"The Lord Will Accomplish His Word":
Paul's Argumentation and Use of Scripture
in Romans 9:24–29

❧ Pablo T. Gadenz ☙

Doctoral Candidate, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome

Romans 9–11 is one of the more challenging areas of New Testament studies. From the perspective of Jewish-Christian dialogue, there is great interest because these chapters involve Paul's most extended discussion of Israel, including his enigmatic statement that "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26). Romans 9–11 is also of considerable significance to scholars studying the use of Old Testament texts by the New Testament writers, since Paul cites the Old Testament more in these chapters than in any other section in his letters, as he seeks to explain God's plan of salvation for Israel and the nations.

For the exegete, a primary challenge comes with regard to the internal coherence of these chapters. Paul's argument does, at first, seem contradictory. For example, he says that "the remnant will be saved" (Rom. 9:27), but later asserts that "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26).[1] Because of such challenges, many scholars in recent years have concluded that Paul's argument in these chapters is simply inconsistent or deliberately ambiguous.

Already in 1986, James W. Aageson suggested that the "impasse" in the study of Romans 9–11 was "the result of too little attention being devoted to Paul's method of developing a theological statement and, in particular, to his technique of scriptural argumentation."[2] Since that time, much work has been done to try to remedy this situation.

In this paper, I would like to draw upon this recent work to make a close study of Romans 9:24–29.[3] I have chosen this passage because it involves several of the key issues found in the whole section. For instance, with regard to his use of the Old Testament, Paul cites in vv. 25–26 two texts from Hosea that were originally addressed to Israel, yet he seemingly applies them to the Gentiles. Another difficulty, which touches upon the coherence of his argument, is whether Paul's citation of Isaiah in vv. 27–29 should be interpreted as favorable or unfavorable

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1   See Heikki Räisänen, "Paul, God, and Israel: Romans 9–11 in Recent Research," in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism: Essays in Tribute to Howard Clark Kee*, eds. Jacob Neusner, et al. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 178–206, at 192: "it would seem that there are considerable internal contradictions in Romans 9–11."

2   James W. Aageson, "Scripture and Structure in the Development of the Argument in Romans 9–11," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 48 (1986): 265–289, at 266.

3   A full discussion of what will be presented here in summary fashion can be found in Pablo T. Gadenz, "'The Lord Will Accomplish His Word': Paul's Argumentation and Use of Scripture in Romans 9:24–29" (S.S.L. thesis, Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2005).

to Israel. The positions one takes with regard to these difficulties will significantly affect one's overall interpretation of Romans 9–11.

My aim, then, is to explain Romans 9:24–29 within the larger context of Romans 9–11. Through an exegesis of the passage, I wish to make a case for the internal coherence of Paul's argument. I will argue that there is a progression of thought, not a contradiction, between chapters 9 and 11.

Throughout the study, I will also examine some aspects of Paul's use of Scripture, such as his application of Jewish techniques of exegesis, which enable us to better understand how he interprets and deploys Old Testament texts in this section of the letter.

Models of Composition in Romans 9:6–29

Jean-Noël Aletti has shown how three models together help to understand Romans 9:6–29— the *midrashic*, the *chiastic*, and the *rhetorical*.[4]

Romans 9:6–29 is not a midrash in the strict sense, since it is not a Scripture commentary. But Aletti suggests that it, nonetheless, has features in common with the midrashim, so that one may conclude that Paul was familiar with, and intentionally used, Jewish techniques of exegesis.[5] For example, Paul follows the basic pattern of the homiletic midrash: a number of scriptural passages are cited to support a thesis, such as the string of Old Testament passages in vv. 7–13, which support the thesis in v. 6b regarding the identity of Israel. In addition, Paul uses "catchwords," such as the verb καλέω ("to call"), which serve to link different parts of his argument. Also, as we will see, he applies the rule of *gezerah shawah*, which joins two passages of Scripture that contain the same or similar words. Finally, Paul uses an "inclusion" to connect the beginning and end of the passage (note the use of the word σπέρμα, "seed," in vv. 7 and 29), and adds a concluding word of consolation or *ḥatima* (see v. 29).

In addition to these characteristics of rabbinic exegesis, Aletti detects in Romans 9:6–29 a chiastic literary structure, which, through a deliberate, repetitious ordering of ideas and vocabulary, directs the reader to Paul's main points. This model, too, emerges from the Old Testament and rabbinic interpretive milieu with which Paul was familiar. From a study of the vocabulary of the small units within this section, the chiastic structure summarized in the table below can be observed.[6]

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4   See Jean-Noël Aletti, *Comment Dieu est-il juste? Clefs pour interpréter l'épître aux Romains* (Paris: Seuil, 1991), 157–178; and his article "L'argumentation paulinienne en Rm 9," *Biblica* 68 (1987): 41–56. For a summary presentation, see also Aletti's commentary, "Romans," in *The International Bible Commentary: A Catholic and Ecumenical Commentary for the Twenty–First Century*, ed. William R. Farmer (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 1553–1600, at 1589–1591.

5   Aletti, *Comment Dieu*, 158–160.

6   See Aletti, "Romans," 1590–1591.

A: vv. 6–9	9:6,9	λόγος	Word	λόγος	9:28	A': vv. 27–29
	9:6²ˣ	Ἰσραήλ	Israel	Ἰσραήλ	9:27²ˣ	
	9:7²ˣ,8	σπέρμα	seed-descendants	σπέρμα	9:29	
	9:9	υἱός	son	υἱός	9:(26),27	
B: vv. 10–13	9:(7),12	καλέω	to call	καλέω	9:24,25,26	B': vv. 24–26
	9:13	ἀγαπάω	to love	ἀγαπάω	9:25²ˣ	
C: vv. 4–18	9:15²ˣ,16,18	ἐλεέω	to have mercy/mercy	ἔλεος	9:23	C': vv. 19–23
	9:16,18²ˣ	θέλω	to will	θέλω	9:22	
	9:17	ἐνδείκνυμι	to show	ἐνδείκνυμι	9:22	
	9:17	δύναμις	power	δυνατόν	9:22	

Of particular interest for our purposes are the links in vocabulary between units AB (vv. 6–13) and B'A' (vv. 24–29). These links highlight important themes of the passage, such as the efficacy of God's word, which has not failed (v. 6a) and which God will accomplish (v. 28).

