

# Session 3

## Rom 9:1–13: Anguish and Election

Romans 9–11: "Paul's Story of Israel," © 2024 Gerald L. Stevens

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Romans: The Gospel of God

Part 1: God's Gospel Explained  
(Rom 1–11)

- 🌐 Introduction (1:1–17)
- 🌐 God and Sin (1:18–3:20)
- 🌐 God and Grace (3:21–8:39)
- 🌐 God and Israel (9:1–11:36)

---

---

---

---

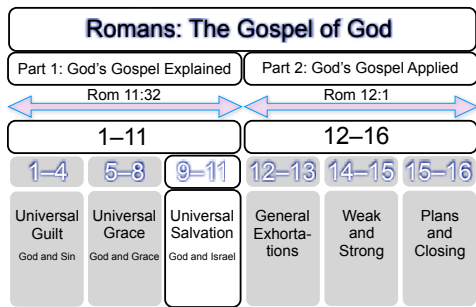
---

---

---

---

### Paul's Story of Israel: Romans 9–11




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Paul's Story of Israel: Romans 9–11




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Part 1: God's Gospel Explained

### God and Israel: Universal Salvation in God's Promise (9:1–11:36)

"to all" (11:32)

- Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)
- Restating Israel's Failure (9:30–10:21)
- Revealing Israel's Salvation (11:1–32)
- Concluding Praise (11:33–36)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### ● Preliminary Reflections

#### 🗨️ Reflections on Jewish Crisis Settings

- Jewish identity in crisis in first century
  - Every Jewish group saying "Thus all Israel will be saved"
  - Ends in crisis of the First Jewish War only a few years later
- Messianic identity in crisis in first century
  - Generally clueless populations ("Who do people say I am?")
  - First-century false messiahs (cf. Josephus, Simon bar Kokhba)
- Romans 9–11 to be read in the context of these Jewish crises

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### ● Preliminary Reflections

#### 🗨️ Reflections on Jewish Crisis Settings

- Jewish identity in crisis in first century
  - Every Jewish group saying "Thus all Israel will be saved"
  - Ends in crisis of the First Jewish War only a few years later
- Messianic identity in crisis in first century
  - Generally clueless populations ("Who do people say I am?")
  - First-century false messiahs (cf. Josephus, Simon bar Kokhba)
- Romans 9–11 to be read in the context of these Jewish crises

Mark 8:27–29;  
Jesus questions his disciples on  
his identity

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### ● Preliminary Reflections

#### 🗨️ Reflections on "Israel" Language

- Two semantic domains (general areas of usage)
  - Biological: descendants of Jacob (cf. "family," "house"); cognate "Israelite"; alternatively: "Hebrew" (if language focus in context)
  - Political: nation of these descendants (cf. "people," "family," "house")
  - Meanings can overlap—but "Israelite" *exclusively* is biological
  - Use of "Israelite" (9:4) must control exegesis of Romans 9–11

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Preliminary Reflections

#### Reflections on "Israel" Language

- Two semantic domains (general areas of usage)
  - Biological: descendants of Jacob (cf. "family," "house"); cognate "Israelite" (cf. "sheep") (if language focus in context)
  - Political: "people" (cf. "people," "family," "house")
- Meanings overlap—but "Israelite" *exclusively* is biological
- Use of "Israelite" (9:4) must control exegesis of Romans 9–11

For example, avoiding supersessionism

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Preliminary Reflections

#### Reflections on "Israel" Language

- Jesus tradition
  - Evidence of *both* biological and political domain usage
  - Davidic "shepherd" imagery with traditional political overtones
  - Problem of meaning of "other sheep" (John 10:16)
    - \* Often assumed as oblique reference to gentiles
    - \* More likely, national reunification anticipated in prophets
    - \* Raises historical issue of the so-called "Samaritans"

