

ROMANS

*God's Word Stands - for
Both Jews and Gentiles*

ROMANS 9:25-29

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The hinge of v.24 today serves as a “swinging door” into a new section that St. Paul will use to validate his argument that God reaches out to Israel and to the Gentiles in mercy. He does this via a “catena” of OT confirmatory quotes from Hosea and Isaiah. Paul will use this catena to maintain that what he has written is in complete agreement with God’s prophetic Word, which has not and cannot fail; neither has His Word fallen (cf. 1:2 and 9:6).

St. Paul will begin with the Gentiles as He will apply two citations from Hosea to them (vv.25 and 26). Then he will turn to the Jews with two quotations from Isaiah (vv.27-29). Paul effectively uses these passages to verify what he has just written about God’s *call* from v.24.

Introduction

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9:24-26



“God Called
Even Us...
...from
Gentiles”

²⁴even us, whom He also called, not only from [the] Jews, but also from [the] Gentiles?

²⁵Also as He says in Hosea: “I will call that which [is] not My people; my people; and her not having been loved, having been loved” ²⁶and, “It will happen that in the place where it was said to them, ‘You [are] not my people,’ they will be called sons of [the] living God.’”

The first point that must be understood is that St. Paul is not using his catena of OT quotations to prove the Messiah-ship of Jesus Christ. Rather, he is applying the catena from God’s Word to the present situation of the NT people of God (even the congregations in Rome).

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For example, Paul uses the present tense of the verb λέγει, “says,” (v.25). In v.17, God “says” to Moses and then also through Moses to Pharaoh (Ex. 9:16). God also “says” prophetically to His people in Hosea’s day and, with the very same words, still speaks “says” to Jews and Gentiles whom He has also called to be vessels of His mercy (vv.23-24). Paul validates this by his use of the present tense active verb “He says” (λέγει).

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**Now My
Beloved
People (from
Hosea 2:23)**

²⁵Also as He says in Hosea: “I will call that which [is] not My people; my people; and her not having been loved, having been loved”

(Hosea 2:23) “Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, And I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy; Then I will say to those who were not My people, ‘You are My people!’ And they shall say, ‘You are my God!’”

It's important for you to know that Paul uses this OT citation to convey a thought; therefore, he uses Hosea 2:23 in a specific order and with words to convey and valid this argument of the calling by God. This is why St. Paul uses this verse from Hosea prior to his use of Hosea 1:10 in the next verse (v.26). Paul is doing this for impact! He is proving the “call” (καλέω), therefore, continues to reverberate throughout Romans and within chapter 9 in particular.

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Paul, very surprisingly, changes the original word of “mercy” (חַסְדִּים) used twice by Hosea to “love” (אֲהַבְתִּי). This may seem to be rather odd in light of the fact that St. Paul’s use of “God showing mercy” in Romans 9 (cf. v.15 [twice], 16, 18; and a cognate noun in v.23). There doesn’t seem to be a reasonable explanation for Paul’s switch, except for the fact that the Hebrew root verb אָהַב can also be translated as “love” in the sense of “having compassion upon” in the Hebrew perfect tense, which is the tense that Hosea uses!!!

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The Call of Gentiles

*²⁶and, “It will happen that in the place where it was said to them, ‘You [are] not my people,’ they will be called **sons** of [the] living God.”*

The textual situation for this verse is the opposite of v.25. Paul’s citation, from Hosea 1:10, is identical to the Greek text of the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT). Hosea emphasizes God’s call going forth to Israel even into places where they will eventually be exiles (Assyria and Babylon). God will do this in order to reclaim them as **“sons.”**

Furthermore, the translation **“call”** for **καλέω** in this verse, as in vv.24 and 25, establishes a connection with Paul’s repeated use of it, thematically, in reference to God’s call.

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Καλέω to the
Gentiles

²⁶and, “It will happen that in the place where it was said to them, ‘You [are] not my people,’ they will be called sons of [the] living God.”

St. Paul refers these two texts from Hosea most directly to the “us” “called” in v.24 “from [the] Gentiles.” A striking change of referent has occurred; however, Paul is not the first to understand the Hosea passage in terms of more than one single group. God does so in the naming of Hosea’s children. His children are given symbolic names: **Jezreel** (Hos 1:4-5); meaning “**a little while.**” Then his daughter, God names *Lo Ruhamah* (1:6), “*not pitied*”; followed by a second son, **Lo Ammi** (1:9), “**not my people.**”

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Καλέω to the
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²⁶and, “It will happen that in the place where it was said to them, ‘You [are] not my people,’ they will be called sons of [the] living God.”

God explains to Hosea that these symbolic names refers to Israel; more specifically, to the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah (Hosea 1:6 – 2:1). The Northern Kingdom (Israel) will soon be destroyed and they will “*not be pitied*” and they will “*not [be] my people.*” Yet, God will have mercy on a remnant of the Southern Kingdom (Judah) and He will preserve them and they will “*in a little while*” be returned to the Promised Land. Thus, this prophecy was indeed fulfilled, at least partially, by Judah’s return from exile.

