

WHEATON COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL

ROMANS 10:9-13:
SALVATION FOR EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF JESUS

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Faith in Jesus results in salvation for everyone who believes. This is the message of Romans 10:9-13 in Paul's richly theological epistle¹ to the first century church in Rome. It was a universal message that Paul believed found its origin in the Old Testament and broke across the cultural divides of Greeks and Jews. To better understand the original meaning and the lasting relevance of Romans 10:9-13 this paper will examine the passage in its historical and literary context, analyze its grammatical and syntactical components, and explore its wider ramifications for Christian theology.

CONTEXT OF ROMANS 10:9-13

Our passage finds its literary context in chapters 9-11 of Romans. While some scholars understand these chapters to be the climax of the letter,² this paper will follow the assumption of others that these chapters form a "distinct argument" separate from chapters 1-8.³ It is here that Paul pauses his explication on the ramifications of the gospel for the Christian—a theme picked up in chapter 12—and instead focuses on the question of Israel's unbelief in the gospel. Paul has great sorrow for his "kinsmen" because they have not received Jesus as the Messiah (9:1-5). Yet he understands there to be theological grounds for why this does not necessitate that "the word of God has failed (9:6), instead, God's sovereign election leads Paul to trust in God's purposes (9:6-29). The reason why Israel has failed to believe the gospel: Israel has sought to

¹ This paper follows the interpretation of Peter Stuhlmacher, who understands Romans as a "hortatory and didactic document with an apologetic accent," found in "The Purpose of Romans," in *The Romans Debate* (ed. Karl P. Donfried; rev., and exp. ed.; Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg, 1977; repr., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1995), 236

² N. T. Wright, *The Letter to the Romans* (NIB 10; Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 2002), 645; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16* (WBC 38b; Dallas, Tex: Word Books, 1988), 519.

³ Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1996), 551; also Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1988), 344.

establish its own righteousness, by the law, apart from faith (9:30-10:13).⁴ Paul believes that Israel is without excuse (10:14-21), that a remnant is redeemed while the Gentiles are being grafted in (11:1-24) and that in some mysterious way “all of Israel” will be saved (11:25-36).

The immediate context of 10:9-13 is 10:5-13. In this section, Paul is building on 10:1-4, where he spoke of his prayer to see his fellow Jews saved—who were not “saved” because, being “ignorant” of God’s righteousness, they sought to establish their own righteousness. There in v. 4, Paul argues that submitting to God’s righteousness includes recognizing Jesus to be the “*telos* of the law for everyone who believes,”⁵ a truth his Jewish brethren have failed to grasp. In 5-13 then, Paul contrasts two types of righteousness: one that is based on a person’s ability to perform the requirements of the law (v.5) and one that is the result of faith (6-8).⁶ Paul believes that the latter righteousness—the righteousness based on faith—is itself rooted in the law; this Paul demonstrates by quoting Deut 30:12-14. In his Christological reading of the text, Paul claims that the law leads one to a “righteousness based on faith” (6), a faith that recognizes Christ as the subject of the “word of faith,” which is not far away, but is near—even in the heart and mouth (7-8). This “word of faith,” which Paul and others were “preaching,” is the message of v. 9-13.

CONTENT OF 10:9-13

In 10:9-13, Paul provides the content of the “word of faith” mentioned in v. 8. The content of this message is a proclamation of faith in Christ resulting in salvation (9-10), a proclamation which Paul understands to be supported by the OT prophets and universal in scope

⁴ Moo correctly recognizes these three contrasting ways of seeking righteousness in ch 9-11: righteousness of based on faith vs. the law of righteousness (9:30-31); righteousness of God vs. one’s own righteousness (10:3); righteousness based on the law vs. righteousness based on faith (10:5-6), *Romans* 619.

⁵ C.E.B. Cranfield also sees a vital link between v. 4 and 5-13: “Verses 5-13 provide explication and substantiation of v. 4,” in *The Epistle to the Romans* (1979; repr., New York, N.Y.: T & T Clark, 2004), 505.

⁶ Moo, *Romans*, 619.