Aletti also finds a rhetorical model (*dispositio*) which shows how Paul develops his argument in this section of the letter. Aletti emphasizes the importance of identifying the thesis statements (*propositiones*) that govern individual argumentative units and the proofs (*probationes*) that support these thesis statements.[7] In the first part of Romans 9–11,[8] namely Romans 9:6–29, the *propositio* occurs in v. 6a (the word of God has not failed) and is followed by a *probatio* in vv. 7–29.[9] Whereas the chiastic model shows the parallelism between the beginning and the end of the section, the rhetorical model reveals the development of the argumentation.[10]

The Rhetorical Structure of Romans 9:24–29

The compositional models proposed by Aletti provide a framework for understanding the main lines of Paul's argument and for interpreting the individual verses of the text. It is to these individual verses that we now turn.

In the Revised Standard Version (RSV), Romans 9:24–29 reads as follows:

> ₂₄[God has called us] not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles. ₂₅As indeed he says in Hosea, "Those who were not my people I will call 'my people,' and her who was not beloved I will call 'my beloved.'" ₂₆"And in the very place where it was

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7   See the articles by Jean-Noël Aletti, "La *dispositio* rhétorique dans les épîtres pauliniennes. Propositions de méthode," *New Testament Studies* 38 (1992): 385–401, at 390-391; "La présence d'un modèle rhétorique en Romains: Son rôle et son importance," *Biblica* 71 (1990): 1–24, at 8–12. On the importance of the *propositiones* in the argument of Romans 9–11, see Aletti, *Comment Dieu*, 148–150.

8   Aletti's rhetorical model for Romans 9–11 is as follows: introduction (*exordium*) 9:1–5; a three-part *probatio*: 9:6–29 (*propositio* in 9:6a), 9:30–10:21 (*propositio* in 10:4), 11:1–32 (*propositio* in 11:1a); and conclusion (*peroratio*) 11:33–36. See "Romans," 1589. Compare the outline in Aageson, "Scripture and Structure," 286–287.

9   See Aletti, *Comment Dieu*, 160–162. Aletti explains that the *probatio* itself consists of three stages: 9:6b–13 (assertions based on Scripture); 9:14–23 (questions/answers with imaginary interlocutor); 9:24–29 (proof from Scripture).

10 Aletti, "Romans," 1591.

said to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God.'" 27And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved; 28for the Lord will execute his sentence upon the earth with rigor and dispatch." 29And as Isaiah predicted, "If the Lord of hosts had not left us children, we would have fared like Sodom and been made like Gomorrah."

In these verses, v. 24 serves as a thesis statement which is supported in vv. 25–29 by a chain of scriptural citations from Hosea and Isaiah. The citations also confirm the governing thesis (*propositio*) of the broader passage (Rom. 9:6–29), namely, that God's word has not failed (v. 6). Paul's argument has two parts. First, he has to show that God's word has not failed with regard to the rejection of the Gospel by the majority of Jews. Secondly, he has to show that God's word has not failed in regards to the acceptance of the Gospel by Gentiles, who are mentioned for the first time in Romans 9:24.

Paul develops the second part of his argument first. Note the rhetorical *reversio*: while the Jews are mentioned first and then the Gentiles in v. 24, in the scriptural proofs, the Gentiles are treated first (vv. 25–26) and then the Jews (vv. 27–29). Many scholars agree with this breakdown of Paul's argument; they understand vv. 25–26 to refer to Gentile-Christians and vv. 27–29 (the "remnant" and the "seed") to refer to Judeo-Christians.[11] Others scholars, however, disagree.[12]

These other positions will be considered below in the exegesis of the individual verses. Obviously, proper identification of the groups to which vv. 25–29 refer is essential for a correct understanding of the passage. It is also important for examining the alleged contradiction in Romans 9–11 and for determining whether Romans 9:6–29 concludes on a favorable or unfavorable note with regard to Israel.

The "Call" of God (Romans 9:24)

In v. 24, the "catchword" καλέω ("to call"), reappears after its absence in vv. 14–23. The verb is used to indicate the scope of God's call. Paul writes that God calls "us"— that is, Paul and those to whom he writes—hence, those who believe in Christ. The end of the verse specifies that these believers in Christ are taken ἐξ Ἰουδαίων … καὶ ἐξ ἐθνῶν. Since one of the challenges in this passage is the correct identification of the groups to whom Paul refers, it is helpful to say a word about these two groups mentioned in v. 24.

The word ἔθνος occurs in Romans a total of 29 times, 27 of which (including

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11 See, for example, C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2 vols., International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975, 1979), 2:501.

12 See, for example, J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul "In Concert" in the Letter to the Romans*, Novum Testamentum Supplements 101 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 79.

9:24) are in the plural. The words typically used to translate the plural form ἔθνη are "Gentiles," "pagans," or "nations." Often, a particular translation is determined by considering whether or not the term in a given context carries a positive or negative connotation. For example, the translation "pagans" is used especially when the word has a negative connotation (see 1 Cor. 5:1).

Of more importance, however, may be the quantitative distinction between the collective ("nations") and individualizing ("Gentiles"). James M. Scott, after reviewing the usage of the term in the Septuagint (LXX), in Hellenistic-Jewish literature, and in Paul, distinguishes three uses of ἔθνη.[13] The term can refer to the "nations" of the world, including Israel (Exod. 19:5–6 LXX); the non-Jewish "nations" (Rom. 15:10); or individuals ("Gentiles") of any nation apart from the nation of the Jews (Rom. 2:14; 9:30; 11:13). Often, when Paul speaks of individual Gentiles, he prefers the term "Greeks" (Ἕλληνες; see Rom. 1:14; 3:9) or the singular Ἕλλην (Rom. 1:16; 2:9–10; 10:12). Concerning Romans 9:24, Scott favors the third sense because of "the antithesis between Ἰουδαῖοι and ἔθνη." Scott's overall conclusion, however, should be kept in mind: "Paul clearly thinks in terms of 'nations,' not just of individual 'Gentiles.'"[14]

The word Ἰουδαῖος occurs in Romans eleven times,[15] but only twice in Romans 9–11 where instead the terms Ἰσραηλίτης and Ἰσραήλ are used; these terms, on the other hand, do not occur in Romans outside of chapters 9–11. We will return to a consideration of the term "Israel" in the discussion of v. 27 below.

