

Wenstrom Bible Ministries
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The Remnant of Israel: Romans 9:1-13-God Elected Israel

Lesson # 3

In Romans 9:1, Paul implicitly appeals to Christ and the Holy Spirit as witnesses as to the veracity of his statements in Romans 9:2-3.

Paul feels the need to do this since in his day he was accused by many in Israel as being a traitor to the nation.

Romans 9:1 I am speaking the truth in accordance with the code of Christ. I am by no means lying, while my conscience does confirm to me in accordance with the code of the Holy Spirit. (My translation)

Then in Romans 9:2, Paul expresses his great sorrow and unceasing grief over the nation of Israel's rejection of Jesus Christ as their Messiah.

Romans 9:2 That, as far my feelings are concerned, there is always great sorrow as well as unceasing anguish in my heart. (My translation)

Paul in Romans 9:3 communicates to his readers his great love for the nation of Israel by expressing his desire to be separated from Christ for their sake.

Romans 9:3 In fact, I could almost wish that I myself could be accursed, totally and completely separated from Christ as a substitute for my brothers, specifically, my fellow countrymen with respect to racial descent. (My translation)

Next, in Romans 9:4-5, he lists eight privileges that were given to the nation of Israel by God that helps the reader understand the depth of his sorrow and grief.

Romans 9:4 Who indeed by virtue of their unique, privileged character are, as an eternal spiritual truth, Israelites. To them belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the service and the promises. 5 To them belong the fathers and from them, the Christ with respect to human racial descent, the one who is, as an eternal spiritual truth,

God over each and every living and non-living thing, worthy of praise and glorification throughout eternity. Amen! (My translation)

In Romans 9:6, Paul teaches that the nation of Israel's rejection of Jesus of Nazareth does not imply that God promises to the nation have been nullified because those who descended in a racial sense from Israel, aka Jacob are never considered by God to be spiritual Israel.

Romans 9:6 Now, this does not by any means imply that the word originating from God is nullified because each and every person who descended from Israel, these are, as an eternal spiritual truth, by no means, Israel. (Author's translation)

Then in Romans 9:7, Paul teaches that a racial Jew is never considered by God to be a member of spiritual Israel because they are biological descendants of Abraham but rather He considers those who have been effectually called from the line of Isaac to be Abraham's spiritual descendants and thus spiritual Israel.

Romans 9:7 Nor because they are, as an eternal spiritual truth, Abraham's biological descendants are they, as an eternal spiritual truth, spiritual children. On the contrary, "by means of the line of Isaac for your benefit, spiritual descendants will be effectually called." (My translation)

He mentions Abraham since the effectual call of Abraham was the first stage in the formation of the nation of Israel and thus being a true Israelite is not based solely upon racial heritage, which supports Paul's premise in Romans 9:6.

The apostle in Romans 9:8 teaches that these biological descendants of Abraham are by no means considered by God to be His children but rather He considers the children of the promise as being such and that the children of the promise are regarded by God as being Abraham's spiritual descendants.

Romans 9:8 This means these biological children by no means are, as an eternal spiritual truth, God's children. On the contrary, the promised children are, as an eternal spiritual truth, regarded as spiritual descendants. (My translation)

This passage supports his premise in Romans 9:6 that not all racial Israel is spiritual Israel since the second stage in the formation of the nation of Israel was based upon the fulfillment of a promise that God made to Abraham that he and Sarah would have a child.

In Romans 9:9, Paul paraphrases Genesis 18:10 and 14 to identify specifically the content of the Lord's promise to Abraham, which was that the Lord would fulfill His promise to Abraham and they would have a son named Isaac.

Romans 9:9 Specifically, this is, as an eternal spiritual truth, the word, which is a divine promise: "At this time next year, I will intervene and for the benefit of Sarah there will be a son." (My translation)

This passage further supports Paul's premise in Romans 9:6 in that it points out that the second stage in the formation of the nation of Israel was based upon a miracle with God providing Abraham and Sarah with a son when they were both past the age of child bearing.

This would refute those in Israel who contend that racial heritage or circumcision is the basis for being a true Israelite.