(11-13). In v. 9-10, Paul informs the Romans that this faith in Jesus includes an affirmation that “Jesus is the Lord” and a belief that “God has raised him from the dead.” By embracing this faith, believers experience salvation and justification (9-10)—a condition Paul had just previously expressed that he wished his Jewish kinsmen would experience (10:1-4). In v. 10-12, Paul explains the universal availability of this faith—an availability which included Jews and Gentiles (12), and its support in the prophets Isaiah (11) and Joel (13). Paul reveals his high Christology here both by explaining that the message of faith centers on the belief that ‘Jesus is the Lord’ and by assigning him the role and identity understood to be held by YHWH, the God of Israel.

TRANSLATION

9 *If⁷ you confess⁸ with your mouth, ‘Jesus is the LORD,’⁹ and believe with your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart a person believes resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth a person confesses resulting in salvation. 11 For the Scriptures declare, “Everyone who believes in him will not be ashamed.”¹⁰ 12 For there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles: he is the same Lord of everyone, richly bestowing [salvation] on everyone who calls upon him. 13 For, “Everyone who calls upon the Name of the LORD will be saved.”¹¹*

⁷ Following the NIV and NLT which leave **ὅτι** untranslated.

⁸ Some MSS (4th century uncial Alexandrian Vaticanus (**B**) and 11th century uncial (**1735**) add το ρημα “the word” before ἐν τῷ στόματι, which is likely an error of sight, wherein a scribe saw the line τὸ ῥῆμα ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ στόματι from verse 8. Since P46 **Ⲙ** A and most MSS omit the phrase, the external evidence suggests this addition was not part of the original and should be left out.

⁹ CAPS used to indicate that κύριος here is conceptually linked to YHWH, the God of Israel.

¹⁰ Isa 28:16

¹¹ Joel 2:32 (English), 3:5 (LXX, MT)

MESSAGE OF FAITH (9-10)

In v. 9-10, Paul explains and elaborates on the content¹² of the message of faith spoken of in verse 8. Picking up the words “mouth” and “heart” found in verse 8, Paul employs a chiasmic structure to describe the act of belief: confession with the mouth and trust in the heart. If a person believes, they will experience salvation, a state Paul links to justification.

9 In verse 9, Paul informs his hearers that the message of faith includes both a condition¹³ and a result. The condition of faith entails: confessing¹⁴ with one’s mouth¹⁵ and trusting with one’s heart. This confession is: “Jesus is Lord.”¹⁶ Some commentators believe this might have been early creedal formula¹⁷ indicating a person’s “transfer of allegiance”¹⁸ to Christ. Yet,

¹² Commentators are divided whether v. 9-10 are the content of “the word we preach” in v. 8 (John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (repr.; NICNT; 1965; repr., Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1997), 55; Morris, *Romans* 384), or an explanation of why the word is “near” to believers (Moo, *Romans* 657; Cranfield, *Romans* 527). Dunn seems to be right here in cautioning against making too rigid a distinction by the ambiguous ὅτι clause, since either translation makes little difference to the overall meaning: *Romans 9-16* (WBC 38b; Dallas, Tex: Word Books, 1988), 606.

¹³ ἔάν 3rd class conditional statement indicating a logical connection: Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996. BibleWorks, v.9); BDF §371; with the subjunctive verbs: ὁμολογήσης and πιστεύσης.

¹⁴ ὁμολογέω: used by NT writers to describe the act of affirming a statement (Acts 23:8), of confessing sins (1 John 1:9), offering praise to God (Heb 13:15), and making a declaration of faith (John 9:22; 12:42; Acts 24:14; Heb 11:13; 1 John 2:23; 4:15; 2 John 1:17). While not common in the OT (only 3 occurrences), the term occurs more often in the intertestamental writings, with 2 Macc 6:6 being the most an important example; here an author employs the term to describe a person proclaiming allegiance to the Jewish religion in the face of persecution. Paul uses the term twice in Romans (here and in 10:10) and two times in his other letters (1 Tim 6:12 and Titus 1:16). In the latter occurrences, Paul uses the term to describe one’s profession of faith: Timothy’s initial profession of faith and a profession of faith by those who claim to be Christians but are not. Here in Rom 10:9-10, Paul employs the term in this same way: to express an allegiance of one’s belief.