Regarding the meaning of Ἰουδαῖος, of interest is Shaye Cohen's study of the use of the term in the Hellenistic era. Cohen indicates that the word has three basic meanings: a Judean (an ethnic-geographical term); a Jew (a religious-cultural term); or a citizen of the Judean state (a political term).[16] In all occurrences before the end of the second century B.C., Cohen argues, the ethnic-geographic meaning is the correct one.[17] Only in the Hasmonean era does the religious meaning emerge.[18] Nonetheless, Cohen says that the term Ἰουδαῖος always "retained its ethnic component" even when the religious meaning became more prominent.[19] In Romans 9:24, it is helpful, therefore, not to exclude the ethnic-geographic component from the term Ἰουδαῖοι, and to keep in mind the possible dual sense (ethnic-geographic and religious) of the word. Because of the parallelism in the construction of v. 24, such a dual understanding of Ἰουδαῖοι also contributes to

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13 See the discussion in James M. Scott, *Paul and the Nations: The Old Testament and Jewish Background of Paul's Mission to the Nations with Special Reference to the Destination of Galatians*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 84 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 120–124.

14 Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 134.

15 Rom. 1:16; 2:9, 10, 17, 28, 29; 3:1, 9, 29; 9:24; 10:12.

16 Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, Hellenistic Culture and Society 31 (Berkeley: University of California, 1999), 70–71.

17 Cohen, *Jewishness*, 69–106.

18 Cohen, *Jewishness*, 109–139.

19 Cohen, *Jewishness*, 133.

a possible understanding of ἔθνη which is ethnic-geographic and collective ("nations"), on the one hand, and religious and individual ("Gentiles"), on the other.

A final question in the text is how to interpret the preposition ἐκ in the parallel expressions ἐξ Ἰουδαίων and ἐξ ἐθνῶν. Whereas Paul uses ἐκ at times (even in Romans 9–11) to indicate origin as to race or family (for example, οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ in Romans 9:6), here in Romans 9:24, it is rather to be understood as indicating separation ("out of," "from among").[20]

In summary, then, Romans 9:24 explains who the recipients of God's call are in Paul's own time, namely, believers in Christ, who come "from among the Judeans/Jews" and "from among the nations/Gentiles."[21] The verses that follow (vv. 25–29) provide Scriptural support for God's calling of believers from these two groups.

Calling Believers Out of the Nations (Romans 9:25–26)

Following the two-part thesis statement in v. 24, Paul now moves to the *probatio*, the "proof," in which he cites in succession a number of carefully interwoven Scriptural texts. In vv. 25–26, he begins by supporting the second part of the thesis statement, the part that involves the Gentiles. He combines two citations from the prophet Hosea to substantiate the claim that God has called "vessels of mercy" from among the Gentiles.

In v. 25, after an introductory formula, Paul loosely quotes from the Septuagint translation of Hosea 2:23. For our purposes here, of interest is Paul's change of the verb from ἐρῶ ("I will say") to καλέσω ("I will call"). This change links the citation both to v. 24 and to the citation of Hosea 1:10 LXX in v. 26 (in both vv. 24 and 26, the verb καλέω also occurs).[22]

The most serious point of debate in these verses is the identity of those addressed. In their original context, the texts from Hosea refer to the promised restoration of the ten northern tribes of Israel.[23] Does Paul disregard this original context? To what group does Paul apply these texts of Hosea?

This issue has particularly interested scholars because of its implications regarding Paul's hermeneutics. Reviewing the literature, three basic positions can be enumerated: first, that Paul applies the Hosea texts to currently unbelieving

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20 See James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, Word Biblical Commentary 38B (Dallas: Word Books, 1988), 570: "The ἐκ indicates a calling 'out of,' with implication of separation, from a larger body."

21 In passing, it is interesting to speculate (especially in view of the citations from Hosea in vv. 25–26 whose original context is the restoration of the northern tribes) whether the expression ἐξ ἐθνῶν might not also echo Old Testament prophecies in which God gathers the Israelites from among the nations. In Ezekiel LXX, for example, the phrase ἐκ τῶν ἐθνῶν occurs five times (Ezek. 11:17; 28:25; 34:13; 36:24; 39:27), and the phrase ἐξ ἐθνῶν once (Ezek. 38:8) with this meaning. Also, in Ezek 37:21, in the prophecy of the "two sticks," there is the expression ἐκ μέσου τῶν ἐθνῶν. Could Paul have thought of the fulfillment of this prophecy when writing that God has called "us" ἐξ Ἰουδαίων … καὶ ἐξ ἐθνῶν?

22 See Aageson, "Scripture and Structure," 272–273.

23 See, for example, Simon Légasse, *L'Épître de Paul aux Romains*, Lectio Divina Commentaires 10 (Paris: Cerf, 2002), 618; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 33 (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 573.

Israel, and hence, in continuity with their original context;[24] second, that he applies the texts to believers from among both Jews and Gentiles (see v. 24);[25] and third, that he applies the texts to Gentile believers (those ἐξ ἐθνῶν in v. 24).[26]

There are several difficulties with the first position.[27] First, it appears from the words ὡς καί, ("as indeed") at the beginning of v. 25 that Paul invokes the texts from Hosea to support what he has just said in v. 24 regarding God's calling of believers from among the Gentiles. It also appears from the mention of "Israel" in v. 27 that vv. 27–29 apply to a different group than vv. 25–26, and that the conjunction δέ, at the beginning of v. 27 should be interpreted adversatively ("but"). Also, as we will see below, Paul modifies the citation of Isaiah 10:22 in v. 27, the result of which is to avoid referring to Israel with the word λαός ("people"), which is already used in vv. 25–26; this change seems to reflect the intention to distinguish two different groups in vv. 25–26 and vv. 27–29. Finally, it seems difficult to reconcile what v. 27 says about the salvation of the remnant with the promise of Israel's restoration in vv. 25–26, if indeed vv. 25–26 are meant to apply to Israel.