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Preliminary Reflections

#### Reflections on "Israel" Language

- Jesus tradition
  - Evidence of *both* biological and political domain usage
  - Davidic "shepherd" imagery with traditional political overtones
  - Problem of meaning of "other sheep" (John 10:16)
    - \* Often assumed as oblique reference to gentiles
    - \* More likely, national reunification anticipated in prophets
    - \* Raises historical issue of the so-called "Samaritans"

For example, as in Micah and Hosea

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Preliminary Reflections

#### Reflections on "Israel" Language

- The Samaritan enigma
  - Another "new perspective" on horizon of NT study
  - Need to rethink three myths about the Samaritans
    - \* Northern Kingdom Jews completely paganized into "Samaritans"
    - \* Samaritan Scriptures are sectarian perversions untrue to Moses
    - \* Judean Jews were only "Israelites" left after Assyrian crisis

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Preliminary Reflections

- **Reflections on "Israel" Language**
  - By tendentious reading of 2 Kgs 17:24–41 and by rewriting Northern Kingdom completely out of historical existence by abrogating its "kingdom of Israel" language to southern kingdom of Judah exclusively after exile
  - Northern Kingdom Jews completely paganized into "Samaritans"
  - \* Samaritan Scriptures are sectarian perversions untrue to Moses
  - \* Judean Jews were only "Israelites" left after Assyrian crisis

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Preliminary Reflections

- **Reflections on "Israel" Language**
  - The election enigma
    - Jesus: raising up children to Abraham from stones (Matt 3:9)
    - Election must be ethnic or cannot be shown working out in history
      - \* Election as distinction from other peoples by default is ethnic
      - \* Genetic, cultural, religious, regional distinctions naturally develop
    - If election is capricious ("stones"), then how is same God "steadfast in love and faithfulness" to a particular people (Exod 34:6)?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Preliminary Reflections

- **Reflections on "Israel" Language**
  - Simple irony for emphasis, or reflection on nature of election?
  - The election enigma
    - Jesus: raising up children to Abraham from stones (Matt 3:9)
    - Election must be ethnic or cannot be shown working out in history
      - \* Election as distinction from other peoples by default is ethnic
      - \* Genetic, cultural, religious, regional distinctions naturally develop
    - If election is capricious ("stones"), then how is same God "steadfast in love and faithfulness" to a particular people (Exod 34:6)?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Preliminary Reflections

- **Reflections on "Jew" Language**
  - Patriarchal roots: derivative of "Judah," Jacob's fourth son (via Leah)
    - Judah's lineage: "tribe of Judah"
    - Judah's territory: "land of Judah" (conquest allotment)
  - Davidic roots: David, from the tribe of Judah, created his own kingdom
    - Twelve tribes coalesced into Davidic kingdom (12 merge into 1)
    - David unilaterally moved Jewish worship center to Jerusalem
    - Inhabitants become "Judeans" politically, culturally
    - "Jew," short form of Judah, used by Babylonians and stuck

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Preliminary Reflections

#### Reflections on "Jew" Language

- Patriarchal roots: derivative of "Judah," Jacob's fourth son (via Leah)
  - Judah's kingdom: Thus, the kingdom period saw the centralization of all Israelite cult and culture into the one tribe of Judah, its capital (Jerusalem), its worship center, and its territory.
- Davidic roots: David established his own kingdom
  - Twelve tribes coalesced into a Davidic kingdom (12 merge into 1)
  - David unilaterally moved Jewish worship center to Jerusalem
  - Inhabitants become "Judeans" politically, culturally
  - "Jew," short form of Judah, used by Babylonians and stuck

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### "Jew" Usage: Complex Contextual Components

- ethnic: Jewish people
- geographical: inhabitants of Jerusalem and territories
- political: authorities ruling in Jerusalem
- religious: cultic, religious observance centralized in Jerusalem
- social: rejection of northern Israelites by southern Israelites, presuming defamatory "Samaritan" slur
- inhabitants become "Judeans" politically, culturally
- "Jew," short form of Judah, used by Babylonians and stuck

