

What About Israel

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Bible Text: Romans 8:1-9
Preached on: Sunday, June 12, 2011

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Now let's go back to Romans chapter nine. This section of Paul's epistle to the Romans—Romans nine, 10 and 11 is what I am referring to specifically now, all three of those chapters or that section—has quite a while for many who call themselves Christian, it has taken a real beating and a lot of it has to do with just lack of study, lack of really understanding the Scriptures. Of course, we know that if we have ears to hear, it is because God has given us ears to hear.

We have been studying the book of Revelation in our Sunday school and when the Lord tells John that he is going to give this message to the seven churches of Asia Minor, each message to each of those churches, he says at the end of it, he says, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

And so I pray, "Lord, give me ears to hear." I pray that he would give you ears to hear also. And you know what I mean by that. It is not just hearing the sound of an audible voice. It means to understand and heed what the Scripture says.

But Romans chapter nine and 10 and 11 they... most people and many of the scholars will call this the Jewish section of Romans. Then they relegate it. Well, that just refers to the Jews or that just pertains to the Jews.

And I thought one time when I heard a preacher say, I said, "Those poor old Jews. Boy, they get saddled with a lot of stuff there that so many believers don't even want to fool with, you know."

And then you will hear stuff like this and especially Romans nine, you know, "Well, there is things in there that we just can't understand. They are just too deep for us."

And I have come to see from studying this passage so many times and in the context of the whole Bible that that is just cover language. That means I don't want to deal with it and I don't want to believe it. Therefore it is too deep for me.

And I don't want to do that. And you certainly don't want to do that either. We want to know what God's Word says. If it is written in God's Word, it is for us. And it is for our good. And then many times in these passages, you know, people have a tendency just to

say, “Well...” Well, I even heard... I had a seminary professor one time he said, “Well, if I preached Romans nine, it would kill my church.”

And I thought, well, maybe that is what ought to happen.

But the thing about it is, let's study the Scriptures. Let's see what God's Word says and read through it. Read through the whole book of Romans, but read through Romans nine, 10 and 11 on your own, you know. You know, I hope you study the Bible at home, but, you know, some of you may not even open the Bible until you come here and aren't you glad we are having these services? But study them and read. This... these are the words of life now.

But don't forget. When you read through these things and you come to these what they call deep truths and all of that, don't forget what has been said before and what is being said after, because there is a context here that is very important. And as I said, most people relegate this to the Jews. They say, “Well, this section is just for the Jews.”

Well, let me show you something before we get into Romans nine. Turn to Romans chapter two. And I will say, “Ok, I agree. This section is just for the Jews,” all right? This is just for the... Romans nine, 10 and 11 is just for the Jews. Now, but what I am going to show you something here, first of all, I want to show you who a Jew is. And, secondly, I want to tell you that Genesis through Revelation is just for the Jews.

Now some of you may be sitting there saying, “Well, why should I read it then?”

Well, look at verse 28 of Romans chapter two. Paul writes here by inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Now that is the kind of Jew that these Scriptures are for, those who have been circumcised in heart. Now who is that? That is the born again. That is people who have been born again by the Spirit. That is what circumcision does. Physical circumcision of the males under the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenant was a type and picture of heart circumcision by the Holy Spirit, the cutting away the filth of the flesh which means repentance, repentance from dead works and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

So by definition here a Jew is not a... he is not talking about Jewish nations here. He is not talking about an ethnic Jew or a political Jew. He is talking about a spiritual Jew. He is talking about a believer. He is talking about one born of the Spirit who has been convicted of sin and of righteousness and of judgment, who has been brought to Christ for salvation.

Now are you a Jew? Spiritually I am, because he is not one who is one outwardly. That is physical. That is the physical seed of Abraham. But he is one who is one inwardly. That is what he is talking about. He is talking about spiritual Israel.

Now go back to Romans nine. Well, there is a lot of talk about Israel, the nation of Israel, Palestine, the Mideast and a lot on the news. And one of the most popular, fasting growing movements today is something in the form of the Christian Jewish alliance. You will hear that a lot. Christians and Jews aligned.

And then the question is: How should we view Israel, the state of Israel? How should we view Israelites, the Jews, the physical Jews?

And Paul mainly deals with that in Romans 11 when we get to that. I will deal with that mainly there. But let me tell you something here now. When we are talking about the Jews as a nation or politically or anything like that, that is not what this book is about. All right? What about this Jewish Christian alliance of Christian Jewish alliance? Is there a Christian Jew alliance? Not religiously.