The second position can also be critiqued. The chief difficulty here is that if vv. 25–26 apply to believing Jews, and not just believing Gentiles, then it follows that the believing Jews, who are among those called by God (v. 24), were at one time among the "not my people" and have now become "my people." This would imply, however, that there was not always at least a group of Jews called by God, and hence that God's word had failed (v. 6a).[28]

Because of the difficulties with positions one and two, the only viable interpretation seems to be the third one, namely, that Paul applies the Hosea texts to Gentile believers. We have already seen above how the rhetorical structure of vv. 24–29 (*reversio*) leads to such a conclusion. This position is also supported by consideration of how the Hosea texts were interpreted in other Jewish and Christian texts. For example, 1 Peter 2:10 clearly alludes to Hosea 2:25 (2:23 LXX) to refer to Christians generally, even though there is not a direct citation of Hosea as there is in Romans 9:25.[29]

Also, it is interesting to note that the Pesachim tractate of the Babylonian Talmud is witness to a tradition that understands Hosea 2:25 with respect to

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24 John A. Battle, Jr., "Paul's Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9:25–26," *Grace Theological Journal* 2 (1981): 115–129.

25 Wagner, *Heralds*, 86; Nils Alstrup Dahl, *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977), 146.

26 Many scholars fall into this category, but they offer different explanations. While some think that Paul disregards the original context of the Hosea texts, others understand the application of the texts to the Gentiles by way of analogy, since the same principle is at work for the Gentiles that once applied to northern Israel; see, for example, Dunn, *Romans*, 571-572.

27 Aletti, "L'argumentation paulinienne," 48-50.

28 Aletti, "L'argumentation paulinienne," 49-50.

29 See John Hall Elliott, *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 37B (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 20–23, 37–40, 442.

God's plan for the Gentiles: God sowed (that is, exiled) Israel among the nations in order that there might be a harvest among the Gentiles.[30] From this last consideration, it is possible to think that Paul, in applying the Hosea texts to the Gentiles, did not disregard the original context but actually had it very much in mind. Since the ten northern tribes of Israel about whom Hosea prophesied were dispersed among the nations, God had to call believers from among the nations (ἐξ ἐθνῶν in v. 24) in order to bring about the restoration of Israel.[31] Now, a number of scholars suggest that Paul, while primarily applying the Hosea texts in vv. 25–26 to the Gentiles, may also have in mind the original context in Hosea of the ten northern tribes.[32] What is being suggested here is that such a consideration need not look elsewhere for another referent for the citations, since it is already contained in the same referent, namely, those called ἐξ ἐθνῶν. This suggestion respects the rhetorical structure of Romans 9:24–29, and at the same time, tries to take more fully into consideration the biblical context of Paul's Old Testament citations. With this suggestion, it is perhaps already possible, therefore, to see that in Romans 9, Paul is preparing for what will follow in Romans 11 regarding the salvation of Israel.

In summary, Paul does indeed apply the Hosea texts to the Gentiles in order to provide Scriptural support for the call of believers ἐξ ἐθνῶν (v. 24). Nonetheless, we have seen that Paul may still have the original context of the Hosea prophecies in mind, and understands the restoration of the northern tribes (and hence, "all Israel") to come about through the call of the Gentiles (see Rom. 11:25–26).

Salvation of the Remnant (Romans 9:27)

Having discussed in vv. 25–26 how God has called believers from among the Gentiles, Paul moves in vv. 27–29 to consider the other group mentioned in v. 24, namely, those called from among the Jews. After an introductory formula, Paul quotes in vv. 27–28 an abbreviated and adapted form of Isaiah 10:22–23.

Paul exchanges Isaiah's phrase ὁ λαὸς Ἰσραήλ ("the people of Israel" Isa. 10:22 LXX) with the phrase ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ ("the number of the sons of Israel"). This phrase is taken from the first half of Hosea 1:10 LXX, the same verse that was quoted in v. 26.[33] The change results from Paul's application of the rabbinic exegetical rule of *gezerah shawah*,[34] which finds a literary analogy

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30 See b. Pes. 87b.; see, for example, *New Edition of the Babylonian Talmud*, ed. Michael L. Rodkinson, 18 vols. (New York: New Amsterdam Book Co., 1896–1903), 5:177.

31 Recall the discussion above regarding ἐκ in v. 24 as indicating separation, and ἐξ ἐθνῶν possibly being understood as "out of the nations."

32 See, for example, Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:500. J. Paul Tanner, "The New Covenant and Paul's Quotations from Hosea in Romans 9:25–26," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 162 (2005): 95–110, at 101, says that Paul's *"point in Romans 9 was not to deny a fulfillment with Israel but only to affirm a fulfillment also with Gentiles."*

33 See Christopher D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 69 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 114–115.

34 Moses Mielziner, *Introduction to the Talmud*, ed. Alexander Guttmann (New York: Bloch, 1968), 143, explains that

between two passages of Scripture that contain the same or similar words. In this case, the Hebrew text of Isaiah contains the phrase יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּחוֹל הַיָּם ("Israel as the sand of the sea"), which only occurs elsewhere in Hosea 2:1 (Hos. 1:10 LXX).[35] A link is thus established between the verses such that one verse can be used in the interpretation of the other. As noted above, an effect of the change is that it enables Paul to avoid designating Israel with the word λαός, a term applied to the Gentiles in vv. 25–26, thereby emphasizing the distinction between the group referred to in vv. 25–26 and that referred to in vv. 27–29.

Also of significance for the interpretation of the verse is the translation of Isaiah's phrase τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σωθήσεται ("the remnant will be saved") and the connotation to be associated with the concept of "remnant." Many modern versions translate: "*only* a remnant will be saved."[36] A few commentators correctly insist, however, that while the insertion of "only" *may* be a fitting part of an interpretation, it is not properly part of the translation itself.[37]

Before considering the connotation of v. 27, however, it is helpful to clarify the identity of the actors (Israel and the remnant) in Paul's application of Isaiah. As discussed above, Paul in vv. 27–29 turns his attention to believers called from among the Jews (v. 24). These Judeo-Christians are identified with the "remnant" (v. 27) and the "seed" (v. 29).[38] By contrast, the term "Israel"[39] in v. 27 refers to a larger group, of which the remnant is a small part.