¹⁵ Instrumental dative ἐν τῷ στόματί σου

¹⁶ κύριον Ἰησοῦν: is a double accusative. Jesus is the object and Lord is the complement. Wallace is helpful here, by recognizing that, “since Ἰησοῦν is a proper name, it is the object and κύριον is the complement.” (*Syntax* 187-188).

¹⁷ Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 607; Cranfield, *Romans*, 527.

¹⁸ Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 608.

another way of translating this phrase could be: “Jesus is *the* Lord,”¹⁹ that is, Jesus is *the* Lord God of Israel. There seems to be good reasons to translate the phrase this way. First, the LXX generally translated the divine name YHWH as *κύριος*, which means that Paul and the NT writers likely understood the conceptual weight *κύριος* could possess. Second, the context of 10:9-13 suggests that Paul followed this tendency as he used *κύριος* in his quotation of Joel 2:32 in v. 13, a quotation which, in its original context, has an unmistakable reference to YHWH. Thus, ‘Jesus is *the* Lord’ is a better translation of the phrase and leaves open the very real possibility that all who made such a confession in the 1st century understood such a statement to ascribe Jesus not only with lordship, but with the deity of YHWH, the God of the Israel.²⁰ Cranfield agrees: “For Paul, the confession that Jesus is Lord meant the acknowledgment that Jesus shares the name and the nature, the holiness, the authority, power, majesty and eternity of the one and only true God.”²¹

Along with making an outward profession of faith, a person must also internally²² “believe.”²³ Paul explains the content²⁴ to be believed: “God raised him from the dead,” which

¹⁹ Wallace reminds us that although ‘Lord’ here is anarthrous, because it precedes the object, it may be definite. This means that one may translate here “Jesus is *the* LORD”, as in *the* LORD YHWH (*Syntax*) 188.

²⁰ For Paul, to confess “*κύριον Ἰησοῦν*” meant far more than assigning him with a merely exalted human status (like the status human ‘lords’ might receive). To confess “*κύριον Ἰησοῦν*” included understanding Jesus to possess some type of *divine* status, a truth recognized by a numbers commentators on this passage and of this Pauline conception in general: Robert Jewett, *Romans* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2007), 630; Moo, *Romans*, 658 f. 58; Morris, *Romans*, 385; Gordon Fee, *Pauline Christology* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2007); Wallace, *Syntax*, 188-189; Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008).

²¹ *Romans*, 529.

²² ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου “in your heart” an instrumental dative. Jewett argues that such a place “refers to the center of humans where the deepest convictions are held,” *Romans*, 630.

²³ πιστεύω is an important action and concept for Paul and the early Christians. Rooted in the OT (as a translation of נָאֵם), it is used: to speak of Abraham’s faith in YHWH’s promise to him—resulting in his faith being considered as “righteousness” (Gen 15:6); to describe the Israelites’ act of trusting in YHWH (Exod 4:31)—resulting in worship; to celebrate trusting in YHWH in the Psalms (Ps 27:13); in prophetic contexts to speak of a future hope (Isa 28:16). In the NT (187 occurrences outside of Paul), Jesus uses the term when he called the people to repent and “believe” (Mark 1:15), it is linked with conversion in the Gospels and Acts (Luke 8:12-13, John 1:12, 3:16; Acts 4:4), it is

refers to the affirmation of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Such a belief was a central tenant for Paul and the NT writers.²⁵ While the Jews believed in a general resurrection of the dead to take place in the "latter days,"²⁶ the Christians understood Christ's resurrection to have already taken place three days after Jesus' death on a Roman cross. The latter day promise has been inaugurated in the present, in the person of Jesus.

After stating the conditions of profession and belief, Paul provides the apodosis: "you will be saved."²⁷ This is likely a logical future,²⁸ which describes the results of believing and confessing. Paul uses this verb²⁹ in the context of 10:1-13 to speak of deliverance from a guilty judicial verdict which comes from being unrighteous on the Day of Judgment. It is Paul's desire

expected of Christians (1 John 3:23), and it is linked with language of salvation and eternal life (1 John 5:13). Paul uses the verb 54 times in his writings (21 times in Romans). Outside of Romans, Paul links believing with: conversion (1 Cor 15:2, 11; Eph 1:13; 1 Tim 3:16); justification (Gal 2:16, 3:6); salvation (1 Cor 1:21, 15:2); and affirming Jesus' resurrection (2 Cor 4:13; 1 Thess 4:14). In Romans, Paul seems to employ the same lexical weight as in his other writings. For him Abraham was the archetypal paradigm for believing (Rom 4), and to believe resulted in receiving the righteousness of God (1:16-17, 3:22, 4:3, 4:5, 4:24, 10:4, 10:10). Thus faith is trusting in God's promise, like Abraham did, and is closely linked to conversion, salvation and justification.

