

INTERPRETATIVE ISSUES IN ROMANS 9–11

A. CONTEXT OF ROMANS 9–11

1. The theme of the book of Romans is the _____ of God revealed through Jesus Christ.
2. Romans 9–11 demonstrates God’s righteousness by explaining how He will uphold His _____ to the nation _____ despite its present state of unbelief. (9:1-6, 14)
 - a) Romans 9 – Israel’s _____ by God’s sovereign will
 - b) Romans 10 – Israel’s _____ of Christ in unbelief
 - c) Romans 11 – Israel’s _____ at Christ’s return
3. Romans 9–11 is written to show: (a) Israel’s present unbelief and failure is not God’s _____ but Israel’s; (b) Israel being set aside is only _____, not total, since God has preserved a remnant of believing Jews; (c) Israel being set aside is only _____, since all God’s promises to Israel will still be fulfilled.
 - *How have many Calvinist, Covenant theologians missed the main point of Romans 9–11?*
4. The main point and emphasis of Romans 9–11 is not the _____ or spiritual salvation of _____ Jews and Gentiles but the sovereign, righteous plan of God for _____, _____ Israel.
 - a) Corporate & national words and concepts are found at least 40x (*Israel* [14]; *nation* [2]; *people* [6]; *Jew/Jewish* [2]; *Gentiles/Greek* [8]; individual names of representatives [8]).
 - b) The Old Testament references in 9:8-19 are to progenitors of nations (9:7-12 – *Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob*, cf. Gen. 12–50; 9:12-13 – *Esau/Edom*, cf. Gen. 25:23; Mal. 1:1-5), national representatives (9:16 – *Moses*, cf. Ex. 33:19; 9:17 – *Pharaoh*, cf. Ex. 9:13-18), or national Judah or Israel in their original contexts (9:19-21 cf. Jer. 18:1-11).
 - c) 11:28 contrasts *election* and the *gospel*, showing that unconditional election in chapters 9–11 is not to individual salvation but to Israel’s privileged national position of service as God’s representatives to bless the world.
 - d) In 11:32, “all” refers to two *corporate* groups, saved Israelites (11:26-27) or saved Gentiles, not “all” *individuals*, lest the verse teach God’s saving mercy on all individuals (i.e., universalism).

B. DOES ROMANS 9 TEACH UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION TO INDIVIDUAL SALVATION?

1. The reason for citing God's choice of Isaac over Ishmael in Romans 9:6-9 was to show that God sovereignly chose who would inherit the promises and blessings of the _____ based solely on His will, not man's (Gen. 12:1-3; 25:19-26; Deut. 7:6-8). This passage is *not* teaching that God chose Isaac and all his descendants to be _____ while choosing Ishmael and all his descendants to be eternally _____ (Gen. 17:18-21).
2. Romans 9:10-12 illustrates God's plan to unconditionally elect one of two "_____" to be heir of the promises and blessings of the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 25:23; Rom. 9:12), not to unconditionally elect some to individual salvation while damning the non-elect.
 - *In Romans 9:12, why is Esau's service to Jacob a problem for those who say this passage is about individuals being unconditionally elected to salvation? (2 Sam. 8:14)*
3. The reference in Romans 9:13 to God's hatred of Esau does not mean God _____ Esau to hell since it was written 1,500 years _____ the descent of the nations of Israel (Jacob) and Edom (Esau). (Mal. 1:1-5)
4. Two Illustrations showing that God's unconditional, sovereign election of Israel was righteous:
 - a) Illustration #1: When *Israel* disobeyed God during the golden calf incident (Ex. 32:10; 33:19), it deserved His _____ but instead received His _____ because it was already chosen in the sovereign plan of God to fulfill the *positive* purpose of being His representative on the earth—a vessel unto honor. (9:15-16)
 - b) Illustration #2: When *Pharaoh* disobeyed God in Exodus 5–14, he deserved God's _____ and he received God's _____, because he had been chosen in the sovereign plan of God to demonstrate God's *negative* purpose of illustrating a vessel unto dishonor. (9:17-18)
 - *Did God set Pharaoh's will to make him an unbeliever so He could send him to hell?*

