

According to Paul God is impartial, yet he continues to be faithful to Israel despite her refusal to accept the gospel of Christ. Did Paul's emotional affiliation to Israel hinder his theological thinking on this issue?

I agree with Paul's views as stated in the first half of the title; while examining the second part of the question I would argue that Paul's emotional affiliation did not hinder his theological thinking. To demonstrate this, the essay will examine the following:

- Impartiality, according to Paul, is demonstrated in the way in which God judges Jews and Gentile alike.
- Covenant relationship - this section shows how Paul understood the pact between God and His beloved Israel, forming some of the basic building blocks of Paul's theological understanding of the Israel issue.
- The paper will look at Paul as a Jew and highlight how we cannot isolate his Jewishness and rabbinic understanding when considering his theology.
- We will examine the bases of Paul's theology of why he believed God is faithful to His covenant people and how Gentiles coming to faith played an important role in this.
- Finally I will examine Paul's relationship with Jew and Gentile and demonstrate how his theological understanding on the Israel issue is grounded biblically and theologically.

Impartiality

Impartiality in Romans 2:11, 'for God does not show favouritism', is indicative of the overall theme of the Bible. Be they Jew or Greek, Paul is saying, everyone is going to be judged equally. 'There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then

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for the Greek (Rom 2:9). Paul isn't giving Israel special dispensation, but when the Day of Judgment comes all will be judged the same. Achtemeier sums up the point of impartiality:

‘When the day comes, no one will be able to avoid judgment by pleading special or extenuating circumstances of whatever kind, because in the matter of such judgment, God is impartial...’¹

Paul was urging Jews and Gentiles to live in accord. Early church gatherings brought diversity to groups of believers from different cultures. For example, Jewish believers were not to impose on others their belief in law over grace. As he points out in Rom 3:10 - 18 there is no one who is righteous as all have fallen short of the mercy of God.

Paul suggests in Romans: 2: 12 – 16 that if God gave the Jewish people the Law of Moses, which ‘imparted knowledge of the divine’² the Jew would have an advantage which wouldn't be fair and God would be partial as opposed to impartial with regard to judgment. What Paul reiterates is that Gentiles are not at a disadvantage in terms of God's judgment since what is required from the law is written on their hearts. The Gentiles have some understanding of God's will and so are equally judged with the Jews who have the law. Both are judged and repaid according to their works (Rom 2:6.). Those who reject the truth of grace through the Messiah will be judged equally.

We can sometimes have the impression that although God is impartial to both Jew and Gentile, Paul's endearment to Israel as impartiality is clouded by his zealousness to the Jewish people. However, there are issues to consider, that impartiality doesn't take away the fact that God according to Paul is faithful to Israel, but was simply that God's hand extended to all who partake in the grace given through the Messiah.

If Paul was to have allowed an emotional affiliation to the Jewish people to hinder his theological perception, he would have surely been one-sided towards the Jews and yet we have begun to demonstrate that his fundamental belief was that both Jew and Greek with or without the law are under as much judgment without the acceptance of Christ.

¹ Achtemeier Paul, *Romans* (USA: John Knox Press, 1985) p.44.

² Das Andrew, *Paul and the Jews* (USA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003) p.86.

Covenant Relationship

Now I will examine Paul's understanding of Covenant relationship which played an important part in his understanding of God's faithfulness to the Jewish people.

Covenant, according to the OED, means a 'solemn agreement, an agreement held to be the basis of a relationship of commitment with God'.³...

God chose Abraham as the Father of Nations who He promised to bless (Gen 12: 1 – 3). There is the promise of a son, Isaac (Genesis 15:1 – 5), the confirmation of God's covenant with Abraham (Genesis 17:2) and after the offering of Isaac in Genesis 22; Genesis 22:17 states God's confirmation to multiply Abraham's decedents as numerous as the stars in the sky'. This formed the basis of God's first covenant with the Jewish people. There are other covenants which scholars define as the Noaic, Mosaic, Davidic and priestly covenants, but the main emphasis I want to draw on is the idea that Paul saw that God's promise to Abraham doesn't change and His purpose and ultimate plan was the Christ which fitted into the Messianic prophecies seen throughout the Old Testament.

Scriptures show how Paul related covenant to the elected people of God. In Romans 9:3 – 5. Paul seems to feel a great deal of unhappiness because the Jews do not accept Christ; if he could he would rather deny Christ to be at one with his fellow Jews. However, having personally accepted Christ this is not possible, although he cannot deny that it was the Jews to whom God gave the covenant and the law. Jesus is the fulfilment of the law.