I heard a man say. He said that Christianity has its roots in Judaism. Well, my friend, that is not so. That is absolutely untrue. And I can prove that to you from Scripture. What is a Jew? Well the word "Jew" doesn't even come up in Scripture until the book of Esther where it identifies a man named Mordecai, Mordecai the Jew. He was a child of God. He was a believer.

Come from the name Judah. Judah, one of the 12 sons of Israel, the 12 sons of Jacob. When Jacob was on his death bed it is recorded in Genesis chapter 49 he was pronouncing blessings upon his 12 sons. And when he came to Judah he spoke of Judah as being a lion's whelp. And he made this statement. Here is the blessing upon Judah. And this proves that Christianity does not have its roots in Judaism.

First of all, you have to define Judaism, too. What do you mean by that? But here is what Jacob said to Judah. He said, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah..." until what? "Until Shiloh come."

Now what is Shiloh? Well, that means peace, the Hebrew word שלום (shaw-lome'). That means peace. Jerusalem, city of peace. Shiloh.

Who was Jacob speaking of there? He is talking about the promised Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Prince of Peace, who is the bringer of peace between God and sinners by the blood of his cross. That is who he is talking about. And this Shiloh, this Messiah, this prince of peace had already been set up before the world began to be the Savior of his people.

The Bible calls him the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. It says of this person, Paul wrote this in 2 Timothy chapter one verses nine and 10. He talked about God who hath saved us with a salvation that he gave us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Christ is the alpha and the omega. He has no beginning and no end. He is the eternal Son of God. He is the second person of the trinity. He is the word which was in the beginning. The first prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ, the first picture of Christ in the Bible is when God said, "Let there be light," because he is the light. That was before Judah was born. That was before Israel was ever formed as a nation. That was before Abraham.

The first prophecy of Christ is in Genesis chapter three and verse 15 when the Lord was pronouncing the curse upon the serpent. He said that there is going to be enmity between your seed and the seed of the woman. And he said you will bruise his heel, but he will bruise your head.

Who is the seed of woman? That is the Lord Jesus Christ, before Judah was ever born, before the... Listen. Before Israel was ever formed as a nation, before Abraham.

The first revelation in picture and type of the Lord Jesus Christ is when God removed the fig leaf aprons from Adam and Eve which they had sown together with the works of their hands to hide their shame. He removed those fig leaf aprons which represent salvation by works and did what in Genesis chapter 3:21? He slew an animal. He shed blood and made them coats of skin. What is that a picture of? What does that teach you? It is teaching Christ was made sin by imputation in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in him by imputation. It is teaching that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin. There must be a substitute. There must be satisfaction of God's law and justice by one whom God appoints, the seed of the woman, by one who is able to do it. He is God and man in one person, God in human flesh and by one who is willing to do it. He agreed in the covenant before the foundation of the world to be the Savior of his people.

And he loved his own until the end for the finishing of the work. That is the Lord Jesus Christ before Abraham, before Judah, before Sinai.

Abel came to God seeking acceptance and blessedness by bringing what? The blood of a lamb which pictured who? The Lamb of God which beareth away the sin of the world.

Do you see what I am saying? It is a fallacy when people tell you, well, Christianity didn't begin until AD 35 to 39. No. Christianity is as old as eternity, my friend.

And then the Lord himself said of Abraham before Judah was ever born he said, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." Read it in John chapter eight.

And then when Moses came along he told him. He said, "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me."

You see, Christianity doesn't have its roots in Judaism. And what is Judaism? Well, if you read Romans chapter nine and 10, Paul who was a physical Jew he characterized it this way, that Judaism was a religion that sought after righteousness, but they didn't find it. They didn't make it.

Why didn't they make it? He says in Romans chapter nine, read it in verses 30 and 31 on down, he says, "Because they sought it by works of the law and not by faith." They didn't seek it in Christ. They rejected Christ. They stumbled at the stumbling stone.

Now are you telling me that Christianity, the religion of grace, the religion that teaches a salvation completed by the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross by the forgiveness of sin through his blood and justification before God by his righteousness complete has its roots in a religion that is seeking righteousness by work and didn't make it? No, sir. It didn't do it.

Now, what about Israel? That is the question, right?

Well, let's read Romans nine. What about Israel. That is the title of the message.

