreknowledge. Calvinism takes Romans 9:11 out of context so they can teach unconditional election to salvation, even though Romans 9:12 says election is, to serve and it never says election is unconditional.

9:11 - that the purpose of God according to election might stand, - Election always has a biblical meaning and a biblical purpose. We should be wary of anyone who teaches an unbiblical definition of election. We need to stay biblical here. Paul is focused on Israel. Here is the biblical truth. Unconditional Election to salvation has not been mentioned anywhere in the OT so far, has not been mentioned anywhere in the NT so far and has not been mentioned anywhere in Romans so far, even in Romans 9:11.

Don't you find that remarkable, that such a widely believed teaching, unconditional election, is not mentioned in the first 45 books of the Bible? It is not surprising then, that, unconditional election, is also, not mentioned in the last 21 books of the Bible. What do you think about that astonishing Bible fact?

Paul's use of the word election here in Romans 9:11, is the first time the word, **election**, is used in the Bible, the first time the word, **election** is used in the NT, the first time the word, **election**, is used in Romans. Wherever the word election is used in the Bible, the word, unconditional, is never used with it. Isn't that an interesting Bible fact? _____ Those are important truths to keep in mind as we study the book of Romans.

Election is used only six times in the Bible

Some Christians believe that, individuals being elected to salvation, is a frequent and prominent doctrine in the Bible. That is not the case at all. Here are the six times the word, election, is found in the Bible. Paul uses it five times and Peter uses it once: Romans 9:11, 11:5, 7, 28, 1 Thessalonians 1:4, 2 Peter 1:10. Is the word, unconditional, ever used with or without the word, election, in the Bible? _____ If Yes, where? _____

How did the concept of unconditional election to salvation become so widespread, when it is never mentioned, anywhere in the Bible? _____

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."
Isaiah 42:11.

"For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me." Isaiah 45:4.

"And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Genesis 25:23.

1. Is the word, election, ever used in the OT? _____ 2. Is the word, election, ever used in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John or Acts? _____ 3. Is the word, election, ever used in the first 8 chapters of Romans? _____ 4. When the word, election, is used in the Bible, is the word, Unconditional, ever used with it? _____ 5. Since the Bible never mentions unconditional election to salvation, what should we conclude? _____

“It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.” Romans 9:12.

1. Was anyone elected to get saved in Genesis 25:23? _____
2. Was anyone elected to get saved in Romans 9:11? _____
3. Was someone elected to serve in Genesis 25:23? _____
4. Who was elected to serve in Genesis 25:23? _____
5. Who was elected to serve in Romans 9:12? _____
6. Who was God’s elect in Isaiah 45:4? _____
7. In Isaiah 42:1, God’s elect was God’s _____
8. Does Romans 9:11-12 say that anyone is elected to salvation? _____
9. Is it biblically honest to teach that Romans 9:11-12, is talking about Unconditional Election to salvation, when the context is not about election to salvation but is about, election to serve? _____
10. Does Genesis 25:23 say that God elected Jacob to get saved? _____
11. Does Romans 9:11-12 say that God elected Jacob to get saved? _____
12. Does Genesis 25:23 say that God elected not to save Esau? _____
13. Does Romans 9:11-12 say that God elected not to save Esau? _____
14. What conclusions can we draw, based on what the Bible actually says, instead of, what it is presumed to teach? _____

**The word, election, has become
a buzz word for false teaching.**

A buzz word in our context here, is a word infused with false and unbiblical meaning, a word which calls to mind a false and unbiblical definition. According to Calvinism, election means: “God unconditionally elects a few people to salvation and leaves the rest to damnation.” Calvinists refer to their doctrine of Unconditional Election (and the rest of TULIP), as “the doctrines of grace.” Be careful when Calvinists start talking about grace and the doctrines of grace.

Don’t be fooled by evanescent grace

The Calvinist teaching about election to salvation causes some Calvinists to doubt their election and, because they doubt their election, they end up doubting their salvation. In Calvinist language, this is sometimes called **1.** arrogated grace (grace claimed without justification; grace claimed without the right to claim it; grace claimed without a basis for claiming it) or temporary grace.

John Calvin referred to this as, **2.** evanescent grace, which is defined as: a false and deceiving grace sent by God to some people, to make them think they are

saved, when they are not saved, so God can damn them more severely than others. Calvin's false teaching is never affirmed or taught or written in the Bible.

Evanescent grace is false teaching, not biblical truth.

In Romans 9, contra Calvinism, God didn't elect Jacob to get saved and go to heaven and elect Esau to be damned and go to hell. Is that clear to you from the context of Genesis 25 and Romans 9, and based on what Romans 9:11-12 actually says? _____ Instead, God elected that Esau, the elder, representing the nation of Edom, shall serve Jacob, the younger, representing the nation of Israel. Election, in Romans 9, is about service, and a nation serving a nation, not the election or salvation of individuals. Please raise your hand if you understand that. **a.** My hand is raised. **b.** My hand is not raised.

When you see the word, election, in the Bible, you should always ask yourself: Elected to do what? Elected for what purpose? Is God's answer good enough for you? _____ Here, in the context of Romans 9:11-12, God's answer is:

"The elder shall serve the younger." Romans 9:12

1. Is that clear enough for you? _____ **2.** Could Paul have been any more precise in his explanation of election? _____ **3.** Is election, as Paul uses the word in Romans 9:12, difficult to figure out? _____ **4.** Is it biblical to understand Genesis 25:23 and Romans 9:11-12 as describing Esau, representing the nation of Edom, being elected to serve Jacob, representing the nation of Israel? _____ **5.** Since individuals getting saved is not the context of Genesis 25:23 and Romans 9:11-12, is it biblical to interpret those verses to mean that God elects some people to be saved and other people to be damned? _____ **6.** *The elder shall serve the younger.* - Did anyone get elected to salvation there? _____ **7.** Was election in Romans 9:12, that Esau the elder shall serve Jacob the younger? _____

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure it out. We don't need a buzz word, election, infused with false meaning, to send us in the wrong direction. We don't need unbiblical definitions of *election* to figure it out. We don't need false presuppositions about predestination to find God's truth. God and Paul and the Bible give us the truth right here in the context.

There's nothing deep, dark or mysterious about it. All we have to do is read and believe what the Bible says, in context. When we do that, we see immediately, that those verses have nothing to do with election to salvation and everything to

do with election to serve. *The elder shall serve the younger*. Election, as Paul uses it here, is to serve, not to salvation. *The elder shall serve the younger*.

1. What do these verses actually say, was God's purpose according to election, in Romans 9:11-12? **a.** Election to serve, **b.** Election to salvation.
2. What is the difference between serving and salvation? _____
3. Why do some people insist on reading salvation into Romans 9:11-12, when those verses are not about salvation? _____

It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger, Romans 9:12. It's not about Jacob being chosen in eternity past, to get saved. It's not about Esau being chosen in eternity past, not to get saved, so God could harden his heart and send him to hell. Let's go by what the Bible actually says instead of, what it is presumed to teach. Romans 9:11-12 are about serving, not salvation. If 800 commentators say otherwise, all 800 commentators are dead wrong.

1. Was God's purpose according to election, to save Jacob? _____
2. Was God's purpose according to election, to damn Esau? _____
3. Was God's purpose according to election, that Esau the elder shall serve Jacob the younger, Romans 9:12? _____ What are some reasons for your answer? _____

Election in the Bible

Our English word, [elect, occurs 17 times](#) in the KJV Bible. At no time is the word, elect, ever used in the Bible, to refer to the Calvinist false teaching of Unconditional Election of individuals to salvation, by a decree of God before the foundation of the world. The Calvinist idea of being elected to salvation in eternity past, is never found in the Bible.

Our English word, [election, occurs 6 times](#) in the KJV Bible. The word, election, is never found in the OT. The word, election, is never found in the gospels or the Acts of the Apostles. At no time is the word, election, used in the Bible, to refer to the false teaching of Unconditional Election of individuals to salvation, by a decree of God, before the foundation of the world.

Here are the six times the word, election, is found in the Bible. Paul uses it five times and Peter uses it once: Romans 9:11, 11:5, 7, 28, 1 Thessalonians 1:4, 2 Peter 1:10. The Greek word for election is used one more time, in Acts 9:15, where it is translated, chosen. In Acts 9:15, Paul is already saved. He was not chosen or elect until he believed on Jesus and got, in Christ.

The Hebrew word which we translate as, elect, is בָּחִיר bachiyr, which is pronounced, bā·khēr'. It means: chosen, choice one, chosen one, elect (of God). The Hebrew word, [bachiyr, occurs 13 times](#) in the Hebrew OT. At no time is the Hebrew word, bā·khēr', used in the Bible, to refer to the false teaching of Unconditional Election of individuals to salvation, by a decree of God, in eternity past. That Calvinist false teaching is never mentioned or taught in the Bible.

The Greek word, ἐκλογή eklogē, pronounced, [ek-lo-gā', occurs 7 times](#) in the Greek NT. Many Greek lexicons give the false Calvinist definition since the Calvinist false teaching about Unconditional Election has been around for a long time and can be traced all the way back to Augustine, AD 354-430, the father of Catholicism and Calvinism. Here are two additional resources which deal with Calvinism. [1. Berean Call.](#) [2. ExCatholics For Christ.](#)

Here is the false definition of election: The Westminster Confession of Faith, 1647, says: "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His own glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death." Westminster Confession of Faith, III. 3.

Of course, no verse in the Bible ever says what the Westminster Confession, says. At no time is the Greek word, ek-lo-gā', used in the Bible, to refer to the false teaching of Unconditional Election, in eternity past, of individuals to salvation or damnation. Calvinism is philosophical fiction, not biblical fact.

When the words, elect and election, occur in the Bible, they refer to Israel, or, to serving God, or, to something that happens to a believer after salvation. For example, Isaiah 42:1, 45:4. Messiah Jesus is God's elect and Israel is God's elect. At no time are the words, elect and election, used in the Bible, to refer to the false teaching of Unconditional Election, in eternity past, of individuals to salvation.

not of works, but of him that calleth;) - This refers to Esau and Jacob, each representing a nation. It has nothing to do with Esau being elected to damnation and Jacob being elected to salvation. Esau/Edom, as a nation, was called, chosen, elected, to serve Jacob/Israel. Imagine how much different OT history would be if Edom had joyfully, obediently served Israel.

1. Based on the word used, is Paul talking about being called to salvation here or is he talking about being called to serve? _____
2. If Paul intended us to believe he was talking about election to salvation in Romans 9:11-12, wouldn't he have used the word, *salvation*? _____

3. Since Paul used the word, serve, Romans 9:12, instead of using the word, salvation, should wise Christians follow Paul's lead and link election with serve instead of linking election with salvation? _____

4. Paul explains what he means in Romans 9:12 - *the elder shall serve the younger*. Is it honest or scriptural to teach that election is unto salvation when the verse says, serve, and doesn't say, salvation? _____

12 - It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. - This is a quote from Genesis 25:23 (repeated by Isaac in Genesis 27:29, 37, 40), citing what God said to Rebekah (OT spelling) or Rebecca (NT spelling), before her sons were born. Why the different spelling of this name? In Genesis, we are translating from Hebrew into English. In Romans, we are translating from Hebrew into Greek into English.

Paul has been talking about the flesh and the spirit in Romans chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9. Paul has already explained that the flesh isn't saved. Because the flesh isn't saved, it wrestles with and resists the spirit. That is what Paul taught in Romans 6 and 7. In God's plan, the spirit doesn't serve the flesh - the flesh is to serve the Spirit. Paul taught that in Romans 8. We are to mortify our members, Colossians 3:5 and put off the old man and put on the new man, Ephesians 4:22-24. Esau represents the flesh (or the old man, which must be put off), Romans 9:8 and Jacob represents the spirit (or the new man, which must be put on).

It was not normal, in the ANE, (Ancient Near East, the area we call the Middle East), for the elder son to serve the younger son. We get a sense of that in 1 Samuel 17, when teenaged David goes to visit his brothers, 1 Samuel 17:20-28, and we see how disdainfully David's oldest brother, Eliab, treats him.

The purpose of God according to election was, that Esau (the older brother) would serve Jacob (the younger brother). Election here, isn't about Jacob getting saved and isn't about Esau not getting saved. Election, here in Romans 9:12, is about service or serving, or serve, not salvation.

Paul's 7 arguments from the OT, in Romans 9.

1. Esau rebelled against God, in Isaac's day, Romans 9:13.
2. Israel rebelled against God, in Moses' day, Romans 9:15.
3. Pharaoh rebelled against God, in Moses' day, Romans 9:17.
4. Israel rebelled against God, in Isaiah's day, Romans 9:20.
5. Israel rebelled against God, in Jeremiah's day, Romans 9:21.
6. Israel rebelled against God, in Hosea's day, Romans 9:25.
7. Sodom rebelled against God, in Abraham's day, Romans 9:29.

Have you noticed a theme here? The seven arguments from the OT, that Paul deploys in Romans 9, are all about lack of faith and rebellion against God. In the examples he uses, Paul illustrates the possibility of rebellion, the danger of rebellion, the results of rebellion and the punishment for rebellion. Israel's rebellion against God in the first century AD can only end in spiritual disaster for Israel. Paul intends to reach Israel's heart, to bring her to repentance so that she stops rebelling against God and receives Messiah Jesus.

Argument One

Esau rebelled against God, in Isaac's day, Romans 9:13.

13 - As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. - This is a quote from Malachi 1:1-3, written about 1300 years after Esau died. According to the Biblical Timeline, [Esau was born in 1836 BC](#). That means Abraham was 160 years old when Esau and Jacob were born. The Malachi quote, around 442 BC, links God's hating of Esau to: *laying waste his mountains*, a judgment from God, based on the wicked activities and decisions of Esau's Edomite descendants.

Notice that, approximately 1400 years earlier, in Deuteronomy 23:7, God extended mercy to Edomites, because they were brothers of the Israelites. God didn't start out, hating Esau and his descendants. God's hatred was the result of 1400 years of observing Esau, and then his descendants, as they ignored God's grace, rejected God's law and violently opposed Israel, God's elect, instead of serving Israel. That experience, based on 1400 years of observing Edom, is what caused God to hate Esau and his Edomite descendants.

What do you think of the Bible truth, that God extended mercy to the Edomites, because they were brothers of the Israelites? _____

Does that indicate that God didn't always hate Esau and the Edomites? _____

What caused God to, eventually, hate the Edomites? _____

Do you see that God's hatred was based on the actions of the Edomites? _____

What Romans 9:13 doesn't say.

1. It doesn't say God hated Esau before he was born.
2. It doesn't say God hated Esau in his mother's womb.
3. It doesn't say God hated Esau when he was a small child.
4. It doesn't say God hated Esau when he was a teenager.
5. It doesn't say God elected Esau, in eternity past, to go to hell.
6. It doesn't say Esau is an example of wrath and reprobation to hell.

Calvinism views Jacob as an example of an individual's Unconditional Election to salvation and Esau as an example of an individual's Unconditional Election to damnation. This is the Calvinist proof text for Unconditional Election. Of course, Bible believers quickly notice three important things.

1. The words, unconditional election, are never used anywhere in the Bible. **2.** The concept of unconditional election to salvation, is never found anywhere in the Bible. **3.** Romans 9:11-13 doesn't even hint at unconditional election to salvation. Wise students of the Bible will take those facts into account and then ask: Why do people try to force unconditional election into verses which never mention that? _____

Make sure you understand the context. The Bible does not say, God hated Esau before he was born and because of that hatred, decided to elect him to damnation. God did not hate Esau before he was born. Sorry folks - You can't board the crazy train at this station either. God's testimony, that He hated Esau, was given to Malachi, 1300 years after Esau died, not while Esau lived.

There is no biblical or historical record that God said He hated Esau while Esau lived. Read the story of Esau's birth in Genesis 25:23ff. Our goal is to stay biblical and not get pulled into false beliefs which ignore what the Bible says, in context. Is it reasonable to expect Christians to believe what the Bible says, instead of ignoring what the Bible says and making up something the Bible never says? _____

Jacob have I loved - Who was Jacob? Jacob was Israel. *"And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."* Genesis 32:27-28. The same cannot be said of Esau. Esau, representing the nation of Edom, rebelled against God and didn't prevail. Jacob represents, the nation of Israel. How do you know God loves you? **a.** Because the Bible says God loves me, **b.** because I'm lovable, **c.** I don't know that for sure, **d.** I'm hoping God loves me, **e.** I worry if God loves me.

"And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Genesis 25:23.

Romans 9:13 - Why did God love Jacob?

This is a question for which Calvinism has no biblical answer. They've painted themselves into a corner with their TULIP philosophy. They believe that God

loved Jacob and hated Esau before they were born. For that reason, they cannot say, God loved Jacob because Jacob was a good guy. Calvinism teaches that God's election of Jacob was Unconditional - without any conditions of any kind, so God couldn't love Jacob for his good qualities.

They cite Romans 9:11, which is the main Calvinist proof text for the U (Unconditional Election) in TULIP. For Calvinists, there were no conditions to God's love of Jacob and hatred of Esau. Beyond that, Calvinists also insist that election is not based on foreknowledge. Therefore, Calvinists cannot answer the question: Why did God love Jacob, except to say, because He did.

(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) Romans 9:11.

Romans 9:11 is Calvinism's proof text for Unconditional Election to salvation. According to Calvinism, God elected Jacob to get saved, without regard to any good or evil Jacob had done. For any student of the Bible who has read Genesis 25, it goes without saying, that, *Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated*, is not said in 1800 BC. God didn't say that until 1400 years after events in Genesis 25.

1. Does Romans 9:11 say that, God unconditionally elected Jacob to salvation? _____
2. If Romans 9:11 doesn't say anything about God unconditionally electing Jacob to salvation, what should we do with that Unconditional Election teaching? _____
3. Since Romans 9:11 doesn't say anything about God unconditionally electing Jacob to salvation, is it false teaching to insist that it does say or mean that? _____
4. Should we apply critical thinking in a case like this and use our sanctified common sense? _____
5. Is Calvinism a belief we dare not contradict or should we examine it by what the Bible actually says? _____
6. Is it biblical or Christian or honest, to go along with or ignore false teaching so we don't offend anyone? _____
7. Should we base our beliefs on what the Bible actually says or on what the Bible is alleged to teach? _____
8. Did God say: *Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated*, in Genesis 25? _____
9. Did God say: *Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated*? **a.** while Esau was a baby in his mother's womb, **b.** 50 years after Esau died, **c.** 200 years after Esau died, **d.** 1300 years after Esau died.
10. Does the Bible say that God's hatred for Esau was: **a.** unconditional or was God hatred for Esau/Edom: **b.** based on 1400 years of wicked behavior?
11. Please define the word, unconditional. _____

12. Why is it important, to understand that God never said He hated Esau while Esau was a baby in his mother's womb or during the lifetime of Esau?

In the Bible, election is based on foreknowledge.

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.” 1 Peter 1:2. God foreknew what Jacob/Israel, Esau/Edom would be like: their moral decisions, their heart toward God, their obedience to God's truth, their disobedience and rebellion, their desire to live for God and walk with God, their worship of God and their worship of Idols.

Why did God love Jacob?

1. God loved Jacob because Jacob wanted the birthright.
2. God loved Jacob because the line of Messiah came through him.
3. God loved Jacob because he sired the twelve tribes of Israel.
4. God loved Jacob because of his grandfather Abraham.
5. God loved Jacob because of his parents, Isaac and Rebekah.
6. God loved Jacob because Jacob wrestled for the blessing, Gen 32:24ff.
7. God loved Jacob because of Christ's saved, spiritual descendants.

“And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt;”
Deuteronomy 4:37.

“But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.” Deuteronomy 7:8.

“Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.”
Deuteronomy 10:15.

“Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words.” Deuteronomy 33:3.

1. Are you willing to obey God's plan for your life? _____
2. Are you like rebellious Esau or obedient Jacob? _____

The first rule of Bible Study 101 - Always mind the context.

The context of Romans 9:13 is about God's chosen people, the nation of Israel, all of whom descended biologically from Jacob. God changed Jacob's name to Israel. The twelve sons of Jacob/Israel fathered the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel.

“And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name.” 1 Kings 18:31.