²⁴ ὅτι as a content conjunction, used with a verb of perception (Wallace 677).

²⁵ ἐκ νεκρῶν with ἐγείρω is used as a phrase indicating Jesus' resurrection from the dead often in the NT: (Matt 17:9; John 2:22; Acts 3:15; 1 Pet 1:21; 1 Cor 15:12).

²⁶ Dan 12:2

²⁷ σωθήσῃ is an aorist, future passive, 2cs verb from σώζω "to save" (BDAG 7214)

²⁸ Jewett, *Romans*, 630.

²⁹ σώζω occurs over 100 times in the NT with 77 times in NT outside of Paul. It is used in a variety of ways: being saved from sickness (Matt 9:21-22, Mark 6:56); saved from physically dying (Luke 23:35); saved from inconvenience of discipleship (Matt 16:25); saved into the Kingdom of God and saved from condemnation on Judgment Day (Matt 19:25; Mark 10:26; Mark 16:16; John 5:34; Jas 4:12). Paul uses σώζω 8 times in Romans and 20 times outside of Romans. Often times he links being saved with preaching of the gospel message (1 Cor 1:18, 1:21, 15:2; 2 Cor 2:15), and with conversion (1 Cor 9:22, 15:2; Eph 2:5,8; 1 Tim 2:4; Tit 3:5). For Paul, being saved speaks not only as having a past reality, but also a present (1 Cor 1:18) and future reality—being saved from God's judgment (1 Cor 3:15, 5:5; 2 Tim 4:18). In Romans, Paul speaks of a person being saved from his God's wrath (5:9), and he links the concept to justification and reconciliation (5:10), and gives the term a future focus (8:24). Thus to understand the term here in 10:9 to refer to deliverance from judicial condemnation and the wrath of God is substantiated from Paul's other uses of the term, other NT writers' employment of the term and the context of Rom 10.

to see his brethren saved from such a guilty verdict (10:1), and he understood belief in Jesus to provide exactly this—righteousness for the Day of Judgment.

10

In v. 10, Paul explains³⁰ the previous statement of salvation. While v. 9 maintained the same word order of “mouth” and “heart” from the Deut 30 quote in v. 8, Paul reverses the order here and forms a chiasm with the promise of salvation in the center: A¹ if confess with your mouth, B¹ if believe in your heart, C you will be saved, B² if believe in your heart, A² if confess with your mouth. Murray notes that this reversing of order demonstrates that Paul did not intend an order of priority or logic between the two actions when he mentioned them in the v. 9.³¹ Rather, both actions are linked together in one act of believing.

By using the passive form of the verbs here, Paul makes a timeless³² statement about believing and confessing:³³ it is by the heart³⁴ that a person believes resulting³⁵ in righteousness, and³⁶ by the mouth that a person confesses resulting salvation. In Romans, Paul uses the term righteousness³⁷ in several different ways, at times referring to a legal standing (Rom 3:21-22) and at other times referring to moral righteousness or faithfulness (Rom 3:25-26). Moo is right when he assigns Paul use of “righteousness” here in v. 10 to speak of a “forensic meaning of

³⁰ γάρ

³¹ *Romans*, 56.

³² Gnomonic present tense for both πιστεύεται and ὁμολογείται.

³³ A.T. Robertson refers to this an “impersonal passive” in, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*. (Nashville: Broadman, 1934. BibleWorks, v. 8), 820.

³⁴ Instrumental dative: καρδίᾳ

³⁵ εἰς of result in both cases (BDAG 2291).