The distinction between a larger group and a smaller subset recalls that made by Paul in 9:6b: "for not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel." Indeed, throughout Romans 9–11, Paul at times uses the term "Israel" for the larger group, despite the distinction made in 9:6b.[40] A key question then arises regarding which sense Paul means in 11:26 when he refers to the salvation of "all Israel."

From the perspective of the Old Testament background, scholars agree that "all Israel" is to be understood in a historical and ethnic sense—that is, "the

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the rule of *gezerah shawah* denotes "an analogy based on identical or similar words occurring in two different passages of Scripture"; one of the rule's uses is to construe laws "with reference to each other." See also Dan Cohn-Sherbok, "Paul and Rabbinic Exegesis," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 35 (1982): 117–132, especially 127–128 for the rule of *gezerah shawah*. For Paul's use of the rule in this verse, see Aletti, *Comment Dieu*, 170, 219–222.

35 In this case, the literary analogy works also with the Greek texts.

36 For example, see the translation of v. 27 in the following versions: New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), Revised Standard Version (RSV), New American Bible (NAB), and New International Version (NIV).

37 For grammatical issues related to whether the clause should be understood concessively ("though" or "even if") or conditionally ("if"), see James Hope Moulton and Nigel Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek: III. Syntax* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963), 114. See also Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 68.

38 Many scholars identify the remnant with Judeo-Christians like Paul himself; see, for example, Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 574.

39 The term Ἰσραήλ occurs eleven times in the letter (Rom. 9:6²ˣ,27²ˣ,31; 10:19, 21; 11:2, 7, 25–26) and the term Ἰσραηλίτης occurs twice (Rom. 9:4; 11:1). It is noteworthy that Paul uses these terms only in chapters 9–11. Scholars generally explain the change in terminological emphasis from Ἰουδαῖος to Ἰσραήλ by saying that Paul uses the term "Israel" in Romans 9–11 because he is considering the question from the perspective of salvation history; see, for example, James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998), 505–506.

40 Jean-Noël Aletti, *Israël et la loi dans la lettre aux Romains*, Lectio Divina 173 (Paris: Cerf, 1998), 237.

tribal structure of the descendants of Jacob/Israel, whether to all twelve tribes, to the northern tribes, or to the southern tribes."[41] The term can also "be used to denote a representative selection from the full complement of the tribes."[42] From the perspective of Paul's argumentation in Romans 9–11, the phrase "all Israel" can be interpreted in a quantitative sense to mean the sum of the remnant plus "the others" (οἱ λοιποί in 11:7) who are presently hardened.[43]

We now turn to a consideration of whether v. 27 should be interpreted as a positive word of hope, emphasizing the salvation of the remnant, or a negative word of judgment, emphasizing the non-salvation of the non-remnant majority of Israel. The text of Isaiah 10:22–23, cited by Paul in v. 27, is generally interpreted to combine both dimensions.[44] Some scholars therefore suggest that Romans 9:27 likewise contains both a positive and a negative aspect, while others emphasize one aspect or the other.[45]

For various reasons, however, the positive understanding of the remnant concept appears indeed to be the one emphasized by Paul. First, considering Paul's rhetorical structure, it is important to recall that vv. 25–29 function to support the thesis in v. 24 regarding God's calling of believers from among the Gentiles (vv. 25–26) and from among the Jews (vv. 27–29). Paul's discussion of the remnant, considered in light of his thesis, is therefore not focused on those rejected but on those called; hence, the positive aspect is emphasized.[46]

Moreover, several scholars suggest that Paul's use of the remnant concept should be understood in light of the hope for the promised restoration of Israel, a dominant theme in the Second Temple Period.[47] Seen in this context, the remnant does not imply destruction for those in Israel who are not part of the remnant. Rather, the salvation of the remnant becomes a sign and pledge of the salvation of Israel as a whole.[48] For these reasons, one can argue that already in Romans 9:27,

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41 James M. Scott, "'And then All Israel will be Saved' (Rom 11:26)," in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, ed., James M. Scott, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 72 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 489–527, at 507. See the whole section, 498–507, for Scott's analysis of the Old Testament texts.

42 Scott, "All Israel," 507.

43 Scott, "All Israel," 518; Aletti, *Comment Dieu*, 186-187.

44 See Gerhard F. Hasel, *The Remnant: The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah*, Andrews University Monographs 5 (Berrien Springs, MI.: Andrews University Press, 1972), especially 318–331 and 398–399 for Hasel's treatment of Isaiah 10:20–23. Hasel writes that "[t]he juxtaposition of salvation and judgment in 10:20–23 is typical of Isaiah's thought and theology" (399).

45 Among scholars who see both positive and negative aspects in Paul's use of the remnant concept in Romans 9:27–28 is James W. Aageson, "Typology, Correspondence, and the Application of Scripture in Romans 9–11," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 31 (1987): 51–72, at 57–58, 69, n. 28. Among those emphasizing the negative aspect of judgment are Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 275; and Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:501. Among those emphasizing the positive aspect of hope are Aletti, "L'argumentation paulinienne," 51–52; and Dunn, *Romans*, 573.

46 Aletti, *Israël*, 183; Wagner, *Heralds*, 107.

47 See Wagner, *Heralds*, 108; Scott, "All Israel," 520; and James W. Watts, "The Remnant Theme: A Survey of New Testament Research, 1921–1987," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 15 (1988): 109–129, at 123–124.

48 Wagner, *Heralds*, 109: "For Paul, the salvation of the remnant upholds God's covenant faithfulness and pledges the eventual salvation of 'all Israel' (11:26)."

Paul is preparing the way for his statement regarding the salvation of "all Israel" in 11:26. There is thus a progression, not a contradiction between the two verses.