Paul's isn't emotionally affiliated, but is a Jew looking at Israel from an OT scriptural basis. I would agree with Dunn, that Paul felt 'the strain imposed upon his Jewishness'⁴ linked with his calling. Paul knows that to be cut off from Christ is a worse fate.

³ *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* 11th edition

⁴ Dunn. G.D. James, *Romans* (Dallas: World books, Publisher, 1988)p.531.

Israel was, as Dunn asserts, ‘clearly established in scriptural thought as the name equally of the covenant people and of the covenant land⁵’. So when Paul is talking about Israel, he is not emotionally affiliated because of blood relations as such, but sees the Jewish people as covenant nation, first with Abraham and renewed with Jacob(Genesis 35:10 – 12).

The term “fathers” are obviously the fathers of Paul’s own people. But now the blessings of the Messiah extend to a much broader spectrum i.e. the Nations who can share in the Messiah as well.

Das asserts that in Galatians 3:15 Paul is uncomfortable with the term covenant. This according to the author is because the term “covenant” is associated with the Mosaic covenant as the Mosaic Law was,

‘regularly viewed as an extension of the Abrahamic covenant as it was the norm in first century Judaism to associate the Abrahamic with the later covenant and law given to Moses at mount Sinai⁶.’

His discomfort is because covenant has close affiliation with requirements of the law. For Paul the Abrahamic covenant is based on God’s gracious promise with no mention of circumcision. He indicates only one beneficiary of God’s covenant which is Jesus Christ i.e. moving away from regular Judaism. Paul isn’t rejecting his people but is reiterating grace through a Messiah. If he was to be hindered in his theological understanding then grace wouldn’t be the forefront of his theology.

I will finally take Galatians 4:21 -31 to unpack covenant relationship and show why Paul’s emotional affiliation doesn’t hinder his theological understanding of Israel. Paul gives two examples to demonstrate that salvation can only be achieved through grace. The contrast between Abraham’s first two children demonstrates the point. There is Ishmael, the child of the slave Agar and Isaac, the child of Sara; child of the promise to Abraham. The child of Agar Paul refers to as slavery. Mosaic Law, one of the other covenants where God gave Moses the Laws, (Ex 20 – 40,

⁵ Ibid.,p.533

⁶ Das Andrew.A, *Paul and the Jews*, p.42.

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Lev 1 – 27...) according to Paul stands on the same side of Hagar Abraham's slave... Mosaic covenant was the sign of Israel's election, but Mosaic Law was equated with Agar the slave woman who was bearing children into slavery 4:24 – 25. The law is bondage but was still a sign of Israel's election and a special place before God. The child of Sara was the seed which would produce ultimately the Christ. The law isn't done away with just as the covenant wasn't finished with. There can't be one without the other i.e. the fulfilment of the new covenant that is Christ. And the law makes an awareness of a need for a redeemer. They are both interconnected and Paul understood this.

In Galatia Jewish believers promoted amongst Gentile Christians a Gospel message including law observance along with faith in Christ. Paul rebukes these doctrines. So Paul understood Covenant and the election of Israel, but his emphasis was on grace. The unbelievers wouldn't be heirs to the seed of Abraham without the previous covenants. The fruit of the Messiah was grounded according to Paul in covenant relationship. Without the root there could not be the fruit that is the Messiah and this was very much rooted in his theology. If Paul was to allow a flawed theology to hinder his theology of Israel, he wouldn't have seen an importance to extend the teachings of Christ to the Nations.

Paul the Jew and rabbinic understanding

When we look at Paul in relation to his affiliation to the Jewish people it is important to take into account that he was first and foremost a Jew and his ministry was embedded in the complexity of his life and thought. Witherington describes Paul as being complex in that he was a Jew, a Roman citizen, a Christian, but did not cease to be Jewish; although he had claimed to have found the Jewish Messiah⁷.

Although the practice of his religion took different shapes and forms, he did not think of a belief in Christ as a different religion. He became an Apostle to the Gentiles, but still remained a Jew.

⁷ Witherington Ben, *The Paul Quest, The Renewed Search for The Jew of Tarsus* (USA: Inter - Varsity Press, 1998), p52.

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This is important when considering the question of whether his affiliation with Judaism hindered his theological understanding of God's place for the Jewish people.

