

The Apostle Paul's Methods of Interpreting Scripture in Romans 10-11 to Explain Israel's Unbelief in Jesus

By Dr. Harry Alan Hahne
Professor of New Testament
Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Scottsdale, Arizona

Presented at the Evangelical Theological Society Annual Meeting, November 20, 2014

In Romans 10:16-11:10, the Apostle Paul cites a large collection of OT passages to explain Israel's unbelief in Jesus. The meaning and implications of these biblical citations are at the heart of his argument. Structurally, he uses a method similar to many rabbinic homilies in which he asks a series of rhetorical questions which he answers with quotations from Scripture.¹

Many scholars believe that Paul misinterprets the Scriptures he cites or that he simply uses them as convenient and familiar words to express his ideas. For example, Sanday and Headlam claim "the passages are quoted without regard to their context or to the circumstances under which they were written."²

Yet a close examination of the context of these OT passages shows that Paul's interpretations are reasonable, if his Christological presuppositions are granted. He often assumes details from the OT context that are essential to his interpretation. In many cases he assumes the literal meaning and then explores implications and contemporary applications of the principles taught in the passages. Since Rom 10:16-11:10 contains a large number of OT citations, it is a good test case for understanding Paul's interpretive methods.

Context and Overall Argument

In Romans 9-11, Paul explores the perplexing question of how it can be that the majority of Jews reject Jesus as the Messiah, even though Israel is God's chosen people. He says that the promise to Abraham's descendants has not failed (9:6), since the promise is for the true Israel, the elect of God (9:1-29). Paul shows that salvation comes from believing in Jesus as the resurrected Lord (9:30-10:15). Yet the majority of God's covenant people do not believe the Gospel because they are disobedient to God and as a result they have been judicially hardened. As a result God is presently blessing the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy, so they will return to God (10:16-31). At the present time, God is working with a faithful remnant of Israel just as he has done in the past (11:1-10). The believing Gentiles have been added to this Jewish remnant to form the Church, in order to bless people throughout the world (11:11-32).

¹ E. Earle Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Baker, 1957), 218-19. However, Paul's questions primarily come out of the contemporary situation with Israel rather than the texts themselves.

² William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 5th ed. (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1902), 303; cf. Winfield Scott Hall II, "Paul As a Christian Prophet in His Interpretation of the Old Testament in Romans 9-11" (ThD Dissertation, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 1982), 196. According to Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 74, Paul interprets Scripture "innovatively."

The Old Testament Citations in Romans 10:16-11:10

1. Romans 10:16 (=Isa 53:1)

Paul's first OT citation supports the fact that not all Israelites have believed the Gospel. As is typical of Paul, in Romans 10:16 he quotes the LXX rendering³ of Isa 53:1: "Lord, who has believed our report?" On the surface it appears that Paul simply uses this verse as an example of the unbelief of the Israelites in the message of God, perhaps as a typological pattern that is replicated.⁴ Seifrid, for example, believes "Isaiah appears as a witness to the pattern of disobedience and unbelief that has now been repeated."⁵

However, the significance of this citation is deeper when seen in its original context, which is Isaiah's fourth Servant song (Isa 52:13-53:12). Numerous NT passages show that early Christians widely believed that Jesus the Messiah is the Servant referred to in Isaiah 53.⁶ The poetic parallelism of Isa 53:1 shows that prophet foresaw Israel's unbelief in the divine "message" about the "arm of the Lord." In Isaiah, the expression "arm of the Lord" refers to God's mighty power at work in history for the salvation of his people or in judgment on his enemies.⁷ In this passage, it refers to his work of redemption from sin (e.g. Isa 53:5-6, 10). Thus Isa 53:1 predicts that Israel will not believe the divine message about God's Servant, who will perform this redemptive work. In Rom 10:16-17 Paul calls this divine message "the word of Christ" (ῥήματος Χριστοῦ, v. 17)⁸ and "the Gospel" (εὐαγγέλιον, v. 16; cf. εὐαγγελιζομένων, v.

³ Out of the 84 OT citations in Paul's writings, 70 are taken directly from the LXX and 12 show some affinity to the LXX (Sanday and Headlam, 302).

⁴ A type is a person, event or institution that God intends to point forward to something that he will bring about in the eschatological age. See the discussion below on Rom 11:3-4.

⁵ Mark A. Seifrid, "Romans," in *Commentary on the Use of the Old Testament in the New*, ed. Beale, G. K. and D.A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007), 662. "That disobedience corresponds typically to the past, when Israel disbelieved the 'report' of the prophet."

⁶ John 12:38 also says that the unbelief of the Jews in Jesus fulfills Isa 53:1. Many other NT authors say Jesus' life and death fulfilled Isaiah 53: Matt 8:17 (=Isa 53:4); Luke 22:37 (=Isa 53:12); Acts 8:32-33 (=Isa 53:7-8); 1 Pet 2:22 (=Isa 53:9). Although many Jewish interpreters take a collective interpretation of Isaiah 53 that understands the Servant as Israel, some early Jewish sources reflect an individual messianic interpretation that sees the sufferings of an individual Israelite as having atoning value for the nation. T. Benj. 3:8 (ca 137–107 B.C.) refers to an individual that offers atonement. The Ethiopian Eunuch's question in Acts 8:34 assumes that Isaiah 53 refers to an individual. For a discussion of other early Jewish texts, see Martin Hengel, "The Effective History of Isaiah 53 in the Pre-Christian Period," in *The Suffering Servant* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 76-146 and Paul D. Hanson, *Isaiah 40-66*, Interpretation Commentary (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 161-66. Hengel, "Effective History", 106-18, demonstrates that 4Q540 and 4Q541 reflect an individual interpretation dating from the 2nd century B.C. He argues that Zech 12:9-13:1 and 13:7-9 draw the idea of a suffering messianic figure from Isa 52:13-53:12 (pp. 85-90). After the first century, some Jewish writings also contain the idea of a suffering and/or dying Messiah (pp. 77-79).