Well, now, the first thing that Paul states here in Romans nine is his compassion and his love for his kinsmen in the flesh. He says in verse one, "I say the truth in Christ."

"What I am going to tell you doesn't deny Christ. It doesn't rival Christ. It will exalt Christ. It will bring him to the forefront of salvation. It will lead you to Christ. I say the truth in Christ and what I am telling you is from Christ." He says, "I am not lying. I lie not. My conscience also bearing me witness. I am not hypocritical about this now. I am not believing one thing and then saying another. My conscience..."

And his conscience was cleansed and purged how? By the blood of Christ. That is how a believer's conscience, that sense of guilt that we have because of sin. How is that purged?

Read Hebrews chapter 10 about that subject something. It is purged by the blood of Christ. The only thing that is going to remove my guilt is the blood of Christ. The only thing that is going to give me peace of conscience, peace of mind, peace of heart is seeing how Christ by the grace of God came and died for my sins, was buried and rose again the third day and how I am righteous before God in him.

So Paul says, "I am... my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit. This what I am telling you is by inspiration of the Holy Spirit."

Do you see that? And he says in verse two, "That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart."

"I am so sorrowful, sad." That is what he is talking about, continual sorrow. It doesn't let up.

What is making Paul...

Now Paul, remember in Philippians he talked about rejoicing in Christ, had joy in Christ. And here he is talking about having continual sorrow. Well, his joy and rejoicing was in Christ, but his sorrow, continual sorrow was for what purpose?

Look at verse three.

“For I could wish that myself were accursed.”

That is separated from Christ.

“...for my brethren.”

You talking about your Christian brothers, Paul?

No. He says, “...my kinsmen according to the flesh.”

Now every one of you sitting here today if you are a believer, now, you have... you really in a sense have two families. You have a spiritual, eternal family that will never... a union that will never be broken. But you have earthly families, wives, husbands, children, mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles. And then a national family in that sense, but that is fleshly.

Do you see what I am saying? You have a fleshly kinship with certain people that you have no spiritual kinship to. That is what I am saying. And you have a spiritual kinship to people that you have no fleshly kinship to other than we can all trace our roots back to Adam, the human race, the fallen human race.

So Paul here identifies who he is talking about. He is talking about his kinsmen according to the flesh. He is talking about national Jews, national Israel, of the flesh, the physical seed of Abraham. And what does he say here? He said, “I could wish myself accursed from Christ for them,” verse four, “who are Israelites.”

What is he saying? His compassion for men, his compassion for sinners. My friend, listen. Being a Christian should never make us hard or mean or unloving. Now I know that the world will identify and classify hard and mean and unloving with being uncompromising about the truth. But don't go by the world's definition.

Paul, look over in chapter 10 and verse one. He says, “Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.” Now Paul was saying that the nation is lost. “And my heart's desire and prayer is that they be saved. I want them to be saved.”

Now the world would say Paul is mean and harsh and unloving just because he says Israel is lost. But why does he say that? I will tell you exactly why. It is not because Paul was mean or unloving or unkind or harsh or proud or a doctrinal Pharisee as some would say. He said it because that is what God's Word says.

Here is what God's Word says. God's Word says that anyone who is not saved by the grace of God in Christ is lost. It might be my fleshly family or fleshly nation. It doesn't matter who they are. It doesn't matter how much I love them. And for me to say otherwise is not love. That is the most deadly thing.

My children, the most deadly thing that I could tell my children is that I believe they are saved when I know they don't know and believe and trust and love Christ. You know, that is the most deadly thing that I could do for my... that is the most self centered thing.

Somebody says, "Well, I want peace at home."

Well, I do, too. But, my friend, peace at the expense of the glory of God is a deadly peace. Do you understand what I am saying?

Paul said, "My heart's desire and prayer for them is that they be saved." He said, "I love them." He said, "I could wish my..."

And let me tell you something, now. These were not just people who were kind to Paul. There were 40 Jews at one time who put a contract out on Paul's life and said they wouldn't eat or sleep until he was dead.

Paul said, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

Listen. And I know. And people talk about the Jewish nation and how they have been persecuted and they have, but let me tell you something. Any persecution of the Jews or any other people or any other nation or any persecution of any individual that comes in the name of Christianity is a false Christianity. There is no Christian way or mandate that we can persecute anybody. And those who persecuted the Jews in the past in the name of Christianity were false Christians. They were Christian in name only. I am telling you. No, sir.