Pharaoh Caused the Hardening

Exodus 3:19 (Pharaoh's Response Predicted)

Exodus 8:15

Exodus 8:32

Exodus 9:34

1 Samuel 6:6

No Cause Indicated

Exodus 7:13

Exodus 7:14

Exodus 7:22

Exodus 8:19

Exodus 9:7

Exodus 9:35

God Caused the Hardening

Exodus 4:21; 7:3 (God's Hardening Predicted)

Exodus 9:12

Exodus 10:1

Exodus 10:27

Exodus 11:10

Exodus 14:4

Exodus 14:8

- *Does God will that some people be unbelievers who go to hell (Matt. 23:37; 1 Tim. 2:3-6; 2 Peter 3:9) or for unregenerate people not to exercise their wills to believe in Christ (Rev. 22:17)?*

C. DOES ROMANS 10 TEACH ETERNAL SALVATION REQUIRES FAITH PLUS CONFESSION?

1. What Romans 10:9-10 IS Teaching

a) The immediate context of these verses contrasts righteousness based on _____ (10:1-5) with the righteousness of God that comes through _____ in Christ (10:6-11).

b) The message of faith in Christ that would bring imputed righteousness was as _____ and available to unbelieving Jews as their _____ and _____. (10:8 cf. Deut. 30:14)

- *What is emphasized in 10:6-8?*

c) Continuing the “mouth” and “heart” analogy of 10:6-8, Paul simply states that faith in Christ in a person’s _____ is _____ with the word of faith that is _____ with that person’s _____, which results in the salvation of imputed righteousness. (10:9-10 cf. Matt. 12:33-37)

- *What does “confession” (homologeō) mean?*

- *What must a person believe about Christ to have the salvation of imputed righteousness?*

2. What Romans 10:9-10 IS NOT Teaching

a) This passage is *not* teaching that a sinner must make Christ _____ of his or her life to be saved. (Acts 16:31)

b) This passage is *not* teaching that a sinner must _____ Christ _____ to be saved. (Matt. 7:21-23; 10:24-42; 12:33-37; John 12:42-43)

c) This passage is *not* teaching that _____ must be _____ from God’s wrath upon their earthly lives by publicly confessing Christ. (Rom. 5:9-10)

D. DOES ROMANS 11 TEACH THAT BELIEVERS MUST CONTINUE IN FAITH TO BE SAVED?

1. Nondispensational interpreters believe that Israel in Romans 9–11 has lost its separate ethnic, national identity and there is now _____ people of God—the church. However, Romans 11 speaks of Israel as a distinct corporate body from the church that will be _____ (11:12) at the time of the _____ (11:15) when Christ _____ (11:26). Because nondispensationalists don't recognize two separate programs of God for the separate people groups of Israel and the church, they view Romans 11:20-24 as a warning about continuing in faith to remain members of the church and thus to stay _____ rather than staying in the place of corporate _____ and _____ as God's representatives or channels of blessing to the world in this age (cf. 9:4-5).

2. Romans 11:16-24 does not equate being in the olive tree with individual, eternal salvation because:
 - a) the context of Romans 11 deals with corporate entities, namely, Israel (11:7, 26) and the Gentiles (pl.).

 - b) individual Gentiles were always able to be eternally saved prior to Christ's first coming and the church age. (Ex. 18:9-12; Job 19:25-26; Isa. 45:22; Jonah 3:5; Matt. 12:41; Luke 11:32)

 - c) this would contradict what Romans teaches elsewhere about eternal security (5:9-10; 8:28-39), along with other passages that teach initial faith, not lifelong faithfulness, is necessary for eternal salvation (2 Tim. 2:13).