

GOD'S SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL

TEXT: ROMANS 9:1-6

INTRODUCTION:

1. Romans chapters 6--8 should be studied as a unit. The theme is victory over sin, and sanctification by faith.
2. Now we are in Romans chapter 9, which begins a new train of thought, and the emphasis is on Israel.
3. Romans 9 deals primarily with Israel's past as God's chosen and privileged people.
4. Romans 10 deals primarily with Israel's present as a people who have refused to submit to the gospel of Christ.
5. Romans 11 deals primarily with Israel's future as a nation which will be restored and redeemed.
6. In the previous chapters, the apostle Paul had explained that the barrier between the Jews and Gentiles had been removed.
7. "For there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:22b; 23; cf. 10:12, 13).
8. There is only one way of salvation for Jews and Gentiles -- by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
9. There are certain teachers and certain churches and certain seminaries, which teach that God is finished with the nation Israel. They call this erroneous teaching "Replacement theology."
10. They teach that the New Testament church has replaced Israel in God's plan. Adherents of replacement theology believe the Jews are no longer God's chosen people, and God does not have specific future plans for the nation of Israel.
11. Replacement theology teaches that the many Old Testament promises made to Israel do not apply to Israel, and are fulfilled in the Christian church.
12. To support this interpretation, they "spiritualize" or "allegorize" most of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the blessing and restoration of Israel.
13. This is not the correct way to interpret Scripture.
14. The Bible teaches that Israel has been temporarily set aside in God's program during the church age. But after the rapture, God's focus will be on Israel.
15. For example, Revelation 7 refers to the 144,000 "servants of God" who will be sealed in their foreheads by God during the tribulation period.
16. During the tribulation, God will prepare Israel for the second coming of the Messiah. Zechariah 12:10 says, "And they shall look upon me whom they

have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son..."

17. Then, when Christ does return at the end of the tribulation, Israel will be ready to receive Him. The remnant of Israel which survives the tribulation will be saved, and the Lord will establish His kingdom on this earth with Jerusalem as its capital.
18. There will be a restoration of Israel, with Christ reigning as King.
19. Israel will be the leading nation, and representatives from all nations will come to Jerusalem to honor and worship the King — the Lord Jesus Christ.
20. According to Revelation 19 and 20, Christians will return with Christ and will reign with Him for a literal thousand years.
21. The church has not replaced Israel in God's prophetic program (Rom. 11:1, 2).

I. PAUL'S GREAT BURDEN FOR ISRAEL

II. THE PRIVILEGES OF ISRAEL

III. DISTINCTION BETWEEN SAVED ISRAELITES AND UNSAVED ISRAELITES

I. PAUL'S GREAT BURDEN FOR ISRAEL (9:1-3)

1. Romans 9:1-3 should be understood in the light of Romans 8:39. Nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."
2. "My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost" (9:1) means Paul's conscience was enlightened and influenced by the Holy Ghost.
3. Albert Barnes said, "It was conscience under the full influence of the Enlightener of the mind and Sanctifier of the heart."
4. Paul's heart was heavy and sorrowful (9:2) because his fellow Jews knew nothing about "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."
5. Though it would be impossible for Paul to be "accursed from Christ" (9:3); nevertheless his burden was real.
6. Moses had a similar burden (Exodus 32:31, 32).

II. THE PRIVILEGES OF ISRAEL (9:4, 5)

1. Back in Romans 3:1, Paul asked these questions, "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?"
2. His answer: "Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (3:2).
3. Now here in Romans 9:4, 5, Paul mentions some other privileges. These great privileges distinguish Israel from all the other peoples on the earth:

- (1)The adoption (9:4). Only Israel enjoys this unique privilege. Paul is not referring here to individual adoption (son-placing) as he did in Romans 8:15 and in his epistle to the Ephesians, but national adoption. Exodus 4:22 says, "Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn." Hosea 11:1 says, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."
- (2)The Shekinah glory (9:4). This refers to the physical presence of God manifested in the tabernacle, and then later on in the temple. Exodus 40:35 says, "the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle."
- (3)The covenants (9:4). The covenants would include the Abrahamic covenant, the Mosaic covenant, and the Davidic covenant. Peter said to the Jews, "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed" (Acts 3:25).
- (4)The giving of the law (9:4). The Mosaic Law was given to the nation Israel (cf. Exodus 19:3-8). H.A. Ironside said the law "was never given to Gentiles as such, though all men become responsible in regard to its provisions when it is made known to them." That is why nine of the ten commandments are repeated in the New Testament. In the New Testament, we are not required to keep the Jewish sabbath (the fourth commandment).
- (5)The service of God (9:4). This refers to the worship service of the tabernacle and the temple. All other religions had their worship services, but none of it was authorized by God.
- (6)The promises (9:4). There are many promises to the nation Israel, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament (cf. Jeremiah 31:35-37; 32:37; Romans 11:26, 27).
- (7)The fathers (9:5). This refers primarily to the great patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (cf. Rom. 15:8).
- (8)The Lord Jesus Christ (9:5). The Jewish Messiah came "as concerning the flesh" through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and from the tribe of Judah, and the lineage of King David. Of all their great privileges and blessings, this was their greatest. "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

4. But the Jews rejected their Messiah (Acts 3:13-15).

III. DISTINCTION BETWEEN SAVED ISRAELITES AND UNSAVED ISRAELITES

1. By the time Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans, the New Testament church was composed predominantly of Gentile believers. By this time, most Jews had rejected the Gospel.
2. Therefore, it appeared to many that God's word had failed in regard to the Jew (9:6). With all of their great blessings and privileges, many were puzzled as to why the Jews had not turned to Jesus as their Messiah?
3. Why have the Jews suffered so much, and even today are surrounded by hostile neighbors who want to destroy them?
4. Romans 9:6 says, "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect." It is not as though the word of God has failed. The failure is on man's part, not God's.
5. In Romans 9:6b, the apostle Paul makes a distinction between the physical offspring of Israel, and the spiritual offspring (cf. 2:28, 29).
6. Scofield's notes over Romans 9:6: "The distinction between Jews who are mere natural descendants from Abraham, and Jews who are also of his spiritual seed" (also, see notes on bottom of page 1202).
7. The New Testament teaches that a person can be descended from Abraham and still not be a child of God (Romans 9:6b; cf. Luke 3:7-9; John 8:33-44).
8. The "natural Israel" is the national, cultural, political Israel, the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (cf. 9:7).
9. The "supernatural Israel" is represented by a saved remnant, "according to the election of grace" (11:5; cf. Scofield notes, bottom of page 1205).

CONCLUSION:

1. Romans 9:1-3 pictures the apostle Paul's great love for his fellow Jews.
2. Since Paul loved his Jewish countrymen so much, people have wondered why he was called to go to the Gentiles, and not to his own people (cf. Acts 9:15; 22:21; 26:17; Romans 11:13; 15:15, 16; Gal. 2:2, 7, 8; 3:8; Col. 1:27; I Tim. 2:7; II Tim. 1:11; 4:17).
3. We cannot be certain, but one thing is clear -- though the Jews hated Paul and considered him a traitor, Paul never stopped loving them and praying for them (cf. Rom. 10:1).
4. From the beginning of his ministry to the very end when he was finally executed, Paul was hounded by the Jewish leaders, who were determined to stop him no matter what (cf. Acts 22:20-22; 23:12-15).
5. Paul had to endure all of their animosity and their bitterness and their hatred and their evil plots and plans, each and every day.

6. Paul wrote in II Corinthians 11:24, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one."
7. Therefore, it is very likely that the reason why God sent Paul to the Gentiles instead of to his fellow Jews was because the Jews would not listen to him.
8. Paul could not get through to the stubborn, hard-hearted and stiff-necked Jews because they hated him and considered him a traitor (cf. I Thessalonians 2:14--16).
9. Nevertheless, Paul still loved the Jews and had a great burden for them (Romans 9:1-3).
10. Paul said he would be willing to go to hell if they could be saved. That was impossible but nevertheless Paul was sincere (9:1-3).