Esau have I hated - Esau was NOT among the children of the promise, Romans 9:8. Esau was not part of the line of Messiah, was not part of the twelve tribes of Israel. Who was Esau? Esau was Jacob's older brother, the firstborn son of Isaac and Rebecca, and, the founder of the nation of Edom. Esau and his Edomite descendants were rebels against God and vicious enemies of the nation of Israel. In the OT, the Edomites' 1400 year long history of disobeying God and fighting against Israel, is what caused God to hate them.

When God says, *Esau have I hated*, He is mostly referring to Esau as the representative of Edom, not so much to Esau as an individual man and certainly not to Esau as a baby in the womb, Psalm 106:38, Jeremiah 19:4-5, because babies have innocent blood. Esau represents the nation of Edom, Genesis 25:23. According to the Bible, Genesis 36:1, 8-9, does Esau represent the nation of Edom? _____ Is that a rock solid fact, clearly stated in the Bible? _____ Will you keep that in mind as we study Romans 9? _____

**In The Bible, there are at least
307 mentions of Esau and his kingdom
and names related to Esau.**

Amalek is mentioned 24 times in 23 verses in the OT. Amalek was Esau's grandson (therefore the Amalekites were also Edomites), Genesis 36:12. Amalek was Edom's neighbor and ally against Israel and an implacable opponent of Israel, Exodus 17:8-16. Amalek was despised by God. Because of their hatred for and opposition to, Israel, God's chosen people, God slated Amalek for destruction, Numbers 24:20, Deuteronomy 25:19, 1 Samuel 15:2-3, 28:18. King David put the remnant of Amalek to tribute, 1 Chronicles 18:11. Amalek is linked to Esau and Edom in the OT.

Bozrah is mentioned 9 times in 9 verses in the OT. Bozrah was the ancient capital city of Edom. Esau was the biological founder of the nation of Edom. For her sins, God condemned Edom, Teman, Dedan and Bozrah, Jeremiah 49:7-22.

“For I have sworn by myself, saith the LORD, that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes.” Jeremiah 49:13.

Bozrah, the capital city of Edom, represents Edom. Do you understand that Bozrah stands for the nation of Edom, in Jeremiah’s prophetic curse? _____

Dedan is mentioned 11 times in 10 verses in the OT. Dedan was a son of Abraham and Keturah, sent away to the east by Abraham in Genesis 25:3-6. The area in the east, where Abraham’s son Dedan settled, was near the kingdom of Edom. Dedan and Esau were contemporaries. Dedan was allied with Esau and his rowdy Edomite descendants, against Israel, Jeremiah 49:8, Ezekiel 25:12-14.

Edom is mentioned 87 times in 82 verses in the OT. Edom, meaning red, was the ancient nation and mountain kingdom founded by Esau.

Edomites are mentioned 13 times in 13 verses in the OT. Edomites are the descendants of Esau, Genesis 36:9, and citizens of the nation of Edom.

Esau, the grandson of Abraham and the son of Isaac, is mentioned 90 times in 78 verses, in the Bible. Esau is described as having red hair, Genesis 25:25. Esau liked red beans or red lentils or red pottage, Genesis 25:30. Esau was an important man in the OT, because he was the firstborn son of Isaac.

Esau could have been in the line of Christ, were it not for his rebellious, flesh-focused nature and his unfaithful heart. Esau’s fate was not due to a decision by God, to hate him while he was an unborn baby in his mother’s womb. Esau’s fate was the result of his stubborn refusal to follow the faith of his grandfather Abraham, and believe God and walk faithfully with God.

Idumea is mentioned 4 times in 4 verses in the OT. Idumaea is mentioned once. Idumea is the Greek word for Edom (red), and is another name for the territory in southern Israel, characterized by red rocks and red mountains and occupied by the Edomites. In biblical times, Idumaeans were Edomites.

The **land of Seir** is mentioned 2 times in 2 verses in the OT. Genesis 36:21 mentions, *the children of Seir in the land of Edom*. Seir is linked to Edom in the OT narrative.

Mount Seir, in the Seir mountains, is mentioned 16 times in 16 verses in the OT. Mount Seir is the biblical name for the mountainous region in southern Israel, occupied by the Edomites. It stretches from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba. In Deuteronomy 2:5, God says: “*I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession.*” Mount Seir, in the Bible, is a synonym for Edom.

Seir, as a reference to Esau’s kingdom of Edom or the Edomites, is mentioned 39 times in 38 verses in the OT. The word Seir is from a Hebrew word, meaning, goat or hairy (Strong’s 8165 and Brown-Driver-Briggs definition), perhaps related to the hairy goats or goat demons (Strong’s 6163), of [Leviticus 17:7](#), which were worshiped by Israel during their 40 years wandering in the wilderness and were probably also worshiped by the Edomites, 2 Chronicles 25:14, 20.

Teman is mentioned 11 times in 11 verses in the OT. Teman was a duke or a chief, a tribal leader, Genesis 36:40-42, the grandson of Esau, great grandson of Isaac and great great grandson of Abraham. His name, Teman, became the name of a geographical district of Edom, sometimes called Temani, Genesis 36:34. In Jeremiah 49:7, 20, God refers to Edom as Teman and declares judgment against Edom, Amos 1:12, Obadiah 9.

God mentions Esau and Edom and other names associated with Esau at least 307 times in the Bible. For God, Esau’s wickedness is an important topic because Esau opposed Jacob, through whom the line of Christ came. Beyond that, Esau represented the nation of Edom and Jacob represented the nation of Israel. When God says, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*, that refers to most of the OT historical record, from Genesis 25 to Malachi 1, and extends into the NT time frame, where Herod the Great and his descendants are the focus.

The OT chronicles the relentless, unceasing war carried on by Esau’s descendants, the nation of Edom, against Jacob’s descendants, the nation of Israel, across 14 centuries. God gave us the history of Esau in the OT, if we will search it out, so that we can understand His historical reasons for hating Esau as the representative of the nation of Edom, as well as all the Israel hating miscreants associated with Esau and Edom.

God didn’t always hate Esau and Edom

It is important to note that in the early history of Israel, God did not hate Esau; instead, God treated Esau with lovingkindness. God’s amazing grace was available to Esau and his descendants if they wanted it. During Israel’s exodus from Egypt, the Edomites refused to let Israel pass through their land, Numbers 20:14-21. They didn’t behave as brothers to Israel.

In spite of Edom's refusal to bless Israel and give them safe passage, Genesis 12:1-3, God forbade Israel to fight the Edomites and they marched around Edom instead of going through Edom. As God helped Israel defeat her enemies, so God helped Edom defeat the Horites (cave dwellers who inhabited the Seir mountains), Deuteronomy 2:22.

“Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession.”
Deuteronomy 2:5.

God gave Mount Seir to Esau and forbade Israel to meddle with them. God wanted Edom to succeed and serve Israel, Genesis 25:23. So great was God's material blessing upon Esau, Genesis 36:6-8, that Esau had to move away from Jacob, to provide adequate grazing for their abundant flocks. God continued to bless Esau, giving him and his Edomite descendants opportunity after opportunity to obey God and do the right thing, serving Israel.

God's particular command to Israel, about Edom, was: *You shall not abhor an Edomite*, Deuteronomy 23:7-8. Clearly, God did not hate Esau in the early history of Israel. God saw fit to provide an extensive [genealogy for Esau in Genesis 36](#) and also, in the official history of Israel, in 1 Chronicles 1:35-54. God's hatred for Esau developed over the span of Esau's life and then, God's hatred for Edom developed over the next thirteen centuries, in response to the wicked rebellion, hatred and violence of the Edomites against God's chosen people, Israel, Obadiah 10.

The Herodian Dynasty

As we cross the 400 silent years, between OT and NT, when no prophets of God are illuminated in the Bible, and approach the NT time period, Herod the Great and his sons stand out, because they were Idumaeans. Idumea is the Greek word for Edomite, and therefore, the Herods were Edomite descendants of Esau. The crimes of the Herods are notorious, some of which are immortalized in the NT.

The Herodian Dynasty began with Herod the Great. He is the infamous Herod who tried to kill the baby Jesus in the slaughter of the innocents, at Bethlehem, in Matthew 2:12-19. God gave us the genealogy of Esau in Genesis 36, because He wanted us to understand the criminal history of Esau's descendants, Genesis 27:41, Ezekiel 35:5, 11. Knowing that criminal history helps us understand why, over the process of time, God came to hate Esau and his descendants.

In the OT, we are told, only one time, that God hated Esau, Malachi 1:1-3. The verses we will list below, from the OT, trace the reasons for that hatred by noting the 1400 year history of Edomite hatred and opposition to Israel. It is never wise to hate God's people. Hating God's people always puts you on the outs with God. In the NT era, we are also told, only one time, that God hated Esau, Romans 9:13. That hatred in the NT time frame, was due to the unceasing hatred of the Herods, against Christ, His people and His apostles, as noted in the list below. The chart at this [clickable link](#) helps explain [The Herodian Dynasty](#).

Crimes of the Herodian Edomites

1. Herod the Great tried to kill the baby Jesus, Matthew 2:12-19.
2. Herod the Great rebuilt [the Jewish Temple](#) in Jerusalem, 19 BC.
3. [Herod Antipas](#) (tetrarch) killed John the Baptist, Matthew 14:3-12.
4. Herod Antipas (tetrarch) is the Herod who tried Jesus in Luke 23:5-12.
5. Herod Agrippa I killed James the apostle, Acts 12:1-2.
6. Herod Agrippa I imprisoned the apostle Peter, Acts 12:3-6.
7. Herod Agrippa II heard Paul's testimony and defense in Acts 26:1ff.

God's promise to Abraham sent the Messianic line through Jacob, not Esau. God was absolutely determined that the line of Messiah would not go through Esau. For purposes of preserving the pure Messianic line, God is said to hate Esau because Esau was a fornicator, Hebrews 12:16, who married pagan women, Genesis 26:34-35, 28:9, 36:2. We know that, in His grace and loving kindness, if a pagan woman got saved, God had no problem including her in the genealogy of Christ.

Rahab the harlot, Joshua 2:1-15, Matthew 1:5, and Ruth the Moabitess are examples of that, Ruth 4:13, Matthew 1:5. Thinking Christians acknowledge that the grace of God would have been upon Esau if he had had an obedient heart toward God. Esau and his Edomite descendants made choice after choice after choice, not to serve God. They earned God's holy hatred.

In the OT, there are many pronouncements of judgment against Edom: Isaiah 11:14; 34:5-7; 63:1-6; Jeremiah 9:25-26; 25:17-26; 49:7-22; Lamentations 4:21-22; Ezekiel 25:12-14; 35:2-15; Joel 3:19; Amos 1:11-12; 9:11-12; Obadiah 1:1-21; Malachi 1:4. Here are more verses which explain what the Bible says about Esau.

Esau and Edom in the OT

"Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau is Edom." Genesis 36:8. Esau is Edom.

“And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir.” Genesis 36:9. Esau is the father of the Edomites.

“But I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself: his seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his neighbours, and he is not.” Jeremiah 49:10. Esau’s seed is spoiled, which is another reason why God chose not to send the line of Christ through Esau.

“As thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so will I do unto thee: thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it: and they shall know that I am the LORD.” Ezekiel 35:15.

“Shall I not in that day, saith the LORD, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?” Obadiah 1:8.

“And thy mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter.” Obadiah 1:9.

“And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken it.” Obadiah 1:18. Obadiah was a contemporary of Elisha, which places him around 840 BC.

“And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.” Malachi 1:3. Malachi prophesied around 440 BC. After 1400 years of sin and rebellion, God was determined to destroy every one of the house of Esau by slaughter.

Why did God hate Esau? 15 Biblical reasons God hated Esau/Edom

“And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb,” Genesis 25:23.

“Now these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom.” Genesis 36:1.

“I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau” Malachi 1:2-3

“Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated,” Romans 9:13.

God hated Esau/Edom for things that happened in time, over the span of 1400 years of OT history, not because of an alleged decree of reprobation that, according to Calvinism, God made in eternity past. The Bible never says that

God hated Esau in eternity past. God hating Esau refers to God's hatred of Esau, for his rebellion and wickedness and God's hatred for Esau's Edomite descendants, because of their 1400 year record of rebellion against God and hatred for Israel. Those events happened in time, not in eternity. That is the two nations truth of Genesis 25:23. Which two nations? _____

1. God hated Esau for despising and selling his birthright, the privilege to be in the line of Christ, Genesis 25:22. "*Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.*" Hebrews 12:16.

2. God hated Esau for disobeying Isaac's instructions not to marry a Canaanite wife, Genesis 28:1, 6-8. Instead of obeying, Esau married pagan women, Genesis 26:34-35, 28:9, 36:2, which things were a grief of heart to Isaac and Rebekah. Should Christians marry pagans or unbelievers? _____

3. God hated Esau because Esau was a wicked man, who did wicked things, who produced wicked children and wicked grandchildren, Psalm 5:5, 11:5, 26:5.

4. God hated Esau for vowing to kill Jacob, to whom God gave the birthright and through whom God intended to send the line of Christ, Genesis 27:41. Esau would have destroyed the line of Christ, by killing Jacob but God said, No!

5. God hated Esau because he was a fornicator and a profane man (profane means, against God or ungodly, 1 Timothy 1:9), Hebrews 12:16. Living a life of fornication is a sinful lifestyle God warns against, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-5. Is it okay for Christians today, to live a profane life of fornication? _____

6. God hated Esau because of one of his wicked descendants, Herod the Great, 73-4 BC. In 40 BC, Herod was given the title, King of Judea, by the Roman Senate. After being made, King of Judea, Herod the Great, beginning in 19 BC, defiled [the Jewish temple](#) by rebuilding it.

7. God hated Esau because Herod the tetrarch (aka, Herod Antipas or King Herod), executed John the Baptist, who was the forerunner of Christ, as well as being the cousin of Jesus, Luke 1:34-36. Herod the tetrarch was the son of Herod the Great and his wife, Malthace. Herod the Great was born in Idumea (Edom and Idumea both mean, red), the second son of Antipater the Idumaeon (Edomite). Herod the Great's father was an Edomite, a descendant of Esau and that makes Herod the Great an Edomite.

8. God hated Esau for the wickedness of one of Esau's descendants, Herod the tetrarch, an Edomite, who questioned Jesus prior to His crucifixion, mocked

Jesus and sent Jesus back to Pilate to be crucified, Luke 23:7-11, 17:1. In AD 39, the Roman Emperor, [Caligula, exiled Herod the tetrarch](#), to the rustic frontier of Gaul (what is now France), where Herod the tetrarch died, unknown and uncared for, stripped of his fortune and power.

9. God hated Esau/Edom because they were enemies of King Saul and King David. Edom is listed among the nations oppressing Israel, whom David and Joab defeated, 1 Samuel 14:47, 2 Samuel 8:13-14, 1 Kings 11:15-16.

10. God hated Esau because of Doeg the Edomite, a wicked man who informed on and conspired against King David, 1 Samuel 22:9. Doeg the Edomite murdered 85 priests of the LORD in one day, and also murdered their women and children and even killed their livestock, 1 Samuel 22:11-23.

11. God hated Edom and promised to destroy Edom because of their hatred for Israel and because their threats to devour Israel were threats against the will of God, to bless Israel, Genesis 12:1-3, Ezekiel 35:12-13.

12. God hated Edom because Edom fought against King David, a great type of Christ in the OT, 1 Chronicles 18:12, Psalm 60:2, Jeremiah 27:3, Obadiah 10. David, the great type of Christ in the OT, defeated Edom, a type of the flesh in the OT.

13. Esau/Edom *rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction*, when King Nebuchadnezzar took Judah into captivity and Edom refused to help Judah, Obadiah 10-16, Psalm 137:7, Lamentations 4:21-22, Isaiah 34:5-10, 63:1-6, Jeremiah 49:7-17. For those sins, God promised He will cut off Edom, and make it a desolation forever.

14. God hated Esau/Edom because they were pagan idol worshipers, 2 Chronicles 25:11-15, 20.

15. For their 1400 years of rebellion against God, and ungodly, warlike behavior toward Israel, God declares that He hates Esau/Edom, 2 Chronicles 28:17, Malachi 1:2-4. Remember that Esau represents the nation of Edom, Genesis 25:23. Esau is Edom. Because of all of Esau/Edom's wickedness, God hated them and would not allow the Messianic line to go through Esau, even though he was the firstborn son of Isaac, Genesis 27:32. Esau's descendants were even more wicked than Esau. That is why God destroyed the Edomites, according to the prophets, Obadiah and Malachi.

1. Did God have good reasons for hating Esau/Edom? _____

2. Did God's hatred originate before the foundation of the world or did it originate in time, based on Esau/Edom's activities and decisions? _____

God hated Esau based on: Esau's pagan idolatry and fertility goddess worship, 2 Chronicles 25:11-15, 20, Esau's rebellious heart and wicked activities. God sent the Messianic line through Jacob instead of Esau the firstborn. As God said, *the elder shall serve the younger*. It was normal for the birthright and the inheritance to go through the eldest son. God switched it up because Esau was a wicked, flesh-focused man who despised his birthright. Why is that important?

The birthright, from Abraham and Isaac, was the incredible privilege of being in the line of Christ, to be part of God's covenant with Abraham, to be an important part of the biological line that would produce Messiah Jesus. Esau despised that great honor and sold it for a bowl of red bean soup, a mess of pottage. Jacob, for all his fleshly failings, was a spiritual man. Jacob valued the birthright, the privilege of being in the line of Christ. Notice that, in the OT, in Genesis 25-27, in its biblical context, this story was never about teaching unconditional election of individuals to salvation. In the NT, this story is also, not about unconditional election of individuals to salvation in Romans chapter 9.

Calvinists use Romans 9:13, as a pretext to teach their unbiblical view of the sovereignty of God, which then becomes a pretext to teach what they refer to as, "the doctrines of grace," which is a faux spiritual way to describe their false, TULIP philosophy. It is important to point out that there is never any saving faith in TULIP. In the TULIP system, people are said to get saved and regenerated before having faith, without having faith, without believing on Jesus, without believing the gospel.

Calvinism rejects saving faith in favor of their philosophical teaching of Unconditional Election and Irresistible Grace, their false teaching that God saves you apart from faith, before you have faith. Instead of teaching what Romans 9 says in context, they use Romans 9 to make you feel guilty if you disagree with them and their unbiblical view of God, as if your disagreement with their opinion somehow denies the sovereignty of God. Here is the Calvinist TULIP.

Total Depravity or Total Inability
Unconditional Election
Limited atonement
Irresistible Grace
Perseverance of the saints

Concerning, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*, Calvinists say, “This is God being God,” or, “This is God exercising His sovereignty,” in Romans 9:13, and: “God is saying, The choice of who I save is mine alone.” They use Romans 9 to teach Unconditional Election to salvation - the U in the Calvinist TULIP. They also say: “This verse teaches us that God is absolutely in control of who is saved and who is not saved.” They extol God’s sovereign right to choose to unconditionally save some and unconditionally damn others because, according to them, that is simply, God being God and exercising His sovereignty.

Romans 9 is not about Jacob being chosen or elected to salvation and is not about Esau being chosen or elected to damnation. Nothing in Romans 9 is about being elected to salvation in eternity past or, before the foundation of the world. Do not be led astray by Calvinist false teaching. Always mind the context.

You have a responsibility as a Christian to recognize and reject false teaching. That is why reading and studying and learning the Bible is important. You need to know the Bible and Bible doctrine so that you know truth and can discern error when you encounter it. You will never be much of a disciple of Jesus if you refuse to read and learn the Bible. If you’re too busy to read your Bible every day, download a Bible app to your phone and listen on your way to work.

14 - What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

What shall we say then? - Paul asks the question because he wants to provoke the Jews to think about these issues. Christianity isn’t just another religion where you throw your mind out of gear and accept it. Christianity is the only natural progression from OT Judaism. Pauline Christianity is biblical, logical, reasonable, rational and direct from the heart of God. Paul isn’t trying to get the Jews to accept something that is man-made, or, that doesn’t make sense.

Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. - God is perfectly right to reject Esau (and the Edomites), Hebrews 12:17, for their wickedness, and send the line of Christ through Jacob. God is perfectly right to judge Israel for her sins and remove Israel from the place of blessing, just like He removed Esau and the Edomites, from the place of blessing, because of their sins. Follow Paul’s reasoning. God rejected Esau. Remember that Esau represents the nation of Edom - and every Jew agreed with God on that. They’re shouting “Amen Paul” as they read this. Paul has set another rhetorical trap here in Romans 9:14, just like he did in Romans 2:1.

Now Paul springs his rhetorical trap in v. 15. “God was right to reject Esau - all of you Jews agree with me on that - and God is right to reject Israel, if you continue in unbelief.” *And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.* Romans 11:23. The point Paul makes has to do with Israel rejecting God’s rule over them, just like the Edomites rejected God’s rule over them. Israel should have embraced Jesus. If you had lived back there in OT times, would you have obeyed God? _____

It is God’s prerogative to righteously deal with Abraham’s children based on the actions and decisions they have made. As surely as God did that with Esau/Edom, He will do that with Jacob/Israel. When God made His covenant with Abraham, it was never God’s intention to bless Israel unconditionally, while ignoring their unbelief, rebellion and wickedness, Luke 23:18-23. Instead, God had promised in Leviticus 18:24-30, if Israel, His chosen and elect people, worshiped idols and false gods, He would drive them out of His land, just like He drove out the pagans before them.

That driving out happened in 722 BC, when the Assyrians took Israel (the northern kingdom) into captivity and in 586 BC, when the Babylonians, took Judah (the southern kingdom) into captivity. Their sin caught up with them, at that time in OT history and their sin in rejecting Messiah was catching up with them again, in NT history, in the mid-first century AD. Would you say that God was fair and long-suffering in His dealings with Israel? _____

Always mind the context. In Romans chapter 9, Paul is explaining to saved Jews and Gentiles, and warning unsaved Israel, that God, in AD 58, is already in the process of judging faithless Israel, rejecting her and removing her from the place of blessing, Romans 11:21-32. In AD 58, Israel as a nation still has a chance to believe on Jesus as her Messiah but time is running out. Paul warns Israel that God can and will remove them from the place of blessing and stop showing them mercy if they reject Jesus as their Messiah. No one gets to come to God on his/her own terms. If you come to God, it will be on God’s terms.

Get ready for Pharaoh

The story of Pharaoh is not an example of God unconditionally electing Jacob and Israel to get saved and unconditionally leaving Pharaoh doomed to hell. In other words, Paul is not using Pharaoh as an illustration of Unconditional Election to damnation and reprobation. The story of Pharaoh is about obeying and disobeying God. Pharaoh had freewill to obey God, had he wanted to obey. Like Pharaoh, Israel had freewill and was willfully sinning and disobeying God by refusing to believe on Jesus as her Messiah, John 16:7-9. The story of Israel’s

deliverance from bondage in Egypt is, for Israel, one of the premier stories in the OT.

Paul compares Israel's rebellion against Jesus her Messiah, in the first century AD, to Pharaoh's rebellion against God about 1500 years earlier. That comparison is Paul's in your face attempt to shock the Jews and get their attention. He wants to provoke a reaction that will force them to think. Paul's warning is clear: If Israel rebels against God, God will treat Israel like He treated Esau and Pharaoh. Israel will not escape the judgment of God simply because they are biologically descended from Abraham. Paul's argument makes perfect sense. Esau is biologically descended from Abraham but Esau/Edom rejected God and God eventually judged them harshly for their sinful rebellion.

Argument Two

Israel rebelled against God, in Moses' day, Romans 9:15.

15 - For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

For he saith to Moses, - Please don't miss this. God first said that to Moses. There is no biblical record in the OT that God ever said that to Pharaoh in the OT. Paul now moves on to another example, by quoting from Exodus 33:19. Take time to read Exodus chapters 32 and 33, so that you understand the context. God is angry at Israel because of her faithless rebellion and her embrace of the golden calf and her worship of false gods.

God wants to kill everyone in Israel and start over with Moses but then changes His mind (repents) and has mercy on Israel. When God says He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, He is referring to having mercy on wicked, willful, idolatrous Israel. This is a plea and a promise, from Paul, to Israel, that God's mercy is available, if Israel believes on Messiah Jesus.

In Paul's argument, Pharaoh is not an example of Unconditional Election to damnation, by the decree of God, before the foundation of the world. Instead, Moses analogizes the rebellious behavior of Israel with the rebellious behavior of Pharaoh. This was intentionally insulting to the Jews. Paul makes the comparison on purpose, to shock them and get their attention. Please don't miss this. Because of the golden calf, God gave Israel up, Acts 7:41-42, and Paul heard that sermon, Acts 7:58. In AD 58, as Paul writes Romans, God is already in the process again, of giving Israel up.

“And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness?” Acts 7:41-42.

Since the death of Christ, when God tore, from top to bottom, the temple veil which hid the holy of holies, Matthew 27:51, Jewish priests knew something radical had happened. God had stopped accepting their blood sacrifices. The holy of holies was unveiled and defiled by the hand of God. Paul confronts Israel with the searing truth that their current rebellion against Messiah Jesus will produce the same result as Pharaoh’s ancient rebellion against Jehovah God.

I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. - God is not obligated to have mercy on anyone who rejects Jesus as Messiah, even if they are biological, circumcised, covenant, Jewish descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Did God say that, in the context of electing to save some people and not electing to save others? No, of course not. Nowhere in the OT and nowhere in the NT did God ever say or suggest that in any context. Here is the passage Paul is quoting from.

“18 - And he (Moses) said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. 19 - And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. 20 - And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.” Exodus 33:18-20.

In the passage Paul quotes, God isn’t saying anything about mercy and election to salvation. How do we know that for sure? Because “election to salvation” is not mentioned in any OT chapter or verse Paul quotes and is not mentioned in Romans chapter 9. Mercy was shown to Israel, when God changed His mind about destroying them for their sin, Exodus 32:10-14, and mercy was shown to Moses, when He asked to see God’s glory. Paul is reminding Israel that God has revealed His word, His glory, His mercy and His Messiah, through Moses and Israel. Israel had already received that revelation. God expected Israel to trust Him and believe what He had showed them in the scriptures.

Paul is making a plea to first century AD Israel to respond to God’s mercy and believe on Messiah Jesus. Because God has been so good to you, respond with believing faith and receive Jesus as your Messiah. Only a few hours before

God's gracious statement to Moses, which Paul quotes in Romans 9:15, the children of Israel had been dancing naked, Exodus 32:25, around the golden calf idol, Acts 7:40-41, in an orgy of sin and idolatrous lust. Israel's wicked rebellion made God so angry, He was ready to consume Israel and start over with Moses, Exodus 32:9-10.

God is not required to have mercy on anyone who rebels and refuses to obey Him. God's covenant with Abraham was unconditional but God's promise to Abraham was not unconditional. Abraham received the promise by faith and God expected Abraham's Israelite descendants to receive the promise by faith. Why is that important? Because Calvinism teaches that God must regenerate you by Irresistible Grace BEFORE you can have faith in Jesus. That false teaching is never stated or taught in the Bible.

Back when Paul wrote Romans, around 58 AD, and now, almost 2000 years later, here is God's one and only condition for showing mercy: Believe the glorious gospel of Christ, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Romans 1:16. Anyone, whether the nation of Israel or Gentiles, can get God's abundant mercy, through Calvary. No one, whether the nation of Israel or Gentiles, can access God's mercy apart from Calvary. Here is an interesting truth. No one in the Bible and no one in the history of the universe was ever saved by Irresistible Grace. In the Bible, belief in Jesus, or, believing the glorious gospel of Christ, or, repenting of sin and having faith in Christ always comes before salvation. God never saves or regenerates anyone until that person believes.

Years I spent in vanity and pride,
caring not my Lord was crucified,
knowing not it was for me He died
on Calvary.

Mercy there was great, and grace was free;
pardon there was multiplied to me;
there my burdened soul found liberty
at Calvary.

By God's Word at last my sin I learned;
then I trembled at the law I'd spurned,
till my guilty soul imploring turned
to Calvary.

Now I've given to Jesus everything,
now I gladly own Him as my King,
now my raptured soul can only sing

of Calvary.

Oh, the love that drew salvation's plan!
Oh, the grace that brought it down to man!
Oh, the mighty gulf that God did span
at Calvary.

-William R. Newell, (1895) 1868-1956

I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, - Mercy is not a right; it's a privilege. God alone is in charge of the Mercy Department. Frankly, what anyone thinks about that doesn't matter. Don't waste time debating God and insisting He should have done His plan of redemption your way. That's an argument you can never win, so why not give in to God, get saved and live joyfully for Jesus until God calls you home to heaven? That's what a wise man would do.

In Romans 9:15, Paul quotes Exodus 33:19, *I will have mercy*. Remember our rule of biblical interpretation: Always mind the context. Before we can figure out what Romans 9:15 means, we must understand what Exodus 33:19 means. That's what Paul quotes here, so, it is vital to know what Moses was talking about so we can understand what Paul is talking about.

1. Carefully read Exodus 33 and tell us, Who is God having mercy on, in Exodus 33:19? **a.** Pharaoh, **b.** Egypt, **c.** Calvinists whom God elected to salvation before the foundation of the world, **d.** Israel. 2. Does Moses mention Calvinism, in Exodus chapter 33? _____ It is important to keep Paul's argument in focus. In Exodus 33, Moses is talking about God having mercy on Israel.

In Romans 9, Paul is talking about God having mercy on Israel. Do you see how nicely that fits? There is no Calvinism in Exodus 33 or Romans 9, for 20,000 miles or 20,000 light years, in any direction. Neither Moses nor Paul was teaching Calvinism and Unconditional Election to salvation or damnation. God showing mercy to Israel in Exodus 33:19 and Romans 9:15 has absolutely nothing to do with unconditional election to salvation or damnation.

Paul isn't trying to get anyone to believe that God Unconditionally Elected a few people before the foundation of the world, whom He intended to save, and, on purpose, left everyone else un-elected and headed for hell. That weird and unbiblical belief isn't implied, stated or written anywhere in the Bible. Paul's purpose is to win Israel to Christ, through the glorious gospel of Christ, which is for everyone, not just an elect few, Romans 1:16, as Paul points out time after time, 1 Timothy 2:4-6, Romans 10:13. The Jewish Messiah prophesied by Isaiah in Isaiah 53, has been rejected by Israel. Paul is trying to win Israel to Christ.

God is getting ready to reject Israel for 2000 years.

Paul is warning Israel that God is in the process, right then, in AD 58, of rejecting Israel and removing her from the place of blessing, because of Israel's unbelief and lack of faith. Israel didn't have the faith of Abraham. Paul uses seven examples from the OT, to demonstrate that God can and does reject people, based on their actions, based on their choices, based on decisions they make in time, but never based on an arbitrary decision of God about Unconditional Election to salvation, before the foundation of the world.

Remember, the Bible never mentions unconditional election to salvation, in the OT or the NT. In your thinking, have you given that truth the weight it deserves?

Since the Bible never mentions it, why do some people spend their lives evangelizing for a false teaching about salvation that God never mentions? God's mercy has been going to the Gentiles and will continue to go to the Gentiles *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*, Luke 21:24, or, *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*, Romans 11:25.

The essence of Paul's argument is: "You Israelites do not have a lock on God's mercy, just because you are biologically descended from Abraham or just because you're Jewish. Israel does not have a lock on God's mercy because of God's promises to your fathers. God can and will and is, rejecting Israel, because you rejected Him, and He will remove Israel from the place of blessing and have mercy on the Gentiles, because you reject Jesus as your Messiah, while the Gentiles receive Him, John 1:11-12, and believe on Him."

This isn't something new that Paul made up. It was God's plan from the beginning. These passages of scripture walk us through God's love for Gentiles and His gradual rejection of the Jews because of their unbelief. Accepting Paul's gospel was the last hope of the Jews, before God rejected them and removed them from the place of blessing.

Abraham started life as an uncircumcised Gentile, Genesis 11:27-28.

Remember that Abraham, the first Jew, began life as a heathen, unbelieving Gentile, in Ur of the Chaldees, Genesis 11:27-28. God's grace was available to Jews and Gentiles, if they wanted it. Throughout the Acts of the Apostles, Dr. Luke records God's progressive turning away from Israel, as Israel progressively turns away from God, rejects the gospel and rejects Jesus.

God's amazing grace is also for the Gentiles.

Genesis 12:3, 18:18, 22:1-18 - all families/nations of earth.

1 Kings 8:43 - all people of the earth.

Isaiah 45:22 - all the ends of the earth.

Jeremiah 22:29 - O earth, earth, earth.

Micah 1:2 - Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth.

Matthew 4:15, 25, 10:1-6, 15:21-28, 28:19-20 - Gentiles.

Consequences of rejecting the glorious gospel of Christ

Acts 4:1-13 - Jewish leaders rejected the witness of Peter and John.

Acts 5:28 - Jewish leaders rejected Jesus in Jerusalem.

Acts 7:57-58 - Jerusalem Jewish leaders rejected Stephen's witness.

Acts 13:45-46 - Jews rejected Jesus in Pisidian Antioch.

Acts 18:4-6 - Jews rejected Jesus in Athens, Greece.

Acts 28:28-31 - Jews rejected Jesus in Rome.

John 5:45-47, 7:35 - The Pharisees knew and rejected this truth.

"lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Acts 13:46.

"I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." Acts 18:6.

"the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."

Acts 28:28.

This is important biblical and dispensational truth. The great profession of Israel was that they kept the law of God, yet Jesus directly contradicted that belief. Jesus (God in the flesh, John 1:14, 1 Timothy 3:16), testified that: **1.** Israel didn't believe what Moses wrote, John 5:45-47, and, **2.** Israel didn't keep the law of Moses, John 7:19. Jesus knew how much of a lie Israel was living. How are you living today, as a professing Christian? _____

1. Is your Christianity all razzle dazzle and no true heart belief or does your Christianity come from a believing heart? _____

2. Are you a showboat or a lifeboat? _____

At the very time Paul was writing Romans, in AD 58, God was in the process of rejecting the Jews and removing them from the place of blessing, Acts 13:39-46, 18:4-6, 28:28-31, Romans 11:25, because of their unbelief. As Israel rejected successive offers of the gospel, God led Paul to begin switching his evangelistic focus from Israel, to the Gentiles. That is one of Paul's reasons for writing

Romans chapter 9. God was getting ready to withdraw His mercy from Israel and give Israel up, and Paul was His instrument for doing that.

Remember, Paul has a dual commission from God, to Israel and to Gentiles, Acts 9:15-16. Paul has been part of God's gradual process of withdrawing mercy and he warns Israel again in Romans chapters 9, 10, 11. Mercy brings responsibility. God can, does and will have mercy on the Gentiles and save them instead of saving Israel, if Israel continues to reject Jesus as Messiah.

and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. - Because Israel is rejecting God's mercy, in the first century AD, God is withdrawing His mercy from Israel and sending His mercy and compassion, through the gospel, to the Gentiles. If you reject God's mercy in your life, God doesn't quit offering mercy. His mercy and compassion are free to all who will receive them, even if you've rejected them time after time. God's mercy and compassion are for whoever wants them but God does not force mercy and compassion on people who don't want them.

Do you understand what is happening in Romans 9? Salvation, compassion and mercy go to the ones who believe on Jesus, to the ones who gladly receive God's grace, to the ones who have faith in Christ - not to people who try to earn salvation by keeping the law. The Gentiles are receptive to the gospel and many of them believe on Jesus and get in Christ. Israel has the same opportunity but Israel rejects Messiah Jesus and refuses to believe on Christ and get in Christ. Today, everyone on earth is in the same situation. The gospel confronts us with a freewill choice: trust Jesus by faith alone or trust your own works. It's as simple as that.

Faith or works - What are you trusting to get you to heaven? _____

There isn't even a hint of Unconditional Election of individuals to salvation, anywhere in Romans chapter 9. Election, in the Bible, is never about individuals being elected, in eternity past, to get saved. The words, elect and election, are never used in the Bible, to mean that God chose, in eternity past, to save certain people and damn everyone else whom He didn't elect to save.

16 - So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

So then it is not of him that willeth, - *It*, in the context, is the mercy and compassion mentioned in v. 15. *It*, refers to God's mercy in sparing Israel and answering Moses' request to see God's glory. John the apostle provides an

example of the rebellious human will. Jesus is talking to the Jews who were trying to kill Him and He states with great precision, what their problem was. “*And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*” John 5:40.

In like manner, God had been showing mercy and compassion to Israel for 1500 years, at the point in time that Paul writes Romans 9. For most of that time, Israel has been in rebellion against God, misbehaving as if they were Edomites instead of Israelites, rejecting God’s compassion and mercy and salvation. Israel in the first century AD, has no grounds to expect God to keep showing them mercy, while they remain in unbelief.

Israel’s unbelief was a great tragedy. 1. Israel didn’t believe what Moses wrote, John 5:45-47, 2. Israel didn’t keep the law, John 7:19, and, 3. Israel didn’t believe Jesus was her Messiah, John 8:24. God is absolutely free to judge Israel’s sin and withhold His mercy, as long as Israel remains in unbelief. That is Paul’s point. God’s mercy and compassion are soon to be withdrawn. What didn’t Israel believe in John 8:24? _____

Him that willeth, in the context, is Israel. Israel cannot “will” or decide, to keep God’s mercy, while also rejecting Jesus as her Messiah. No Jesus, no mercy, or, Know Jesus, know mercy. Israel had that choice. God set things up so that anyone can get God’s mercy through Christ’s sacrifice at Calvary (and glorious resurrection) but no one can get God’s mercy apart from Christ, Calvary and the resurrection, not even God’s elect nation, Israel. Every individual Israelite had freewill to obey the gospel and get saved. If they rejected Messiah while individual Gentiles believed on Messiah, their fate was their own choice.

Israel cannot blame anyone but herself. God spent 1500 years showering Israel with grace, mercy and forgiveness, culminating in Christ coming in person, to redeem Israel, Matthew 1:21. God sent Messiah to His people, as the fulfillment of the law, and they rejected Him, crying, *Crucify him, Crucify him*. God is not obliged to continue showing mercy and compassion to the generation of Israelites who rejected Jesus their Messiah. Should God unconditionally save people who refuse to believe on Christ as their Savior? _____

The first century AD decision of that one generation of rebellious, Christ rejecting Israelites, negatively affected all of their descendants for the next 2000 years. Be careful when you start resisting what God is doing in your life. Resisting God can have repercussions throughout your family, across the generations, across the centuries and into eternity. What do you think about that? _____

God’s mercy is freely available to everyone who wants it.

nor of him that runneth, - *Him that runneth*, in the context, is Israel. Mercy and compassion are gifts from God, which Israel received because of God's grace, not because they ran a great race. This is Paul's warning that God's mercy upon unbelieving Israel is not forever, and is, in fact, in the process of running out and being withdrawn. *Him that runneth* refers to Israel's insistence on trusting her own works righteousness instead of trusting the grace righteousness of Christ.

but of God that sheweth mercy. - Calvary is where God showed mercy to the entire human race. Whether or not God shows mercy is based on the conditions God has set for showing mercy to sinners. On the grace side of Calvary, God's condition to show His mercy is: you must believe on Christ and get in Christ, Ephesians 1:4, 2 Corinthians 5:17. That condition is for everyone - Israel and Gentiles alike. How does someone get in Christ? _____

Israel doesn't get a pass because they have a long history or because they are too proud to believe on Messiah Jesus or because they are practicing Jews or because they are Abraham's biological descendants. Paul is getting ready to use the example of Pharaoh's destruction in the swirling waters of the Red Sea, one of the favorite stories of ancient Israel, Isaiah 63:11-14, to tug at their heartstrings. God would have had mercy and compassion on Pharaoh, if the Egyptian King had humbled down and obeyed God's command to let Israel go.