⁷ Salvation of God's people (spiritual or physical): 40:10, 11 (tender care); 51:5; 52:10; 59:16; 62:8?; 63:5, 12. Judgment against God's enemies: 30:30; 48:14. Both: 51:9.

⁸ "Word of Christ" (ῥήματος Χριστοῦ, v. 17) probably refers to the message about Christ, i.e. the Gospel (objective genitive or genitive of contents; cf. Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, *Romans. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible Commentary 33 (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 598; Sanday and Headlam,

15). Hence Isa 53:1 perfectly suits Paul's theme that Israel has rejected the good news about Jesus, given his presupposition that Jesus is the Servant prophesied by Isaiah.

In addition, the context in Isaiah contrasts the unbelief of Israel with the positive response of the Gentiles to God's eschatological Servant. Isa 52:15 says that the Gentiles will benefit from the Servant's work and respond positively to him. The Servant will "sprinkle many nations." The verb translated "sprinkle" (*nazah*) signifies a purifying rite that cleanses people from sin,⁹ which anticipates Christ's atoning death for the world. The kings of these nations will "shut their mouths" at him, which suggests that they will be silent in awe and honor.¹⁰ The positive response of the Gentiles to God's Servant in contrast to the unbelieving response of Israel aligns perfectly with Paul's theme in Romans 10-11. Paul's understanding that Isa 53:1 is a prediction of Israel's unbelief in the Messiah is built on an awareness of the OT context. His quotation of a single verse serves to remind the reader of the overall message of this Servant song in Isaiah.

2. Romans 10:18 (=Ps 19:4[18:5])

Paul now reaffirms the theme of Rom 10:9-13, where he said that faith comes by hearing the word of Christ (v. 17), i.e. the Gospel (v. 16). This raises the question of whether Israel's unbelief is because they have never heard the message (v. 18). Paul refutes this possibility with a quotation from Ps 19:4: "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

In the original psalm, this statement refers to the general revelation of God's nature and majesty – "the heavens are telling of the glory of the Lord" (Ps 19:1).¹¹ How then, can Paul apply verse 4 to the Gospel?

Some believe that Paul ignores the original meaning of the psalm. For example, Sanday and Headlam argue that Paul simply adopts the language of Scripture to express his ideas in familiar language.¹² Käsemann believes that Paul interprets Ps 19:4 as a prophecy of the "worldwide

298). Verses 8-9 define the "word of faith which we are preaching" as a message involving specific beliefs about Jesus as the resurrected Lord. Some argue that ῥήματος Χριστοῦ uses a subjective genitive, "the message from Christ" (e.g. M. J. Lagrange, *Saint Paul: Épitre aux Romains* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1950), 261). Cranfield says the hearing of the message comes about "through Christ's speaking the message by the mouths of His messengers" (C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary, ed. S. R. Driver, A. Plummer and C. A. Briggs (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1975), 2:537). Dunn believes the expression is intentionally ambiguous: "Christ is content and author" (James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, Word Biblical Commentary 38B, ed. David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Barker and Ralph P. Martin (Dallas: Word, 1988), 623).

⁹ In the Hiphil, *nazah* means "to sprinkle" in a ceremonial sense to bring ritual purity and to cleanse from sin (e.g. Lev 4:6; 5:9; 14:7, 51; Num 19:4; cf. I Pet 1:2; Heb 9:13-14). TWOT, 566.

¹⁰ Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah. The English Text, With Introduction, Exposition, and Notes* (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Eerdmans, 1972), 3:339. The "kings" refer to rulers of the Gentile nations. This may be a metonymy for the nations themselves, implying that Gentiles honor the Servant.

¹¹ Paul expresses a similar idea in Rom 1:20: "Since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse."

¹² Sanday and Headlam, 289.

success of Christian preaching.”¹³

A better solution is that the psalm teaches the principle that God does not leave himself without a witness. Paul extends to a new situation the biblical principle that God gives widespread revelation. Since God’s way of working is to reveal himself to people, it would be unlike God’s behavior to leave his chosen people, the Israelites, without a witness to the Messiah. Bruce says “The dissemination of the Gospel is becoming as world-wide as the light of the heavenly bodies.”¹⁴

The significance of the citation of Ps 19:4 is even deeper when viewed in light of the original context. Paul assumes his readers are familiar with the whole of Psalm 19. Although the first half of the psalm focuses on God’s revelation through nature (vv. 1-6), the second half focuses on God’s verbal revelation (especially vv. 7-11). The psalm refers to God’s verbal message to humanity in several ways: “law” (v. 7), “testimony” (v. 7), “precepts” (v. 8), “commandments” (v. 8) and “judgments” (v. 9). Psalm 19, therefore, extols both nonverbal and verbal forms of God’s revelation.¹⁵

Paul sees the Gospel as the current phase of God’s verbal revelation.¹⁶ The ῥήματα (“word”, Ps 19:4) of the heavenly bodies and the Law are aspects of God’s transcendent revelation, as is the Gospel of Christ in this age.¹⁷ The concept that the Gospel is the revelation of God is, of course, a presupposition held by Christians. Yet if this idea is accepted, what Psalm 19 teaches about the verbal revelation of God can be extended to the Gospel.¹⁸

How does this citation refute the charge that Israel has not heard the Gospel (v. 18)? Ps 19:4 says that the message of God “has gone out to all the earth.” In the apostolic generation, the Gospel was widely proclaimed throughout the Mediterranean world.¹⁹ By the time Paul wrote Romans, he had preached the Gospel “from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum” (Rom

¹³ Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Eerdmans, 1980), 296.

¹⁴ F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans. An Introduction and Commentary*, The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries 6, ed. R. V. G. Tasker (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Eerdmans, 1963), 209. However, this interpretation is weakened by the fact that Paul does not use an adverb of comparison in the introductory formula as he does in 11:5 and 8.

¹⁵ Psalm 19:3 says that although the heavenly bodies have no words (λόγοι), they still speak in some sense.

¹⁶ Verse 17 links the citations of Isa 53:1 and Ps 19:4 so that the two Scripture passages are interpreted in light of one another (J. W. Aageson, “Scripture and Structure in the Development of the Argument in Romans 9-11,” *CBQ* 48 (1968): 278).

