

Romans 9

After the glorious conclusion of chapter 8 and Paul's stunning declaration that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, he addresses the apostasy of the Jewish nation.

He is intuitively answering the logical question. Israel was chosen by God yet missed the Messiah. How is it that they have missed the mark?

The first part of chapter 9 deals with the nation of Israel.

Paul's Anguish Over Israel

9 I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it through the Holy Spirit—² I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race, ⁴ the people of Israel.

- Exodus 32:31-32: Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, “Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! Yet now, if You will forgive their sin; but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.”
- What causes such a great passion for souls?

Theirs is the adoption to sonship; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. ⁵ Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

Paul makes a clear and emphatic statement that Jesus is God.

The nation Israel will always be special in God's eye. They have received so much.

God chose Israel sovereignly to be a pattern not a pet.

God's Sovereign Choice. Isaac vs Ishmael

⁶ It is not as though God's Word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.

Israel means, governed by God. not everyone who claims to be governed by God is actually governed by God.

⁷ Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.”

Physical ancestry does not make one a child of Abraham. There is no safety in lineage.

Isaac was the child of promise. Children of the promise were counted as the seed.

Gal. 4:28 Now you, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are children of promise.

Paul shows that merely being the descendant of Abraham saves no one. For example, Ishmael was just as much a son of Abraham as Isaac was; but Ishmael was a son according to the flesh, and Isaac was a son according to the promise (**At this time I will come and Sarah will have a son**). One was the heir of God's covenant of salvation, and one was not. Isaac stands for the **children of the promise** and Ishmael stands for the **children of the flesh**.

⁸ In other words, it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring. ⁹ For this was how the promise was stated: "At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son."

This is not stating that Israel was replaced by the church it is asserting, Israel is National as well as Spiritual.

Jacob vs Esau

¹⁰ Not only that, but Rebekah's children were conceived at the same time by our father Isaac. ¹¹ Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: ¹² not by works but by him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." ¹³ Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

Hated means not chosen

God in his sovereignty chose Jacob. understand: He chose Jacob to inherit the land, the same way he chose Abraham. God can do what he wants.

Esau still had a great life and in his lifetime never served Jacob. Generations later Esau's descendants served Israel. The promise was corporate Israel not individual Jews.

¹⁴ What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! ¹⁵ For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."

This stresses the sovereignty of God's choice.

Moses vs Pharaoh

¹⁶ It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy. ¹⁷ For Scripture says to Pharaoh: "I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." ¹⁸ Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

Scripture tells us repeatedly that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. God honored his choice.

We should not think that God persuaded an unwilling, kind-hearted Pharaoh to be hard towards God and Israel. In hardening the heart of Pharaoh, God simply allowed Pharaoh's heart to pursue its natural inclination.

He hardens: We know that Pharaoh did harden his own heart, according to Exodus 7:13, 7:22, 8:15, 8:19, 8:32, 9:7, and 9:34

But "He does not so much as bother to indicate that Pharaoh hardened his own heart, an evidence of unbelief and rebellion, because he is emphasizing the freedom of God's action in all cases." (Harrison).

Paul makes three individual cases to prove God's sovereign choice of Israel.

¹⁹ *One of you will say to me: "Then why does God still blame us? For who is able to resist his will?"* ²⁰ *But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'"* ²¹ *Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?*

God is sovereign in his actions.

²² *What if God, although choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction?* ²³ *What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory—* ²⁴ *even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?*

God can show mercy to whoever he desires, even us (the seed, the church) Jews and Gentiles as well. God has chosen the church in a similar manner to the way he chose Israel.

The church is predestined to heaven just as Israel is predestined to the land.

Foreigners were allowed to be part of Israel.
Whoever will can be part of the church.

Example of the church.

²⁵ *As he says in Hosea:*
"I will call them 'my people' who are not my people;
and I will call her 'my loved one' who is not my loved one,"
²⁶ *and,*
"In the very place where it was said to them,
'You are not my people,'
there they will be called 'children of the living God.'"
²⁷ *Isaiah cries out concerning Israel:*
"Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea,
only the remnant will be saved.
²⁸ *For the Lord will carry out*

his sentence on earth with speed and finality.”

²⁹ *It is just as Isaiah said previously:*

*“Unless the Lord Almighty
had left us descendants,
we would have become like Sodom,
we would have been like Gomorrah.”*

Gentiles are brought in to the church and Israel is spared a remnant.
The tribulation will be worse than the Holocaust.

Israel’s Unbelief

³⁰ *What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹ but the people of Israel, who pursued the law as the way of righteousness, have not attained their goal.*

The tie in is fantastic. God sovereignly chooses as is the case with Isaac, Jacob and Moses and the Church. God chooses faith not works. Note: now the individual responsibility of the people of Israel. No longer National Israel rather the people of Israel. They rejected the Messiah.

³² *Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone. ³³ As it is written:*

*“See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall,
and the one who believes in him will never be put to shame.”*

Jesus is the stumbling stone.