God gave Pharaoh ten undeserved yet genuine opportunities to obey God and let Israel go, Exodus 5:1-11:10, and Pharaoh could have obeyed, any of those ten times. Had Pharaoh obeyed God, God would have had mercy on Pharaoh and on Egypt. The lesson is: God will have mercy on Israel if Israel humbles down and obeys and receives Jesus as Savior and Messiah. Is God dealing with you about something, time after time, and you've been resisting His will? _____

1. Can you list some Gentiles in the OT who received God's mercy when they trusted God? _____
2. Does God allow us to make up our own rules about how to get saved? _____
3. Does it matter what any of us believes, as long as we are sincere? _____
4. Is there any way to get saved, apart from Calvary? _____
5. Where did God show mercy to the entire human race? _____
6. How many opportunities did Pharaoh have to obey God? _____
7. Does God make getting saved easy or difficult? _____
8. What kept Pharaoh from getting saved and obeying God? _____
9. What kept Israel from obeying God and getting saved? _____
10. In Romans 9:32, what was Israel's problem? _____
11. What's the best way to get saved, by faith or by works? _____
12. Can we get God to do things our way instead of His way? _____

Argument Three
Pharaoh rebelled against God, in Moses' day, Romans 9:17.

17 - For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, - What the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, in Exodus 9:16, is quoted by Paul in Romans 9:17. In the next verse, Romans 9:18, Paul applies to Pharaoh, what God originally said to Moses. God cared enough about Pharaoh to speak to him, Exodus 8:1, and give him a chance to obey. Pharaoh presided, as a god, over the pagan pantheon of Egyptian false gods. Pharaoh wanted the Israelites to continue as slaves of the idol worshiping, pagan Egyptians.

The ultimate contest was not between Moses and Pharaoh. The ultimate contest was between Jehovah God and the false gods of Egypt. The [ten plagues God sent were against the false gods of Egypt](#), Exodus 12:12. God wanted His people to leave Egypt, to get away from Egypt's false religions, away from Egypt's idolatry, away from [Egypt's false gods](#), away from Egypt's sexual worship of false gods.

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me.” Exodus 8:1.

This was not an Egyptian Pharaoh's first run-in with God.

In Genesis 12:10-20, Abram and Sarai had a run-in with a 400 years earlier Pharaoh. In that confrontation, *the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife*, Genesis 12:17. God always knows the most precise and perfect way to deal with any Egyptian Pharaoh, in Abram's day or in Moses' day. Only fools fight an unwinnable war with God. Wise people obey and glorify God. Are you wise? _____

God used His infallible foreknowledge to predict, in advance, what Pharaoh would do, Exodus 3:19. Pharaoh could have responded in obedience to God, like another Pharaoh responded in Genesis 12, and like Nebuchadnezzar responded in Daniel 4:31-37, but God foreknew that the Pharaoh who resisted obeying God in the days of Moses, would disobey and rebel against God. Notice that Paul personifies *scripture* as if scripture is a real person, who can:

1. foresee events and preach the gospel, Galatians 3:8, 2. draw conclusions, Galatians 3:22, and 3. in Exodus 8:1, speak as God, to Pharaoh, through Moses. Pharaoh could have been a world-famous hero of the faith, had he made a freewill choice to obey God. Is God offering you opportunity to obey Him? Are you resisting God like Pharaoh resisted God? _____
Is rebelling against the will of God a wise course of action? _____

This incident in Exodus is not exactly a Christophany (an appearance of the pre-incarnate Christ in the OT, Genesis 12:7, 17:1, 18:1, 18), but it is an unusual circumstance. It points out the interesting relationship between the written word of God, meaning the Bible, and the Incarnate (meaning, the Word became flesh, John 1:14) Word of God, meaning the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

Jesus is called *the Word* in John 1:1, 14, and *the Word of God* in Revelation 19:13. God is absolutely serious about His written word, Psalm 138:2. *"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."* Since the written word is so important to God, it ought to be important to us. Is the written word of God important to you? _____ How do you demonstrate the importance of the written word of God in your life? _____

If you refuse to read the Bible, that is a good indication that the Bible is not important to you. Only you can change that by starting to read the Bible.

Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, - This quotes Exodus 9:16, which had not been written at the time the scripture said this to Pharaoh. When the scripture said something to Pharaoh, it was the Word, speaking, John 1:1, 14. When God shows up in person in the OT, it is called a theophany, Genesis 12:7, 18:1ff., Exodus 24:9-11, Deuteronomy 31: 14ff. When the pre-incarnate Christ shows up in the OT, it is called a Christophany, Genesis 16:7-13, 22:11-18, Daniel 3:25.

When the scripture or the word of God shows up in the OT, as cited here in Romans 9:17, it is a kind of Christophany. Never underestimate the written word of God. It is alive and powerful. It discerns the thoughts and intents of your heart. Don't be alarmed by that. Give praise to God for His goodness in giving you His written word. Pharaoh could have responded affirmatively to God's word and we should too. Read, believe and obey it. Love, treasure and study it. Dig deep into its bounty and grow close to Jesus, your Creator. *The word of God is quick and powerful.* Are you using the written word of God in your spiritual life? _____ What will it take to get you to start reading and learning the Bible?

“For the word of God is quick (alive), and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Hebrews 4:12.

that I might shew my power in thee, - It doesn't say: that I might teach everyone about Unconditional Election. It doesn't say: that I might use Pharaoh as an example of someone I didn't elect to salvation. It doesn't say: That I might glorify Myself by sending Pharaoh to eternal hell, with no hope of ever getting saved.

Problems with reading Romans 9 as Calvinists read it.

1. Esau and Pharaoh are both OT characters, not NT characters.
2. In the OT, no one was born again.
3. In the OT, no one was, in Christ.
4. In the OT and NT, Esau was elected to serve, not to get saved.
5. In the OT, Esau represented the nation of Edom.
6. In the OT, Jacob represented the nation of Israel.
7. OT & NT never says Esau & Jacob are about election to salvation.
8. Israel is still trying to live under OT law but since the death of Christ, on Calvary, OT law is over and done away, Romans 6:14, 10:4.

God's interaction with Pharaoh was, *that I might shew my power in thee*. It would have equally shown God's power if Pharaoh had obeyed God and let Israel go. The issue in Romans 9 isn't Unconditional Election to salvation. Unconditional election isn't mentioned in any of the OT scriptures Paul quotes and isn't mentioned in Romans chapter 9. Since Unconditional Election to salvation or damnation is never mentioned anywhere in the Bible, why do people insist that that is what Paul is talking about in Romans 9:17? _____

It is not biblical to import unconditional election into the Bible, as if it is a vitally important Bible doctrine, when the Bible never, ever mentions unconditional election to salvation. As long as John 3:16, Romans 1:16 and 2 Peter 3:9 are in the Bible, don't fall for the lie, that God intentionally created unnumbered multitudes for the sole purpose of sending them to hell, with never any intention of saving them. In John 3:16, Jesus definitively rejects that false teaching and, as a wise Christian, you should reject it too.

Romans 9:17 is about God working His will, to preserve and deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage, despite Pharaoh's rebellion, despite Pharaoh's attempts to kill the Israelites. Have you ever noticed this weird juxtaposition? In Exodus, Pharaoh is trying to kill the Israelites. In the Gospel of John, the Israelites

(Pharisees) are trying to kill Jesus, their Messiah, John 5:16, 18, 7:1, 19, 25, 8:44, 59, 10:30-33.

In Exodus, God was protecting the biological and genealogical purity of the Jewish Messiah, to make sure His plan of redemption was not ruined by Pharaoh and Satan. God used the against Egypt, to rebuke the false gods of Egypt, Exodus 12:12. Pharaoh represented and worshiped those false gods and the true God called him out and confronted him publicly for his wickedness and unbelief, and then destroyed him in the swirling waters of the Red Sea.

A word to the wise. When anyone, including Pharaoh, tries to interfere with the royal line of Messiah and gets in the way of God sending Jesus to die for the sins of the world, God squashes him like a bug.

1. When did God hate Esau? **a.** before he was born, while he was still in the womb **b.** 1400 years after he was born.
2. When did God say to Rebekah: *the elder shall serve the younger?*, Genesis 25:23. **a.** before they were born, **b.** after they were born, **c.** on April 11, 1999.
3. When we consider the context of Romans chapter 9, is Jacob an example of God, in eternity past, electing someone to salvation? _____
4. What is a theophany? **a.** an OT appearance of the pre-incarnate Christ, **b.** an OT appearance of the Holy Spirit, **c.** an OT appearance of God Himself.
5. What is a Christophany? **a.** an appearance of God Himself in the OT, **b.** an appearance of the pre-incarnate Christ in the OT, **c.** an appearance of the Holy Spirit in the OT.
6. In the Pharaoh/Moses confrontations, was God using the plagues to rebuke the false gods of Egypt? _____
7. Jacob and Esau are an example of: **a.** God electing Jacob to get saved and leaving Esau un-elected and headed for hell, **b.** God electing Esau to serve Jacob, Romans 9:12, **c.** Two twin brothers who didn't like each other.
8. In AD 58, while Paul was writing Romans: **a.** God was already in the process of rejecting Israel because of her unbelief, **b.** Israel still could have received and believed on Messiah Jesus.

and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. - God is serious about evangelism. God wants all people everywhere to get saved, 2 Peter 3:9. People who worship false gods want to honor their false gods. JEHOVAH of the Bible made it clear in Exodus that He is the one true God. That should have been enough demonstration of the power of God for many Egyptians to get saved, and perhaps some did, Exodus 12:38, Numbers 11:4, Deuteronomy 29:11, Zechariah 8:23, because a *mixed multitude* left Egypt with Israel. Even though the Gentile Pharaoh, rebelled against God and persecuted

Israel, God intends to use Pharaoh's rebellion as an evangelistic warning to others, down the corridors of time, so that, God's purpose in saving Gentiles throughout all the earth can be accomplished.

If you want God to save you, you must stop rebelling against Him. According to 1 Timothy 2:4-6, did Jesus die for Pharaoh? _____ According to 2 Peter 3:9, did God want Pharaoh to get saved? _____

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Hebrews 2:9.

1. In Hebrews 2:9, what does, *every man*, mean? _____
2. Does Hebrews 2:9 contradict Calvinism's teaching that Christ only died for a few elect? _____
3. Does 1 Timothy 2:4-6, plainly say that Christ *gave himself for all*? _____
4. Does 2 Peter 3:9 plainly say that God wants all to be saved? _____

Consider this. If Pharaoh had humbled down and obeyed God, He would be a trophy of God's amazing grace instead of a rebellious tyrant whom God destroyed. Pharaoh's obedience would have been as convincing a demonstration of God's power, as his disobedience. Paul's lesson in Romans 9 has nothing to do with Unconditional Election to salvation or damnation.

The lesson for Israel is: rebelling against God never produces good results. Don't lose sight of Paul's evangelistic purpose. In Romans 9, the examples Paul uses are to convince Israel to believe on Messiah Jesus. Rebelling against God is a lose-lose game for every rebel, including Israel. In Romans 9, Paul presents Israel as a faithless, unbelieving rebel against God. Are you rebelling against God about things in your life? _____

18 - Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, - This was said to Moses, about Israel, and Paul now applies it to Pharaoh, to make clear that disobedience and rebellion against God, brings judgment from God. The NT lesson boils down to this. God makes His mercy available on the condition that people access that mercy through the death of Christ on Calvary, and Christ's glorious, bodily resurrection. Everyone who seeks God's mercy that way, finds it. Everyone who rejects God's mercy through Calvary and the glorious resurrection

of Christ, and seeks mercy someplace else, cannot find it in any other place. Receiving God's grace and mercy is just as simple as that.

As Paul writes Romans in AD 58, God is already in the process of doing to rebellious Israel, what He already did to rebellious Esau and Pharaoh - kicking them to the curb, leaving them on the ash heap of history. Why? Because Israel rejected the grace and mercy God offered them at Calvary. It's always: God's way or the highway.

God didn't bend the rules for Esau and Pharaoh and OT Israel and He will not bend the rules for you. God will not accept your religious excuses for trying to do things your way or trying to work your way to heaven. If you don't humble down and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you have a guaranteed reservation in hell for all eternity. Exercise your will and stop rebelling against God.

Is expecting God to bend His rules for you, a workable plan? _____

Moses and Pharaoh knew each other and had a long-running conflict, described in Exodus chapters 5-12. This Exodus 33:19 quote is God, speaking to Moses, about having mercy on Moses and on rebellious, stiff-necked Israel but Paul applies it to Pharaoh, for purposes of his argument about Israel.

Remember, just prior to the actual historical event of God's statement to Moses, about mercy, the children of Israel were dancing naked around the golden calf, Exodus 32:25. That made God so angry He told Moses He was going to kill all of them. Then God changed His mind (repented). That's the mercy Paul writes about here. God's mercy is conditioned on obedience. If you're obedient, you get God's mercy. If you're disobedient, you don't. Do you have enough wisdom to learn that lesson? _____

Don't get distracted by Pharaoh.

To first century Gentiles and to twenty first century Christians, the context is unfamiliar and for that reason, some people misinterpret Paul's intent. Once again, Paul is warning Israel of God's judgment. Don't get distracted by Pharaoh. Paul cites Pharaoh as an example of rebellious unbelief. Read Exodus 32-33 for the context of God having mercy. God said that to Moses, about Israel.

First century Jews would have understood immediately, what Paul was warning them about. No one who read Romans in the first century AD, would come away from it, believing that Paul was teaching unconditional election to salvation for Jacob and unconditional election to damnation for Esau and Pharaoh.

It is a serious doctrinal error to read this, as if it is referring to people getting saved or not getting saved in the twenty first century, based on the spurious teaching of Unconditional Election to salvation, before the foundation of the world. In the context of Romans, Paul refers to how God dealt with historical people who lived in the past and their relationship to the line of Messiah and the freedom of the nation of Israel. Paul is warning Israel about the judgment of God. Israel is in the process of being judged and removed from the place of blessing. Israel is about to lose God's mercy. That's what concerned Paul and that is precisely what Paul warns Israel about.

**If Israel rebels like Pharaoh rebelled,
Israel will be judged like Pharaoh was judged.**

Did Pharaoh get right with God? _____ Did Pharaoh get removed from the exalted office to which God had raised him? _____ Did Pharaoh's army get destroyed in the Red Sea, Exodus 14:23-28? _____

Remember, God's original plan was that Messiah would come through the descendants of Abraham the Hebrew, Genesis 14:13, and the saved Jews who descended from Abraham, would evangelize the Gentiles, Genesis 12:1-3, Isaiah 49:6, and the entire book of Jonah, which is about Jonah, the Jewish evangelist, evangelizing a city full of Gentiles. Because Israel rebelled like Pharaoh rebelled, and refused to believe on their Messiah, that evangelization of the Gentiles happened through a relatively few Jewish evangelists, like Paul and the apostles.

In the OT, God sent a Jew named Jonah to evangelize Ninevah, a city full of Gentiles, like God sent Paul to evangelize Gentile cities, Acts 13:47. That happened because God desires all to come to repentance, Jeremiah 22:29, 2 Peter 3:9. When anyone uses Romans 9 to teach the opposite of what 2 Peter 3:9 says, that's your clue that they've embraced a serious doctrinal error and no thinking Christian should follow their false teaching.

The people of Israel used their freewill to ignore God's plan and reject God's election of them. Israel rebelled and worshiped idols and false gods. People in the OT had freewill, just like people in the NT have freewill. In other words, there is no such thing as Total Inability, Unconditional Election and Irresistible Grace.

1. Please list the names of the people Paul mentions, in Romans 9:13-17.

Romans 9:18 has absolutely nothing to do with anyone getting saved or not getting saved in 2020 or 2021 or 2022. Please don't make the hermeneutical

error of assuming that false Calvinist presuppositions are true, and deciding, based on those false presuppositions, that this verse refers to God electing or predestinating some people to get saved and electing or predestinating everyone else to eternity in hell. Romans 9 doesn't say anything like that. In this verse, Paul is not talking about God electing or predestinating anyone to get saved or not get saved.

Using Romans 9:18 to "prove" the false presuppositions of TULIP is called, eisogesis, pronounced: **ice-so-gee-siss**. Christians should never eis-o-gete Bible verses. Eisogete and eisogesis mean: to read a meaning into the text that the text does not say. Christians should always exegete the text, meaning: always read, believe and teach what the text actually says, in context. Remember Paul's purpose in Romans 9, isn't teaching Calvinism. Instead, he wants to provoke Israel to jealousy of the saved Gentiles, so that Israel will get saved, Romans 10:19, 11:11, Deuteronomy 32:21. We should be obedient to God, not to the ancient Gnostic philosophy of Calvinism.

*"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy,
and whom he will he hardeneth."* Romans 9:18.

Obedience to God is important. If you want God's mercy, be obedient to God. If you want hardening and judgment, be disobedient to God. You have freewill, so the choice is yours. In Romans 9:18, Paul isn't teaching that God made a choice not to elect and save most people. That is not the teaching of Paul and Peter and the Bible. What determines whether you get mercy or hardening? _____

18 - Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Here is how Calvinism eisogetes and misreads Romans 9:18. "*Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy,*" morphs into something like these two examples.

1. "God will save a few modern day people whom He elected to salvation before the foundation of the world but God didn't choose or elect the others. He hated them like He hated Esau, Romans 9:13, and that's why He didn't elect them. Instead, God is hardening their hearts so they can't get saved."

2. "God is having mercy on those He elected to save and He is hardening the hearts of those He didn't elect to save."

Obviously, Romans 9:18 does not say that or anything like that. Read it please. Paul is intensely focused on Israel getting saved. He wants Israel to receive and

believe on Messiah Jesus. God will have mercy on Israel if Israel believes on Jesus. God will harden Israel's heart if Israel rejects Jesus.

**If Israel rebels like Esau rebelled,
Israel will be judged like Esau was judged.**

1. Who is God having mercy on in Romans 9:18? _____
2. Whose heart is God hardening in Romans 9:18? _____
3. How many people does God have mercy on in Romans 11:32? _____
4. What does it mean, that God hardens someone's heart? _____

Do you see how the false presuppositions of Calvinism have ripped Romans 9:18 from its context of the historical characters, Jacob/Israel and Esau/Edom and Moses and Pharaoh and their relationship to Israel, and twisted it to an entirely different, Unconditional Election to salvation view, which is not found in Romans 9? _____ Do you see how wrong it is, to import the false teaching of unconditional election into Romans chapter 9 when that isn't even mentioned in Romans 9? _____

Modern Christians need to become Berean Christians. Berean Christians, Acts 17:11, always mind the context and search out the context, Romans 9:13-18, and reject out of context, false teaching.

1. Are you a Berean Christian? _____
2. Do you seek God's truth or do you defend error and settle for error? _____
3. Does God bless and reward people for rejecting His truth? _____

Always mind the context.

Remember, the context of Romans 9 is: how God dealt with Esau about serving, and Pharaoh, about obeying. The context is not: God unconditionally electing to save a few people in modern times, whom He predestinated to salvation before the foundation of the world, and damning many people in modern times, whom He didn't predestinate to salvation, before the foundation of the world.

and whom he will he hardeneth. - It is important to understand what harden or hardened or hardeneth means in the Bible. Many Christians have an entirely unbiblical understanding of what, harden and hardeneth, mean in the Bible.

What harden does not mean in the Bible.

1. Harden does not mean that God causes a man to do something against the man's will, that the man would not do, if left to his own devices. In plainer words, God never compels a man to commit sin, John 16:8-9.

2. Harden does not mean that God forces a man to make a decision he doesn't want to make. Pharaoh, like everyone else in the OT, had freewill and was perfectly capable of making the right decision every time God confronted him with truth. God gave Pharaoh ten opportunities to do the right thing, which was, to set Israel free from slavery in Egypt, to let Israel go. Pharaoh, by his own freewill, rebelled against God and intentionally made the wrong decision each time God, through Moses, confronted him.

3. Harden does not mean that God stops a man from making the right decision, when that man is trying to make the right decision. Every time God confronts a sinner, saved or lost, with truth, that sinner, because he has freewill, is capable of responding and making the right decision.

4. Harden does not mean that God makes it impossible for a man to obey God or makes a man incapable of complying with God's will.

Do those four truths about hardening make biblical sense to you? _____
Does the Bible ever tell us that God forces men to commit sin or rebel against Him? _____ If Yes, where does the Bible say that? _____
Since people have freewill, are we responsible for our decisions? _____

**What harden does mean in the Bible.
The hardening is in the confrontation.**

1. Harden means: God confronts a sinner with truth but allows that sinner to make his own freewill decision about how he responds. God already knows what the sinner will decide but confronts him anyway. Hardening is in the confrontation, not the freewill choice the sinner eventually makes.

2. Harden means: God confronts a rebellious sinner with making a choice, forcing him, by the confrontation, to make a choice, yea or nay, without making the choice for him.