¹⁷ Cf. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 624.

¹⁸ Perhaps ῥήματα in Ps 19:4 (18:5 LXX) reminded Paul of the “word of Christ” (ῥήματος Χριστοῦ, v. 17) and the “word of faith” (τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως, v. 8). However, the link between Isa 53:1 (Rom 10:16), Ps 19:4 (Rom 10:18) and Deut 30:14 (Rom 10:8) is deeper than an argument based on a “pattern of verbal and thematic associations” with ῥῆμα and ἀκοή (Aageson, 277-78). There is an important conceptual link between all of these citations. In these passages, the ῥῆμα is the very message of God to His people, which in light of the coming of the Messiah, is now embodied in the “word of Christ” (10:16) and the “word of faith” (10:8). This same message was also anticipated in the report (ἀκοή) redemption through God’s Servant in Isaiah 53.

¹⁹ “World” (οἰκουμένη, Rom 10:18; cf. Ps 19:4 LXX) usually refers to the inhabited earth or typically the Roman empire (BDAG).

15:19) and he looks forward to taking the Gospel to Spain (Rom 15:21). Since the Gospel was widely proclaimed in places where Jews commonly lived in the Roman Empire, the Israelites as a group have had the opportunity to hear the word of Christ and thus they are accountable for their response to the message.

3. Romans 10:19 (=Deut 32:21)

Next Paul deals with the objection that perhaps Israel did not understand the message.²⁰ No – The problem is that Israel is obstinate and disobedient to God. As a result, God is seeking to make Israel jealous by bringing Gentiles to faith, so Israel will turn to God and accept the message of Christ. The problem is not with Israel’s understanding, but with their will. In vv. 19-21, Paul cites three OT verses that provide a theological explanation for the current situation: (1) Deut 32:21 shows that God will use the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy (v. 19). (2) Isa 65:1 says that although the Gentiles did not seek God, they found him (v. 20). (3) By contrast, Isa 65:2 shows that Israel is obstinate and disobedient to God (v. 21).

First Paul cites Deut 32:21: “I will make you jealous by that which is not a nation, by a nation without understanding will I anger you.”²¹ This citation makes sense if Paul’s readers know the context of the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32), which describes Israel as disobedient to God, idolatrous, “perverse and crooked” (Deut 32:5; cf. 6, 15-18). Paul assumes but does not quote the first part of Deut 32:21, which says: “They have made Me jealous with what is not God; They have provoked Me to anger with their idols.” The Hebrew uses a powerful play on words: They have made God jealous with a “non-God” (Heb. *lô-’el*), so God will make them jealous with a “non-people” (Heb. *lô-’am*). Israel regarded the Gentiles as a “non-people” because they were not part of the covenant people of God (cf. Rom 9:25, citing Hos 2:23). The implied purpose for which God provoked Israel to jealousy was to encourage them to return to God (stated explicitly in Rom 11:11, 14).

Several factors suggest that this message is applicable at any time that Israel persists in rebellion against God’s covenant: (1) The Gentile enemy is not specifically identified in Deuteronomy 32, so it is difficult to place the fulfillment at a specific time.²² (2) The Song of Moses uses a *rib* pattern (from Heb. *rib*, meaning lawsuit). This ancient literary form was used by a suzerain confronting a vassal state that had violated the vassal treaty. In one common form, the document ends with an ultimatum, warning of judgment if the vassal does not correct its errors.²³ Although there may have been an historical rebellion of Israel in view when the Song of

²⁰ In this context, γινώσκω refers to intellectual comprehension, not consent of the will (Johannes Munck, *Christ and Israel*, trans. Ingeborg Nixon (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), 99-100).

²¹ The text is from the LXX, except that Paul changes “them” (αὐτοῦς, LXX) to “you” (ὁμᾶς) to add vividness and to reproach Israel for their present unbelief. (Cf. Gleason L. Archer and Gregory Chirichigno, *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament: A Complete Survey* (Chicago: Moody, 1983), 49).

²² P. C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, The New International Commentary of the Old Testament, ed. R. K. Harrison (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Eerdmans, 1976), 374.

²³ In Deuteronomy 32, the *rib* pattern is: (1) calling heaven and earth and declaration of God’s character (vv. 1-4); (2) interrogation and accusation (vv. 5-6); (3) recollection of God’s mighty acts of Israel’s behalf (vv. 7-14); (4) direct indictment (vv. 15-18); (5) the sentence (vv. 19-25). Deuteronomy 32 also includes (6) an added section of

Moses was written, this *rîb* form promises specific consequences if Israel violates the covenant at any time. (3) The Song of Moses was probably sung at a regular covenant renewal ceremony that witnesses to the terms and implications of the covenant.²⁴

If the warning of the Song of Moses is timeless, then it may be fulfilled whenever Israel rebels against God. Such a period of disobedience was punished by the Exile. The Qumran sectarians believed the Song referred to the apostasy of their day.²⁵ Thus Paul's application of Deut 32:21 to Israel's rejection of Jesus is quite reasonable, given the assumption that Jesus is the promised Messiah. Hence, to reject Jesus the Messiah means to turn against God. God has not rejected his covenant people (11:1), but by blessing the Gentiles, God seeks to provoke Israel to jealousy, so that they will turn back to God by accepting the Gospel of Christ (11:11).²⁶

4, 5. Romans 10:20-21 (=Isa 65:1-2)

The next two quotations are taken from Isa 65:1-2. Paul quotes Isa 65:1 as a description of the Gentiles who are turning to God in his day: "I was found by those who sought Me not, I became manifest to those who did not ask for Me." Although the Gentiles were not explicitly seeking God and were not God's covenant people, God reached out to them in grace so that they found him when they accepted the message about Christ. In contrast to the Gentiles, Israel is rebelling against God when it rejects the message about Christ. Paul cites Isa 65:2 to show that God knew this disobedience would happen: "All the day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and obstinate people." The irony is that God's covenant people reject God's message in their rebelliousness, while those who were outside the covenant turn to God when given the opportunity (cf. 9:30-31).