I will tell you what I know about lost people, that the only reason that I am not lost with them is the grace of God in Christ. I was lost, but now I am found. If we are believers, if we are saved, it is by the grace of God. We are what we are by the grace of God. Who made us to differ? God did.

We were born in sin, Paul wrote in Ephesians chapter two, dead in trespasses and sins and were by nature children of wrath, even as others. Do you know what he means by that? He means that even us believers, even us who have been... we who have been born again, that as we were born in the flesh, there is no difference between us and the

children of wrath. You couldn't tell the difference. Religion wouldn't make you different, because man by nature is a religious creature. But we are what we are by the grace of God. We are chosen by the grace of God. The Scripture teaches that.

Over there in Romans chapter 11 he is going to talk about a remnant according to the election of grace. That is a small piece that God chose because of grace.

That means this. We didn't earn it and we didn't deserve it. You can go up and down this. If you believe you are one of the chosen of God and if you do you better have Scripture to back it up. But if you believe that, you could walk up and own this earth all day, all night wondering: Why did God choose me? And there is not one human answer that will satisfy.

Christ gave us the only answer in Matthew chapter 11 when he said, "For so, Father, it seemed good in thy sight."

That is it. Chosen by grace. Justified by grace. How can I, a sinner stand before God and be accepted? It is not by my works. And men and women will bring up all kinds of reasons.

They say, "Well, I joined the church or I got baptized or I have tithed or I went on a missionary journey or something."

No, no, no. There is only one way a sinner can stand before God accepted in his sight and that is in the beloved, Ephesians chapter one verse six and seven. That is in Christ.

Paul wrote in Philippians chapter three, "Oh, that I may know him and be found in him not having my own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ," his faithfulness to keep the law and to die for me.

Sanctified by grace, set apart by grace, redeemed by grace through the blood of Christ, regenerated by grace.

Christ told a Jew named Nicodemus. He said, "You must be born again, Nicodemus, or you can't see or enter the kingdom of heaven."

How are you born again? By the grace of God. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth. It is of God who shows mercy, Romans chapter nine. It is not by the will of the flesh nor by the will of man. It is not by blood, but it is of God, born again of God.

Preserved by the grace of God. The only reason we stay saved is by the grace of God in Christ. And then ultimately glorified by the grace of God. We have no reason to be mean or unkind to anybody who is lost. We ought to be like Paul.

And I tell you. For somebody to say that by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that is some statement, isn't it? If you want to see something mind boggling in the book of Romans it is not God's electing grace. Right here it is.

"I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

I think that the only way that you and I might be able to enter into that—and I want you all to think about this—is when you think about your children. I believe we can come close to what Paul was expressing there in genuine heart sorrow. Think about our children.

Now the next thing Paul does here is he brings forth the advantage of the nation of the Israel, the advantages. Well, they are lost, but now they had some advantages, privileged people. And listen to what he says.

He says, "Who are Israelites," verse four. And he lists these things. Now I want you to notice. Everything he lists here, everything he lists here has for its ultimate reason and its ultimate fulfillment the truth of salvation by the grace of God in Christ.

And yet the Jews as a nation now, not every individual Jew. Paul was a Jew. Peter was a Jew. And that is why Paul says in Romans chapter 11, "We ought to thank God for the Jewish nation."

Listen. If we are Christians, no, Christianity doesn't have its roots in Judaism, but I sure thank God for that nation. How about you? God used them in a mighty way to accomplish his purposes. And we ought to thank God every day. The first believers in the New Testament were Jews. And I read the Bible. I read the New Testament. God used Jewish men to write it. And I thank God for it. Thank God for his using them in a mighty way.

But everything here that has for its ultimate reason and fulfillment the salvation of sinners by God's grace in Christ and the Jewish nation as a whole down through its... that old covenant which was a period of about 1500 years from Sinai to the cross. They missed it.

Now, again, if it weren't for the grace of God, we would have missed it, too. Being a Jew or a Gentile has nothing to do with that, see.

Then look at what he says. He says, "To whom pertaineth the adoption." That is their national adoption as a nation, not in the sense of eternal salvation for every person born a Jew, but as to God choosing and using them for his special purposes. He adopted that nation. He chose that nation mainly to do one thing. Now they did a lot of things. There were some other reasons, but mainly to do one thing, to bring the Messiah through that nation according to the flesh. That was the main thing right there. He chose them.