Decisive Fulfillment of the Word of God (Romans 9:28)

In v. 28, Paul continues with the abbreviated citation of Isaiah 10:22–23 begun in v. 27. Of interest is the change at the end of the citation. Here it can be argued that Paul modified the text under the influence of Isaiah 28:22, once again applying the principle of *gezerah shawah*.[49] The Hebrew phrase כִּי כָלָה וְנֶחֱרָצָה ("for decreed destruction") occurs only in these two verses. As a result of the *gezerah shawah*, Isaiah 10:23 and 28:22 are linked as being mutually interpretive. Thus, Paul substitutes certain words at the end of the citation in order, it seems, to strengthen the positive sense of the text.[50]

The chief difficulties in the verse are semantic: what is the precise meaning of λόγος and of the participial pair συντελῶν and συντέμνων? Many versions translate λόγος, not as "word," but as "sentence."[51] Such a translation clearly carries a connotation of God's judgment on Israel and hence contributes to an overall negative interpretation of the whole passage. Certainly, if v. 27 is understood as a word of judgment, then v. 28—which functions syntactically to confirm v. 27 (γάρ)—will also be understood that way. However, in the discussion above, it was argued that v. 27 should be interpreted positively; in this case, v. 28 should confirm this positive interpretation.

Another problem with translating λόγος as "sentence," is that it obscures the link to the occurrence of λόγος in Paul's thesis statement (the *propositio* "the word of God has not failed," v. 6a).[52] The word λόγος also occurs in v. 9, where it refers specifically to God's word of promise to Abraham regarding a descendant (Gen. 18:10, 14). It is better, therefore, to take λόγος in v. 28 also as referring to God's word, not a word of judgment (a "sentence") but rather a word of promise, namely, the one just mentioned in v. 27 regarding the salvation of the remnant.[53]

Turning to a consideration of the participles, the meaning of συντελῶν is more easily understood than that of συντέμνων. The verb συντελέω occurs six times in the New Testament,[54] and its meaning is "to complete/finish," "to fulfill/execute/accomplish," or "to end/be over." Hence, the phrase λόγον … συντελῶν

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49 See John Paul Heil, "From Remnant to Seed of Hope for Israel: Romans 9:27–29," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 64 (2002): 703–720, at 713–714. Heil, however, considers the *gezerah shawah* at the level of the Greek LXX text.

50 See Wagner, *Heralds*, 105: "the reverberations of Isaiah 28:22b in Romans 9:28 enrich and amplify the note of imminent deliverance." Also, the LXX translation of vv. 22–23 lacks the words of destruction (כליון and כלה) found in the Hebrew, thus contributing to the positive sense of Romans 9:28; see Aletti, "L'argumentation paulinienne," 51, n. 22.

51 See, for example, the NRSV, RSV, NAB, and NIV.

52 Recall the chiastic structure of 9:6–29 in the table above.

53 Erich Seitz, "λόγον συντέμνων—eine Gerichtsankündigung? (Zu Römer 9, 27/28)," *Biblische Notizen* 109 (2001): 56–82, at 66.

54 The six occurrences are in Mark 13:4; Luke 4:2, 13; Acts 21:27; Rom. 9:28; and Heb. 8:8.

... ποιήσει κύριος in Romans 9:28 means that the Lord will carry out his word, that he will bring it to fulfillment.[55]

The verb συντέμνω, on the other hand, is rare, not occurring elsewhere in the New Testament and occurring in the LXX only several times.[56] Its meaning is usually given as "to cut short/shorten," and "to limit/curtail." The problem, then, in Romans 9:28 seems to be to determine the object of the shortening or limiting action of the verb.

Many scholars understand "time" as the implied object of συντέμνω, so that the idea is that God will accomplish his word by curtailing the time, and hence the word is accomplished "quickly" (NRSV, NAB) or "with speed" (NIV).[57] Together with the translation of λόγος as "sentence," this temporal understanding of the participle leads to the idea of "swift judgment" — hence, a negative interpretation. Arguing against this common interpretation, however, is Paul's statement, only a few verses earlier, that God's way of fulfilling his word is just the opposite of swift; God instead exercises much patience (9:22; see 2:4).[58]

A second suggestion is to consider λόγος as the object of the participle, with the idea that God fulfills and curtails his word; in other words, that the scope of the promise is limited.[59] This would seem to imply, however, that God's word (9:6a) had, for the most part, failed.[60] To get around this difficulty, it is suggested that "Israel" (in v. 27) is really the object of συντέμνων, rather than λόγος: the idea is that the fulfillment of God's word or promise applies to a "curtailed" Israel; that is, to a remnant. A negative interpretation is also associated with this understanding: if God's word is fulfilled in only a diminished Israel, then the majority of Israel has no hope of salvation.[61] The difficulty with this interpretation, however, is that there is not a good grammatical basis for understanding the object of the participle to be "Israel."

Since it is grammatically easier to take λόγος as the object of the participle (indeed, as the object of both participles), it is worthwhile to take a closer look at this option, taking into account the objection just mentioned, namely, that the interpretation "curtailing the word" contradicts Paul's earlier claim that God's word has not failed (9:6a). It is necessary, therefore, to study more closely the meaning of συντέμνω as it is used in the Greek Old Testament.

On four occasions (Isa. 10:22, 23; 28:22; Dan. 9:26 Theodotion), the verb

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55 Seitz, "Gerichtsankündigung?" 64.

56 In the LXX, the verb συντέμνω occurs in the following passages: 2 Macc. 10:10; Isa. 10:22, 23; 28:22; Dan. 5:27; and Dan. 9:24,26 (Theodotion).

57 See the discussion in Wagner, *Heralds*, 103–104.

58 Seitz,"Gerichtsankündigung?" 68.

59 Heinrich Schlier, *Der Römerbrief*, Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 6 (Freiburg: Herder, 1977), 304–305.

60 Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, 3 vols., Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 6 (Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 1978, 1980, 1982), 2:207.

61 Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:207.