There is little difficulty with Paul's use of Isa 65:2, which clearly describes the rebelliousness of Israel common in much of Israel's history (ὄλην τὴν ἡμέραν, "all day long"). Although this probably originally referred to Israel's disobedience which led to the Exile, this kind of rebellion was also exhibited in Paul's day in response to God's new message about the Messiah. So Paul applies to his own day this description about a behavior that Israel exhibited at several times in its history.²⁷

hope that promises Israel's restoration and vengeance against Israel's enemies, if Israel returns to God (vv. 26-43). This section is not normally found in the secular *rîb* pattern Cf. J. A. Thompson, *Deuteronomy. An Introduction and Commentary*, The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, ed. D. J. Wiseman (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity, 1974), 296-97.

²⁴ Meredith G. Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 141.

²⁵ CD 5 cites Deut 32:28 concerning the contemporary apostasy of Israel. 4Q372 1:12 says "foreigners" will "make for themselves a high place on a lofty mountain to provoke Israel to jealousy" (Fitzmeyer, *Romans*, 600).

²⁶ Hays claims "Deuteronomy 32 contains Romans in nuce," because it describes Israel's lack of faith and ultimate restoration as well as God's intention to use the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy through embracing the Gentiles. (Hays, 164). It is more accurate to say that these themes in Deuteronomy 32 are an important background to Rom 9-11, rather than the whole of Romans (cf. J. Christiaan Beker, "Echoes and Intertextuality: On the Role of Scripture in Paul's Theology," in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 65).

²⁷ Israel's disobedience that led to the exile may be a type of their eschatological rejection of the Gospel.

Further, in the context of the same section of Isaiah, God promises the eschatological restoration of Israel in cosmic terms as a “new heavens and a new earth.” This will be accompanied by extraordinary prosperity, longevity of life and a transformed natural world (Isa 65:17-25; cf. 66:19-23). This goes far beyond the conditions after the return from the Exile and suggests an eschatological significance for both the rebelliousness of Israel and the universal blessings of God after Israel repents. In Romans 9-11 Paul sees Israel’s rejection of Christ as an eschatological fulfillment of the prediction of Israel’s rebellion and hardness of heart in Isaiah 65.²⁸ Later in Romans 11, Paul also refers to the eventual repentance of the nation, citing a different passage in Isaiah (Rom 11:23-27; vv. 26-27 quote Isa 59:20-21).

The bigger question is whether Paul’s use of Isa 65:1 is legitimate, since in the original setting the verse appears to refer to Israel, not the Gentiles. Some see Paul’s interpretation of Isa 65:1 to be “totally at odds with the OT setting.”²⁹

However, there are several indications that Isa 65:1-2 contrasts the response of the Gentiles and Israel in the original context, even as Paul understands the passage: (1) The Hebrew uses “nation” (*gôy*) in v. 1 and “people” (*‘am*) in v. 2. Although there is an overlap between the two words, in the later writings of the Hebrew Bible *gôy* is frequently used for a “Gentile” or “heathen” nation in contrast to God’s covenant people (*‘am*).³⁰ God frequently calls the Israelites his “people” (*‘am*)³¹ to stress God’s ownership and the intimacy of their relationship with God.³² In Isaiah 40-66, *gôy* almost exclusively refers to the Gentile nations. Out of the 38 occurrences of *gôy* in Isaiah 40-66, only 3 are used of Israel and these have the generic sense of “nation.”³³ In the immediate context (Isaiah 65-66), *gôy* refers to the Gentiles and *‘am* refers to the Israelites, except for 66:8 (which is a generic use of *gôy*).³⁴ Paul’s interpretation of Isa 65:1-2 apparently

²⁸ Cf. 1 Pet 3:13, which alludes to the promise of a new heavens and earth in Isa 65:17 (and 66:22?). The author sees the present age as a period in which God is patiently allowing people to repent before he brings judgment and the new heavens and earth.

²⁹ Hall, 196; cf. Kasemann, *Romans*, 297; Hays, 74-75.

³⁰ “Once the descendants of Abraham had become a distinct, recognized, political, and ethnic group of people who were in a specific covenant relationship with Yahweh, the term *gôy* and *gôyim* increasingly takes the meaning of ‘gentiles’ or ‘heathen,’ in reference to the non-covenant, non-believing peoples considered as national groups.” (TWOT 1:154). Sometimes *gôy* is used when Israel is viewed as a nation by others (Deut 4:6) or when taking possession of territory (Josh 3:17). But in religious contexts where the relationship with and responsibility to God is in view, *‘am* is typically used.

³¹ E.g. Is 1:3 (in poetic parallelism to “Israel”); 3:12, 15; ; 5:13; 10:2; 10:24; 26:20; 32:13, 18; 40:1; 43:20-21; 51:16; 52:5-6; 53:8; 57:14; 65:22; Ps 78:52-66; 95:7; etc.

³² TWOT 2:646.

³³ Nations other than Israel: Is 40:15, 17; 41:2, 42:1, 6; 43:9; 45:1, 20; 49:6 (?), 7, 22; 52:10, 15; 54:3 (in the sense of territories rather than people); 55:5 (twice); 60:3, 5, 11, 12 (twice), 16, 22; 61:6, 9, 11; 62:2; 64:1; 65:1; 66:8, 12, 18, 19 (twice), 20. Is 55:5 is an interesting parallel to 65:1: “you will call a nation you do not know, and a nation which knows you not will run to you.” This refers to Gentiles as people not in a relationship with God, much like Is 65:1 which calls the Gentiles “a nation which did not call on My name.” The only exceptions in Isaiah 40-66 are 58:2 and 60:22 (both generic--Israel is a particular kind of nation) and 66:8 (asking rhetorically whether a nation can be formed in a day).

