

Romans 9:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;

Analysis

And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac—Paul escalates the argument. The Ishmael/Isaac distinction might be explained by different mothers (slave vs. free), but the next example removes that variable. Rebecca conceived twins ex henos (ἐξ ἑνός, 'from one man'), Isaac. Same father, same mother, same conception—yet God chose between them. This intensifies the sovereignty theme.

The phrase koitēn echousa (κοίτην ἔχουσα, 'having conception') emphasizes the unity: one act of conception produced both sons. No external factor differentiates them—not parentage, not chronology of conception, not prenatal behavior. Yet God elected Jacob before birth. The ground of election must be God's sovereign will alone, not foreseen merit.

Historical Context

Genesis 25:19-26 records the oracle to Rebecca during pregnancy: 'Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger' (Genesis 25:23). God's choice preceded birth.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the Rebecca example eliminate every possible ground for election except God's sovereign choice?
2. Why is it crucial that God's choice was made 'from one' conception rather than different mothers?
3. What does this teach about the timing of election (before birth, before works)?

Interlinear Text

οὐ	μόνον	δέ	ἀλλὰ	καὶ	Ἐρεβέκκα	ἐξ	ἐνὸς	κοίτην
not	only	And	this but	also	when Rebecca	by	one	had conceived
G3756	G3440	G1161	G235	G2532	G4479	G1537	G1520	G2845
ἔχουσα	Ἰσαὰκ	τοῦ	πατρὸς		ἡμῶν·			
G2192	Isaac	G3588	father	even by our				
		G2464			G3962		G2257	

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