Dunn maintains that Paul's faith remained in large measure the faith and religion of his forefathers⁸

We can see this in Galatians 1:14,

'I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the age, for I was more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors.'

Hence his theology was grounded in Jewish thought and rabbinic understanding.

To understand the theological and historical complexity of Paul's life and thought, we need to understand that his ministry was rooted in rabbinic tradition⁹ as Schnelle suggests. The different ways Paul disputes is learnt through rabbinic teaching. Within the context of Diaspora Judaism Paul in his letters shows that he accumulated original Hellenistic material into his developing education and was familiar with the ancient schools of philosophy¹⁰.

As Paul was a Roman citizen, he was placed in the elite category of Roman society and in the elite of Jewish society. He most likely would have studied in Jerusalem. We see in Acts 22:3,

'I am a Jew born in Tarsus, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated strictly according to our ancestral law'.

His education would have started at six and he would have been grounded in the scriptures, the Septuagint and then the Hebrew scriptures.

Evidence suggests that there was no ordination of rabbis before AD 70, but he would have been at the same league as any learned Rabbi of today. He would have 'soaked up eschatological theology as well as the theocratic and political teaching. Paul would have learned to debate, persuade and argue from the current experiences and analyse scripture'¹¹ with the zeal of the Religious Jews of today.

⁸ Dunn G.D. James, Romans, p.716.

⁹ Schnelle Udo, Apostle Paul (USA:Baker Academic,2005)p.146.

¹⁰ ibid

¹¹ Witherington Ben, *The Paul Quest*, The Renewed Search for The Jew of Tarsus, p.96.

Witherington asserts that the way Paul handles texts, uses such creative handling of the Hebrew Scriptures cannot just be put down to inventiveness etc. but a good measure came from his education¹².

We can't deny all these factors when considering the opening question. If we were to say that Paul was emotionally hindered to believe that God had a special purpose for the Jewish people, we would be denying his existence first of all as a Jew, but also as a learned theologian.

Paul's theological understanding of Israel

Paul realises that Israel was set apart to be the chosen people of God and through them there was to be the Messiah that all those outside Judaism, are able to partake in salvation through faith. God is the God of the Gentiles as well (see Rom 3:29). He never suggests that God's love for Israel means that they are saved through the law. A Jew, according to Paul, does not equal the outward circumcision but reflects a spiritual circumcision of the heart (Rom 2:28).

E:P Saunders suggests that we can ask ourselves why God would choose Israel, give them the Law and then require them to be saved, as much as gentiles through faith in a Messiah¹³. The Old Testament was the laying of foundations to the coming of the Messiah. Paul saw the Messiah as an extension of the Jewish faith. So Israel needed to be given the law as the law was the foundation of what was to come.

'For the Messiah is the culmination of the law as far as righteousness is concerned for everyone who believes'. Rom 10:4

Romans 9:13, 'Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated,' is an example that God elects those who he chooses to elect. We know that Jacob and Esau were twins with Jacob second in line to the inheritance which was to be imparted through Isaac. Jacob was the one that God chose

¹² ibid

¹³ Saunders.E.P, *Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).p.118.

to inherit the blessings. Dunn asserts the reason why Paul is relating to Jacob and Esau is in relation to Israel's election¹⁴. God chose Jacob over Esau without both proving or disproving who was worthier to inherit the promise of God. God made the choice before they were born. Whatever they did or would do made no difference. The election of Israel's forefather was God's decision. God chooses who He wills to choose and man has no right to question the Creator (Romans 9:20 – 21). This can be summarised by Dunn.

...‘the children of Israel should recognise that their own selection as God's people was solely a matter of Gods choice, and that his purpose continues to unfold solely in terms of what God determines’¹⁵

In Romans 9: 12 Paul is saying that Israel's election is nothing to do with Law keeping. Its election took place before his birth and is not determined through works of the law such as circumcision, observance on dietary laws, Sabbaths and festivals. It is only dependent on God's calling.

In Romans 11:11, Paul gives an allegory of an olive tree which is a representation of Israel (Jer11:16)

‘After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!’

The Gentiles were outside Judaism and were considered unclean. Contrary to Judaic ideals they were grafted on to Israel through the Messiah. God extended his hand to Gentiles so they could have the blessings of redemption as well as the Jews.

¹⁴ Dunn.G.D.James, *Romans 9 – 16*, p.549.