³⁴ *gôy*: 66:12, 18, 19, 20. *‘am*: 65:3, 10, 18, 19, 22.

draws on this distinction between *gôy* and *‘am*, which especially makes sense when he reads it in light of Deut. 32:21, where the Gentiles are called a “non-people” (*lô-‘am*) because they are not related to God.³⁵

(2) The meaning of *nidraštî* (v. 1) is “I allowed myself to be inquired of.”³⁶ This implies that God *allowed* these people to find him, whereas Scripture normally represents God as actively choosing Israel.³⁷

(3) The expression “a nation which did not call on My name” (v. 1) would be an odd description for Israel, which was a nation associated with the name of the Lord (Isa 43:7; Jer 14:9).³⁸

(4) There is an intriguing allusion in Isaiah 65 to a group of people that God will bless in the future, in contrast to Israel. The disobedient Israelites will be excluded from this eschatological salvation, but “my servants” shall be abundantly blessed (65:13-15).³⁹ God’s future blessings will encompass the entire earth (65:17-25). In 66:18-20 this future time of blessing explicitly includes Gentiles along with the faithful remnant of Israel.

These features point to an interest in the salvation of the Gentiles in Isaiah 65. They support Paul’s understanding that Isa 65:1-2 contrasts the response of the Gentiles and Israel. Paul’s interpretation depends on details from the Hebrew text, even though he quotes the LXX.

6. Romans 11:2 (=1 Sam 12:22; Ps 94(93):14)

Paul now asks whether God has rejected Israel (11:1). He emphatically denies this, citing himself as an example of a full fledged Israelite who has believed God’s message about Christ.

Dunn argues that the statement “God has not rejected His people” in 11:2 is a quotation of 1 Sam 12:22 and Ps 94(93):14,⁴⁰ both of which use identical wording. It is better to see this as an adaptive paraphrase, in which Paul changes the wording of these verses to fit the flow of his sentence.⁴¹ Since Paul was steeped in Scripture, he easily adopts biblical language to express his ideas. Paul changes the LXX κύριος (“Lord”) to ὁ θεός (“God”), as he often does, since he prefers to reserve the title κύριος for Jesus.⁴² He changes the future tense from the LXX

³⁵ Seifrid, “Romans”, 665-66.

³⁶ Gesenius calls this *Niphal tolerativum* (GKC §51c).

³⁷ E.g. Is 41:8; 43:20 65:9, 12, 15. Munck, 104 says, “In respect to the Jews it is not simply a question of God’s allowing himself to be found, of his becoming manifest to them, but of an untiring activity on his part; he strives with love for his people, even though said people respond to his love with disobedience and contrariness.”

³⁸ Delitzch notes that it does not say they are not called by the Lord’s name, which would use the Niphal of *qara’*, but that they did not *call* on his name (F. Delitzch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, ed. C. F. Keil and F. Delitzch, trans. James Martin, vol. 7, *Isaiah* (1871; reprint, Grand Rapids, Mi.: Eerdmans, 1973), 476). Nevertheless the fact that they are not associated with the name of the Lord is a significant hint of their identify as Gentiles, in light of how frequently Israel is associated with the name of the Lord in the OT.

³⁹ This is similar to the remnant concept (cf. Rom 11:5).

⁴⁰ Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 636; cf. Fitzmeyer, *Romans*, 604. Since Paul uses a Scripture quotation after every other rhetorical question in this passage, a citation is expected here.

⁴¹ There is no introductory formula that marks this sentence as a quotation.

⁴² Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 636.

ἀπόσεται (“will not abandon”) to the aorist ἀπόσατο (“has not abandoned”), to indicate that God has not abandoned the Israelites in his own day.

Through these adaptations, Paul applies the general principle of these verses to the new situation. Both 1 Sam 12:22 and Ps 94(93):14 use the same language to express a general principle about God’s behavior. Since God promises not to abandon his people, it follows that God has not abandoned his people *today*, no matter how it might appear.

7. Romans 11:3 (=1 Kings 19:10) and 8. Romans 11:4 (=1 Kings 19:18)

Paul further supports his claim that God has not rejected his people (11:1), by arguing that God is currently dealing with a remnant chosen by grace, even as he has done at other times in Israel’s history. To support this claim, he quotes two verses from the story of Elijah. During Elijah’s day, apostasy was rampant. After the miraculous demonstration of the superior power of Yahweh compared to the power of Baal (1 Kings 18), Elijah hid in the desert from Jezebel’s murderous rage. He became very depressed and despaired that he was the only Israelite remaining faithful to God. Paul quotes his complaint from 1 Kings 19:10: “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have torn down your altars, and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life.”⁴³ But God told Elijah that there were actually many more people faithful to God than he knew. In Rom 11:4, Paul quotes from God’s response to Elijah in 1 Kings 19:18: “I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.”⁴⁴

This story illustrates that God always reserves for himself a remnant of people that are faithful to him, even in times of great rebellion. Paul does not imply that 1 Kings *prophesies* about his day, but he uses this story to illustrate a *principle* that he applies to the current situation. The conclusion he draws from the Elijah quotations begins with the comparative adverb οὕτως (v. 5), meaning “in this manner” (BDAG), which shows that the situation in Paul’s time is analogous to Elijah’s day. The exact number is not significant. What matters is the principle that even in times of great disobedience, God does not reject his people (v. 2), but he preserves some that remain faithful.

Paul stresses that the remnant exists by God’s gracious choice (v. 5), not their meritorious righteousness (v. 6). This concept is implicit in the Hebrew text of 1 Kings 19:18, in which God

⁴³ Paul essentially quotes the LXX, but reverses two clauses: “they have torn down your altars” and “they have killed your prophets”.