συντέμνω appears as part of a translation in which appears the Hebrew root חרץ. This root can mean "to cut/sharpen," but in these four passages has the meaning "to decide/determine."[62] Also, on one occasion (Dan. 9:24 Theodotion), συντέμνω is used to translate the root חתך, which means "to determine." The usage of the verb συντέμνω in the Greek Bible, therefore, suggests that the correct meaning of συντέμνω in Romans 9:28 may be "to decide" or "to determine."[63]

Another important observation regarding the use of συντέμνω in the Greek Old Testament is that several times it appears together with συντελέω, so that the two verbs can be understood as forming a hendiadys related to the Hebrew hendiadys כָלָה וְנֶחֱרָצָה.[64] In addition to Isaiah 10:22 LXX (συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων), the two Greek verbs also occur together in Isaiah 28:22 and Daniel 5:27 LXX. In a hendiadys, two ideas are coordinated, and one of them is dependent on the other as a further determination of it.[65] In our case, the "fulfilling" (συντελῶν) is dependent on the "deciding/determining" (συντέμνων) since the logical order would be that one first makes a decision and then carries it out. This logical order is the order of the participles in the last-mentioned verse (Dan. 5:27 LXX). In Romans 9:28 (and in Isaiah 28:22), however, the participles are reversed, apparently to put emphasis on the fulfilling (συντελῶν) of the word, an idea which parallels the action of the main verb ποιήσει.[66] A possible translation of the Greek participial pair in Romans 9:28, therefore, could be "fulfilling and deciding," or, considering the pair as a hendiadys, "fulfilling decisively"; all of v. 28 might therefore be rendered: "For decisively fulfilling [his] word, the Lord will accomplish [it] on the earth."[67]

In summary, the function of v. 28 is to confirm (γάρ) the "word" expressed in v. 27 regarding the salvation of the remnant by indicating that God will accomplish this word on the earth, bringing it to decisive fulfillment. The citation from Isaiah in Romans 9:28, therefore, highlights the efficacy of God's word (9:6a),[68] a word which is here a positive word of salvation. The results of our study of the meaning of λόγος and of the participial pair συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων rule out the negative interpretation of the verse that understands it in terms of a sentence of swift judgment on Israel. The results regarding v. 28 also confirm the positive interpretation of v. 27 given earlier.

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62 See Seitz, "Gerichtsankündigung?" 68–70; Heil, "From Remnant to Seed," 715.

63 See Seitz, "Gerichtsankündigung?" 73; Heil, "From Remnant to Seed," 715.

64 Heil, "From Remnant to Seed," 714.

65 See Friedrich Blass and Albert Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. and trans. Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), §442,16.

66 Seitz, "Gerichtsankündigung?" 71-72; Heil, "From Remnant to Seed," 715.

67 Compare Seitz, "Gerichtsankündigung?" 73; Heil, "From Remnant to Seed," 720.

68 Aletti, "L'argumentation paulinienne," 51.

The Sign of Hope (Romans 9:29)

In contrast to the earlier citations in 9:25–28, Paul in v. 29 cites the LXX text of Isaiah 1:9 exactly. This citation corroborates the citation of Isaiah 10:22–23 in vv. 27–28, since the two citations are linked by the comparative conjunctive phrase καὶ καθώς ("and just as"). The syntax suggests, therefore, that v. 29 and vv. 27–28 express parallel rather than antithetical ideas.[69]

From the parallelism, it follows that the key words ὑπόλειμμα ("remnant") in v. 27 and σπέρμα ("seed") in v. 29 refer to the same group of people. The link between the two words is also indicated by the verb in v. 29, ἐγκατέλιπεν, from the lexical form ἐγκαταλείπω ("to leave behind"), a cognate of λεῖμμα (the word for "remnant" used in 11:5) and ὑπόλειμμα.[70] The recurrence of the word σπέρμα in v. 29 functions as an inclusion, linking this final unit (A': vv. 27–29) with the first unit (A: vv. 6–9), in which σπέρμα occurs twice in v. 7 and once in v. 8. Because of the syntactical and semantic links between v. 29 and vv. 27–28, it follows that if v. 29 is understood positively as a word of reassurance, then vv. 27–28 should also be so understood, and not as a word of judgment on Israel.[71] Verse 29 can thus provide a further reason for understanding the more difficult vv. 27–28 in a positive way.

However, in interpreting v. 29, some scholars believe that Paul here affirms that there is no longer any hope of salvation for Israel, apart from the believing remnant.[72] Does v. 29, however, really yield such a negative assessment? To answer this question, it is helpful to note that, grammatically, the citation of Isaiah 1:9 LXX in Romans 9:29 is an unreal conditional sentence.[73] The part of the citation which is interpreted as a judgment on Israel (the reference to Sodom and Gomorrah) is in the apodosis of the conditional clause, and hence, never occurs because the unreal condition is never fulfilled. Those who argue in favor of the negative interpretation nevertheless interpret the conditional clause to mean that, except for the "seed" which is spared, the same fate as that of Sodom and Gomorrah will fall on Israel.[74]

The conditional clause, however, can be interpreted to mean that since God has left a "seed" of Israel, the judgment, like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, will not fall on Israel at all.[75] To substantiate this positive interpretation of the conditional

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69 Some commentators, apparently failing to see the parallelism, contrast vv. 27–28 and v. 29, seeing the former negatively, and the latter positively; for example, James W. Aageson, *Written Also for Our Sake: Paul and the Art of Biblical Interpretation* (Louisville, KY.: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 93–94.

70 See also the excursus on the seed-remnant relationship in Paul Edward Dinter, "The Remnant of Israel and the Stone of Stumbling in Zion According to Paul (Romans 9–11)" (Ph.D. diss., Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York, 1980), 347–356.

71 Seitz, "Gerichtsankündigung?" 58.

72 For example, Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:207.

73 See Blass and Debrunner, *Greek Grammar*, §360.

74 See Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 575.

75 Wagner, *Heralds*, 110: "the citation of Isaiah 1:9 provides decisive evidence that Paul's appeal to Isaiah in Romans

clause, one can consider that, in reference to Israel, the "seed" language in the Old Testament and in other Jewish literature has a positive connotation: it indicates not only the continued survival of Israel, but also its future growth.[76]

One can also arrive at the positive interpretation by referring once again to Paul's use of compositional models. With regard to the rhetorical and chiastic models, v. 29 functions in a positive way to show that God's word has not failed (v. 6a): the promise of "seed" (v. 7) has become a reality experienced by the "seed"- remnant itself.[77] With regard to the midrashic model, recall that the conclusion of a midrashic homily contains a word of consolation (*ḥatima*)[78]; Paul's citation of Isaiah 1:9 is meant also to function as a concluding word of hope at the end of the section, Romans 9:6–29.[79]

Both on account of the Old Testament background and on account of Paul's argumentation, therefore, the positive interpretation of v. 29 is to be favored over the negative interpretation. Finally, because of the syntactical and semantic links between v. 29 and vv. 27–28, the positive interpretation of vv. 27–28 is also confirmed. In summary, Paul's citation of the "seed" text from Isaiah 1:9 serves as a sign of hope for Israel, and thus prepares for what Paul will say in Romans 11:26 regarding the salvation of all Israel.[80]

Romans 9:24–29: Directions for Future Research

At the end of this paper, I wish to note some conclusions and suggestions for future work in Romans 9–11, not only at the levels of exegesis and theology, but also at the level of methodology.