Romans 9:10 In fact, not only this, but also Rebekah, while having been pregnant by means of one man as a source, our father Isaac. (My translation)

The implication of this statement is that there was nothing to discriminate or distinguish Jacob from Esau.

They had the same father and mother and were conceived from the very same act of sexual intercourse.

Therefore, God's selection of Jacob over Esau was not based upon race but rather God's sovereign grace since they shared the same biological parents and were conceived at the same point in time, thus neither of them received the covenant promises based upon race or being biological descendants of Rebekah and Isaac.

Romans 9:11 For you see, when they had not yet been born nor practiced anything good or evil in order that God the Father's predetermined plan, which is in accordance with election would remain immutable. Never based upon meritorious actions as constituting its source, but rather based upon the one who effectually calls is the one who constitutes its source. (My translation)

So in this passage, he is teaching that God's choice of Jacob's descendants over Esau's is in accordance with the Father's immutable predetermined plan and sovereign will.

God's selection of Jacob and his descendants, the Israelites over Esau and his descendants, the Edomites to be His covenant people further supports Paul's premise in Romans 9:6.

It points out that the third stage in the formation of the nation of Israel was not based upon racial heritage but rather upon God's sovereign grace and totally apart from human merit.

In Romans 9:12, the apostle cites Genesis 25:23, which contains the prophecy that Esau's descendants would be in subjection to Jacob's.

Romans 9:12 It was said to her, "The older will be in subjection to the younger." (My translation)

The quotation from Genesis 25:23 was made by the Lord to Rebekah in the context of the nations that would descend from her twins.

Thus, this quotation is used to advance Paul's discussion that the formation and election of the nation of Israel was never based upon racial heritage but rather God's sovereign grace, which again would support Paul's premise in Romans 9:6.

In Romans 9:13, Paul quotes Malachi 1:2-3, which is also clearly speaking of Esau's descendants and not Esau as an individual.

Romans 9:13 As it stands written for all of eternity, "Jacob I loved however Esau I hated." (My translation)

God's selection of Israel rather than Edom illustrates perfectly that the election of Israel is based upon God's sovereign grace and never based upon human merit.

Thus this contributes to Paul's argument that not all biological Israel are spiritual Israel since many in Israel erroneously believed that being a biological descendant of the patriarchs or performing meritorious works constitutes being a member of the covenant people of God.

That the quotation in Malachi 1:2-3 is a reference to the national election of Israel and has nothing to do with Jacob and Esau as persons is indicated in that this passage is quoted by Paul in Romans 9:13 as he is discussing the origins and national election of Israel as a nation.

In Romans 9:1-5, he expresses his sorrow and grief over the nation of Israel's rejection of Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah.

Then in verse 6, he teaches that this rejection does not imply that God's promises to the nation have been nullified since not all "racial" Israel is considered by God to be "spiritual" Israel, i.e. His covenant people.

Next, in verses 7-12, he illustrates this premise in verse 6.

Secondly, in Malachi 1:1, Malachi says that the oracle in Malachi 1:2-3 is to the nation of Israel.

In Malachi 1:2, the Lord says to the nation of Israel, "**I have loved you**" and Israel's response is "**how have You loved us?**"

Therefore, the context clearly indicates that the Lord is addressing the nation of Israel and saying that He loved the nation as demonstrated by His electing them to be His covenant people rather than Esau's descendants, the Edomites and is emphatically not addressing them as individual human beings.

The statement "**Jacob I loved but Esau I hated**" is "not" a reference to Jacob and Esau as individuals but rather it is a reference to the nations, which descended from them, namely, the Israelites from Jacob and the Edomites from Esau.

Therefore, the statement refers to the "national" election of Israel as God's covenant people who are descendants of Jacob and the rejection of the Edomites as His covenant people who were descendants of Esau.

The rejection of Esau's descendants as His covenant people does "not" mean that God elected the Edomites and the Gentiles to eternal condemnation and the Israelites to salvation since that would contradict the biblical doctrine of the unlimited atonement, which states that God desires all men to be saved.

The election of the nation of Israel, like the choice of Jacob over Esau was "non-meritorious" meaning that there was nothing that the nation of Israel and Jacob did that secured God choosing them since many times both sinned and failed to obey God.