³⁶ Connective δὲ

³⁷ δικαιοσύνη

righteousness.”³⁸ Paul is building off the principles he laid down in 1:17 and 3:21-4:24, which claim that a person attains a righteous standing with God through faith in Christ.³⁹

“Righteousness” here is parallel to “salvation,”⁴⁰ and Cranfield is correct in claiming that the two terms likely carry the same basic meaning here: “eschatological salvation.”⁴¹ Paul believed such a salvation was the power of the Gospel (1:16) and was what his Jewish kinsmen so desperately needed (10:1). This salvation was only possible through receiving an alien righteousness, God’s righteousness, which comes through faith in Christ.⁴²

In v. 9-10 then, Paul provides the content of the message of faith mentioned in v. 8. This message concerns faith in Jesus as the LORD, expressed through profession and internal assent, and results in salvation. Now that Paul has provided the content being preached, he will spend some time informing the Romans about the far-reaching nature of this message.

³⁸ Moo, *Romans*, 619.

³⁹ Ibid., also: BDAG (2004) also views this use as referring to “judicial righteousness;”

⁴⁰ σωτηρία

⁴¹ *Romans*, 531; also: Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 609; Moo, *Romans*, 659.

⁴² Regarding the notion of receiving an alien righteousness, we must disagree with Ben Witherington, who argues that when Paul refers to “righteousness” here: “What is certainly nowhere on the horizon here is the notion of Christ’s alien righteousness being predicated of the believer in lieu of the believer’s own personal righteousness,” *Paul’s Letter to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2004), 263. This is precisely what Paul is describing in Rom 10:1-13. Paul’s kinsmen could not be saved because they sought to establish “their own righteousness” (10:3 assuming the variant original) and did not pursue the righteousness which comes from faith (10:6-8). If Paul was explicating the need to receive a righteousness which was certainly alien—in that it was not from one’s own self or from the law but from God—then he likely was referring here to the need to receive Christ’s righteousness in the place of a person’s own righteousness (a concept he seems to explicate more clearly in 2 Cor 5:20-21). Though we should not import Luther’s theology wholesale into this passage, one can see how the Reformers organically found the concept of receiving an alien righteousness in lieu of one’s own personal righteousness in passages like this one.

UNIVERSAL SCOPE (11-13)

In v. 11-13, Paul comments on the universal scope of the salvation brought about through faith in Jesus. Paul's theme in this passage is "everyone,"⁴³ using the word four times in three short verses. Quoting from Isaiah and Joel, Paul shows the universal dimension of faith in Jesus, a faith which his hearers ought to recognize is available both to Jews and Gentiles. While exploring this theme, Paul again reveals a remarkably high Christology: Jesus is identified with the "Name of the Lord" and assumed to be the recipient of pleas for salvific mercy—a position and identity held by YHWH, the God of Israel.

11

In v. 11, Paul explains⁴⁴ the universal scope of the salvation mentioned in v. 9-10 and supports his view by appealing to the message⁴⁵ of Scripture.⁴⁶ Paul quotes from Isaiah 28:16, a passage mentioned earlier in 9:33b: "Everyone who believes⁴⁷ in him will not be ashamed." In Isaiah, the passage is found in the midst of a polemic against "corrupt priests and prophets" (Isa. 28:7). In that context, the quotation is an offering of hope, as YHWH promises to lay a "cornerstone" that will bring deliverance for the one who believes in "it." Indeed, such a person "will not be ashamed" as they experience YHWH's deliverance. When Paul quotes the verse in 9:33b, he interprets it Christologically and understands Christ to be the "stone"—a stone by which the Jews who seek to establish their own righteousness stumble over and by which those

⁴³ πᾶς. The linking of one word through several texts was a "common ancient Jewish exegetical principal": Craig S. Keener, *Romans* (NCC 6; Eugene, Ore.: Cascade, 2009), 127.

⁴⁴ γάρ here explains the salvation made possible in v. 9-10 and sets up the Isaiah quote here in v. 11.

⁴⁵ λέγει, by using the present tense of λέγω, Paul may be using what is known as the "perfective present", which is "used to *emphasize* that the results of a past action are still continuing," (Wallace, *Syntax*), 532-533. That is, Scripture spoke in the past, and was still being heard in Paul's time.

⁴⁶ ἡ γραφή refers to Scripture (BDAG 1686).

