

The Epistle to the Romans
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Righteousness Rejected

Reading assignment: Romans 9

Introduction

Up to this point in our study of Romans (Chapters 1-8), we have studied many of the great doctrines of the scriptures. Now Paul's thoughts turned to his own people, the nation of Israel.

In the Church of Rome there were no doubt many Jewish believers. Some of these Jewish members were ignorant of God's purpose for Israel in this new dispensation of grace. Some of their questions could have been "Is God finished with Israel? Did God cast them away forever? Does God have a future purpose for this nation?" We will discover Paul's answer to these questions as we study chapters 9, 10, and 11. Remember that while Romans 1-8 are doctrinal, Romans 9-11 are dispensational and relate dispensationally to Ephesians.

It is sad, indeed, that immediately after writing of the glorious promises of God, the prospect of a future and wonderful inheritance for believers, the purposes and keeping power of God, Paul must now write of Israel's rejection of it all! Considering the theme of the Righteousness of God, we see in Romans 9-11 "Righteousness Rejected."

Importance of this Lesson

- It is very important to study these chapters because there are those people today who teach that God is finished with Israel, the nation will never be restored and the church is now the "new Israel."
- It is important to realize that these are false teachings. We are about to discover why in the study of Romans 9.

THE LESSON

- Outline:**
- A. Paul's love for Israel – verses 1-3
 - B. Israel's glorious past – verses 4-5
 - C. The true Israel are the saved of Israel – verses 6-13
 - D. God's mercy and His sovereign will – verses 14-24
 - E. The stubborn unbelief of Israel – verses 25-33

I. PAUL'S LOVE FOR ISRAEL – verses 1-3

- A. In verse 1, we feel Paul's burden for his people. He said that I am telling you the truth, I am not lying to you. My conscience also bears witness in the Holy Spirit. Every believer should carry a burden for the lost.
- B. In verse 2, we see Paul's broken heart for the lost of Israel. *...I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.* Paul had the joy of the Lord, but he also felt great sorrow for Israel, his brethren.
- C. It is difficult to understand Paul's statement in verse three. *...I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ...* if only the Jewish people could be saved. Paul was a great example in love for the lost. He was willing to be cursed of God if that resulted in the salvation of Israel. It is remarkable that Paul wrote these words immediately after writing that absolutely nothing could separate us from God's love (Romans 8:38-39).

II. ISRAEL'S GLORIOUS PAST – verses 4-5

- A. In these verses, Paul described the glorious past of Israel and reminded the Jews that they were a highly favored people. He called them “Israelites.” They were direct descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The word *adoption* refers to the whole nation, which came from these three great patriarchs.
God chose these people and placed them as His own in His sovereign divine plan. *The Glory* refers to the presence of God in the “Shekinah” in the tabernacle. God made “covenants” (guaranteed agreements) with Israel. Some have been fulfilled and others are yet to be fulfilled. The great Mosaic Law was given to them at Mt. Sinai. *The service* referred to the offerings given by the people and the priests in worship of God. There were many Messianic promises given to the fathers of Israel, ...*of whom, as concerning the flesh Christ came....*
- B. The first phrase of verse 5 could refer to the first three great patriarchs and the seed line through which Christ came into the world. Paul ended this verse with a note of praise and adoration.

