

"THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS" (Chapter Nine)

KEY OBJECTIVE IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

To appreciate why and how God could choose to reject the nation of Israel (except for a remnant) and accept people from among the Gentiles.

SUMMARY

With the conclusion of chapter eight Paul has completed his description of how God's righteousness was manifested in Christ, and the results of such justification. However, some of Paul's readers may have received the impression that God's plan of saving man in Christ apart from the Law (**3:21-22**) implies that God has rejected His people of Israel and the promises made to them. In chapters nine through eleven, Paul explains that God has not rejected His people. Paul first expresses his own concern for his fellow Israelites (**1-2**). If it would do any good, Paul would gladly be condemned in order to save his brethren who had been the recipients of so many blessings (**3-5**). But Paul quickly states that God's promises had not failed. He reminds them that true Israel is not simply the physical descendants of Israel, any more than the promises to Abraham were to be carried out through all of Abraham's descendants just because they are his physical descendants. Rather, it depends upon what God has chosen according to His Divine purpose. This is illustrated by contrasting what the Scriptures reveal about Isaac and Ishmael, and then about Jacob and Esau (**6-13**). That God has made such distinction is illustrated further with the example of Pharaoh, where God chose to show mercy to some while He hardened others [who had already persistently rejected God's mercy, (**14-18**)]. That God has the right to make such choices is His as the potter over the clay (**19-21**). So God chose to endure "vessels of wrath" with much longsuffering, that He might make known His glorious riches to "vessels of mercy" [a point expanded upon further in chapter eleven, MAC] (**22-23**). And who are these "vessels of mercy"? They consist of Gentiles, and a remnant of Israel, as foretold by Hosea and Isaiah (**24-29**). **Paul's conclusion?** That God's words of promise were not just to the fleshly descendants of Abraham (as the Jews would have it), but to the faithful remnant of Israel and to the Gentiles who accepted the righteousness which is by faith. The only reason any of the Israelites were rejected by God was because of their rejection of the Messiah, even as Isaiah foretold (**30-33**).

OUTLINE

I. PAUL'S CONCERN FOR HIS BRETHREN OF ISRAEL (1-5)

A. HIS GREAT CONCERN (1-3)

1. His conscience and the Holy Spirit bear witness to his great sorrow and grief (**1-2**)
2. He would even be willing to be cut off from Christ for their sakes (**3**)

B. FOR ISRAEL, RECIPIENTS OF MANY BLESSINGS (4-5)

1. Including the covenants, the Law, the promises (**4**)
2. Of whom are the patriarchs, and of course, Christ Himself (**5**)

II. THE TRUE CHILDREN OF GOD (6-29)

A. ARE CHILDREN OF PROMISE, NOT CHILDREN OF FLESH (6-13)

1. They are not all Israel who have descended from Israel (**6**)
2. As illustrated with Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau (**7-13**)
3. According to God's purpose, whose choice was not based upon works (**11**)

B. ARE THE OBJECTS OF GOD'S MERCY (14-23)

1. Possible only through His Mercy (**14-16**)
2. Just as Pharaoh was the object of His Wrath (**17-18**)
3. God's right to choose the objects of His mercy and His wrath (**19-23**)

C. ARE OF BOTH THE JEWS AND THE GENTILES (24-29)

1. Not of Jews only, as foretold by Hosea (**24-26**)
2. But only a remnant of Israel, as foretold by Isaiah (**27-29**)

III. THE BASIS OF GOD'S CHOICE: FAITH vs. NO FAITH (30-33)

A. FOR THE GENTILES (30)

1. Though they had not actively been looking for it (**30a**)
2. Yet many have attained righteousness through faith (**30b**)

B. FOR ISRAEL (31-33)

1. Though diligent for the Law, did not have the attitude of faith (**31-32a**)
2. And therefore stumbled over Christ, as foretold by Isaiah (**32b-33**)

KEY WORDS TO PONDER:

Harden - to make callous, to make strong; can be accomplished in two ways:

- 1) INDIRECTLY, by providing occasion to repent or resist (eg: as when judgment is delayed, [Ro 2:4-5](#)), and
- 2) DIRECTLY, by strengthening those who rebel so as to contrast power, mercy, or judgment (for example,
 - a) Pharaoh, to show God's power, [Ex 9:12-16](#);
 - b) Israel, to show God's mercy, [Ro 11:7-11, 31](#);
 - c) those who disbelieve, to show God's judgment, [2Th 2:9-12](#)

Remnant - a small portion of the whole; Isaiah foretold only a remnant of Israel would be saved ([Ro 9:27-29](#))

The Stumbling Stone - a reference to Jesus (cf. [1Pe 2:6-8](#))

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

1) List the main points of this chapter

- Paul's Concern For His Brethren Of Israel (1-5)
- The True Children Of God (6-29)
- The Basis Of God's Choice: Faith vs. No Faith (30-33)

2) How much love did Paul have for the nation of Israel? (2-3)

- Enough to be lost if it would do any good

3) Who are the true children of God? (8)

- Children of promise, not children of flesh

4) What does God have the right to do? (18)

- To show mercy on who He wills, and to harden who He wills

5) What O.T. prophet foretold that Gentiles would be a part of the people of God? (25-26)

- Hosea

6) What did Isaiah say would happen to the nation of Israel (27)

- Only a remnant would be saved

7) Why are Gentiles among the saved? (30)

- Because of faith

8) Why are some Israelites going to be lost? (31-33)

- They trusted more in the keeping of the Law, and did not believe in Christ