⁴⁴ Paul’s paraphrase of the LXX in v. 4 accurately summarizes the sense of the original and his changes do not alter the meaning. “Paul abbreviates, eliminating some of the awkwardness in this overly literal Greek rendering, adds the reflexive pronoun ἐμαυτῷ to strengthen the point, and changes the tense of the initial verb from future to aorist, reflecting his own perspective.” (Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 676, note 26.) It is possible, of course, that Paul is using a Greek translation other than the majority text of the LXX. (cf. C. D. Stanley, “The Significance of Romans 11:3–4 for the Text History of the LXX Book of Kingdoms,” JBL 112 [1993], 43–54). For a detailed analysis of the differences between the Paul’s quotation and various Greek OT texts, see Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 657-58. Jewett, 658, says that the change of the verb tense from the future καταλείψει (“I will keep”) to the aorist κατέλιπον (“I have kept”) shows that the 7000 were preserved in Elijah’s time rather than in Paul’s own time. This provides a basis of comparison for the present preservation of a remnant, rather than implying a certain number will be preserved in the present.

says he has left 7000 who have been not bowed to Baal. The Hebrew verb *shā'ar* (“left”) in the Hiphil means to “leave over, spare” (BDB) or to “allow to survive a massacre” (HALOT). This expresses an active choice, in contrast to the Qal, in which the verb simply means “to remain.” God actively chose some as a remnant. This is clearer in the Hebrew Bible than in the LXX, suggesting that Paul was familiar with the Hebrew text. Even as a modern preacher may quote a translation while making a point based on the original language, Paul draws his conclusion from implications of the Hebrew Bible.

Dunn argues that Paul sees the Elijah story not simply as an example of God’s way of working, but also as typological event.⁴⁵ Typology means that God established patterns in persons, events and institutions that point forward to something that God will bring about in the eschatological age. When God preserved a remnant during the rebellious era in which Elijah was a prophet, he established a pattern that points forward to the eschatological climax of salvation-history. God is again working through a remnant to establish the people of God under the New Covenant. The goal of the preservation of the remnant is that ultimately both the Gentiles and “all Israel will be saved” (Rom 11:11-15, 25-32).

However, the connection between the 7000 in Elijah’s day and the remnant today is deeper than a mere pattern that is replicated. There is an *organic connection* between the remnant of Elijah’s day and the remnant today, in that they are all part of the same people of God that have been faithful to God throughout the ages. Paul’s metaphor of the olive tree (11:17-24) shows this connection between the root (those faithful to God in Israel in OT times), the branches that remain (the faithful remnant of Israel in Paul’s day), and the branches that are grafted in (the Gentiles who believe in Christ). So although the pattern is replicated as God works with a remnant through the ages, the remnant from the past through today consists of one unified people of God (cf. v. 8, “down to this very day”).

9. Romans 11:8 (=Deut 29:4(3); Is 29:10)

Sadly, because of their rebellion against God, Israel as a whole did not obtain the righteousness and divine acceptance that they sought (11:7; cf. 9:31-32; 10:2-3). Yet the chosen remnant received God’s acceptance by grace.

The corollary to the fact that the remnant was selected by grace is that God judicially hardened the hearts of those Israelites who were disobedient to God (11:7). This explains theologically why Israel failed to obtain what it seeks (cf. 9:30-33).

To support this concept, Paul paraphrases a conflation of Deut 29:4(3) and Isa 29:10: “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes to see not and ears to hear not, down to this very day.”⁴⁶ This is essentially the LXX of Deut 29:3, with the “spirit of stupor” added from Isa 29:10.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 638.

⁴⁶ The portion added from Isa 29:10 is in the middle of a portion of Isaiah frequently quoted in the NT to explain Israel’s blindness: Isa 28:11 (1 Cor 14:21); 28:16 (Rom 9:33; 1 Pet 2:6); 29:13 (Mark 7:6-7); 29:14 (1 Cor 1:19). Isa 6:9-10 also expresses the same judicial hardening and was frequently quoted by the early Church to explain Israel’s unbelief in Jesus (Matt 13:14-15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; Acts 28:26-27; John 12:40).

⁴⁷ He also changed “you” to “them” and changed it from negative to positive (“God did not give” becomes “God gave”). None of this substantially changes the basic meaning.

The context in Deuteronomy 29 is a reminder of God’s gracious care of the Israelites during the wilderness wandering. Moses says that God performed great signs and wonders during their 40 years in the wilderness, but he did not give Israel the insight to understand the deeper significance of these events. The comparative conjunction καθὼς (“just as”) shows that for Paul, this passage illustrates the principle of divine hardening of those who are disobedient to him. Even as the Israelites were judicially hardened during the wilderness wandering, so the Israelites today are judicially hardened against seeing the truth of the Gospel. Fortunately, this hardening is only partial and temporary. God will end it when the appointed number of Gentiles have been saved (Rom 11:25-26).

The tone of divine judgment is stronger in Isa 29:10 than in Deut 29:4(3). Paul’s adaptive paraphrase inserts part of Isa 29:10 to express divine judgment more strongly. In order to fit the phrase from Isa 29:10, he changed the negative (“God did not give”) in Deut 29:4(3) to the positive (“God gave”). This suggests an active judicial hardening as in Isa 29:10, rather than simply withholding an undeserved grace as Deut 29:4(3) suggests.

10. Romans 11:9-10 (=Ps 69:22-23[23-24])

Paul also quotes Ps 69:22-23(23-24) to support the judicial hardening of unbelieving Israel: “Let their table become a snare and a trap, and a stumbling block and a retribution to them. Let their eyes be darkened to see not, and bend their backs forever.”

This psalm is not David’s cry for retribution against his personal enemies. Since he is king of Israel, the enemies of David are also the enemies of God.

The early Church widely understood this psalm in messianic terms.⁴⁸ King David was seen as a type that points forward to Jesus as the Messiah. The descriptions of David and the kings descended from him are often idealized and set a pattern that was only perfectly fulfilled in the Messiah (e.g. Ps 2, 45, 110; 2 Sam 7:14).⁴⁹ Thus the opposition against Jesus the Messiah was divinely prefigured in the opposition against David described in Psalm 69 (e.g. vv. 4, 7, 9, 19, 26).