⁴⁷ Substantial participle from πιστεύω "to believe"

who embrace faith in Jesus are saved.⁴⁸ Here in v. 11, Paul quotes the Isaiah passage again, and adds the word “everyone.”⁴⁹ By doing this, Paul emphasizes the notion of a universal quality: *everyone* who believes in Jesus⁵⁰ will have access to this salvation and will not be ashamed⁵¹ on the Day of Judgment.⁵²

12 In v. 12, Paul explains⁵³ further what it means that “everyone” who believes will not be ashamed. In particular, the “everyone” includes both the Jews and the Greeks,⁵⁴ a fact he mentioned earlier when he expressed the theme of Romans in 1:16-17. By claiming there is⁵⁵ “no distinction,”⁵⁶ Paul unites two extremely ethnically diverse groups. To explain⁵⁷ this unity, Paul writes, “[he is] the same⁵⁸ Lord of everyone.” While Paul could be referring to God the Father here, it seems more likely this “Lord” (κύριος) refers to Jesus, since Paul refers to Jesus as

⁴⁸ Wright expresses it well, “He is both the stumbling stone and the object of faith,” *Romans*, 665.

⁴⁹ πᾶς. It seems clear that this is intentional addition of “all,” since the “all” is missing from 9:33 and the LXX of Isaiah 28:16:

Paul’s quote 10:11: πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ κατασχυνθήσεται.

Paul’s quote in 9:33b: ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ κατασχυνθήσεται

Isaiah 28:16: ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνθῆ

Isaiah 28:16 MT: שִׁיבָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל

J. Ross Wagner concurs, and describes this as “a crystal-clear example of a deliberate modification of the text by Paul... Paul has modified the text of Isaiah 28:16 under the influence of his christological convictions,” (emphasis mine), *Heralds of the Good News* (NovTSup 51; Boston, Mass.: Brill, 2002), 169.

⁵⁰ ἐπ’ αὐτῷ here referring to Jesus, who is the nearest object of belief as expressed in v. 9-10.

⁵¹ The future passive of κατασχύνω “to be ashamed.”

⁵² Moo, *Romans*, 659.

⁵³ γάρ

⁵⁴ Ἰουδαίου τε καὶ Ἑλλήνος, Paul uses this combination of words to express these two groups in several places in Romans: 1:16; 2:9; 2:10; 3:9.

⁵⁵ ἐστὶν present tense of εἶμι, denoting the current and active reality.

⁵⁶ διαστολή “difference or distinction” (BDAG 1918)

⁵⁷ γάρ

⁵⁸ αὐτὸς in the attributive position indicating an identical use “same.”

κύριος in v. 9 and Jesus is the object of belief in v. 11. By ascribing Jesus' lordship over Gentiles and Jews, Paul affirms the divine status of Jesus—a theme of cosmic lordship expressed in other Pauline texts (Phil 2:6-11 and Col 1:15-20). This “Lord” of everyone⁵⁹ richly bestows⁶⁰ salvation on everyone who calls upon him. While the Greek literally reads, “being rich for everyone who calls on him” (πλουτῶν εἰς πάντα), the context of “being saved” as a universal availability to Greeks and Jews leads us to understand the riches being bestowed here to be in connection eschatological salvation.⁶¹ It makes best sense to understand the person who bestows salvation to be the Lord of the previous clauses, which is Jesus. Thus, everyone⁶² who calls⁶³ upon Jesus⁶⁴ receives richly salvation from him. Paul again displays his high Christology, as Jesus is the recipient of the calls⁶⁵ or pleas for salvific mercy from everyone. Such pleas are best understood as prayers made to the Lord of Israel, who Paul identifies here to include Jesus.

Cranfield states well the significance of a monotheistic Jew to make such a claim:

The fact that Paul can think of prayer to the exalted Christ without the least repugnance is, in the light of the first and second commandments of the Decalogue, the decisive clarification of the significance which he attached to the title *kurios* as applied to Christ.⁶⁶

⁵⁹ Note here the second occurrence of πᾶς in this section.

⁶⁰ πλουτῶν, masculine singular participle from πλουτέω “to be rich.”

⁶¹ The translations here are unhelpfully divided and woefully ambiguous in understanding what Paul might mean here: “abounding in riches” (NASB); “bestowing his riches” (ESV); “generous to all” (NRSV); “richly blesses” (NET, NIV); “rich unto all” (N/KJV); “gives richly” (CEB); “gives generously” (NLT).

⁶² Third occurrence of πᾶς in this section.