III. THE TRUE ISRAEL – verses 6-13

- A. In these eight verses, Paul made a distinction between saved Jews and unsaved Jews. Individually and as a nation Jews are God’s chosen people, but this does not mean that all Jews are saved.
- B. In verse 6, Paul said that the Word of God has not failed or fallen to the ground. Unsaved Jews are lost because they have not believed in God as their fathers did. Not all Israel are of the spiritual children of Abraham. There is a natural Israel and a spiritual Israel. Compare Galatians 3:7 with Romans 2:28-29.
- C. In verse 7, this truth is clearly explained. The Jews are not the children of God or the children of faith until they believe God as their forefathers did and are accounted as righteous before God.
- D. In verse 8, the children of God are not the natural seed of the flesh but those who believe the promises and claim them by faith.
- E. In verses 9-13, Paul used the birth and choice of Isaac rather than Ishmael and the birth of Jacob and Esau as illustrations of believing and unbelieving Jews. Verse 13 needs special attention. Many people have stumbled over this verse. God loved Jacob because He knew Jacob would believe the promises of God. God also knew Esau would not believe, so in advance, God hated his unbelief, his sin and rebellion. God’s love for the believing Jacob was so great in contrast to His feeling for unbelieving Esau, it was as though he hated Esau (Luke 14:26). Because of God’s foreknowledge, He elected Jacob to be the true seed through which Christ would be born. This choice by God was not by works since Jacob was not yet born, but by His sovereign will.

IV. GOD’S MERCY AND SOVEREIGN WILL – verses 14-24 – In these verses, Paul stressed the fact that the call, salvation, and preservation of both Israel and the Gentiles were with regard to God’s absolute sovereign will and purpose, concerning which it is impossible to resist.

- A. Verse 14 states that there is no unrighteousness with God. God has a purpose and a will for everything He does.
- B. In verse 15, Paul quoted from Exodus 33:19. Paul had the Old Testament and believed it to be the inspired Word of God. ...*I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy....* God is absolutely sovereign in all His acts.
- C. In verse 16, God is under no obligation to the human will or works. He bestows mercy with no regard to human effort of deserving.
- D. In verse 17, God raised up Pharaoh to demonstrate His power even over all earthly sovereigns and that His name might be declared throughout the earth.
- E. Verse 18 is a repetition of verse 16 with the addition of the word *hardeneth*. God hardens whom He will because of their unbelief.

- F. Verses 19-22 are the strongest words in the Bible about the irresistible will of God. Man may blame God for allowing certain tragedies to happen, but God's will in all matters is hidden from the human mind. Faith and trust in God's love and purposes will dispel our doubts. Paul did not answer his own questions in verses 19-21. They cannot be answered by human reason. All God's children walk by faith and not by sight. We walk by faith, not by understanding.
- G. In verses 23-24, God makes His power known in the vessels of wrath but makes His mercies and the riches of His glory known in the vessels of mercy. In verse 24, Paul included himself and all saved Jews and Gentiles as vessels of mercy. If you are a Gentile believer and are saved, it is not because you merit such blessing but rather because God sought you, saved you and prepared you for glory.

V. THE STUBBORN UNBELIEF OF ISRAEL – verses 25-33

- A. Verses 25-27 – Once again Paul used quotations from two Old Testament Prophets, Hosea and Isaiah. Hosea 2:23 tells of people who were not of Israel but will be called “my people.” Gentiles were to be called and saved. Isaiah 19:20-22 says a very similar thing. Romans 9:26 indicates that the Gentiles will be called *the children of the living God*. Romans 9:27 tells us the God also has a remnant of Israel that will be saved.
- B. Verses 28-29 – The short work God will do on the earth will be during the tribulation period when He will call a large remnant of saved Jews. They are the *seed* of verse 29. The spiritual remnant of saved Jews down through the years has kept Israel from becoming like Sodom and Gomorrah. (Note Romans 11:5.)
- C. Verses 30-33 – The Gentiles who were saved attained righteousness because of their faith in Christ. The Jews did not attain righteousness because they sought it by the works of the Law. They stumbled over the necessity of believing in Christ as their Messiah. Christ became their stumbling stone. He was their rock of offense. *Whosoever believeth in him* – this was their downfall. They failed to accept Christ as their Savior and Messiah and this is still true today for the majority of the Jewish people.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS
EXAM - LESSON 16

Name _____

Address _____

1. The question the Jewish believers might have been asking in relation to Israel was: (Value 6 points)
 - a. why did the Jews crucify Christ?
 - b. does God still have a future plan for Israel?
 - c. will the nation of Israel repent?

2. A major error regarding Israel and the Church being taught by some today is that: (Value 6 points)
 - a. the Church is the new Israel.
 - b. Israel is part of the Church today.
 - c. Jews cannot become members of the Church.