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Preliminary Reflections

#### Reflections on "Jew" Language

- Paul's usage: mainly as a globalizing category
  - Similar to globalizing usage in John and Acts
  - Distinctive rhetoric of singular form for whole group (synecdoche)
  - Distinctive rhetoric of law observance as way of relating to God
  - Not distinctively ethnic (proselytes, synagogue activity, lifestyle)
  - Conclusion: "Jew" and "Israel" *are not synonymous in Paul*
    - \* "Jew" centered on religious generalities, not national destiny
    - \* "Israel" always centered on national destiny and Isaiah's vision

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Preliminary Reflections

#### Reflections on "Jew" Language

- Paul's usage: mainly as a globalizing category
  - Similar to globalizing usage in John and Acts
  - Distinctive rhetoric of singular form for whole group (synecdoche)
  - Distinctive rhetoric of law observance as way of relating to God
  - Not distinctively ethnic (proselytes, synagogue activity, lifestyle)
  - Conclusion: "Jew" and "Israel" *are not synonymous in Paul*
    - \* "Jew" centered on religious generalities, not national destiny
    - \* "Israel" always centered on national destiny and Isaiah's vision

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### 🌐 Anguishing Israel (9:1–5)

#### 🗣️ *Paul's Asseveration of Anguish (9:1–2)*

- Authorial *pathos* at its height in Romans
  - *Pathos* intensity indicates core of argument
  - Rom 9–11 is whole point of Rom 1–11
  - Final, climatic act of the first part of Romans
  - Matter crucial to Paul and to the purpose of Romans

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### 🌐 Anguishing Israel (9:1–5)

#### 🗣️ *Anguish over Kinfolk (9:3–5)*

- Topic: "my own people . . . according to the flesh"
  - Biology is where the argument of Romans 9–11 starts
  - Romans is all about "Israel", and "Israel" is about ethnicity, nation
  - "Israelites" (9:4) is ethnicity, and ethnicity is claim to covenant
  - Theologically: "Israel" as a covenanted nation among the nations
- Problem: continuing rejection of gospel in Paul's mission
  - Damascus Road: new messianic hermeneutic on prophets
  - Rediscovery of Isaiah's vision of Israel's national destiny

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### 🌐 Anguishing Israel (9:1–5)

#### 🗣️ *Anguish over Kinfolk (9:3–5)*

- Topic: "my own people . . . according to the flesh"
  - Biology is where the argument of Romans 9–11 starts
  - **Breaks stranglehold of Great Assembly veil on reading prophets as subordinated to their take on Moses**
  - Romans is all about ethnicity, nation
  - "Israelites" (9:4) is ethnicity, and ethnicity is claim to covenant
  - Theologically: "Israel" as a covenanted nation among the nations
- Problem: continuing rejection of gospel in Paul's mission
  - Damascus Road: new messianic hermeneutic on prophets
  - Rediscovery of Isaiah's vision of Israel's national destiny

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### 🌐 Anguishing Israel (9:1–5)

#### 🗣️ *Anguish over Kinfolk (9:3–5)*

- Wish: personal "anathema," more conciliation than expiation
- Target: "brothers," "kinsmen," "Israelites" (argument about ethnicity)
- Perspective: three critical stages of Jewish history in parallel sets
- Crisis: resisting gospel = cut off from Messiah (= "anathema")
- Problem: outstanding issues of Mosaic Israel in Rom 7:7–25
- Link: literarily transitioning from "*nothing* can separate us" (Rom 8:39)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1-29)

Sacrifice heart, body, and soul to conciliate fellow Israelites to God to the point of destruction, thus reflecting devotion, self-sacrifice of Messiah