⁶³ τοὺς ἐπικαλουμένους masculine plural (though meaning men and women) middle participle from ἐπικαλέω “to call or call upon.”

⁶⁴ The antecedent of αὐτόν is the “Lord” of the previous clauses, which is Jesus.

⁶⁵ While ἐπικαλέω may be used generically to name a place (1 Sam 23:28) or person (Acts 10:5), it is often used in a religious context express pleading to/praying to/pledging oneself to the Lord (Gen 4:26; 12:8; 13:4; Ps 17:4; Hos 7:7; Acts 22:16), and in the NT to identify those who are Christians (1 Cor 1:2; 2 Tim 2:22; Acts 9:21).

⁶⁶ *Romans*, 532.

13, which associates Jesus with the title κύριος each time it is used, seems to be speaking of Jesus. Allowing the context then to determine the referent leads us to the conclusion that κύριος here in v. 13 “clearly indicates” a reference to Jesus.⁷⁴ Thus, everyone who calls upon the Lord *Jesus* will be saved.

While the claim here is soteriological, it would be foolish to overlook the Christological implications present in this situation.⁷⁵ Jesus is identified here as fulfilling the soteriological redemption promised by the prophet Joel, a role assumed by Joel to be fulfilled by YHWH the God of Israel.⁷⁶ Thus Paul here is likely revealing an assumed Christological conviction that Jesus was to be understood as fulfilling the role and identity of YHWH, the God of Israel. The ramifications of such an assumption cannot be overstated, and C. Kavin Rowe is most helpful here:

Through the verbatim citation of Joel 3:5 in Rom 10:13, Paul’s christologically explicit use of *to onoma kyriou* here issues in a dialectical identity of subject. The theological medium is that of overlap and resonance such that the conjunction of the text of Joel 3:5 with Rom 10:13 produces the conceptual spaces wherein the resonating identification between YHWH and Jesus occurs. The name which *is* the God of Israel alone (*kyrios*) is now the name which *is* Jesus (*kyrios*). The salvific name in its original context was YHWH; now the salvific name is Jesus.⁷⁷

Thus a right understanding of God must include understanding Jesus to be a partaker in the divine identity of YHWH: “In Joel the Israelites would have called out “YHWH” to be saved,

⁷⁴ Jewett, *Romans*, 633.

⁷⁵ As Dunn does in his commentary, *Romans 9-16*, 617.

⁷⁶ Referred to here by “the Name of the Lord,” a title YHWH possessed: Gen 4:16; Gen 13:4; Exod 20:7; Sir 39:35.

⁷⁷ “Biblical Pressure and Trinitarian Hermeneutics,” *ProEccl* 11 (no. 3 2002): 301-302.

and now in Romans all would call out Jesus. The name of the Lord” = YHWH has become, by virtue of the intersection between Joel and Romans, “the name of the Lord” = Jesus.”⁷⁸

A final point is worth exploring in this verse, and that is the issue of time. The original context of the Joel quotation (2:28-32) describes a future time,⁷⁹ known as “the Day of the Lord.” Yet Paul seems to imply that the time for fulfilling this verse is the present. In this way he performs the same hermeneutical decisions as Peter in Acts 2, who quotes the same passage in his Pentecost sermon.⁸⁰ Peter understands the wonders of the Holy Spirit falling on believers as the fulfillment of the wonders spoken of by Joel, and the promise that “everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved” refers to Jesus in the present. Thus for Peter the climactic eschatological Day of Lord has occurred, or rather has been inaugurated in Jesus. This seems to be exactly what Paul is doing here. The end-time climatic Day of the Lord has occurred with the coming, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Today, in the present salvation historical moment, everyone who calls on the Name of Jesus will be saved.

Verse 13 then supports the universal scope of the gospel message found in v. 11-13 and climatically summarizes the promise of salvation for everyone who believes in Jesus in v. 5-13. In this verse Paul has allowed us a glimpse of his immensely high Christology, a Christology which understood Jesus to be partaker in the divine identity of the God of Israel.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 302. See also: Larry Hurtado H., “Lord,” *DPL* 563; Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 195; Daniel I. Block, “Who Do Commentators Say “the Lord” Is? The Scandalous Rock of Romans 10:13,” in *On the Writing of New Testament Commentaries: Festschrift for Grant Osborne* (ed. S. Porter and E. Schnabel; Leiden: Brill, 2012).