At the level of exegesis, one of the difficulties examined here in detail is the apparent disregard of the original context of the Hosea citations in Romans 9:25–26. The exegesis of vv. 25–26 showed that while Paul indeed does apply the texts to the Gentiles, he does not ignore Hosea's original context, which refers to the restoration of the northern tribes of Israel. Since the ten northern tribes of Israel were dispersed among the nations or Gentiles, God had to call believers from among the nations in order to bring about the restoration of all Israel. In Paul's mind, the restoration of Israel is, therefore, closely connected to the calling of the Gentiles (see Rom. 11:25–26).

More work is needed in this area, especially with regard to the possibility that Paul is thinking of the restoration of the northern tribes throughout Romans

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9:27–29 is intended as a word of *hope* for the remnant––and ultimately for Israel as a whole."

76 Wagner, *Heralds*, 112–115.

77 Aletti, "L'argumentation paulinienne," 52.

78 On the *ḥatima*, see Hermann L. Strack and Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, trans. Markus Bockmuehl (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991), 266-268.

79 Aletti, *Israël*, 183.

80 Aletti, "L'argumentation paulinienne," 52. Also, Wagner, *Heralds*, 116: "it is clear that Paul's reference to the 'seed' in Romans 9:29 carries with it the germ of his conclusion in 11:26 that God will certainly redeem 'all Israel.'"

9–11.[81] More study is also needed of the distinctions between terms such as Ἰουδαῖος (Jew/Judean) and Ἰσραήλ (Israel).[82] Paul's shift in terminology from Jew to Israel in Romans 9–11 was noted above, but an understanding of the full significance of the shift requires further investigation in the Jewish literature of the time-period.

With regard to issues of theology arising from a study of Romans 9–11, of particular interest are ecclesiological questions, especially in light of ongoing Jewish-Christian dialogue. Since Paul affirms that Israel continues to have a role in God's plan of salvation (see Rom. 11:11–15), scholars often consider the relationship between Israel and the Church, and the models that can be used to describe this relationship. However, more attention should also be given to the relationship between Israel and *the nations* or *Gentiles*, since this is the relationship about which Paul speaks more directly––especially in Romans 11.[83] Indeed, the Church consists of believers called both from among the Jews and from among the Gentiles or the nations (9:24). Further work is needed, then, to understand the respective roles of Israel and the nations in God's plan of salvation, and to understand how Paul viewed his own mission as "apostle to the nations" (Rom. 11:13).[84]

With regard to methodology, one of the concerns of this study has been to show the importance of paying close attention to *how* Paul develops an argument, in order to understand better *what* he is truly affirming. Studies which do not attend closely to the logic of Paul's argument run the risk of either seriously misunderstanding it or concluding prematurely that it is inconsistent.

The exegesis in this study made use of three compositional models (midrashic, chiastic, and rhetorical) that have been proposed by Jean-Noël Aletti to aid in understanding Romans 9:6–29, the first part of Romans 9–11. It is important to emphasize that these models are not imposed on the text from outside, but are developed from observations within the text itself. The explanatory power of these models was confirmed in the exegetical analysis of Romans 9:24–29.

Together with the focus on Paul's argumentation and use of compositional models, attention was also given in this study to Paul's use of Scripture, since about one-third of all of Paul's citations of the Old Testament occur in Romans

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81 Scott, "All Israel," 518, n. 78, notes the lack of work done in this area: "The fact that 'all Israel' includes the northern tribes is made plausible by Rom 11:2, which introduces citations from 1 Kings 19… . Elijah the Tishbite is, of course, the prophet who was active in the *Northern* Kingdom of Israel … . Hence, 'Israel' refers here particularly to the northern tribes. Surprisingly, this fundamentally important observation seems to have escaped notice in the secondary literature."

82 For example, see Cohen, *Jewishness*, 71: "the relationship between the term *Ioudaios/oi* and the terms *Hebraios* and *Israel* must be determined; and the occurrences of the terms must be catalogued by chronology, geography, and language."

83 See Aletti, *Israël*, 236–242; and Dunn, *Theology*, 504–509.

84 Regarding Paul's understanding of his own mission, see, for example, the two articles by Craig A. Evans, "Paul and the Hermeneutics of 'True Prophecy': A Study of Romans 9–11," *Biblica* 65 (1984): 560–570; and "Paul and the Prophets: Prophetic Criticism in the Epistle to the Romans (with special reference to Romans 9–11)," in *Romans and the People of God: Essays in Honor of Gordon D. Fee on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, eds. Sven K. Soderlund and N. T. Wright (Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans, 1999), 115–128.

9–11. We saw how Paul understands texts of Scripture in relation to one another (for example, through the rule of *gezerah shawah*) and how he rereads Scripture in light of his conversion and missionary experiences.

Certainly, more work needs to be done, in order to extend to all of Romans 9–11 the combination attempted here of formal analysis of Paul's argumentation and study of the material content of his scriptural citations. It is hoped, nonetheless, that a contribution has been made to help move beyond the "impasse" in the study of Romans 9–11. Through the consideration of Paul's argumentation and his use of Scripture in Romans 9:24–29, this study has defended the coherence of Paul's argument, especially with regard to the apparent contradiction between 9:27 and 11:26. There is continuity and progression between the words in Romans 9 and the words in Romans 11. God's word has not failed. Indeed, as Paul affirms, the Lord will accomplish his word.