

of any nation or individual by God to use for any particular purpose of His remains the exclusive prerogative of God Himself.

That is, God's word to Israel has not failed, because not every individual within Israel belongs to the true Israel, and not every descendant in Israel is a child of Abraham. The doctrine of the remnant would suffice the reader: Consult Romans 9:29.

Then he adds two illustrations to emphasize individual election:

From v. 7b-9, Paul says Abraham's true children would come through Isaac. By this, he means that they would come through God's supernatural power to fulfill His promise rather than by natural birth. "It is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring" (v. 8b). God made the promise to Abraham, but he distinguished the individual of Isaac against the individual of Ishmael. So his grace does not apply to "children of Abraham" in an all-inclusive and corporate sense, but in a selective and individual sense:

Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham? Further, if one thinks that from Isaac forward divine grace is given in a corporate sense with no consideration of individuals, Paul makes the same point again, this time with Isaac's children (v. 10): Two children, even twins, came from the same father, but God chose to love one (to use one) and hate the other (not use him). As if to stress individual election even more, he chose the younger instead of the older: The reader notices that He did not choose the younger to "go to heaven!" (A complete importation, indeed!) Rather He chose the younger to fulfill His purpose.

Returning to Paul's reason for writing all this in the first place, his argument is intelligible and compelling only because he asserts the success of God's purpose (calling) according to election, and in a sense, even *against* corporate election. God's promise to Israel (corporate) has not failed because the promise is efficacious if only a few individuals (a remnant) within Israel believed, which one might call a true Israel, or the Israel of God.

Romans 9:16 So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Election, or being one of God's "elect" is not of him who desires to be so, nor of one that is making every effort to be one of the "elect," much more rather, the God helps those that believe, and in so doing He fulfills His purpose (calling) according to election.

Romans 9:33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

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# Election

## **1. Scriptures (Romans 9)**

[6] It is not as though God's word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. [7] Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." [8] In other words, it is not the natural children who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as

Abraham's offspring. [9] For this was how the promise was stated: "At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son."

[10] Not only that, but Rebekah's children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. [11] Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad – in order that God's purpose in election might stand: [12] not by works but by him who calls – she was told, "The older will serve the younger." [13] Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

On one hand, Arminians tend to interpret the election of Jacob and Esau to mean the choice of the people Israel and Edom. According to Arminians, election is of a collective and not of individuals. So they would say Romans 9 does

not deal with the salvation of individuals but the election of Israel as a nation. Calvinists on the other hand, interpret the election of Jacob and Esau to mean the choice of individuals. According to them it means the election of individuals. So they would say Romans 9 does deal with both the election and salvation of individuals based upon their individual election

### **False Dilemma: Individual vs. Corporate Election**

(also known as: false dichotomy, the either-or fallacy, either-or reasoning, fallacy of false choice, fallacy of false alternatives, black-and-white thinking, the fallacy of exhaustive hypotheses, bifurcation, excluded middle, no middle ground, polarization)

**Description:** When only two choices are presented yet more exist, or a spectrum of possible choices exists between two extremes. False dilemmas are usually characterized by “either this or that” language, but can also be characterized by omissions of choices. Errors of omission can include any data source that would provide all necessary elements for accurate decision making. However, source avoidance can become prevalent when bias achieved through priming is not acknowledged prior to an objective study of any text, or subject.

This text is the basis of an ever growing False Dilemma; namely, that upon the conclusion of either one or the other, a larger conclusion is assumed to be true or proven conclusively. That is, on one hand a kind of election is either an “individual” selection unto salvation, or another kind of election is a “corporate” kind of selection unto salvation. If individual, then

one side claims to be true; but if corporate, then the other side claims to be true. However, neither is necessarily a full expression of the case to which Paul spoke; for, if individuals are chosen, then somehow everything that is erroneously assumed like “election unto salvation,” is declared true; or if a corporate selection is determined then everything that is erroneously assumed by it is declared true.

**Logical Form:** Either X or Y is true.

X = God chooses individuals for salvation; or  
Y = God chooses collectively for salvation.

Either X, Y, or Z is true. Z= the unconsidered option afforded in the context itself.

**Example (two choices):** Either election is of individuals (X) or it is collective (Y). [Z is not even considered]

**Explanation:** A one dimensional thinker limits his options to those presented to him. Further, the one-dimensional thinker is doomed to think according to prescribed options like “either or,” “this or that;” or in this case X or Y, preventing him from ever searching for Z; for, he does not consider the possibility that Z even exists. Both X, and Y might be false, or in this case, be omitting complete information. There is a way that election occurred of the nation of Israel (collectively) while the minority of individuals that believed (by being helped by God-shown mercy) actually assured that the purpose (calling) according to election prevailed.

**Example (omission):** I thought God chose Israel, but the majority of individual Israelites did not believe, so the plan and purpose of God to choose Israel must have failed.

**Explanation:** The assumption here is that since the majority of Israelites did not believe, then the purpose of God to have chosen that nation had failed; yet it is precisely because individuals believed, that God helped them and through the minority of Israelite individuals God accomplished His plan of Salvation for all mankind, bringing forth (His Son) Salvation out from Israel.

The point of the passage is to show that God's word to Israel has not failed (v. 6). The reason this question comes up is because it seems that God promised salvation through Israel, but salvation is only available through faith in Jesus Christ, but Israel on the whole (the majority of *individuals!*) rejected Christ, and therefore it appeared that election of that nation according to God's purpose failed. Paul answers this right away: God's word has not failed: "For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children" (v. 6b-7). Election is not according to one being “biologically” related to Abraham at all. For, though an “Ishmaelite” is biologically related to Abraham, he is not the one (the Isaac) through whom God has chosen to bring forth His Son, the Messiah. Of course, an individual Ishmaelite can believe and become born from above, but he cannot alter the purpose of God in His choice of Isaac any more than Esau's becoming an individual believer could alter God's choice to use Jacob (He loved Jacob-used him for His purpose) and Hated Esau (Did not choose him for His plan and purpose). The reader notices that the discussion of individual salvation to heaven is an “imported idea.” For, an Israelite, Ishmaelite, Esau, or anyone else could believe and become born from above, but the election