⁷⁹ Future tense in LXX “καὶ ἔσται μετὰ ταῦτα” and in MT an implied future הָיָה

⁸⁰ Acts 2:14-36

SUMMARY

To summarize this paper: Romans 10:9-13 is the universal message about faith in Jesus that results in salvation. Verses 9-10 provide the content of the message, while 11-13 describes the universal dimensions of this message.

A closer examination of v. 9-10 has revealed that the message of faith includes both the condition of belief and the result of salvation. This belief professed, 'Jesus is the LORD' and accepted the dogmatic claim that God raised Jesus from the dead. If a person meets the condition of faith—faith in the heart and profession with mouth—, they will receive righteousness and experience the results of salvation, which is deliverance from a guilty judicial verdict before God on the Day of Judgment.

In v. 11-13, Paul emphasizes the universal scope of the gospel. By quoting from Isaiah and Joel, he demonstrates that Jesus is the “stone” which saves everyone who believes, this includes both Jews and Greeks. Paul’s Christology assigns Jesus cosmic lordship over Jews and Greeks, and includes him as the recipient of pleas for salvific mercy. Everyone who calls out to Jesus will be saved. Salvation which found its hope in YHWH now finds its hope in Jesus, who bears the identity and prerogatives of YHWH, the God of Israel.

APPLICATION

This passage has both scholarly and practical implications for Christians today. Concerning the scholarly implications, there seems to be two which are the most important. First, the Pauline gospel—along with uniting two ethnically diverse groups (Jews and Greeks)—confronted the universal human tendency to rely on one’s own works for a righteous standing before God on the Day of Judgment. This message urged Jews and Greeks alike to rely on God’s righteousness, a righteousness graciously given to all who placed their faith in Jesus the

Messiah. Ben Witherington⁸¹ and others err by not seeing in this passage the Pauline concept of a person receiving a foreign righteousness in lieu of their own. Although Luther coined the term ‘alien righteousness,’ it was Paul who spoke of the concept behind it. Second, scholars must not overlook the weighty assumed Christological material present here. Paul identifies Jesus with the role, person, and prerogatives of YHWH, the God of Israel. There was no higher possible Christological affirmation that a monotheistic first century Jew could give. This needs more attention from scholars, and all would do well to follow Bauckham, Fee and Rowe who are doing just that.

This passage also has practical implications for Christians. The message of the gospel is centered on the person and work of Jesus Christ and this must continue to remain so. External pressures of our age, which promote relativistic notions of religious truth and skeptical attitudes toward dogmatic assertions, tempt Christians to change, compromise, or water down the Christian gospel in order to make it less offensive to the surrounding culture. This must be resisted, for the gospel is an objective dogmatic statement with both universal and exclusive elements: “everyone (universal) who believes in Jesus (exclusive) will be saved” (an objective statement). This gospel is the power of salvation for everyone who believes, and will continue to remain so despite our antagonistic culture’s attitudes toward it. A Christian would do well to continue to believe in and delight in this message while proclaiming to all the good news of Jesus Christ.

⁸¹ See footnote 42 for full argument and citation.

Romans 10:9-13 Syntactical Diagram

9

ὅτι ἐὰν ὁμολογήσης...
 ↑ ἐν τῷ στόματί σου
 ...κύριον Ἰησοῦν
 καὶ πιστεύσης...
 ↑ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου
 ...ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν,

MESSAGE OF FAITH

10

σωθήσῃ·
 ↑ καρδίᾳ γὰρ πιστεύεται
 ↑ εἰς δικαιοσύνην,
 | στόματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται
 | ↑ εἰς σωτηρίαν.

UNIVERSAL SCOPE

11

↓ λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή·
 πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῶ οὐ καταισχυνθήσεται.

12

↑ οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν διαστολὴ Ἰουδαίου τε καὶ Ἑλλήνος,
 ↑ ὁ γὰρ αὐτὸς κύριος πάντων,

13

↑ πλουτῶν εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἐπικαλουμένους αὐτόν·
 ↓ πᾶς γὰρ ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσῃται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου
 σωθήσεται.

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