¹⁵ *ibid*

As Dunn asserts the breaking off the branches of historic Israel obviously was done to make room for the Gentiles within Israel (11:19 – 20). But that, ‘did not reverse the line of dependence of all branches on the historic roots¹⁶ (11:18)

In other words this whole analogy was to warn Gentiles Christians that Israel was not rejected because of their unbelief.

The natural branches i.e. Israel, have been broken off through unbelief. But because the wild branches i.e. Gentiles, have been grafted in through faith (11:20-21) unbelieving Gentile branches can also be broken off and newly natural branches (Israel) could be and will be re-engrafted in (11:23 – 24).

It is God who did not spare the natural branches (11:19 – 21) and it is down to God who grafted in the branches of the wild olive contrary to nature (11:24). It would be God who may not spare the Gentile branches (11:21).

Dunn believes that Paul knows this single tree must not to be cut down or replaced. There is only one Israel.

It is God according to Paul who will graft in Israel once again 11:23. Israel was ‘still the central subject of God’s saving purpose, expressed in his goodness and his severity¹⁷,

To finalise the theological point of Israel is, as Schnelle suggests:

‘that if election of Israel, the promise to the fathers and the provisions of the covenants are no longer valid then God’s righteousness is at stake¹⁸’.

¹⁶ Ibid., p.525.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.526.

Faithfulness to Israel incorporated the salvation of all Nations as, if Israel hadn't been set apart, the Messiah couldn't have come as he came through the Jewish people.

We have seen that Paul's faithfulness to Israel was tied in his Jewishness and rabbinic training, but also he had an understanding of messianic prophecy. Jews had been waiting for a Messiah and Christ was the fulfilment. Paul knew his Scriptures and understood them from a Judaic viewpoint. He constantly uses scripture from the Old Testament to prove Christ's Messiahship

In Romans 9 verse 25 – 28, Paul quotes from the prophet Hosea

'I will call My people, who were not my people, and her beloved, who was not beloved....'

and Verse 29 ... and also quotes Isaiah

'Unless the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom and we would have been made like Gomorrah.' (Rom 9:29)

Paul didn't argue that Israel's call from God had anything to do with race or works. He wasn't suggesting that others were rejected so that Israel was chosen. These texts prove that God's purpose wasn't to select Israel for the sake of it. Israel was set apart so through Abraham there would ultimately be a Saviour where the Nations could also take part in the blessings of salvation.

¹⁸ Schnelle Udo, Apostle Paul, p.343.

Using Hosea, who was addressing the Northern Kingdom after the killing of the Assyrians who had oppressed Israel, Paul emphasises that God was making a way ‘to transform the covenant status of those outside the covenant or rejected from the covenant¹⁹’.

Isaiah also refers exclusively to Israel. Paul uses these scriptures to focus on the central promises to the patriarchs. The seed (Rom 9:29) refers to Genesis 32:12 where God makes ‘the promise of the covenant with Abraham that Abraham’s seed would be “like the sand of the sea”... God’s purpose for the people of Israel was to be fulfilled through Christ. Paul sees that his God never forgets the binding agreement that He made with the people of Israel but embraces all those outside the covenant who want to partake in the blessing.

‘The seemingly new range of God’s call embracing neither Jew alone nor Gentile alone, but all who respond to that call, whether Jew or Gentile, was foreseen and spoken of long before in scriptures...’²⁰

In Romans these scriptures that we have just looked at 9:25 - 29 the grafting in of the gentiles (9:25 – 26), the rejection of Israel (9:27 – 28) and the remnant 9:27 were prophesied in the Old Testament.

Paul didn’t want to settle for what he refers to as a remnant as his hope and prayer was that all Israel will be saved 11:26

Paul sees that there are two different meanings to what constitutes Israel

‘But it is not that a word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham. ..’(Rom 9:6)

There is the Nation and there were the believing people.

¹⁹ Dunn., *Romans*, p. 574.

²⁰ *ibid.*, P.574 .

‘The Jews were defined ethnically or geographically. They could be identified as Judeans i.e. a people from other regions or countries’²¹.

Conversely Israel the nation is defined usually by its relation to God. The people are identified as the chosen people through the descendants of Abraham and Jacob where election was achieved. Paul knows that it can only be through Christ and physical descent is no guarantee to the kingdom of God.