Note: We derive those truths about hardening from the biblical example of Pharaoh, in Exodus chapters 4-12. Pharaoh had freewill, was confronted by God ten times and had to make a freewill choice all ten times.

Any decision an unsaved sinner makes is affected in some way, by that unsaved sinner's sin nature. In Romans chapters 6, 7 and 8, we studied the provisions God has made for saved sinners, to deal with our sin nature. Unsaved sinners do not have the resources of saved sinners and cannot use the indwelling Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit to deal with their sin nature or make their choice.

*“But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day;
lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”*

Hebrews 3:13.

Hardening comes from the deceitfulness of sin. Because they have not been born again, unsaved sinners are trapped in the flesh and are not identified with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection. Yet even for a saved man, sin can cause our heart to be hardened. How would you define, *the deceitfulness of sin*? _____

Calvinism teaches that God, in eternity past, elected only a relatively few people, whom He would save by Irresistible Grace, meaning, He would save them before they believe on Jesus, without them having faith in Jesus, without them repenting of their sins, without them believing the gospel. The Bible never says or implies that but that is the teaching of Calvinism. Should we try to bend the Bible to fit Calvinism or should we stick with what the Bible says, in context?

Calvinism teaches: Everyone that God didn't elect to get saved, He would allow to be born anyway, so He can eventually judge them and send them to hell. Doing that, according to Calvinism, will exalt and glorify God's love, grace and mercy. People God didn't "elect to salvation" probably have a different view of how loving their non-election was. The Bible never says what Calvinism believes and teaches. See page 74, for quotes from Calvinists.

Since, according to Calvinism, God didn't elect the non-elect to salvation, Jesus didn't die for any of the non-elect, therefore, the non-elect can never be saved. All of the non-elect have freewill but, according to Calvinism, their will is only free to sin. They do not have freewill to obey God or believe the gospel or believe on Jesus. So here's an honest question. If those Calvinist beliefs are true, why would God have to harden Pharaoh's heart? _____

Remember, Pharaoh is supposed to be an example of the people God didn't elect to salvation, whom God created, for His own good pleasure, to glorify Himself by sending them to hell, with never a chance of getting saved. Why was it necessary for God to harden Pharaoh's heart, if he was already elected to hell and Jesus didn't die for him and his will was only free to sin? _____

**In the Bible, *hardening* doesn't mean
what some Christians think it means.**

In the Bible, hardening describes the process of God, confronting a man with truth, giving that man opportunity to receive truth, and that man, using his freewill, and under no compulsion from God, rebelling against God's truth.

1. In the Bible, *hardening* has no relationship to being elected to salvation or damnation, in eternity past, before the foundation of the world.
2. In the Bible, *hardening* never means that God prevents someone from believing the gospel, so God can send him to hell.
3. In the Bible, *hardening* never means that God elected some people to go to hell so He can show His glory by sending them to eternal punishment in hell.
4. *Hardening*, essentially, is God, confronting a sinner, over and over, time after time, with opportunity to obey, knowing that the sinner will disobey. In that process, the confrontation, forcing the sinner to make a freewill choice, is the hardening.

The unsaved sinner always has freewill and God never compels him to sin. He has a freewill choice to obey God or disobey God. That was Pharaoh's situation 1450 years before Christ and that is Israel's situation in the first century AD and that is our situation right now, today, Hebrews 3:7-8, 15-19.

19 - Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? - Paul words it this way because, in Paul's argument, Pharaoh is not really the issue. Unbelieving Israel is the issue and Paul is focused on Israel like a laser beam. Paul is warning unbelieving Israel, John 5:45-47, that God will judge them, just like He judged unbelieving Pharaoh, if they persist in rebelling against Messiah and disobeying God.

So, Paul asks and answers a question he anticipates that Israel might ask. *Why doth he yet find fault?* If God has hardened us, why does He still find fault with us? Paul imagines Israel trying to blame God for their unbelief. Their argument might go like this: "It's God's fault that we haven't believed because He hardened our heart." In verse 20, Paul is having none of that.

Paul refuses to let Israel blame their rejection of Messiah on the God who sent Messiah to them. Sinners, including Calvinists, cannot get away with blaming their sins on God. Sinners sin because sinners prefer to sin.

No Bible believing Christ believes the false teaching of meticulous sovereignty or meticulous providence or divine determinism. That is, the Calvinist teaching that God is the author of everything that happens in His universe, including cancer,

traffic accidents, rapes, murders and every sin that's ever been committed, [including the fall of Adam](#).

Here is the teaching of Calvinism, from 3 famous Calvinists

“God not only foresaw the fall of the first man, and in him the ruin of his posterity; but also at his own pleasure arranged it.” John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book III, Ch. 23, Sect. 7.

“Even the fall of Adam, and through him the fall of the race, was not by chance or accident, but was so ordained in the secret counsels of God.” Loraine Boettner, The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination, p. 234.

“Not only did His omniscient eye see Adam eating of the forbidden fruit, but He decreed beforehand that he should do so.” Arthur W. Pink, The Sovereignty of God, p. 147.

Those men say that God arranged the fall of Adam, that God is responsible for the fall of Adam. That wicked lie on God is never stated in the Bible. That makes it an unbiblical and unChristian false teaching.

For who hath resisted his will? - Isn't that an odd question to ask, coming from the chosen nation, Israel, who has been resisting God's will for centuries? In the first century AD context, which Paul sets up in Romans 9, who is resisting God's will? **a.** Gentiles, **b.** Israel, **c.** people whom God elected to damnation, **d.** people whom God elected to salvation, **e.** Pharaoh, **f.** Jacob's brother, Esau, **g.** people who live in the twenty first century AD.

Argument Four

Israel in Isaiah's day rebelled against God, Romans 9:20.

20 - Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? - There isn't even a hint here, of God, in eternity past, making an eternal decree of unconditional election to salvation and an eternal decree of election to reprobation, yet that is what some people read into this verse. They read it as the non-elect, unfairly questioning God.

O man, is supposed to be Pharaoh or the non-elect, speaking out of turn and accusing God of unfairness, for not electing them to salvation, or, of preventing

them from ever being saved. Of course, that view is flat out wrong. Why? Because the text of Isaiah 29 and Romans 9 doesn't say anything like that. Read those chapters and see for yourself. That's not what Isaiah wrote and that's not what Paul wrote. When we read those chapters without the false presuppositions of Calvinism, Paul's emphasis on pointing out OT examples of Israel's rebellion against God becomes crystal clear.

Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? - Paul first quotes Isaiah 29:16 and 45:9. Serious students of the Bible will read those chapters, to see what Paul is talking about. When we read Isaiah chapters 29 and 45, Isaiah says nothing about God, before the foundation of the world, unconditionally electing people to get saved or damned. Isaiah 29 is about the judgment of God upon faithless Jerusalem, the capital city of Judah.

God withdraws His favor and blessing and leaves His unbelieving people to their own devices, Isaiah 29:13-14. It is about God pouring upon faithless Judah, the spirit of slumber. God judges Judah and withdraws from her because she has rejected Him. There is no hint of unconditional election to reprobation in Isaiah 29 or Isaiah 45 or Romans 9.

Argument Five

Israel in Jeremiah's day rebelled against God, Romans 9:21.

21 - Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? -

Hath not the potter power over the clay - This is not a word for word quotation from the OT but it resembles Isaiah 29:16. What Paul says here in Romans 9:21 matches what Paul later wrote in 2 Timothy 2:20-21. Keep in mind that God is the potter and Israel/Judah is the clay.

The issue is Israel's rebellious unbelief

Isaiah, in Isaiah 29:16 and Jeremiah, in Jeremiah 18:6 and Hosea, in Hosea 8:8 and Paul, here in Romans 9:21, are not talking about God making Gentiles like Pharaoh into vessels of wrath or vessels of dishonour, fitted for destruction. Rebellious Israel is the vessel. Paul uses OT illustrations of rebellious ancient Israel and the consequences Israel suffered, to appeal to first century Israel, to believe on Messiah Jesus.

The issue in Romans 9 is Israel's faithless unbelief and rebellion against God, just like rebellion and faithless unbelief were the issues God had with Israel in

the OT. Romans 9:21 is not about unconditional election to salvation. Why? Because unconditional election to salvation is not mentioned or referenced anywhere in Paul or elsewhere in the Bible. Let's allow Paul to comment on Paul.

This is God's inspired truth from the Apostle Paul

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

2 Timothy 2:20-21.

What does Paul's plain language mean? Doctrinally speaking, the potter is God and the clay is Israel, Isaiah 64:8. Paul is appealing to his Israelite brethren in the first century AD, to get saved. 2 Timothy 2 has a broader application. It could include Gentiles. If a man is a vessel to dishonour (born fallen, in Adam, Romans 5:12, and therefore, under the wrath of God), is he forever locked into that or can he do something to change his situation?

of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? - Paul says he can do something to change his situation. *If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour*. You can swap from being a vessel to dishonour, to being a vessel to honour. If you are a vessel unto dishonour and you'd rather be a vessel unto honour, what can you do? **A.** You can obey the gospel, Romans 1:16. **B.** You can believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 10:9-10. That's how you get saved. Why can you get saved? **1.** Because God gave you free will. **2.** Because Jesus died for all, 1 Timothy 2:4-6. **3.** Because God gave you the glorious gospel, Romans 1:16.

When you get saved, the Holy Spirit baptizes you into the body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 12:13, (no water involved). That means you are in Christ. Being in Christ, you are free to start believing Bible truth, instead of the false teaching from which you needed to purge yourself. In Christ, the wrath of God is appeased, so that, you are no longer under the wrath of God, so that you are no longer a vessel of wrath or a vessel unto dishonour. In Christ, you are a vessel to honour, a vessel of mercy.

Paul expects his readers to be familiar with Jeremiah 18. Take particular notice of Jeremiah 18:6-11. The potter and clay imagery is aimed at Israel. Paul cites Isaiah and Jeremiah because he is burdened for Israel/Judah to get saved. Paul is not referencing Pharaoh as someone God specially made as a vessel of wrath or a vessel unto dishonour.

Everyone born in this world starts off as a vessel of wrath or a vessel unto dishonour, because we are all fallen in Adam, Romans 5:12. But you don't have to stay that way. God's will is that all come to repentance and get saved. God wants you to be and intends you to be, a vessel unto honour. At this point, let's read Jeremiah chapter 18, to help us understand who Paul is talking about and why he quotes Jeremiah 18:6. Who is the clay vessel in Jeremiah 18:6, Israel or Pharaoh? _____

Pharaoh is mentioned [236 times in 200 verses](#) in the Bible. If Paul wanted us to believe he was talking about Pharaoh in Romans 9:21, he had 200 verses he could have quoted about Pharaoh, yet Paul quoted Jeremiah 18:6, which specifies Israel as the topic. 1. Based on what Jeremiah 18:6 actually says, who did Paul have in mind when he wrote Romans 9:21 and quoted Jeremiah 18:6? **a. Israel, b. Pharaoh, c. St. Augustine, d. Pope Francis.** 2. Since Paul specified Israel, by quoting Jeremiah 18:6, is it biblical to insist that Paul really meant to refer to Pharaoh? _____

In Romans 9, Israel is the vessel unto dishonour, not because God, before the foundation of the world, elected Israel to reprobation, but because of the freewill choices Israel made, in time, not in eternity, to rebel against God. Paul's message from God, to Israel is: "As I plucked up and pulled down Judah in Jeremiah's day, because of her unbelief, Jeremiah 18:6-7, so will I do to you, first century AD Israel, if you continue in unbelief, if you continue rejecting faith in Messiah Jesus."

Notice that there is something odd in Jeremiah 18:17, that matches Exodus 33:23. Compare the verses below and remember, that Paul has already quoted Exodus 33:19 in Romans 9:15 and Jeremiah 18:6 in Romans 9:21. Below, God is speaking to Moses.

"And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen." Exodus 33:23.

The Exodus 33:23 passage was God blessing Moses and showing mercy to Israel, instead of destroying Israel. Historically, it had nothing to do with Pharaoh.

"I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy; I will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity." Jeremiah 18:17.

The Jeremiah 18:17 passage seems to be similar to the incident God had with Moses in Exodus, but in Jeremiah, it is judgment instead of mercy. Isn't that an interesting contrast, a fascinating juxtaposition?

Want to stop being a vessel unto dishonour?

If you want to stop being a vessel to dishonour, according to the Bible, in 2 Timothy 2:21, you have the power to do that. Being a vessel unto honour isn't about the potter making your vessel one way, with no possibility of change. And, it isn't about the potter making the choice without giving you any say in it. It's about what you believe and choose, by your God-given freewill. That's what Paul taught us in 2 Timothy 2:20-21. Do you understand? _____

Paul writes about born again Christians, in 2 Corinthians 4:7, that, *we have this treasure in jars of clay, or, KJV, earthen vessels*. Christians are jars of clay or, *earthen vessels*. Isn't that a fascinating revelation from God? Paul knows that, so, when he writes about the potter in Romans 9, he isn't contradicting Isaiah and Jeremiah's focus on the potter working with Israel and Judah.

Paul's quotes from Isaiah and Jeremiah are focused on Israel because Paul is focused on Israel. Pharaoh was not and is not, the vessel unto dishonour in Romans 9. Israel is the vessel unto dishonour because Israel was rebelling in the first century AD, just like her ancestors rebelled in Isaiah's day and Jeremiah's day.

Paul isn't contradicting what he will later write in 2 Timothy 2:20-21. In plainer words, in writing about the potter and the clay, Paul isn't using secret, Calvinist, code words for unconditional election to salvation and unconditional reprobation to hell, before the foundation of the world. In Calvinism, God making some vessels to honour and some vessels to dishonour, is viewed as code for electing a few to salvation and electing most to damnation. According to Calvinist thought, being elected to dishonour or damnation or reprobation, is irrevocable and unchangeable, because Jesus didn't die for the unelect (Limited Atonement).

Paul begs to disagree. According to Paul in 2 Timothy 2:20-21, to stop being a vessel to dishonour, all a man has to do is purge himself from the sins or the false beliefs Paul listed earlier in 2 Timothy 2. Paul isn't teaching purging your sins as works based salvation in 2 Timothy 2. He is encouraging unsaved religious people to get saved and backsliding Christians who have embraced false teaching, to reject the false teaching, get right with God, and start believing God's truth. The apostle Paul knew what he was talking about.

Are you a vessel to honour or a vessel to dishonour? _____ If you are unsaved and a vessel to dishonour, would you like to get saved so you can be a vessel to honour? _____ How does one get saved?

“If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.”
2 Timothy 2:21.

1. How does a man become a vessel unto honour, according to Paul in 2 Timothy 2:21? _____

Before a man gets saved, he is under the wrath of God. He is a vessel of wrath and a vessel to dishonour. When a man gets saved, he is in Christ. In Christ, he is no longer a vessel of wrath, no longer a vessel to dishonour. 2. Does that help you understand vessels of mercy and vessels of wrath, vessels to honour and vessels to dishonour? _____

Notice that everything Paul refers to in Romans 9, took place in time, not before the foundation of the world.

There was no earth, to form clay and make earthen vessels, until Genesis 1:10. Genesis 1:10 happened in time, not in eternity past and not before the foundation of the world. Paul never mentions or hints at eternal decrees of election and reprobation, before the foundation of the world. God’s dealings with mankind, as recorded in the Bible, always happen in time, not in eternity past.

Everything Paul talks about in Romans 9 took place in time. In the OT, Isaiah and Jeremiah’s stories about the potter and the clay were prophetic warnings to ancient Israel, that God was going to judge them for their sin. In the NT, in Romans 9, Paul’s citations of Isaiah and Jeremiah serve the same purpose. God wants to get Israel’s attention so He has Paul remind Israel that God is the potter and Israel is the clay. God is going to judge Israel for her sin.

According to Paul’s quotations from the OT, who is the clay? _____

Hath not the potter power over the clay, - Paul then quotes Jeremiah 18:6. When you read Jeremiah chapter 18:1-10, there is nothing about God, in eternity past, unconditionally electing people to get saved or not get saved. Calvinists read Romans 9:21 like this. “Hath not God power to elect a few people to get saved (*make one vessel unto honour*) and leave the rest of the human race unelected (*and another unto dishonour*) and send the dishonored ones to hell?”

That Calvinist misinterpretation is philosophical fantasy. It was made up to fit with Augustine's and Calvin's false teaching but it is not what Isaiah, Jeremiah and Paul wrote down in the Bible. The TULIP teaching is a man-made philosophy that came from outside the Bible. Wise Christians believe the Bible, instead of trying to bend the Bible to fit Calvinism.

22 - What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, - This is a question Paul asks, to advance his argument about God's long-suffering toward Israel. In Paul's argument, the vessels of wrath are unbelieving Israel. Paul isn't making a doctrinal statement about unconditional election to salvation and unconditional election to damnation, and he isn't talking about Pharaoh. How do we know that, absolutely for sure?

Because those words and those ideas about unconditional election to salvation are never mentioned in Romans chapter 9. Since Paul never mentioned them, we can be sure Paul was not using code words, trying to convince us he was teaching us Calvinism.

No Christian should ever base his doctrinal beliefs on a hypothetical, **What if**, question. Christian doctrine is not based on hypotheticals. Paul started this epistle to the Romans with a warning about God's wrath in Romans 1:18. The antidote to God's wrath is the gospel, Romans 1:16, which Israel has already rejected. The antidote to God's wrath is not unconditional election. Paul has already pointed out that the gospel is for every one.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
Romans 1:16.

Paul's message is: "The wrath of God is waiting but will not wait forever. It's time for you, Israel, to fish or cut bait. This is your come to Jesus moment."

endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:
- *Endured with much longsuffering*, describes God's mercy in withholding His wrath and giving Israel as a nation, more time to repent and receive Messiah. The rebellious people of Israel are *the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction*. Paul isn't confusing analogies or jumbling metaphors. He isn't saying that people whom God didn't elect to salvation are *the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction*.

Fitted to destruction - God set up all of the laws of the moral universe. He didn't ask for anyone's advice or input. Human philosophy was not consulted while God was doing His creative work. Anyone who refuses salvation full and free, in our Lord Jesus Christ or, who tries to earn salvation through works righteousness, is a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction. Any vessel of wrath fitted to destruction can change his circumstances by getting in Christ.

Biblical truth about vessels of wrath

the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction - Doctrinally speaking, every unsaved person is born into this world as a vessel *of wrath fitted to destruction*, by virtue of our fallen condition, inherited from Adam, Romans 5:12, Philippians 3:19. Every unsaved person treasures up wrath against the day of wrath, Romans 2:5. *The law worketh wrath* for every unsaved person, Romans 4:15. We who are Christians have already been saved from the wrath of God, Romans 5:9, 1 Thessalonians 5:9.

Paul already pointed out, in Romans 1:18, that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. When we get saved and justified by faith, we are saved from wrath, through him (Jesus), Romans 5:9. Would you prefer not to be a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction? All you have to do is believe the gospel, Romans 1:16, and get saved. When you get saved, you are in Christ and, in Christ, you are a vessel of mercy; in Christ, you are no longer a vessel of wrath. Isn't it great to be saved? _____

That phrase, *vessels of wrath*, refers to rebellious, faithless, unsaved Israel, not to people God passed over, before the foundation of the world and didn't elect to salvation. The word, *wrath*, occurs 198 times in the Bible, 150 times in the OT, 48 times in the NT and 11 times in Romans 1:18, 2:5, 2:8, 4:15, 5:9, 9:22, 12:19, 13:4, 13:5. Paul has been clear in Romans, about wrath and Israel.

Wrath is upon the Jews/Israel because they trusted works righteousness and their biological descent from father Abraham instead of having faith in Messiah Jesus. John the Baptist had the same message, about the wrath of God, in Matthew 3:7. John the apostle said almost the same thing to Israel in John 3:36. When Paul warns Israel about the wrath of God in Romans 9, it isn't a new message. It is the consistent message of God, to Israel, for 1500 years.

Is Israel trusting her physical circumcision instead of Messiah Jesus? Or, are they trusting their own religious righteousness, based on keeping God's law, instead of trusting Messiah Jesus? Remember that Jesus already told us the truth about Jews not keeping the law, in John 7:19. In Romans 9, being *the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction* is not primarily aimed at unsaved Gentiles

or Esau or Pharaoh or, people Calvinists think were created to be sent to hell. *Vessels of wrath* applies to Israel because Israel rejects Messiah Jesus.

