

**GOD'S WORD IS LIFE**  
**Key Greek Terms in Romans 9**

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**1. Ἐκλογή (Eklogē) – “Election/Choice”**

- **Occurrences in Romans 9:** Appears in verse 11.
  - **Meaning:** "Ἐκλογή" refers to the act of choosing or selecting, often used to describe God's sovereign choice or election of individuals or groups.
  - **Verse Context:** "...though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election (ἐκλογή) might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls..." (Romans 9:11)
  - **Theological Significance:** Paul emphasizes that God's election is based on His sovereign will, not human merit. This aligns with the theology of the cross, where God's actions often contradict human expectations. Election underscores that salvation is rooted in God's mercy and grace, not human effort.
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**2. Σπέρμα (Sperma) – “Seed/Offspring”**

- **Occurrences in Romans 9:** Appears in verses 7, 8, and 29.
  - **Meaning:** "Σπέρμα" denotes "seed," "descendant," or "offspring." It can refer both to physical descendants and, more importantly in Paul's theology, to spiritual heirs.
  - **Verse Context:** "...it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring (σπέρμα)." (Romans 9:8)
  - **Theological Significance:** Paul uses "σπέρμα" to distinguish between those who are merely physical descendants of Abraham and those who are the true spiritual heirs through faith. This concept highlights that God's promise is fulfilled not through human lineage but through faith in Christ, the true Seed.
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**3. Ἔλεος (Eleos) – “Mercy”**

- **Occurrences in Romans 9:** Appears in verses 15, 16, 18, and 23.
- **Meaning:** "Ἔλεος" means "mercy," compassion, or kindness. It emphasizes God's compassionate and undeserved favor.
- **Verse Context:** "So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy (ἔλεος)." (Romans 9:16)

- **Theological Significance:** Paul highlights that God's mercy is freely given and not based on human willing, effort or desire. God's mercy is shown most fully in Christ's sacrificial death, a gift that cannot be earned but only received through the gift of faith.
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#### 4. Σκληρυνσις (Sklērynsis) – “Hardening”

- **Occurrences in Romans 9:** Appears in verse 18.
  - **Meaning:** "Σκληρυνσις" refers to the act of hardening or making stubborn. It describes how God allows or causes a person's heart to become resistant or obstinate.
  - **Verse Context:** “So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens (σκληρύνει) whomever he wills.” (Romans 9:18)
  - **Theological Significance:** Paul's use of "σκληρύνει" points to God's sovereign right to act according to His will, even in ways that seem contrary to human understanding. This hardening demonstrates how God's purposes can work through both mercy and judgment, where God's ways are often hidden and paradoxical.
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#### 5. Λίθος Προσκόμματος (Lithos Proskommatos) – “Stumbling Stone”

- **Occurrences in Romans 9:** Appears in verse 32-33.
  - **Meaning:** "Λίθος" means "stone," and "προσκόμματος" means "stumbling." Together, they describe an obstacle or stumbling block.
  - **Verse Context:** “...they have stumbled over the stumbling stone (λίθος προσκόμματος), as it is written, ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.’” (Romans 9:32-33)
  - **Theological Significance:** Paul identifies Christ as the "stumbling stone," demonstrating that the crucified Messiah is both the fulfillment of God's promise and the cause of offense to those who rely on their own righteousness. This term powerfully illustrates the theology of the cross, where God's saving work is hidden in what appears weak or foolish.
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#### 6. Δίκαιος (Dikaios) – “Righteous” / Δικαιοσύνη (Dikaiosynē) – “Righteousness”

- **Occurrences in Romans 9:** "Δίκαιος" appears in verses 30 and 31, and "δικαιοσύνη" appears in verses 30, 31.
- **Meaning:** "Δίκαιος" means "righteous" or "just," while "δικαιοσύνη" refers to "righteousness" or "justice." It conveys the idea of being in right relationship with God.

- **Verse Context:** “That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness (δικαιοσύνη) have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith.” (Romans 9:30)
- **Theological Significance:** Paul contrasts the righteousness achieved by faith with the righteousness sought through the law. True righteousness is bestowed on the sinner by God through faith in Christ, not through human effort or adherence to the law.