Paul assumes the context in Psalm 69, which describes the opposition against David. Since Israel (apart from the remnant) has opposed Jesus the Messiah, they have positioned themselves as an enemy of the Messiah and hence an enemy of God. This explains the ironic situation in which Israel, the chosen people, end up as the enemy of God. “From the standpoint of the Gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers” (Rom 11:28). As a result of Israel’s opposition to the Messiah and their

⁴⁸ In Rom 15:3, Paul sees Jesus’ willing suffering of the reproaches of his enemies as a fulfillment of Ps 69:9b(10b): “The reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.” John 2:17 explains Jesus’ cleansing of the temple as a fulfillment of Ps 69:9a(10a): “zeal for thy house will consume me.” In John 15:25, Jesus explains the hatred of the Jews against him as a fulfillment of Ps 69:4(5): “They hated me without a cause.” In Acts 1:20, the apostles explain the gory death of Judas as a fulfillment of the imprecation against God’s enemies in Ps 69:25(26): “Let his homestead be made desolate, and let no man dwell in it.”

⁴⁹ Psalm 2: Acts 4:25-26; 13:33; Heb 1:5; 5:5; Rev 2:26-27. Psalm 45: Heb 1:8-9; Psalm 110: Matt 22:44; 26:64; Mark 12:36; 14:62; Luke 20:42-43; 22:69; Acts 2:34-35; Heb 1:13; 5:6, 10; 7:17, 21; 1 Sam 7:14; 2 Cor 6:18; Heb 1:5.

resistance to God’s plan, God has judicially hardened the hearts of the Israelites (11:7; cf. 9:31; 10:2-3, 16).⁵⁰

Summary of Paul’s Interpretive Methods

In this passage, Paul uses several sophisticated interpretive techniques (see Table 1):

1. The interpretation assumes the original context of the OT passage. Paul’s interpretations are often clearer to readers who are familiar with the OT passage, since details from the context are essential to his interpretation. The few lines he cites are designed to bring to mind the entire original context. C. H. Dodd notes that this is typical of other Jewish and Christian testimony collections: “These sections were understood as *wholes*, and particular verses or sentences were quoted from them . . . as pointers to the whole context.”⁵¹

In Rom 10:16, Paul assumes the context of Isaiah 53, which says that Israel will not believe the divine message concerning the Servant/Messiah. The passage also contrasts the unbelief of Israel with the positive response of the Gentiles to God’s Servant. Similarly, the context of Psalm 19 extols the verbal revelation of God, which Paul extends to include the Gospel in Rom 10:18. Paul’s contrast between Jewish unbelief and Gentile belief in 10:20-21 is supported by the context of Isaiah 65-66. Eschatological overtones in the passage take the meaning beyond the post-exilic period to suggest an eschatological worldwide and cosmic blessing.

2. The interpretation may be based on details in the Hebrew text, even when the Greek of the LXX is quoted. Even as a modern preacher may quote a Bible translation while making a point based on the original language, Paul sometimes draws conclusions from the Hebrew text even when he quotes the Greek translation that is familiar to his readers. This is apparent in Paul’s stress on God’s active choice of the remnant (11:4-5), which is implied in the Hiphal of *shā’ar* (“left”) in 1 Kings 19:18. Paul’s view that Isa 65:1-2 contrasts the Gentiles and Israel are based on details clearer in the original Hebrew than the Greek of the LXX, such as the usage of *gōy* for the “Gentiles” in contrast to God’s covenant people (*‘am*). Paul’s use of Deut 32:21 in 10:19 may in part be based on an awareness of the play on words between “non-God” (Heb. *lō’-el*) and “non-people” (Heb. *lō’-‘am*) in the original verse.

3. He may use the passage as an illustration or example of a principle. This could also be called an argument by analogy. In this type of citation, the OT passage does not *predict* the contemporary situation, but Paul uses it as an *example* of the concept he is teaching. The comparison between the historical event and the present situation may be expressed with a comparative conjunction (καθὼς, 11:8) or adverb (οὕτως, 11:5). Sometimes the comparison is implied, as in 10:16, where Paul uses Isa 53:1 as an illustration of the unbelief of Israel. In 11:3-4, the Elijah story provides an example where God preserved a faithful remnant (1 Kings 19:10-18). In 11:8 the wilderness wandering (Deut 29:4) serves as an example of a judicial hardening of rebellious people.

⁵⁰ Paul sees the reference to darkening their eyes (Ps 69:23a[24a]) as the spiritual blindness of Israel to the truth of the Gospel.

⁵¹ C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures. The Substructure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1952), 126.

4. He may apply a biblical principle to the contemporary situation. In many places, Paul assumes the literal interpretation of the passage and then explores its significance for the current situation.⁵² If this is not recognized, it may appear that Paul is “reading things into” the text. Yet even though Paul’s application may be quite different than the original application of the passage, it is a legitimate implication of the teachings of the text. Since Psalm 19 shows by God’s revelation through nature and the Law that God does not leave himself without a witness, God can be expected to make his Gospel widely proclaimed, since it is God’s revelation in the messianic era (10:17-18). Since God promises that if Israel is rebellious, he will provoke them to jealousy through Gentiles (Deut 32:21), this explains what has happened today (10:19). Israel was disobedient to God several times in history as it is today (10:21). Since God promises never to abandon his people (1 Sam 7:22; Ps 94(93):14), he must not have rejected Israel today (11:2). God is working with a remnant today, even as he did in Elijah’s time (11:3).

5. The biblical principle may provide a theological explanation for a contemporary situation. Israel’s obstinacy and disobedience to God (Isa 65:2) explains why the Israelites do not understand that God is now working through Jesus the Messiah (10:21). Since God judicially hardened Israel (Deut 29:4; Ps 69:22-23), this explains why Israel has not obtained the righteousness and divine acceptance they seek (11:7-10).

6. Some passages contain predictive prophecy which has been fulfilled. Scripture predicts Israel’s unbelief and disobedience to the Covenant (10:16, 19, 21), the eschatological blessing of the Gentiles (10:20), and God’s provocation of Israel to jealousy through the Gentiles (10:21).

7. The historical event described may point to an eschatological typological fulfillment. Typology assumes that God intends the historical event to be a pattern that points to something that will happen in the future. Since David is a type of the Messiah, the call for divine judgment on his enemies sets a pattern for the judicial hardening of the enemies of the Messiah (11:9-10). Israel’s rebellion that led to the exile is a pattern repeated in their eschatological rejection of the Gospel (10:21). The remnant in Elijah’s day points to the eschatological remnant of Israel that accepts the Gospel (11:3).