Paul is also reiterating grace. He lets go of the concept of a Gospel of works which where a Jew would be living by 613 laws and regulation codes. His theology is biblically rooted in Judaic thought but with a true concept of who Christ was. What He was said to be is a redeemer of Israel and a completion of what the Law was unable to do. (Rom 8:3)

Wasserberg asserts that:

‘if the gospel of Christ is God’s power for salvation for the Jew first and also for the Greek (Rom 1:16) then any Jewish refusal of this gospel poses a fundamental problem for the core of Christ’s proclamation’²²,

In Romans 11:11 – 32, Paul states that the rejection of Israel is not final. Although Israel is unbelieving, God’s purpose is making use of their unbelief. As Jewish people rejected Christ, many believers of the gospel turned their back on the Jewish synagogue and started to reach the Gentiles. This was encouraged by Israel’s rejection (Acts 13:46 – 48; 14:1 – 3, 18:4 – 7; 19:8 – 10; 28:23 – 29). Paul sees that if Israel’s rejection brought blessings to the gentiles there would be even greater blessings if Israel were to accept the Messiah (Rom11:12).

²¹ Dun.G.D James, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006)p.505.

²² Wasserberg Günter, *Reading Israel In Romans, Romans 9 – 11:Israel and Jesus Christ God Interrogated*(USA:Trinity Press International,2000),p.180

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Paul's emotions are tied into his passion for scripture to be fulfilled. The Jews will be provoked to jealousy and turn to the Christ: (Rom 11:11). He sees the Gentiles coming to faith as part of God's plan for the Jews. And Israel coming to faith in Christ fits into the messianic expectation concerning Isaiah 59:20, 21 in Rom 11:26 and Isaiah 27:9 in Rom 11:27. The Messiah was expected to come out of Zion and was a fulfilment of the covenant. 'the deliverer will come out of Zion' Isaiah 59:20, 21. He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant with, I will take away their sins (Romans 11:27 / Isaiah 59:21)

Paul doesn't have to reject Israel, but simply extends His thinking and new theology out of the root of the Jewish faith and he interprets it through Jewish understanding. Christianity was an extension of Judaism. Paul didn't think of privilege or non-privileged Israel, faith in Messiah abolished the distinction between Jew and Greek under Christ but didn't abandon the everlasting commitment between God and the people of Israel. The hardening in the Nation was seen throughout the Old Testament and God always brought them back from captivity. For Paul he understood this and understood that God would restore his people.

'Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers' (Romans 11:28-36)

God's promise to the fathers was revealed through His grace of which regarded even His enemies as beloved. Paul's theology rested on this understanding of the mercy and compassion of God, which is the same God of the Old Testament.

Paul's relationship with Jews and Gentiles

To turn to Paul's relationship with Jews and Gentiles, we find that this is centred on his new found relationship with the Messiah. Under Christ all were equal but Israel according to Paul's theological understanding was still the elect.

Paul's the 'righteous Pharisee found himself to be a sinner who was made alive by grace²³'.

Bruggen claims that Paul's radical theological refusal to accept grace through the law led him to an understanding of grace through a Messiah, and to a universal mission to bring Gentiles into the promises which Jews saw as meant for them only. This meant that to the unbelieving Jews Paul became a stumbling block and an enemy to the religious communities which he once was part of. We should understand culturally that Paul had abandoned the very existence of his identity as a Pharisee. He couldn't then be flawed in his theology through emotionally being affiliated with Israel or the Jewish people, which he had not abandoned but had embraced what was foretold in the scriptures.

Paul was looking towards eschatological times.

According to E.P. Saunders many passages in the Bible and post biblical Jewish literature predicted that when God established his kingdom Gentiles would turn and worship him²⁴. The prophet Isaiah actually thought that in the last days all the Gentiles would come to the Temple to worship the God of Israel (Isaiah 2:2). Paul never saw Gentiles as becoming Jewish. In Romans 15 he describes himself as a priest taking the offering to the Gentiles. The last days, as Paul saw, had now arrived and the Gentiles should be included as Gentiles and not Jews. Paul saw a clear distinction between Gentile and Jew, but both were entitled to the redemption of a Messiah. He opposed views which sought to make Gentile believers Jewish.

Paul had conflict with other Christians over what should be required. He had a series of three confrontations between himself and other Jewish Christians. These are recounted in

²³ Bruggen Van Jakob, Paul (New Jersey:P & R Publishing,2005), p.29.