Christ had to have a humanity. Now let me show you that. Turn to Hebrews chapter two. You see, in order for God to save his people spiritual Israel, his elect out of every tribe, kindred, tongue and nation, Jew and Gentile, Christ the Son of God, Christ, God, he is God, he had to have a human body. So he had to be made flesh.

Now why? Well, look at verse 14 of Hebrews two.

He says, “Forasmuch, then, as the children...” Whose children? God’s children. That is God’s elect, children of the promise. And they are partakers of flesh and blood. In other words, they are in partnership, in fellowship with flesh and blood. That is what we are. He also himself, that is Christ. Christ also himself likewise took part of the same, flesh and blood. Why? That through death, he had to die, sin demands death. Without the shedding of blood, no forgiveness. He had to die. That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

He had to have a human body. The Word had to be made flesh to dwell among us. He had to be man, God man. That is who Christ is. And think about this. God chose this nation and adopted them as a nation to bring Christ according to the flesh. He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, Romans chapter one and verse four.

Look back at Romans nine. It says, “Who pertaineth the adoption and the glory.”

The glory there refers to the shekinah glory of God in the tabernacle. That is where the mercy seat was. That is where the high priest went one time a year into the holiest of all with the blood of an animal, all of that picturing and symbolizing and prophesying of the one great high priest to come, the Lord Jesus Christ who would present the sacrifice of himself upon the altar of his deity to save us from our sin. That is what that was all about. That is the glory of God in the face of Jesus. That is what that pictures.

But they had that tabernacle. They had that whole list of... they had that ark of the covenant and the mercy seat. They had all of that. And that was not to be an end in and of itself. The blood of bulls and goats can’t take away sin. But that was to point them to Christ, but most of them missed it.

He says, “The covenants.” What about those covenants? Well, he made a covenant with Abraham. And the Jews, you know, he made many promises to Abraham. Some of them were physical promises. Some of them were spiritual promises. The physical promises pertained to that nation, that physical nation. The spiritual promises pertained to the spiritual nation. I will show you that in just a moment.

But the covenant of Abraham, the covenant of Sinai. They had the law given to them. That law, Galatians chapter three tells us, was to be a schoolmaster to lead them unto Christ. They had the priestly covenant. They had the covenant of David, the royal covenant, all of that pointed to Christ. But they missed it.

He said, "They had the giving of the law, the law on Sinai." They had the moral law, the ceremonial law, the civil law all one law. He says they had the service of God. That is the service of the tabernacle and the priest and the temple later on. They had that, again, all picturing Christ.

They had the promises, physical promises connected with the old covenant and ultimate eternal promises connected with Christ.

Verse five. It says, "Whose are the fathers." That is Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. You remember, they would always say, many times when they wanted to prove that they were children of God they would say, "We have Abraham as our father. We are Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

Well, what was Abraham? Abraham wasn't saved by his works. Read Romans four. He was saved by grace. He is an example of how God justifies the ungodly based upon the imputed righteousness of Christ. The Jews as a nation rejected that.

Christ told them. He said, "You seek to kill me. Abraham didn't do that. Abraham rejoiced to see my day."

Isaac, he was the child of promise picturing Christ, the ultimate child of promise and his people who are all children of promise. And old Jacob, what a picture of a sinner saved by grace. They had the fathers.

And it says, and verse five, "And of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came," though that nation in his humanity. He came through that nation, not with the aid of man, but he was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit and she was of that tribe of Judah.

"The scepter shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come."

And he says, "Who is overall God blessed for ever."

He makes sure that he testifies of this fact that was very offensive to the Jews and unbelieving Jews and that is that Christ came of the seed of David according to the flesh, but he is God. He is over all.

Jesus of Nazareth is God. That is what he is saying. He is God incarnate.

Now the third thing Paul does here is he shows God's power and grace in eternal salvation as it pertains to Israel. What about Israel?

All right, well let's look at it. First of all, what does Israel mean? Well, the first time the term Israel is used is in Genesis chapter 32 and it is verse 28. You mark that down. That is the segment where Jacob wrestled with the angel. And you remember what happened there. Jacob wrestled with the angel and Jacob would not let that angel go. And you

remember that angel disjoined Jacob's hip, made him lame. And all of that is a picture of salvation how a sinner, God's people, God's elect will not quit until we seek and find and have Christ. And that angel who I believe was a pre incarnate appearance of Christ, he blessed Jacob and he gave him a new name. Jacob was the name of his fallen humanity. Jacob was the name of his sin and depravity. Jacob was the name of his rebellion.