### Anguishing Israel (9:1-5)

#### Anguish over Kinfolk (9:3-5)

- Wish: personal "anathema," more conciliation than expiation
- Target: "brothers," "kinsmen," "Israelites" (argument about ethnicity)
- Perspective: three critical stages of Jewish history in parallel sets
- Crisis: resisting gospel = cut off from Messiah (= "anathema")
- Problem: outstanding issues of Mosaic Israel in Rom 7:7-25
- Link: literarily transitioning from "nothing can separate us" (Rom 8:39)

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1-29)

### Anguishing Israel (9:1-5)

First Set	Second Set
1. adoption (Sinai: nation building; cf. 8:15-17)	1. Torah (Sinai: national covenant obligations)
2. glory (Shekinah, divine presence: fire, cloud)	2. temple (divine presence, purified worship)
3. covenants (Abraham, Moses, David)	3. promises (especially Abrahamic)
4. ancestors (patriarchs = national destiny)	4. Messiah (national destiny realized)

- Link: literarily transitioning from "nothing can separate us" (Rom 8:39)

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1-29)

"Paul innovates with his unique term 'adoption' applied to the standard Jewish term 'Israelites' . . . Thus, 'adoption' is Paul's own unique (and distinctively Roman) way of speaking of how God worked with both Abraham and Moses toward the grand plan of the ages to consummate creation. Through election, God adopted a family in Abraham and then adopted a nation in Moses. God always has worked by adoption in the saga of Israel" (Stevens, 399).

9)

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1-29)

### Anguishing Israel (9:1-5)

#### Anguish

- Wish: personal "anathema," more conciliation than expiation
- Target: "brothers," "kinsmen," "Israelites" (argument about ethnicity)
- Perspective: three critical stages of Jewish history in parallel sets
- Crisis: resisting gospel = cut off from Messiah (= "anathema")
- Problem: outstanding issues of Mosaic Israel in Rom 7:7-25
- Link: literarily transitioning from "nothing can separate us" (Rom 8:39)



## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Clarifying Election (9:6–13)

#### *Dilemma of Mosaic Israel And God's Word (9:6a)*

- Question: "God's word fallen short"? Reprises Rom 7:7–25
  - Sign of the times: recent arrival of God's Messiah
    - \* Consummation of all covenants, promises
    - \* Critical, eschatological moment for Israel
  - Current crisis: present rejection of God's Messiah
    - \* Voiding God's word to Israel?
    - \* Vacating Israel's chosen status?
- Answer: Romans 9–11: theodicy of God and Israel

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Clarifying Election (9:6–13)

#### *Dilemma of Mosaic Israel And God's Word (9:6a)*

- Question: "God's word fallen short"? Reprises Rom 7:7–25
  - Sign of the times: recent arrival of God's Messiah
    - \* Consummation of all covenants, promises
    - \* Critical, eschatological moment for Israel
  - Current crisis: present rejection of God's Messiah
    - \* Voiding God's word to Israel?
    - \* Vacating Israel's chosen status?
- Answer: Romans 9–11: theodicy of God and Israel

Theodicy:  
defending God's  
character, actions

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Clarifying Election (9:6–13)

#### *Israel Never Was by Legal Heirship (9:6b–13)*

- Thesis: not all out of "Israel" (Jacob) are "Israel" (heirs)
  - Proof 1 (first generation): not all out of Abraham are heirs (9:6–9)
  - Proof 2 (second generation): not all out of Isaac are heirs (9:10–13)
- Point: in *each* generation, *heirship is God's prevenient promise, grace*
  - Abraham→Isaac: God's gracious promise = *not* first born
  - Isaac→Jacob: God's gracious choice = *not* first born + *not* merit
- Conclusion: "Israel" = God's promise + grace
- Opposes traditional synagogue definition

## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### Clarifying Election (9:6–13)

#### *Israel Never Was by Legal Heirship (9:6b–13)*

- Thesis: not all out of "Israel" (Jacob) are "Israel" (heirs)
  - Proof 1 (first generation): not all out of Abraham are heirs (9:6–9)
  - Proof 2 (second generation): not all out of Isaac are heirs (9:10–13)
- Point: in *each* generation, *heirship is God's prevenient promise, grace*
  - Abraham→Isaac: God's gracious promise = *not* first born
  - Isaac→Jacob: God's gracious choice = *not* first born + *not* merit
- Conclusion: "Israel" = God's promise + grace
- Opposes traditional synagogue definition

Ishmael is first  
born! Legal heirship  
should go to Ishmael.