²⁴ Saunders.E.P,*Paul*,p.50

Galatians. One is over circumcision, Titus a Greek convert was urged to be circumcised which Paul refutes in Gal 1 – 10. The second time was in Antioch, where there were Jewish and Gentile members. They also shared in eating meals together and the Lord's Supper. Peter, when visiting Antioch, joined in, then was sent a letter by James resulting in his removal from the Gentiles and thus the Jewish believers. Paul in Gal 2:11 – 21 refutes this, reiterating that it is not through the law but through grace. And finally we have the conflict over the status of Gentile converts which arose in Galatia. The Gentiles were put under pressure to be circumcised...

Paul was incensed Gal 5:12 'let them cut them mutilate themselves' Rom 5:12. Circumcision was a sign of covenant. There was now the Christ and Gentiles.

As Gentiles related to Nations, Jews were to play a role as they were elected by God. Timothy was circumcised but this was because he was going to the Jews and his mother was Jewish. In Christ Jew and Gentile are one according to Paul. The fate of the Jews as far as Paul was concerned was a demonstration of God's fairness

Paul's writings all demonstrate the grace that the Law was unable to do. Paul as a Pharisee would have had nothing to do with the Gentiles as they were considered by the Jewish people to be dogs, unclean, and not to be associated with. His theology would have been challenged and we can see that yes he has an understanding of Israel's place in God's plan for the Nations, but this does not hinder his theological understanding of God's love for the people that he chose to elect.

Calvert asserts that Paul makes the law the ultimate taboo for a child of Abraham by equating the law with idolatry²⁵. In Gal 4: 1 – 10, Paul urged that the Gentiles who were now part of the body of Christ were to avoid the idolatry of the law. Paul uses the Abrahamic traditions for his own purpose to demonstrate Grace over the law. He is

²⁵ Calvert.L.Nancy, *Abraham and Idolatry: Paul's Comparison of Obedience to the Law with Idolatry in Galatians 4:1 – 10*(UK: JSOT Press, 1993),p236.

emotionally linked to Israel but does not adhere to teachings which were to draw people back into slavery (Gal 4: 3 – 5). So his emotional affiliation was theological. As he reiterates that the law is unable to impart salvation 3:21 and is a form of slavery 4:3 – 5. This proves that Paul was not hindered in any way. He had experienced new relationship with His God but was rooted in Judaic thought with an understanding of law leading to completion through the Christ who came through the Jews and would return to the Nation of Israel.

I would say Paul's emotional affiliation did not hinder his theological understanding of God's faithfulness to Israel despite Israel not accepting the Messiah.

Conclusion

The essay has examined Paul's understanding of God as Impartial where all are subject to the same judgment, conversely subjected to grace to all who believe, demonstrating that his emotional affiliation wasn't affecting his theology on the issue of Israel

I have demonstrated that Paul was first and foremost a Jew who had not abandoned his Jewishness but had come to an understanding that Law was not enough to live by. Believing in the Christ challenged his thinking and his rabbinic upbringing, but he still maintained a close link to his people, despite being an Apostle to the Gentiles. Culturally there will be an emotional link, but Paul was a renowned theologian and probably can be considered the patriarch of Christian theology and thought. As regards this and the fact that he never left Judaism it is difficult to suggest that his emotional affiliation to Israel influenced his theology on the issue.

We have seen through Covenant relationship, that God does not elect those He sees fit to elect but elects those who He chooses and this cannot be questioned according to Pauline thought.

I have shown that through Paul's rabbinic understanding, he would have learned to argue, and tackle Old Testament Scripture which is evident in his writings. I have looked at Paul's understanding of Israel theologically, determining that the rejection of Jews and the acceptance by Gentiles plays an eschatological role, and was the fulfilment of scripture.

The essay examined Paul's relationship with Jew and Gentile. Paul reiterated that Law was not equal to grace, and it is grace in the Christ that is the answer which shows that his theology was not hindered by his emotion

Paul's understanding of God's mercy for his covenant people was not emotional but was understood from a theological perspective and we have seen how this fitted into to Messianic prophecy. The Israel issue was understood through a great understanding from a Jewish perspective. And for Paul to deny that God was not for a Nation that He predestined, he would have had to deny his Jewishness and God's faithfulness to all those outside the chosen people.

Finally I would agree with Bell's statement:

'Paul in 'Romans' clearly believed that Israel remains the people of God, that the election is firm and that God's call is irrevocable.... That if God has chosen it, Israel has to come through to final salvation²⁶.

²⁶ Bell.H.Richard, *The Irrevocable Call of God*(Germany:Gulde – Druck,1979),p29

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