But he gave him a new name. He said, "Now you are going to be called Israel."

Now what does Israel mean? Well, if you go back to Genesis 32:28 and you have a concordance in your Bible it may say something like prince of God. Now those who are saved by God are made princes of God in that sense. But do you know what Israel really means, the name Israel? It means God prevails. That is what Israel means. The E L on the end of Israel, that is El, Elohim, God. God prevails.

And that is kind of weird because if you look at it back there in Genesis chapter 32:28, Jacob is wrestling with the angel and it looks like Jacob prevails. No, not so. God prevailed.

All that was going on there and Jacob, yeah, he wouldn't let go. He said, "I am not going to let go until you bless me."

What is he saying? I must have Christ. That is what Jacob was saying. I have got to have Christ and I can't let go of him. He is my only hope. He is my only righteousness before... he is my only forgiveness. I have got to have Christ.

Whenever a sinner does that, do you know who prevails? God does, because that is the work of God, my friend. That is the work of God. That is what Israel means. And what Paul is talking about here is God prevailing in salvation. And look at what he says.

He says, first of all, verse six. He says, "Not as though the Word of God hath taken none effect."

Why does he say that?

Well, back in the Old Testament God promised this. You can read this in Isaiah 45:17 and other Scriptures. Giving you an example. You read them. Isaiah 45:17.

He said this. He said, "Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, world without end. Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, world without end."

And yet we see in the Old Testament and in the New Testament that Israel wasn't...national Israel wasn't saved.

Hebrews chapter three and verse 19, they couldn't even enter into the Promised Land because of what? Unbelief. Their carcasses, he said, perished in the wilderness.

Remember Christ, “Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft I would have gathered you together as a mother hen gathers her chicks and you would not.”

Israel wouldn't receive him. He came unto his own and his own received him not. They rejected him.

In the book of Romans chapter 11 Paul quoted Isaiah 45:17. Verse 26 of Romans 11 he said, “All Israel shall be saved. All Israel shall be saved.”

Well, what is the problem then? Did God make a promise he couldn't keep? Or did God go back on his promise? Was the Word of God... has it not taken effect? Is God's Word void and weak like mine?

I may promise to do something for you and it may not get done. And do you want to know why? Because I am human and a sinful human.

But when God makes a promise the Bible says in Hebrews chapter six that when God makes a promise, he swears an oath. By himself. He engages himself behind. His reputation and glory is on the line to fulfill his promise. Well, he promised to save Israel back there and he has made that promise several times.

Is the Word of God of no effect? Well, Paul says, “No, that is the not the case, fellows. It is not as though the Word of God had taken none effect.”

Here is the issue. Here is the answer. Look at verse six.

“For they are not all Israel which are of Israel.”

What do you mean by that?

Well, he means this. Not all Israelites of the flesh are Israelites of the Spirit. A person may be a physical Jew and not a spiritual Jew.

He says in verse seven, “Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called.”

The physical seed, that physical connection with Abraham does not make one a child of God. Physical connection with Abraham did not give identity here. What does? God's promise does. Physical circumcision didn't get it. Spiritual circumcision does.

And he says, “But in Isaac shall thy seed be called.”

Even the natural descendants who received the national promises were not determined by natural birth. Abraham had two sons, one Isaac, one Ishmael. Ishmael wasn't the child of promise. Isaac was. But that is only determined by the promise and the power of God.

Well, the same is true of those who receive the eternal promises of God through Christ, the child of promise who is Christ.

And then he says, verse eight, he says, "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God."

Now did you read that with me? Did you see that? What does that say? Read it again.

"That is, they which are the children of the flesh, born physically children of Abraham, these are not the children of God. But the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

Now let me read one Scripture to you. Turn to Galatians chapter three and I am going to come back next week and go through some of this again. But let me show you who these children of the promise are. Who are the children of the promise? That is the children of God. That is spiritual Israel.

Galatians chapter three verse 26. Just read this and we will conclude with this.

He says in verse 26, "For you are all the children of God. How? By faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized, placed into Christ, have put on Christ, believe in him."

If you have been placed into Christ, united with Christ, you will believe in him sometime by the power of the Spirit.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek. Greek was a way to refer to the Gentiles back then. There is neither Jew nor Gentile. There is neither bond nor free. There is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Do you see that? And if you be Christ's, that is a possessive. If you belong to Christ, then are you Abraham's seed, children, Abraham's children and heirs according to the promise.

All right.