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Καλέω to the
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Paul’s citations from Hosea serves to extend the referent of God’s prophetic and enduring Word even further to those Gentiles whom God calls in Paul’s day (cf. v.24); including those **“called” “sons”** in Rome. We see the same message from St. Peter (1 Pet 2:10). And Paul will later develop this theme most completely in Eph 2:11-22. Therefore, the people who were **“not pitied”** and **“not my people”** will be **“in a little while”** called vessels of mercy in and through Christ Jesus.

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9:27-29



*“He Called
Us...from
Jews”*

*²⁷Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel:
“Though the number of the sons of Israel be like
the sand of the sea[shore], [only] the remnant
will be saved. ²⁸For while completing and
cutting short, [the] Lord will accomplish upon
the earth.” ²⁹And, as Isaiah foretold, “If [the]
Lord of Hosts had not left us seed, like Sodom
we would have become; and like Gomorrah we
would have been made.”*

**The presence of the verb “cry out”
(κράζω) recalls the NT prophetic
proclamation of John the Baptist (e.g.,
Jn 1:15) and of our Lord Jesus (e.g.,
Jn 7:28, 37; 12:44). In keeping with
St. Paul’s “both/and” argument thus
far, both Isaiah quotes from Is 10:22-
23 and 1:9, express two truths:**

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- 1) They stand comparable to the situation which exists between the vessels of wrath headed for destruction; and,**
- 2) With vessels of mercy headed for abundant glory.**

Isaiah’s words have both a condemnatory effect and also an expression of hope.

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The Meaning of v.28

²⁸For while completing and cutting short, [the] Lord will accomplish upon the earth.” ²⁹And, as Isaiah foretold, “If [the] Lord of Hosts had not left us seed, like Sodom we would have become; and like Gomorrah we would have been made.”

This verse is close to the translation found in the Septuagint. St. Paul, though, uses two compound verbs which are important for us. First, **συντελῶν (completion)** that denotes that God will carry out His Word to its full completion, as He has promised.

Secondly, is **συντέμνων**, which literally means to cut short, to shorten in duration, or to limit. This raises an important question, “What does Paul mean?”

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**The Meaning
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Some think that Paul is speaking of the cutting off of Israel and that their destruction will be great; however, a remnant will survive. Yet, some believe, and this interpretation is more in line with our Lord Jesus and His use of a similar Greek verb “to shorten” (κολοβόω) in Mt. 24:22 and Mk 13:20, that it refers to time.

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The
Promised
Seed

29And, as Isaiah foretold, “If [the] Lord of Hosts had not left us seed, like Sodom we would have become; and like Gomorrah we would have been made.”

The final quotation is from Isaiah 1:9. Paul quotes verbatim as found in the LXX. This translation is a literal translation from the Hebrew, with one minor exception! The Hebrew noun for survivor or escapee is translated in the LXX as **“seed”** (σπέρμα). To the Jewish mind, Paul is making a clear point: If Yahweh of Host had not caused seed to remain for us, then what follows would indeed be true – but He did allow offspring to remain. So the use of **“seed”** for **“offspring”** enhances the sense of God fulfilling and keeping His promise to Abraham.

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The
Promised
Seed

***29**And, as Isaiah foretold, “If [the] Lord of Hosts had not left us seed, like Sodom we would have become; and like Gomorrah we would have been made.”*

We remember the story of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19) and, though Abraham witnessed its destruction, God kept His promise of saving, preserving a remnant, Lot and his family. Isaiah declared that Israel deserves to suffer the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, however, Yahweh will keep His promise and preserve His seed. So then, since God is merciful, the conclusion of the “*then*” clause does happen; the verb “left” (ἐγκατέλιπεν) denotes a remnant will remain, since it is a cognate to the noun ὑπόλειμμα (remnant) in v.27.

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Conclusion
in Christ
Jesus

The catena of OT quotes illustrates for us how Paul extends the meaning of God's OT Word by applying it in light of our Lord's resurrection. In doing so, Paul hears what God **"says"** in Hosea anew. As the Lord also **"still holds forth"** from Isaiah, Paul hears the words fulfilled again in his own day when God **"called us, not only from [the] Jews but also from [the] Gentiles"** (v.24).

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Conclusion
in Christ
Jesus

Paul has, hereby, established the veracity of his assertion regarding God's Word in 9:6. Paul's immediate purpose was to show that despite the failure of most of his contemporaries to believe in the Messiah, God's Word has not failed or fallen.

Why then does only a remnant believe and only this seed saved from destruction? Paul will begin to answer this, and other such questions, beginning at 9:30 and running through chapter 10.

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Conclusion
in Christ
Jesus

As we look forward, Paul's focus moves away from God's actions to explain how and diagnose why some of Israel have responded improperly to God's Word and His call of mercy (9:30 - 10:5, 16-21).

Then, beginning in 10:19 and extending into chapter 11, we will see how God reacts to Israel's response.

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9:30-10:5

RIGHTEOUSNESS

REAFFIRMED



Part 1:

*Not from
Works
of the
Law!*