23 - And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, -

And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, - The vessels of mercy are those who get in Christ by believing on Jesus as Savior. In Galatians 6:16, Paul calls saved Israelites, *the Israel of God*. If you'll believe on Christ and have faith in Christ, instead of trusting your law keeping, you will be *vessels of mercy*. In plainer words, you get to decide whether you are a vessel of mercy or a vessel of wrath. Believe on Jesus - you're a vessel of mercy. Reject Jesus - you're a vessel of wrath.

the riches of his glory - This refers to the spiritual blessings God has prepared for everyone who is saved, Ephesians 1:3. God gives us those blessings to equip us for service. God intends us to learn about those blessings and how to use them as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Who are the vessels of mercy? **a.** Gentiles who believe on Christ, **b.** Jews who refuse to believe on Christ. 2. Who is trusting the law and refusing to have faith in Jesus? **a.** Gentiles, **b.** Israel. 3. Who are the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction? **a.** Jews who refuse to believe on Jesus as Messiah, **b.** Gentiles who have faith in Jesus. 4. Can an unsaved man stop being a vessel of wrath and become a vessel of mercy, by believing on Jesus? _____

Paul wants all Israel to believe on Messiah Jesus, John 1:11-12, Romans 1:16, 5:17, Acts 6:7, 21:20. The mercy of God was available to Israel, only through Jesus Christ, as a free gift of God's amazing grace. There are not two or three or four ways to heaven, John 14:6, Acts 4:12. If Israel wanted the mercy of God and the riches of his glory, all she had to do was receive Jesus as her Messiah.

Jesus made this abundantly clear during His earthly ministry. The apostles of Jesus made this abundantly clear in Acts 4:10-12. God wants to save all Israel. Jesus died and rose from the dead to save all Israel. God has already reconciled the world unto himself, 2 Corinthians 5:19, and that includes all of unbelieving Israel. The ball is now in Israel's court. Israel has freewill to respond affirmatively to the gospel, Leviticus 22:18, Romans 10:9-10, 13.

Some people try to make Israel's unbelief the fault of God. Here is this sweet and loving religious group, the Jews, minding their own business and Jesus comes charging in, to mess things up. Everything was nice and peaceful until

Jesus showed up. Have you noticed that Jesus has a way of cutting through Israel's pretense and prevarication and getting right to the point? In John chapter 8, the Pharisees angrily argued with Jesus. They told Him:

"Abraham is our father and we are Abraham's children," meaning, "we're already saved because we're descended from Abraham. We don't need you, Jesus. We're good to go, just as we are." And Jesus doesn't even try to be diplomatic. He answers: *"No, you are of your father the devil,"* John 8:44. At the end of the argument, John 8:59, the kind and gentle Jews tried to kill Jesus. Think about that. Jesus is face to face with them, offering them truth, salvation and eternal life and their response is to reject Him and try to kill Him.

1. Back in the OT, when Pharaoh and his army chased after the children of Israel as they left Egypt, who were the vessels of mercy? **a.** Jews/Israel, **b.** Egyptians, **c.** Christians, **d.** Calvinists, **e.** Episcopalians, **f.** Baptists, **g.** Gentiles.

2. Here in Romans 9:23, who are the vessels of mercy? **a.** Jews/Israel, **b.** Egyptians, **c.** Christians, **d.** Calvinists, **e.** Episcopalians, **f.** Baptists, **g.** Gentiles.

which he had afore prepared unto glory, - The context in Exodus 9 and here in Romans 9, is Israel. In these chapters, there is no context of Unconditional Election to salvation by an arbitrary decree of God, before the foundation of the world. If you insist on reading Romans 9 as supporting the false teaching of Calvinism, you are deceiving yourself. God has far more for you than that.

How did God prepare afore the vessels of mercy? Paul is describing God's plan of redemption, that in the fulness of time, God would send forth His Son, *made of a woman, made under the law*, to redeem them that were under the law, from the curse of the law. The first promise of God's plan to send Jesus to redeem us, is found in Genesis 3:15.

God's plan sent the Messianic line through Abraham, through whom *all families of the earth* would be blessed, Genesis 12:3, because Messiah came from Abraham's line. God's plan worked because Jesus has already come, died and resurrected, and people have been getting saved for 2000 years. Regardless what Israel does now, accept or reject Jesus, God's plan of redemption in Christ is up and running, and working brilliantly for all who believe in Christ.

24 - Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

Even us, whom he hath called, - *Who is us whom he hath called?* Us is the vessels of mercy, meaning: saved Israelites and saved Gentiles, who make up the body of Christ. Who are the vessels of mercy? Everyone who responds to the gospel call and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. That doesn't cancel out the truth that unsaved Israel is still, God's chosen, elect people. But Israel needs to trust Jesus and get saved too. Keeping the law isn't enough to save anyone.

God wants to save every one, Israel and the Gentiles, Romans 1:16, if they believe on Jesus. According to Jesus, all, meaning the world, are called to salvation, John 3:16, Romans 10:13, Revelation 22:17. Always remember: God calls people to salvation through the gospel, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, Romans 1:16. Everyone can make a freewill decision to believe on Jesus or not. God made the gospel to work in such a way that, everyone who believes it is saved.

not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? - Ephesians 2:15-19, helps us understand Paul's perspective on this. God's plan always included the Gentiles. Remember Paul's purpose. He is warning Israel not to rebel against God like Esau rebelled, like Pharaoh rebelled, like Israel in the days of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Osee (Hosea in the OT) rebelled. God can and in the case of Israel, will, restore His people but Paul is also clear in Romans 11:25-26, that that restoration is a long way off, in the future. In essence, Paul is warning Israel, she is about to lose the mercy of God, for the duration of the church age.

This mention of *the Gentiles* alerts us that Paul has more than one purpose in mind as he writes Romans chapter 9. Do you get the impression that Israel would rather go to hell than mix with Gentiles as part of the body of Christ? Have you noticed how some people (Israel), love having the mercy of God upon them but they're not happy when God shows mercy on people they don't like?

Doctrinally, in this section, Romans 9:24-30, the quotes Paul cites from Isaiah, Jeremiah and Hosea are talking about Israel. Paul, writing under inspiration of God, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, expands the meaning contained in Isaiah and Hosea, to have at least spiritual application to the Gentiles, Romans 9:24, 30. In the OT, the Gentiles were not the people of God yet in the NT, salvation is as open to Gentiles as it is to the Israelites of Israel. Everyone who gets in Christ is saved and accepted in the beloved, Ephesians 1:6. God doesn't accept you outside of Christ or outside of the beloved. Are you saved/accepted in the beloved? _____
Who is the beloved in Ephesians 1:6? _____

Argument Six

Israel in Hosea's day rebelled against God, Romans 9:25.

25 - As he saith also in Osee, - Osee is Hosea, one of the Minor Prophets, found in the OT, right after the book of Daniel. Hosea is the prophet whom God told to marry a prostitute, Hosea 1:2. The name Hosea means, Save, O God, or, Salvation, or, God is salvation. In Hebrew, Hosea is the same name as Joshua, the son of Nun, Deuteronomy 32:44. The name, Jesus, is used in Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8, to translate, Ἰησοῦς Iēsous, pronounced, e-a-soos, which is the Greek equivalent of Joshua or Jehoshua, meaning, "Jehovah is salvation," in the Hebrew and the Greek and the English, JESUS, Matthew 1:21.

In the Bible, the name Hosea is found 3 times, Oshea is found 2 times, Hoshea is found 11 times and Osee is found 1 time. All the variations are from the same Hebrew word. Osee/Hosea prophesied in the 8th century, from about 760-715 BC and was a contemporary of Isaiah the prophet. In Hosea 1:1, Hosea lists five of the Kings during whose reign he prophesied.

“The word of the LORD that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.” Hosea 1:1.

In Hosea’s day, Israel had turned away from God, to serve idols and false religions. 700 years later, in Paul’s day, by ignoring the stark testimony of the holy of holies with its torn temple veil and, by rejecting Messiah Jesus, Israel’s Judaism had become just another false religion, dead, lifeless and unable to save. Why a false religion? Because first century AD Judaism:

1. No longer had the approval of God (torn temple veil, Matt 27:51), 2. didn’t have the glorious gospel of Christ, 3. didn’t believe or receive Messiah Jesus, 4. didn’t have a risen Savior, and since the death and resurrection of Christ, 5. didn’t have temple sacrifices accepted by God. Israel desperately needed to get with God’s program in the first century AD, before God tossed them on the ash heap of history for 2000 years. Paul had a dual commission to the Gentiles and to the Jews (Acts 9:15-16) but Israel rejected Paul’s message.

25 - As he saith also in Osee, - Paul cites Hosea (Osee) as his sixth example, in Romans chapter 9, of God’s judgment upon rebellious, disobedient Israel.

“And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And God said unto him, Call her name Loruhamah: for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away.” Hosea 1:6.

“Then said God, Call his name Loammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God.” Hosea 1:9.

“Plead with your mother, plead: for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband: let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts;” Hosea 2:2.

Hosea was the prophet who prophesied Jehovah’s rejection of Israel, because of Israel’s sin. Israelites associated Hosea with warnings of God’s judgment on Israel, God’s rejection of Israel and God’s genuine divorce from Israel, Isaiah 50:1, Jeremiah 3:8-9, 6:2, 7:28-31, Hosea 2:2. Do those verses help you better understand the stark reality of Paul’s warning to Israel in Romans 9? _____

Paul citing Hosea is a personal message, direct from Jehovah God, to Israel: “If you reject your Messiah, Jesus, you will be rejected by God, yet again.” Israel had a chance at a do-over and didn’t take it. Please don’t make the same mistake that Israel made. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ today.

Israel’s centuries long rebellion against God

For Israel, this is the continuation of a 700 year rebellion against God, from Hosea’s time period in the OT, to the mid-first century AD. Israelites couldn’t miss the import of Paul’s warning. God told ancient Israel, through Hosea, that they were no longer His people. God had divorced Israel and cast them off from the place of blessing. In a few short years from the time Paul wrote Romans, judgment would come, and God would turn from Israel and remove her from the place of blessing for 2000 years, because of Israel’s unbelief and rejection of Messiah. That is approximately a 33 year period, from the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry, to AD 62, when God turned from Israel in Acts 28:28.

Paul, by divine inspiration of God, 2 Timothy 3:15-17, cites Hosea’s 700 year old warning to ancient Israel and applies it to first century AD Israel. “God is getting ready to do to you, first century Israel, what He did to Israel in Hosea’s day. God will reject you for your sin of unbelief.” Not only that, Hosea’s prophesy is being fulfilled, even as Paul writes Romans. Israel is in the process of being removed from the place of blessing and Gentiles who believe on Messiah Jesus are receiving God’s blessing, in Israel’s place.

What is the lesson, in Romans chapter 9, for people living the twenty first century? The lesson for us is: *“(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” 2 Corinthians 6:2.*

Get saved now - today, while God’s mercy and grace are freely available. Don’t continue in your willful, sinful, rebellion against God. Get saved today.

I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. - This is a prophetic reference to the Gentiles getting saved. That is Paul's conclusion a few verses later, when he writes: "*What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.*" Romans 9:30.

Paul free quotes Hosea 2:23. "*And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.*"

For her spiritual adultery and idol worship, God had divorced ancient Israel, Isaiah 50:1, Jeremiah 3:8. That is why God says in Hosea: *I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.* Hosea's prophesy has dual application. It is a prophesy about the Gentiles getting saved, beginning in the first century AD, because Israel rejected Jesus as her Messiah/Savior. Hosea's prophesy will also, in the future, apply to the remnant of Israel, at the end of the Great Tribulation, when *all Israel shall be saved*, Romans 11:26-27.

The divine divorce from Israel was a genuine divorce, so real that God could legitimately say, of Israel: "*which were not my people.*" Paul reminds Israel of their past, painful history but when God's grace and the gospel are involved: Past doesn't have to be prologue. Israelites as individuals still had freewill. They could say, Yes, to Messiah Jesus and believe Paul's gospel and get saved, if they wanted to. And many thousands of Israelites did get saved, Acts 21:20.

As God rejected OT Israel in Hosea's day, for her idolatry and unbelief, so God is in the process, in AD 58, of rejecting Israel again, for her unbelief and rejection of Messiah Jesus. God is in the process of turning from Israel and to the Gentiles. Any Jew hearing or reading Romans chapter 9 in the first century AD, immediately understood that Paul was condemning first century Israel's unbelief and rejection of Jesus as Messiah.

Hosea's message was: *The land hath committed great whoredom*, Hosea 1:2 and, *I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel*, and, *Israel is: not my people, and I will not be your God*, Hosea 1:6, 9. Paul fervently hopes that first century Israel will repent of her sinful unbelief, reverse course, believe and receive Messiah Jesus and not repeat the rebellious sins of ancient Israel.

By quoting Hosea, Paul is telling Israel: You are in the same dangerous position as ancient Israel in Hosea's time, (700 years before Paul wrote Romans). *Return unto the LORD thy God*, warns Hosea 14:1-5. The judgment of God is already

falling upon Israel, warns Paul, in Romans 9, and your time to repent is running out.

When Paul quotes Hosea 2:23, Israelites hearing or reading it, cannot help but associate the quote with the unfaithfulness, idolatry and spiritual adultery of OT Israel. If their conscience was not already seared, their conscience would have convicted them of the parallel between unbelieving ancient Israel and unbelieving first century AD Israel. Scores of thousands of individual Israelites, in the first century AD, did respond to their conscience and get saved, Acts 21:20.

**God sincerely wanted Israel to be saved.
Israel made a freewill choice to reject Jesus.**

“And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.” Exodus 6:7.

“And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.”
Leviticus 26:12.

“But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.” Jeremiah 7:23.

“Which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God:” Jeremiah 11:4

“And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.” Jeremiah 30:22.

“And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.” Ezekiel 36:28.

“Then said God, Call his name Loammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God.” Hosea 1:9.

Eternal life in the family of God is freely offered to all who will receive it, whether Jew or Gentile. No one has to be a vessel of wrath or a vessel to dishonour. Approach to God is no longer through the Levitical priesthood. Since the resurrection of Christ, *whosoever will* may come. In the OT, it would have been easy to believe that salvation was based on merit, being born an Israelite, instead of based on mercy. It becomes abundantly clear after the resurrection of

Christ; mercy and grace are freely available to Jews and Gentiles alike, precisely as Paul writes in Romans 9:25.

26 - And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; - Paul quotes the part of Hosea 1:10, which works for his evangelistic purposes and for God's purposes in Romans chapter 9. Here is the whole verse.

"Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God." Hosea 1:10.

In the context of Hosea in the OT, God promises to restore rebellious, backsliding (Hosea 14:4), idolatrous, faithless, unbelieving Israel. God would have willingly restored rebellious Israel in the first century AD, if Israel had accepted Messiah Jesus. Israel did not accept her Messiah and as He did 700 years earlier, God again rejects Israel, and, in the NT situation, turns to the Gentiles, Acts 13:46, 18:6, 28:28.

there shall they be called the children of the living God. - That should have happened when Messiah Jesus came to Israel, if they had had the faith of Abraham. There will eventually, be an Israel who loves and trusts God and who accepts Messiah Jesus. That will happen in the future, when, *the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*, Romans 11:25-26. The restoration of Israel will happen because God promised it will happen, Romans 11:26. Till Israel is restored, we should witness and try to win individual Jews to saving faith in Messiah Jesus.

1. "Whosoever heareth," shout, shout the sound!
Spread the blessed tidings all the world around:
Tell the joyful news wherever man is found,
"Whosoever will may come."

2. "Whosoever cometh need not delay,
Now the door is open, enter while you may;
Jesus is the true, the only Living Way:
"Whosoever will may come."

3. "Whosoever will" the promise is secure;
"Whosoever will," forever shall endure;
"Whosoever will!" 'tis life forever more;
"Whosoever will may come."

"Whosoever will, whosoever will!"
Send the proclamation over vale and hill;
"Tis a loving Father calls the wanderer home:
"Whosoever will may come."
-Philip P. Bliss, 1870, 1838-1876

27 - Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:

Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, - Paul is quoting from Isaiah 10:22-23. That is a warning of God's judgment against Israel, with God using the nation of Assyria, to take Israel into captivity in 722 BC, 2 Kings 15:29, 1 Chronicles 5:26. For more than eight hundred years, Assyria was a powerhouse in the ancient near east. As wicked as Assyria was, God used them against Israel when He wanted to judge Israel for her sins.

And a little more than one hundred years later, from 597 to 586 BC, God sent the nation of Babylon to take Judah and Benjamin into captivity, 2 Kings 24:10ff. By this point in time, the power of Assyria had waned and the Babylonian Empire dominated everything around her. At that point in time, God used Babylon to judge Israel, when Israel should have been evangelizing Babylon. The reason why Israel didn't evangelize Babylon was Israel's rebellious unbelief. So, God used Daniel and his fellows, to witness to and evangelize Babylon.

The history of Israel isn't well known among Christians today. For that reason, we struggle to see the relevance of Paul's quotation from Isaiah. Yet to first century Israelites, it was astonishingly clear. Isaiah's warning of judgment and promise of restoration should have profoundly resonated with Paul's brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh, Romans 9:3.

Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, - In the OT, God uses three phrases, with even more variations of these phrases, to indicate a large number. **1.** as the sand of the sea, **2.** as the stars of heaven and **3.** as the dust of the earth. God intended Israel to be an enormous army of evangelists, carrying the glorious gospel of Christ to the whole world.

Because Israel rejected God's Messiah, that grand army of gospel evangelists became a mixed army, made up mostly of saved Gentiles. Israel as a nation threw away their privilege of carrying the gospel to the whole world, like Esau threw away his privilege of being in the genealogy of Christ. The privilege of being evangelists for Jesus passed to saved Gentiles, because of Israel's unbelief.

Isaiah foresaw that many in Israel would not receive Jesus as their Messiah. They had every advantage God could give them, Romans 3:1-2, 9:4-5, and still, they rejected Messiah Jesus. This reinforces what Jesus taught in Matthew 7:14, about the narrow road. In the context of Matthew 7, Jesus is speaking to Jews, about unbelieving Jews.

The pesky perennial problem is human freewill. Many Jews who could be saved will not be saved. Why? Because they willfully rejected their Messiah instead of willfully receiving Him. "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5:40, is the way Jesus put it. Your stubborn, unbelieving, Christ rejecting human will can send you to hell if you don't govern it with the Bible, your freewill decision to believe on Christ and your God-given common sense.

a remnant shall be saved: - The *remnant* is Israelites who get saved. Why is Paul talking about a remnant of Israel? Because Israel as a nation, had rejected Jesus as her Messiah, God and Paul were in the process of progressively rejecting Israel and sending the glorious gospel of Christ to the Gentiles, Acts 1:8, 13:46, 18:6, 28:23-28. Paul points out to unbelieving Israel, how the Gentiles will respond to the gospel: *they will hear it*, Acts 28:28.

Who is the *remnant*? **a.** only Israelites who keep Torah, **b.** only Israelites who believe on Messiah Jesus, **c.** only the tribe of Judah, **d.** only modern day Israel since May 14, 1948.

Israel was as capable as the Gentiles, of hearing and believing the gospel, because every Israelite had freewill. Paul isn't shy about telling us why the Gentiles received the gospel and Israel rejected the gospel. The rude, crude, uncultured Gentiles were willing to believe on Christ, by faith, while smooth, cultured, educated Israel was unwilling to believe on Christ by faith, Romans 9:32. Isn't that an incredible insight?

Whose fault was it that Israel rejected their Messiah, Jesus? _____

That perfectly describes the problem people have today in the twenty first century. Everyone who is willing to believe on Christ by faith, gets saved and is headed for eternal joy in heaven. Everyone who is unwilling to receive Christ by

faith stays lost and headed for eternal misery in a devil's hell, Romans 1:18. Is that fair or unfair, of God? _____ Why do people choose their works-based religion instead of choosing Jesus Christ? _____

a remnant shall be saved: - *a remnant* has dual application here. **1.** The *remnant* is a doctrinal reference to Israel in the tribulation, as explained by John and Jesus in Revelation 12:17. **2.** The *remnant* is an immediate reference to Jews who are getting saved in the first century AD and throughout the church age, Romans 11:5, Acts 2:41, 4:4, 6:7, 21:20.