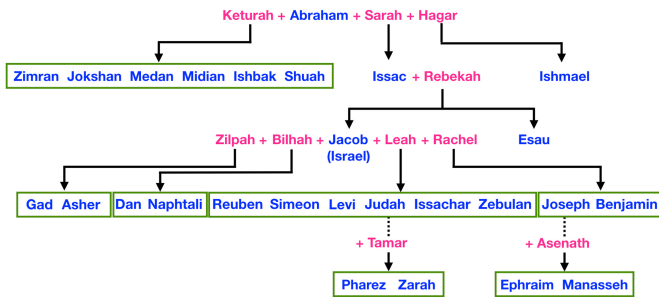


## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

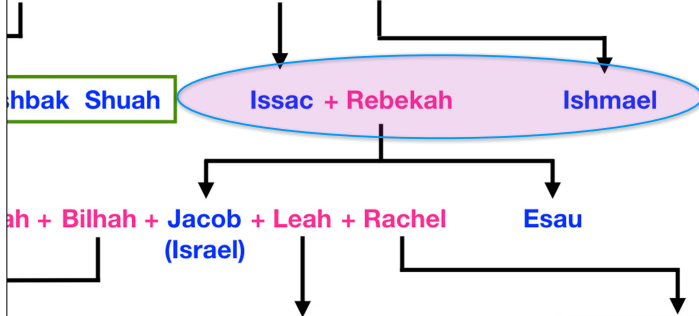
### Clarifying Election (9:6–13)

- Esau is first born!  
Legal heirship should go to Esau.
- Israel Never Was
- Israel Never Was Heirship (9:6b–13)**
  - Thesis: not all of Abraham's family are "Israel" (heirs)
    - Proof 1 (first generation): not all out of Abraham are heirs (9:6–9)
    - Proof 2 (second generation): not all out of Isaac are heirs (9:10–13)
  - Point: in *each* generation, *heirship is God's prevenient promise, grace*
    - Abraham→Isaac: God's gracious promise = *not* first born
    - Isaac→Jacob: God's gracious choice = *not* first born + *not* merit
  - Conclusion: "Israel" = God's promise + grace
  - Opposes traditional synagogue definition

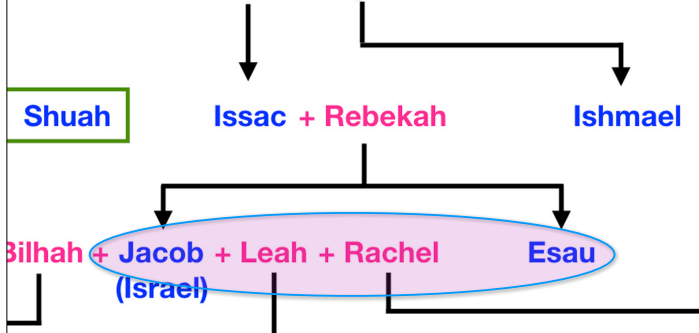
### Abraham's Lineage



### Keturah + Abraham + Sarah + Hagar



### + Abraham + Sarah + Hagar



## Refocusing Israel's Story (9:1–29)

### 🌐 Clarifying Election (9:6–13)

🗣️ *Israel = God's Promise + God's Grace*

Synagogue	Paul	Romans 9	New Aeon
by birth inherited	promise, not birth	Isaac (9:6–9)	Messiah
by law retained	grace, not law	Jacob (9:10–13)	Justification

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---