3. The extreme statement Paul made which shows his deep love for Israel was that: (Value 5 points)
 - a. he was willing to be a messenger to Israel.
 - b. he was willing to go anywhere in the world to preach to the Jews.
 - c. he was willing to be cursed if it would mean the salvation of the Jews.

4. Israel descended from: (Value 5 points)
 - a. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
 - b. Esau.
 - c. Ishmael.

5. The word “adoption” in Romans 9:4 refers to the fact that: (Open Bible) (Value 6 points)
 - a. believers are adopted into the family of God.
 - b. God adopted the whole nation of Israel as His own.
 - c. Jews can be adopted into God’s family as well as Gentiles.

6. The word “covenants” in Romans 9:4 refers to: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
 - a. guaranteed agreements God made with Israel.
 - b. all of God’s covenants with Israel that have been fulfilled.
 - c. the offerings the people made in their worship of God.

7. The word “promises” in Romans 9:4 refers to: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
 - a. God’s promise to adopt believers into His family.
 - b. God’s promise to Israel about giving them their own land.
 - c. the Messianic promises given to the fathers of Israel.

8. The “natural” Israel means those: (Value 6 points)
 - a. who are part of the nation of Israel by being born as Jews.
 - b. who are born Jews and have believed in Christ.
 - c. Jews who are part of the church.

9. Among Israel the true children of God are those who: (Value 5 points)
 - a. are born of Jewish parents.
 - b. believe in Jesus Christ as their Messiah.
 - c. keep all of the Old Testament laws.

10. God chose Jacob and not Esau because: (Value 5 points)
 - a. Jacob was a better person than Esau.
 - b. it was His sovereign will.
 - c. Jacob would become a shepherd, a type of Christ.

11. The statement in Romans 9:15, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy" indicates that: (Open Bible) (Value 6 points)
 - a. God will have mercy on some people.
 - b. God will be merciful to Jacob.
 - c. God's mercy is based on His sovereign will.

12. God raised up Pharaoh because: (Value 6 points)
 - a. He wanted to show His power over all earthly kings.
 - b. He was angry with Pharaoh.
 - c. Pharaoh did not obey God.

13. Concerning the will of God, Romans 9:19-23 tell us that: (Open Bible) (Value 6 points)
 - a. man must come to God in faith.
 - b. God's will is irresistible.
 - c. God's will is so hidden from the human mind that nobody can know it.

14. In Romans 9:23-24, those included as being vessels of mercy, prepared unto glory were: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
 - a. the believers in the Church age.
 - b. the believing Jews.
 - c. Paul himself and all saved Jews and Gentiles.

15. The remnant of Israel as mentioned in Romans 9:27 are: (Open Bible) (Value 5 points)
 - a. those Jews who will be saved.
 - b. the Jews living in Palestine in Paul's day.
 - c. all Jews who came back from the Babylonian captivity.

16. The future time when a large number of Israelites be will saved is during: (Value 6 points)
 - a. the Millennium.
 - b. the Tribulation.
 - c. the Church age.

17. According to Romans 9:30-33, the Jews failed to attain unto righteousness because: (Open Bible) (Value 6 points)
 - a. they would not listen to Paul.
 - b. they tried to gain righteousness by the works of the law.
 - c. they thought God already gave it to them because they were descendants of Abraham.

18. Israel's stumbling stone and rock of offense was: (Value 6 points)
 - a. the apostle Paul.
 - b. Pilate the Roman governor.
 - c. Jesus Christ.

Decision Time

I have learned that Israel rejected the righteousness God had available for them. I need the righteousness of God today. I understand that I am guilty before God, because I have rejected Him up to this point. I know I am bound for eternal punishment and separation from God. Knowing this, I am repenting of my sin and by the power of God I am forsaking them. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who died for my sin and rose again from the dead on the third day. I believe He is living in heaven at this time.

Therefore I _____ receive Him as my personal Savior on this
_____ day of _____ 20__