Saved Israelites are the real Israel. Paul refers to this group of saved Jews as, *the Israel of God*, Galatians 6:16, Romans 2:28-29, 9:6-8, in distinction from national Israel, which is unsaved and unbelieving. God expects individual Israelites and Israel as a nation, to not only be descended from Abraham but to also have the faith of Abraham.

Whose fault is it that Israel didn't have the faith of Abraham and rejected Messiah Jesus? **1.** Some people say it is God's fault, because, in eternity past, God didn't unconditionally elect every individual Israelite to salvation. And if God didn't unconditionally elect every individual Israelite to salvation, then Jesus didn't die for the non-elect and there's no way they could ever get saved.

That seems an odd belief, for the simple reason that God has already told us, Israel is His elect, chosen people, Isaiah 45:4. And God has also told us, He wants everyone to get saved, 2 Peter 3:9. **2.** Romans 9:32 makes it clear that it is Israel's fault and interestingly enough, the Bible never, ever mentions unconditional election or lack of unconditional election, as the reason.

If Calvinism is true, then: **a.** God intentionally left Israel unelected to salvation, so that they could not get saved; **b.** God then blamed Israel for what He did and made His choice not to elect them, their fault. How could it be their fault if election is Unconditional? Of course, that silliness is not biblical truth. The God of the Bible is not now and never has been, the God of Calvinism. Here is what the Bible says.

"O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help."
Hosea 13:9.

"Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;" Romans 9:32.

28 - For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.

For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: - Paul quotes Isaiah 10:22-23, where Israel was cut short, as God's judgment fell upon them. So too, in AD 58, God is about to cut it short because Israel has rejected their election, Isaiah 45:4, and their Messiah, Isaiah 42:1. The idea is, God's long-suffering has ended and, in AD 58, judgment upon Israel is coming swiftly - *a short work will the Lord make upon the earth*. For first century Israel, judgment means that God will soon do these three things: **a.** cast away Israel, Romans 11:15, **b.** break off some of the branches, Romans 11:17, **c.** spare not the natural branches (Israel), Romans 11:21.

That doesn't mean, removed and cut short, for a day or a week, a month or a year. It means Israel will be out of the place of blessing for the next 2000 years. No one knew, back then, how long it would be but we know now because we see it from near the end of that 2000 year period of time.

Citing Isaiah is Paul's way of summarizing his message in Romans 9. God will do exactly what He said He would do, meaning, the same judgment that fell on rebellious Esau and rebellious Pharaoh, will fall on rebellious Israel, and, it will happen quickly. That turning away from Israel and removing her from the place of blessing, happened within four years, by AD 62, Acts 28:28-31, of when Paul finished writing Romans in AD 58. Count on it - God always keeps His promises.

Being God's elect but having rejected God's election of them and having rejected God's elect Messiah, God's long-suffering for rebellious Israel is running out. God can and does, toss unbelieving Israel on the ash heap of history, for the duration of the church age, *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*, Luke 21:24, *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*, Romans 11:25.

because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. - This refers to the speed with which God will stop His evangelizing work toward national Israel, and turn to the Gentiles. The work of evangelizing Israel will be finished soon (from the AD 57-58 time frame, when Paul wrote Romans), because Paul, as God's ambassador, 2 Corinthians 5:20, Ephesians 6:20, and apostle to the Gentiles, is turning from Israel, to the Gentiles. Was God long suffering and patient with rebellious Israel? _____ Has God been long suffering and patient with you? _____ Will you surrender to God? _____

Remember, Paul had a dual commission. God sent him to the Gentiles and to the Jews, Acts 9:15-16. What does it mean, that Paul had a dual commission?

Paul writes from the stand point of having led the evangelization of Israel for more than [twenty years](#). God used Paul as an evangelist and biblical apostle, first, to preach reconciliation to Israel and the Gentiles, and then to spearhead the gradual turning away from Israel as the nation rejected Messiah Jesus, Acts 13:46, 18:6, 28:28. It is always best to keep short accounts with God. Israel rebelled too long, waited too long and God turned away from national Israel. Yes, God will save individual Israelites who believe on Messiah Jesus but national Israel is out of the place of blessing, Romans 11:25.

Argument Seven

Sodom, in Abraham's day, rebelled against God, Romans 9:29.

29 - And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.

And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth - This is a quote from Isaiah 1:9. The Lord of Sab-a-oth does not mean, Lord of the Sabbath. Sabaoth is a different word and means, the LORD of Hosts, or, Jehovah as Warrior King, Psalm 20:1, 7, Isaiah 47:4. LORD of hosts as Warrior-King over Israel occurs 235 times in the KJV Bible. Sabaoth is the English form of the Greek word, Σαβαώθ, pronounced sä-bä-ōath, which comes from the Hebrew word, שָׁבָא' tsaba' which is pronounced, sä-väh (the t is silent). This is not gentle Jesus, meek and mild.

This is an interesting reference because Isaiah and Paul link the Lord of hosts with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha. This is a prophetic warning from Paul, to Israel, even as she is in the process of rejecting her Messiah and being rejected by God. Just a few years after Paul wrote this, God wrote, Finished, on Israel and removed her from the place of blessing for the duration of the church age. Oddly enough, [By order of Emperor Nero](#), Rome began [the siege of Jerusalem](#) in AD 66, only eight years after Paul wrote Romans.

Before the Roman legions conquered Jerusalem, Paul was executed by Rome and Nero committed suicide, both events happening in AD 68. On September 8, AD 70, General Titus was victorious in Jerusalem. The Jewish temple and much of the city was destroyed. In essence, Jerusalem received a judgment almost as severe as Sodom and Gomorrah, although God left a remnant for Israel, because they are His chosen people and He intends to restore them when *the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*, Romans 11:25.

Jesus taught that, if the incredible miracles He and his disciples did in Israel, had been done in Sodom and Gomorrah, they would have repented and the implication is, they wouldn't have been destroyed. There was no election to

salvation before the foundation of the world and no predestination to salvation involved in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha. It was simply a matter of obeying God, of repenting when God confronted them with their sins. Judgment was the penalty for disobedience to God. Blessing was and is, God's reward for obedience.

Remember the example of Ninevah. The whole city repented when God's Jewish evangelist Jonah preached to them. Sodom and Gomorrha could have repented. They refused to exercise their freewill and repent and so, God destroyed them. The LORD of hosts, called in this verse, the Lord of Sabaoth, in AD 58, when Paul wrote Romans, was in the process of rejecting Israel for rejecting Him, the same way He rejected Esau and Pharaoh, the same way He rejected Sodom and Gomorrha (Gomorrhah in Genesis 19), for rejecting Him.

had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. - This is Paul's seventh example, in Romans 9, of God's judgment on sinful rebellion. The *seed* is the Jewish remnant, meaning, Jews who had accepted Jesus as Messiah, also known as, distinct from national Israel, Galatians 6:16. Every saved Jew was part of the remnant or part of the seed or part of the Israel of God. Unbelievers are not part of the remnant, are not part of the seed. There are no unsaved people in *the Israel of God*. Here are Paul's 7 arguments in Romans 9, for a quick review.

Paul's 7 arguments from the OT, in Romans 9.

1. Esau rebelled against God, in Isaac's day, Romans 9:13.
2. Israel rebelled against God, in Moses' day, Romans 9:15.
3. Pharaoh rebelled against God, in Moses' day, Romans 9:17.
4. Israel rebelled against God, in Isaiah's day, Romans 9:20.
5. Israel rebelled against God, in Jeremiah's day, Romans 9:21.
6. Israel rebelled against God, in Hosea's day, Romans 9:25.
7. Sodom rebelled against God, in Abraham's day, Romans 9:29.

Paul is reassuring saved Jews everywhere, that God turning away from Israel because they rejected Jesus as their Messiah, is not permanent. Two thousand years is a long time to be out of the place of blessing but eventually, God will restore the remnant of Israel, after the horrific events of the great tribulation, Jeremiah 30:7, Matthew 24:21, Revelation 2:22, 7:14.

God will not do to Israel, what He did to Sodom and Gomorrha. In Romans 11, Paul explains that God is not rejecting Israel forever. Israel as a nation will,

eventually, be restored to the place of blessing, Romans 11:25. The restoration of Israel happens at the end of the great tribulation, not in the church age.

30 - What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.

What shall we say then? - Paul now begins to wrap up his seven point argument in Romans 9. In light of the truth that Israel is refusing faith in Jesus and rejecting Jesus, and the Gentiles are receiving Jesus and getting saved, what shall we say then? In light of God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah, what shall we say then?

Do you see Paul's consistent message to Israel?

Seven times in Romans 9, Paul illustrates, from the OT, the judgment of God upon rebellious unbelievers. If Israel rejects Messiah Jesus, God will judge Israel like He judged Esau/Edom, like He judged Israel in Moses' day, like He judged Pharaoh, like He judged Israel in Isaiah's day, like He judged Israel in Jeremiah's day, like He judged Israel in Hosea's day, like He judged Sodom and Gomorrah in Abraham's day.

Note carefully Paul's message. Believe on Jesus or face the judgment of God. Paul makes no attempt to soft-pedal or sugar-coat his message from God, to make it more palatable for Israel. If you reject Jesus, that's a deal breaker.

1. What is the one thing Israel needed to do, to stop being a vessel of wrath and become a vessel of mercy? _____
2. What was Israel's problem; what was the obstacle to Israel believing on Jesus and receiving Him as her Messiah? _____

That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, - Here is what we say then. That the Gentiles, the bad guys of the OT, have found salvation full and free, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Throughout her entire biblical history, Israel has looked down on Gentiles. To Jews, Gentiles were barbarians, uncivilized, uncouth, unclean, ungodly, unholy. Paul expressed that attitude in Galatians 2:15. "*We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles.*"

Jesus expressed that attitude in Matthew 15:26. "*But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.*" The Gentiles pursued fleshly lusts and idolatry but a funny thing happened to the Gentiles. A few Jewish evangelists for Jesus, who had received their Messiah, carried the gospel to the Gentiles and the Gentiles believed it, becoming vessels of mercy.

have attained to righteousness, - How could those blasphemously pagan Gentiles attain to righteousness? How could they become vessels of mercy? The Gentiles were not God's chosen people. The oracles of God hadn't been given to them. They didn't keep the law of God. How did the Gentiles attain to righteousness? _____

even the righteousness which is of faith. - Now that's interesting. Faith was the key to Abraham the Gentile, being declared righteous. Every Israelite knew about the faith of Abraham and God expected every Israelite to have the faith of Abraham. Faith was involved in the righteousness the Gentiles attained.

Abraham was an uncircumcised Gentile when he believed God and God counted it to him for righteousness, Genesis 15:1-6. That's why he can be the father of believing Gentiles and believing Jews. Abraham had to believe God first, before God counted it to him for righteousness. Abraham didn't get regenerated first and then believe. That is a clear Bible fact. Abraham didn't get circumcised until Genesis 17:10, 23-27. Gentiles didn't need to know the law or keep the law to get or attain, *the righteousness which is of faith*.

Abraham lived 430 years before the law, Galatians 3:17. Gentiles back then and now, made no sacrifices in the Jewish temple. They didn't approach God through the Levites or the Jewish priests. And yet Paul tells us: *the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith*. Was Israel's rejection of Messiah Jesus, the result of: **a.** God not electing them to salvation before the foundation of the world, or, **b.** their stubborn refusal to have faith in Jesus?

31 - But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, - Why did Israel miss God's salvation? _____ They were God's chosen, elect people, yet they had *not attained to the law of righteousness*. They sought after the law of righteousness. What kept Israel from obtaining righteousness?

Romans 9 has nothing to do with anyone's unconditional election to salvation before the foundation of the world or anyone's reprobation to damnation. Romans 9 has nothing to do with election or predestination to salvation. Romans 9 has nothing to do with God the potter, making most of the human race into vessels of dishonour and wrath, so that they can never be saved.

Everyone is born into the world as a vessel of wrath and everyone can get saved, if they want to. Is that clear to you? _____

Romans 9 has to do with rebellious Israel and her stubborn, freewill refusal to obey God. It has to do with trying to earn righteousness by works of the law, instead of by faith. Israel wanted to keep trusting the shadow (the OT sacrificial system) instead of the substance (which was Jesus, God's ultimate sacrifice). In Romans chapter 9, Paul illustrates Israel's unbelief by citing OT examples of unbelief. Can you list those OT examples? _____

hath not attained to the law of righteousness. - According to the Bible, the reason God's elect people didn't get saved, had nothing to do with God not electing them to salvation before the foundation of the world. The reason God's elect people didn't get saved is because they didn't seek salvation by faith, Romans 9:32. Does Paul state that clearly in Romans 9:32? _____
Is it possible to get saved, if you refuse to believe on or have faith in, the Lord Jesus Christ? _____ Isn't it enough to be a church member? _____

They were not totally depraved or totally unable. They still had freewill. God requires faith in Messiah Jesus and Israel made a freewill choice to reject Messiah Jesus. *They sought it not by faith*, Romans 9:32. When the Bible states that truth so plainly and so precisely, we should not seek a different explanation. When God makes it plain and people reject God's plain explanation, that is sinful rebellion against God.

1. Should Christians accept Romans 9:32 as God's final answer to the question: Why didn't Israel believe on Messiah Jesus and get saved? _____
2. Is there anything difficult to understand in Romans 9:32? _____
3. Is unconditional election Paul's explanation in Romans 9:32? _____

32 - Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;

Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, - Have you taken particular notice, in Romans 9:30-32, that the Gentiles received Jesus because they sought Him by faith? _____ Faith in Jesus is the key to getting saved.

Question: What is the biblical explanation for Israel rejecting Jesus and the Gentiles receiving Jesus? Wouldn't you love to talk to Paul in person and ask him? We have Paul's answer right here in Romans 9:32. What do you say Paul? Why didn't Israel get saved? _____

*“Because they sought it not by faith,
but as it were by the works of the law.”*
Romans 9:32.

Is there anything difficult to understand about that question and that answer? *Because they sought it not by faith.* It is important to note an answer, which Paul doesn't give. Paul doesn't say: Because God didn't elect you to salvation, before the foundation of the world. Instead, Paul says Israel's problem was:; *they sought it not by faith.*

The stumbling stone is Israel's lack of faith, not an arbitrary decree of God before the foundation of the world, or, God making a choice not to unconditionally elect Israel to salvation. Romans 9:32 is perfectly clear and convincing and final. Faith - believing on Jesus - is the catalyst that turns vessels of wrath into vessels of mercy. Which vessel are you? _____

The reason isn't Unconditional Election or, God making the choice for them, as to who could or could not get saved. The reason Paul gives, by inspiration of God is: Gentiles sought righteousness by faith and Israel sought righteousness by works. It's as simple as that. Are you willing to accept the Bible's explanation, Paul's explanation, God's explanation, and allow Romans 9:32 to settle the question for you? _____

In the OT, Gentiles who wanted to be saved, could become Jewish proselytes, and start keeping the law of Moses, with its blood sacrifices. What worked for Gentiles in the OT, no longer worked for Gentiles, or anyone else in the NT, after the death and resurrection of Christ. After the resurrection of Christ, Gentiles who wanted to be saved couldn't get saved by becoming proselytes to Judaism.

Jews who wanted to be saved could no longer find salvation by keeping the law of Moses. NT salvation is always by grace, through faith, plus nothing. What is it about the human heart, that insists, “No thanks Jesus, I'd rather keep trying to earn my salvation.” The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Please use it.

How wicked was Israel in her behavior toward Messiah Jesus? They would rather crucify Him than confess Him as Messiah, Savior and King. They would rather reject Him than receive Him. Did Israel have capacity for faith? Yes, but their faith was in the righteousness they thought they earned by their law keeping, Deuteronomy 6:24-25.

When you put your faith in the wrong thing, that is a dangerous way to live, a dangerous mistake which has eternal consequences. God will not change His

eternal plan, to accommodate your unbelief. God did not compel Israel to rebel and reject Messiah Jesus. Israel did that on her own.

but as it were by the works of the law. - This is the key to understanding Romans chapter 9. The issue is law and grace, faith vs. works. The issue with Paul is not the “doctrine of election” or “the doctrines of grace” or the false teaching that God chose a few people before the foundation of the world and elected and predestinated them to salvation. The issue in Romans 9 isn’t the sovereignty of God or the Calvinist TULIP teaching.

Here is the real issue

Will you accept the grace of God in Jesus Christ and salvation by faith, apart from works of the law? Will you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, for salvation? The Jews answered, No. The Gentiles answered, Yes. How do you answer that question? _____ Which is required, in order to forsake your religious works and believe on Jesus by faith alone? **a.** pride, **b.** humility.

For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; - Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ - that’s the *stumblingstone* that tripped up Israel. Jews in AD 58 had an enormous struggle with the grace of God and faith in Christ. They saw Gentiles getting saved and blessed and it made them angry instead of joyful. As God’s elect nation, they made a freewill choice to reject Jesus as their Messiah, refused to believe on Jesus as Messiah, refused to have faith in Jesus as their Messiah. And therefore, God rejected them, like He rejected Esau, Hebrews 12:16-17, Genesis 27:34, and God removed them from the place of blessing, Romans 11:25.

1. Faith was a stumblingstone to Israel, Romans 9:32.
2. Jesus was a stumblingstone to Israel, Romans 9:33.
3. Christ crucified was a stumblingstone to Israel, 1 Cor 1:23.
4. God’s word was a stumblingstone to Israel, 1 Peter 2:8.

Does this have practical application for people in the twenty first century? Take another look at that list. Are any of those four things a stumblingstone for you in your spiritual life? _____ All four of those things can be fixed by you dealing with them one by one.

1. Exercise faith by trusting God’s Messiah, whom He sent to save you.
2. Believe on Jesus Christ as your Savior from sin, hell and God’s wrath.
3. Receive the atonement Jesus bought for you with His precious blood.
4. Live your life obedient to God’s written word in the Bible.

Faith in Jesus Christ is what stumbled the Jews. Salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, always stumbles religious people. That fact deserves careful consideration. Religious people sometimes want religion more than they want a Savior. The grace and faith messages were radical, new information for OT Israelites. The flesh strongly resists NT grace and NT faith. There was a lot of resistance to Paul's message but Paul had a gospel which, in itself, contained power to convict and save, Romans 1:16.

Religious people tend to see themselves as good instead of ungodly. Religious people need to memorize Romans 4:5 - because God justifies the ungodly; not the good, not the godly - God justifies the ungodly.

Israel was God's chosen people, God's elect people, Isaiah 45:4. If Calvinism were true, God's elect people, Israel, should have a lock on getting saved by Unconditional Election and Irresistible Grace and yet, Israel rejected Jesus their Messiah; Israel refused to receive Him by faith and Israel didn't get saved and God rejected faithless, unbelieving Israel. Don't be like Israel.

The Bible doesn't say, God rejected Israel before the foundation of the world, by not electing them or not predestinating them to salvation. The Bible says, *because they sought it not by faith*. They were rejected based on decisions they made, in time, based on their own actions. They were not rejected before the foundation of the world, based on decisions God made. Does that make biblical sense to you now? _____

that stumblingstone; - *Stumblingstone* is found only twice in the Bible, Romans 9:32, 33, although, a stone of stumbling is also found twice in the Bible, Isaiah 8:14 and 1 Peter 2:8. Lack of faith is part of what caused Israel to stumble. God wanted Israel to have the faith of Abraham and to have faith in Messiah Jesus and Israel preferred to put their faith in keeping the law instead of doing things God's way. Have you learned the lesson of trusting God, instead of trying to do things your way? _____

1. Based on what the Bible says in Romans 9:32, what was the stumblingstone for Israel? _____
2. According to what Romans 9:32 says, was Unconditional Election part of the problem Israel had? _____
3. Was the problem in Romans 9:32, Israel seeking salvation by works of the law instead of by faith? _____
4. When the Bible says: *Because they sought it not by faith*, should Christians believe that or should we try to invent a different answer? _____
5. Based on 2 Peter 3:9, would God have saved every Israelite who believed on Jesus in the first century AD? _____

33 - As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: - Paul is quoting Isaiah 8:13-14. He is referring to Messiah Jesus as the stumblingstone and rock of offense. In the context of Isaiah and Romans, Jesus is the stumblingstone to Israel. They got offended at Him and were too proud to believe on Jesus or have faith in Jesus. Who is the stone of stumbling in Isaiah and Romans? _____

and rock of offence: - This is a quote from Isaiah 8:14. The stumbling stone is also the rock of offense. Jesus is the Rock all through the OT. Who is the rock in Isaiah 8:13-14? _____ Moses writes about Him, teaching us that there is a real Rock and a fake rock, Deuteronomy 32:4, 15, 18, 30, 31, 37. Samuel writes about Him, 1 Samuel 2:2, 2 Samuel 22:2, 32, 23:3. The Psalmist wrote about Him in Psalm 18:2, 28:1, 42:9, 62:2.