8. Christological presuppositions govern Paul’s interpretation. Unstated Christian presuppositions affect Paul’s understanding of the interpretation and contemporary significance of biblical passages. These are revelational presuppositions that are explained elsewhere in Paul’s writings. Some of Paul’s assumptions are that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Gospel of Christ is the divinely revealed message in this age, and the Church, consisting of believing Jews and Gentiles, is the people of God. The interpretation of Isa 53:1 is governed by the belief that the Servant of Isaiah 53 refers to the Messiah and that Jesus is that promised Servant (10:16). If Jesus is the Messiah, then Israel’s rejection of the Gospel constitutes disobedience to God (10:19; 11:8-10). The assumption that the Christian Gospel is the current phase of God’s verbal revelation is behind the understanding of Psalm 19 (10:18). Throughout the passage Paul assumes that the people of God today is the Church, which consists of believing Jews and Gentiles. He makes this explicit in the olive tree metaphor (11:17-24). This assumption explains Paul’s application of the remnant principle, since there is an organic connection between the

⁵² Cf. Hays, 160: “His comments characteristically emphasize the immediacy of the text’s word to the community rather than providing specific rules for reading.”

remnant of Elijah’s day and the Church, in that are both part of the same people of God (11:3-4).

9. **He may use an adaptive paraphrase to emphasize a point.** In most cases Paul sticks closely to the wording of the LXX, with an occasional change of a word for emphasis (10:19; 11:2). In one instance (11:8), he conflates two passages and slightly adapts the language to stress the judicial hardening of Israel. The adaptations, however, do not change the basic teachings of the passage.

Table 1: Paul's Interpretive Methods

Rom	OT	Content	Assume OT Context	Illustration of Principle	Application of Principle	Theological Explanation	Predictive Fulfillment	Typological Fulfillment	Adaptive Paraphrase	Presupposition
10:16	Is 53:1	“Lord who has believed our report?”	Servant passage; positive response of Gentiles contrasted to unbelief of Israel.	Unbelief of Israel about the Servant/Messiah.			Unbelief of Israel about the Servant/Messiah.			Jesus is the Servant/Messiah.
10:18	Ps 19:4	“Their voice has gone out into all the earth...”	Nature and verbal word of God are both parts of God’s revelation.	God does not leave himself without a witness, as is shown in revelation through nature.	The Gospel is widely proclaimed.					The Gospel is the current phase of God’s verbal revelation.
10:19	Deut 32:21	God will make Israel jealous by the Gentiles.	Israel’s disobedience to God		If Israel is disobedient, God provokes them to jealousy through the Gentiles.		Israel’s unbelief and disobedience to the Covenant led God to provoke Israel to jealousy through the Gentiles.			Jesus is the promised Messiah, so to reject him is to rebel against God.
10:20	Is 65:1	Those who did not seek God found him.	Contrast between Israel and Gentiles. Eschatological blessing of the Gentiles				Eschatological blessing of the Gentiles			The Church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, is the people of God today.
10:21	Is 65:2; cf. Jer 35:17	Israel is obstinate and disobedient to God.	Eschatological restoration of Israel is suggested by the worldwide/cosmic blessing.		Israel was disobedient to God several times in history.	Explains why Israel did not understand and accept the Gospel.	Israel’s unbelief/disobedience to the Covenant	The pattern of Israel’s pre-exilic rebellion is repeated in their eschatological rejection of the Gospel		Jesus is the promised Messiah, so to reject him is to rebel against God.
11:2	1 Sam 7:22; Ps 94(93):14	“God has not rejected his people.”			God will never abandon his people				Expresses a biblical concept in biblical language worked into the sentence.	

Rom	OT	Content	Assume OT Context	Illustration of Principle	Application of Principle	Theological Explanation	Predictive Fulfillment	Typological Fulfillment	Adaptive Paraphrase	Presupposition
11:3	1 Kings 19:10, 14	Elijah says "...only I am left"		God reserves a remnant, even in the times of great unbelief of Israel, as he did in Elijah's day.	God is working with a remnant today.			An eschatological remnant pointed to by the remnant in Elijah's day.	Reverses 2 clauses.	The Church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, is the people of God today.
11:4	1 Kings 19:18	"I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal."		(same as 11:3)	(same as 11:3)			(same as 11:3)	Summary of the meaning.	(same as 11:3)
11:8	Deut 29:4; Is 29:10	"God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes to see not, ears to hear not."		Election and judicial hardening of the heart of the unbelieving and rebellious.		Judicial hardening explains why Israel has not obtained what it seeks (v. 7)			Conflation of two passages. Adaptive paraphrase stresses judicial hardening	Jesus is the promised Messiah, so to reject him is to rebel against God.
11:9-10	Ps 69:22-23	"Let their table become a snare...let their eyes be darkened..."				Judicial hardening explains why Israel has not obtained what it seeks (v. 7)		David is a type of the Messiah. His call for divine judgment on his enemies is a pattern for the judicial hardening of the Messiah's enemies.		Jesus is the promised Messiah, so to reject him is to rebel against God.

Conclusions

Paul shows that the OT anticipated Israel's unbelief and the eschatological blessing of the Gentiles. Paul's insights from Scripture help illuminate the perplexing rejection of Jesus as Messiah by the majority of Jewish people. God is using the faith of the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy, so that they will turn to God and accept the message about Jesus the Messiah. Predictive prophecies and typological patterns in Scripture point to these events.

Paul respects the original meaning of the biblical passages that he cites. In fact, a familiarity with the original context is essential for Paul's interpretations to make sense. At times he *assumes* the meaning of a passage and explores theological *implications* and practical *applications* of the principles taught in the passage. His presuppositions about the people of God, the Gospel and the Messiahship of Jesus govern his application of various passages. Yet his presuppositions and interpretive methods do not result in interpretations that are at odds with the original meaning of the OT passages.