Isaiah writes about Him, Isaiah 17:10. Jesus spoke of Himself, Matthew 16:18, as the rock. Paul writes about Him, Romans 9:33, 1 Corinthians 10:4. Peter wrote about Him, 1 Peter 2:8. Given how many times God is spoken of as the Rock and the rock, in the OT, should Israel have missed these clues about their Messiah? _____

Offence - Paul is teaching us something interesting here. We have seen that Paul's evangelistic strategy is to make Israel jealous of the blessings God has poured out upon saved Gentiles, Deuteronomy 32:21, Romans 10:19. Paul has also quoted Hosea/Osee. Hidden in Hosea 5:15 is another clue about Paul's message to Israel.

"I will go and return to my place, till they (Israel) acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early." Hosea 5:15.

Israel offended God by her unbelief. During the ministry of Paul, God has, through Paul's ministry, been gradually turning away from Israel, as Israel progressively rejects Jesus as Messiah. Instead of believing on Jesus, Israel continued to offend God by rejecting Jesus.

This turning away from Israel (*I will go and return to my place*), was prophesied in Hosea 5:15. It corresponds with what Jesus said in Luke 21:24 and what Paul wrote in Romans 11:25. Israel could have gotten saved but God also had a plan if Israel rejected Messiah Jesus. God's plan was, turning away from Israel and sending the gospel to the Gentiles, Acts 13:46, 18:6, 28:23-29.

“And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” Luke 21:24.

“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.” Romans 11:25.

This blinding and turning away from Israel is God’s judgment on their unbelief, their lack of faith and their rejection of Jesus. This turning away lasts approximately 2000 years, the duration of the church age, *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*, meaning, *till they* (Israel) *acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction* (during the great tribulation) *they will seek me early.* Hosea 5:15.

In their affliction is a doctrinal reference to Israel’s travail and trouble in the great tribulation. Jeremiah described it as, *the time of Jacob’s trouble*, Jeremiah 30:7.

“Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.” Jeremiah 30:7.

In the midst of great tribulation, that is when the remnant of Israel gets right with God, gets saved and acknowledges *their offence* in rejecting and crucifying Jesus their Messiah. In the great tribulation is when Israel will seek God early. Doctrinally it has a tribulation application. Devotionally or spiritually, we can use Romans 9:33 to teach that no Christian should ever be ashamed of Jesus.

“And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.” Galatians 5:11.

Preaching circumcision refers to keeping OT law. Preaching circumcision is what Israel did, instead of believing on Jesus. Paul says: If I was still preaching, “get circumcised and keep the law,” none of you Israelites would be offended. You’re offended because I’m telling you that Messiah Jesus is *the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*, Romans 10:4.

When you believe on Jesus, you don’t have to try to keep the law to earn righteousness, Deuteronomy 6:24-25. Why? Because when you believe on Jesus, He gives you His righteousness as a free gift. That’s called, justification by faith, Romans 5:1. Jesus’ righteousness is infinitely superior to our righteousness. Israel trusted her own righteousness. Whose righteousness are you trusting to get you to heaven? _____

The offence of the cross is the stumblingstone that tripped up Israel. Israel was offended at many things. **1.** They were offended at being told: righteousness which comes by law keeping cannot save you. **2.** They were offended at being told: your descent from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob cannot save you. **3.** They were offended at being told: you must believe on Messiah Jesus. **4.** They were offended at being told: your circumcision is meaningless if you reject Jesus as your Messiah. **5.** They were offended at being told: the temple veil is rent in twain, from top to bottom, Matthew 27:51, and therefore, God is no longer accepting your blood sacrifices. **6.** They were offended at being told: You will have to share the favor of God with saved Gentiles. **7.** They were offended that: God's gracious invitation, *Whosoever will may come*, includes Gentiles.

What do you get easily offended at, that should not cause you to get offended?

The offence of the cross, Galatians 5:11, is that you are not good enough to deserve heaven - you desperately need a Savior. The offense of the cross is that you are a dirty, rotten sinner whose only hope of salvation is the grace and mercy of God. God justifies the ungodly, Romans 4:5. Is that true? _____
Are you justified by faith alone, in Christ alone? _____

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Romans 4:5.

Israel was offended at Jesus because He is their stumblingstone and rock of offence. Israel couldn't believe that their sins were so awful and ungodly that God had to punish Jesus for their sins for three hours, in the awful darkness of Calvary. God ordained that specific length of time - three hours of darkness, Matthew 27:45, as the blood of Jesus, God's passover Lamb, was shed and Jesus bore the penalty for all our sins.

That awful darkness was the veil that hid the holy of holies on Mount Calvary, from human eyes, as Jesus became God's ultimate sacrifice. When Jesus gave up the ghost and died, the veil hiding the holy of holies in the Jewish temple, was rent in twain from top to bottom, Matthew 27:51, exposing the holy of holies and indicating that God would no longer accept blood sacrifices in the temple.

The veil of darkness that hid Calvary from twelve noon to three p.m., as Christ hung on the cross, lifted to reveal an entirely new world, an entirely new paradigm, an entirely new spiritual reality. Before the awful darkness of Calvary, OT law was God's truth. After the darkness of Calvary, when Jesus died at three

p.m., NT grace replaced OT law and the world would never be the same again. That's why many Jews in Israel rejected Jesus.

They clung to the law and the darkness and were offended by and ashamed of Jesus, the Light of the world, John 1:9, and the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Acts 22:11. That's why Jesus said in Matthew 7:14 and Luke 13:23-24, few (in Israel), will be saved. You've got to turn your back on the darkness and walk into the light. You've got to believe on Jesus because He is the Light of the world, Micah 7:8, John 1:7-9.

You can tell a lot about a man by what offends him. If he is thin skinned and gets offended at Jesus and the gospel and the truth of the word of God, he reveals himself as proud in spirit and shallow in character. That man has no depth to him, Matthew 13:21, Mark 4:5.

and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. - There is a sad reality to acknowledge here. Israel was ashamed of Jesus. They couldn't accept the wonderful Messiah God sent them. **1.** The stumblingstone who tripped up the Jews is a person. **2.** The stumblingstone is a person you must believe on and receive, John 1:11-12. **3.** The stumbling stone is a person of whom you should not be ashamed. **4.** Israel missed the Bible truth that the stumblingstone was a person. **5.** Israel refused to believe on this Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was their Messiah.

"For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." Luke 9:26.

Paul seems to have the words of Jesus in mind when he writes Romans 9:33. *Whosoever* includes any Jew and any Gentile. God's *whosoever* truth was also a big stumblingstone for Israel. Anyone, Israelite or Gentile, can become a vessel of mercy by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. *Whosoever* will may come, and *whosoever* includes Gentiles, according to Jesus in John 3:16. Paul echoes Jesus when he says: *Whosoever*, in Romans 10:13.

It's not the privileged few of Israel, or, the proud and privileged few who believe in Unconditional Election, who think God predestinated them to salvation before the foundation of the world. It's not the lucky few who were born, biological descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

In the Bible it is: *Whosoever* will may come! Let it never be said of us, as Christians: They were ashamed of Jesus and His mighty gospel.

Ashamed of Jesus?

Jesus, and shall it ever be
A mortal man ashamed of Thee?
Scorned be the thought by rich and poor:
My soul shall scorn it more and more.

Ashamed of Jesus! Sooner far
May evening blush to own a star.
He sheds the beams of light divine
O'er this benighted soul of mine.

Ashamed of Jesus! Just as soon
Let midnight be ashamed of noon.
'Tis midnight with my soul, till He,
Bright Morning Star, bids darkness flee.

Ashamed of Jesus, that dear Friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend?
No! when I blush be this my shame,
That I no more revere His name.

Ashamed of Jesus! Yes I may
When I've no sins to wash away,
No tears to wipe, no joys to crave,
No fears to quell, no soul to save.

Till then - nor is the boasting vain,
Till then I boast a Savior slain:
And O, may this my glory be,
That Christ is not ashamed of me!
-Joseph Grigg, 1720, 1710-1768,
was an English Presbyterian.

When Paul says, *Whosoever*, he rejects the false teaching of Gnosticism and Manichaeism, which would later adversely influence Augustine and Calvin. By saying, *Whosoever*, God rejects the false teaching of Augustine and Calvin. They limited salvation to an imaginary, elect few but let's always remember what the Bible says.

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22:17.

Whosoever will has never meant, an elect few. Whosoever will simply means, whosoever will. Do you understand that tough and resilient truth? _____

If you hear the gospel call, if you are athirst for righteousness and freedom from sin, then you are a whosoever, and you are welcome to come and, *take the water of life freely*. Hearing and being thirsty are God's criteria for being a whosoever and coming to Jesus. God will welcome you with open arms.

With their conclusive *Whosoever*s, the apostle Paul and the apostle John echo Jesus in John 3:16, and reject the false teaching of Unconditional Election to salvation, for a privileged few. If we believe what Paul says in Romans 9, we will not take verses out of context and use the out of context verses to teach a man-made philosophy which the text of Romans 9 never mentions.

believeth on him - With Jesus and Paul, it's all about, every one, whosoever and believing, Romans 1:16. Jesus and Paul never restrict getting saved to a small group called the elect. Jesus and Paul never say that getting saved happens before you believe on Jesus or before you have faith in Jesus or because God chose you by Unconditional Election before the foundation of the world.

Are you tired of being a vessel of wrath?

Do you want to stop being a vessel of wrath? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. That puts you, in Christ, and in Christ, you have now become a vessel of mercy. It's as simple as that, 2 Timothy 2:20-21.

We have studied Romans chapter 9 and discovered for ourselves, that nothing in Romans 9 mentions the five points of TULIP Calvinism. Nothing in Romans mentions unconditional election to salvation by a decree of God before the foundation of the world. In fact, in the entire Bible, the phrase, unconditional election, is conspicuous by its absence. Can anyone cite any verse of scripture where the phrase, unconditional election, occurs in the Bible? _____

Romans 9 is not now, and never has been, a pretext for teaching the false philosophy of Calvinism. If we approach Romans 9 with any of the false presuppositions of Calvinism, we make it more difficult to understand Paul's message in Romans 9. Throw aside those false presuppositions and open your heart to the Holy Spirit. He will lead you out of darkness, into the light of truth.

In Romans 9, Paul isn't talking about a decree of Unconditional Election of individuals to salvation. How do we know that? Because Paul never mentions unconditional election to salvation. When Paul did mention election, he never

linked election with “unconditional” or “salvation” or “before the foundation of the world.” Instead, Paul told us plainly, in Romans 9:12, that election is to serve.

In Romans 9, Paul is explaining to Gentile and Jewish Christians, that God has every right to replace law with grace and Israel with the church, if Israel rebels against God and rejects Jesus. In Romans 9, Paul gives seven examples from the OT, of what happens when unbelievers rebel against God. Paul is explaining this to help Israelites believe on Jesus as their Messiah and to help saved Jews assimilate back into Roman churches which had been run by Gentile Christians for five years, since the Emperor Claudius had made a decree in AD 49, that Jews must leave Rome.

Upon the death of Emperor Claudius, in AD 54, the decree of Claudius expired and Jews started returning to Rome. Paul wants those returning Jews to understand the new spiritual conditions and the new revelation God gave to the church, through Paul, Ephesians 3:1-11.

Review Questions for Romans Chapter 9

1. As we begin Romans chapter 9, God is in the process of dumping Israel on the ash heap of history, because of her unbelief and lack of faith, Romans 9:32. T or F
2. In Romans 9, Esau represents: **a.** the spirit, **b.** the flesh, **c.** the church, **d.** earth, wind and fire.
3. In Romans 9, Jacob represents: **a.** the spirit, **b.** the flesh, **c.** the liberals, **d.** vegetarians.
4. Romans 9 explains that God rejected Israel because of: **a.** Bible prophesy, **b.** segregation, **c.** a lack of diversity, **d.** a lack of faith.
5. How many times does Romans 9 mention, unconditional election to salvation before the foundation of the world? **a.** 2 times, **b.** 4 times, **c.** Romans 9 never mentions unconditional election to salvation.
6. The theme of Romans 9 is: **a.** unconditional election to salvation before the foundation of the world, **b.** faith in Messiah Jesus, **c.** blue skies of Hawaii.
7. Romans 9:2 - Why did Paul have continual sorrow in his heart over his unsaved Israelite brethren? _____
8. What was Paul's evangelistic strategy, to get Israel saved? **a.** He wanted to provoke Israel to jealousy of the blessing God was giving to saved Gentiles, **b.** He wanted everyone to know that only people God elected to get saved before the foundation of the world could get saved.
9. Which did Paul say? **a.** I wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren. **b.** I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren.
10. What is the difference between **a.** and **b.** in Question 9? _____
11. Who are Israelites? **a.** Everyone who is descended from Abraham, **b.** Everyone descended from Abraham and Sarah, **c.** Only those descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
12. Before the resurrection of Christ, was anyone adopted into the family of God? Yes. No.
13. Were descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob automatically saved, because of their genealogy? _____
14. Christ came from: **a.** the godly line of Esau, **b.** the godly line of Jacob, **c.** the godly line of Pharaoh.
15. Romans 9:6 - *For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.* What does that mean? **a.** Paul means that no Israelite is automatically saved. **b.** Paul means that Israelites need to believe on Jesus to get saved.
16. Romans 9:10 - Who was the father of Esau and Jacob? _____
17. Romans 9:10 - Who was the mother of Esau and Jacob? _____

18. Genesis 25:23 - Esau and Jacob represent: **a.** themselves as individuals, **b.** two Subchapter S Corporations each would start, **c.** two powerful private armies, **d.** two nations, Esau/Edom and Jacob/Israel.
19. Romans 9:11 mentions, the purpose of God according to election. Who was elected in that verse? _____
20. Does Romans 9:12 say that Esau was elected to damnation before the foundation of the world? _____
21. Does Romans 9:12 say that Jacob was elected to salvation before the foundation of the world? _____
22. What does Romans 9:12 tell us was the purpose of election? **a.** to go to heaven, **b.** to go to hell, **c.** to serve.
23. In Romans 9:12 - Who was the elder? **a.** Esau, **b.** Sampson, **c.** Jacob, **d.** Pharaoh.
24. In Romans 9:12 - Who was the younger? **a.** Esau, **b.** Jacob, **c.** Sampson, **d.** Pharaoh.
25. Does any verse in Romans 9 use the words, unconditional election to salvation? Yes. No.
25. Does any verse in Romans 9 mention, election as taking place before the foundation of the world? Yes. No.
26. Are the words, unconditional election, ever found anywhere in the Bible? Yes. No.
27. Romans 9:12 - *The elder shall serve the younger.* Is that talking about: **a.** people elected to get saved or, **b.** people elected to serve?
28. Romans 9:13 - *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* What on earth does that mean? _____
29. Did God have reasons to hate Esau? _____
30. Did God have reasons to love Jacob? _____
31. Did God hate Esau before Esau was born? _____
32. What nation does Esau represent? **a.** Persia, **b.** Greece, **c.** Israel, **d.** Edom.
33. Did God always hate Esau/Edom? _____
34. Romans 9:13 - List two reasons God hated Esau. _____
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35. The Herodians were: **a.** Jewish, **b.** Arabian, **c.** Egyptian, **d.** Edomites, **e.** Idumeans.
36. How many times does the Bible say, God hated Esau? **a.** 7 times, **b.** 2 times, **c.** 5 times.
37. How could Esau and Pharaoh have changed God's treatment of them? **a.** They could have converted to Christianity, **b.** They could have converted to Catholicism, **c.** They could have obeyed God.
38. Romans 9:15 - *For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.* That is Paul,

quoting Exodus 33:19. Who did God say that about? **a.** Esau, **b.** Pharaoh, **c.** Jews in Rome, **d.** Moses and rebellious Israel.

39. How did God show mercy to poor, lost sinners? _____

40. Did Jesus die for all or for just a chosen few? _____

41. Does Jesus want all Israel to be saved? _____

42. Does Jesus want all Gentiles to be saved? _____

43. Romans 9:17 - How could Pharaoh have pleased God? _____

44. What is a theophany? **a.** an OT appearance of the pre-incarnate Christ, **b.** an OT appearance of the Holy Spirit, **c.** an OT appearance of God Himself.

45. What is a Christophany? **a.** an appearance of God Himself in the OT, **b.** an appearance of the pre-incarnate Christ in the OT, **c.** an appearance of the Holy Spirit in the OT.

46. In the Pharaoh/Moses confrontations, God was: **a.** using the plagues to rebuke the false gods of Egypt, **b.** forming the aurora borealis over the desert.

47. If Israel rebels like Pharaoh rebelled, Israel will be judged like Pharaoh was judged. T or F

48. Should modern Christians be like Berean Christians, Acts 17:11, always minding the context and searching out the context, Romans 9:13-18, and rejecting out of context, false teaching? _____

49. Romans 9:18 - What does, harden, mean? _____

50. Does, harden, mean that God forces a man to sin? _____

51. Romans 9:21 - In Isaiah, Jeremiah and Romans, who is the potter? **a.** The Hittites, **b.** Joshua, **c.** Pharaoh, **d.** God, **e.** The Edomites.

52. Romans 9:21 - In Isaiah, Jeremiah and Romans, who is the clay? **a.** Gentiles, **b.** Israel, **c.** Arabs, **d.** Egyptians, **e.** Christians.

53. Romans 9:21 - How can a vessel of dishonour/wrath become a vessel of honour/mercy? **a.** Finish his catechism class, **b.** Convert to Presbyterian, **c.** Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and get saved, **d.** Become a 32nd degree Mason.

54. Romans 9:22 - Should Christians base their beliefs about salvation on hypothetical, What if, verses in the Bible? _____

55. Romans 9:24 - Did God call both Jews and Gentiles to salvation in Christ? Yes. No.

56. Romans 9:25 - Osee/Hosea is an example of God rejecting Israel, because of her sin and rebellion. When Paul brings that up in Romans 9, he means: **a.** God will never again destroy the earth with a flood, **b.** God will never again be merciful to Israel, **c.** From now on, God will only save Gentiles, **d.** If first century AD Israel doesn't believe on Messiah Jesus, God will reject them like He rejected Israel in Hosea's day.

57. Romans 9:27 - Paul quotes Isaiah to prove that, in spite of Israel's rejection of Jesus, a remnant shall be saved. T or F

58. Romans 9:30 - How did the Gentiles get saved? **a.** By doing lots of good works, **b.** By converting to Judaism, **c.** By *the righteousness which is of faith*.
59. Romans 9:31 - Can Israel be saved by following after the law of righteousness? _____
60. Will God only accept the good works of Israelites? _____
61. Romans 9:32 - Why didn't Israel get saved? _____
62. When does God accept our works to get saved? _____
63. Romans 9:33 - Who was the stumblingstone, for Israel? **a.** Abraham, **b.** Esau, **c.** Pharaoh, **d.** Jacob, **e.** Jesus.
64. Who can get saved? **a.** Only the elect, **b.** Only the Jews, **c.** Only the Gentiles, **d.** Everyone who wants to, **e.** Whosoever will.
65. What was the most interesting thing, to you, about Romans 9?

66. What is your favorite teaching or truth, that you learned from Romans 9?

67. What verses did you struggle to understand, as we studied Romans 9?

68. What was the most difficult thing to get your mind around in Romans 9?

69. What do you want to do more study on, in Romans 9, to increase your understanding? _____

Thank you so much, for being part of this Bible study!

We appreciate you!