



Romans 9:1-29

ISRAEL'S PAST: ELECTION

If Jews and Gentiles are both equally indicted in sin and have equal access to salvation through Christ, and if the blessings of the OT people of God are in the possession of the church (righteousness, reconciliation, sonship, etc.), then what does one make of the OT promises made to Israel? Have the promises simply been transferred to the church, and is ethnic Israel left outside? If God's promises to Israel have not come to fruition, then how can one be sure that the great promises made to the church in Romans 8 will be fulfilled? ...Is the God who made saving promises to Israel faithful to His word? ...The thesis of all of Romans 9-11 then follows in 9:6a: "It is by no means the case that the word of God has failed." The central issue in these chapters is not predestination, nor is it even the salvation of Israel. At the forefront of Paul's thinking is God's faithfulness to His promises.

—Thomas R. Schreiner

In Romans 9-11, Paul addresses the question that is lingering in the back of the minds of the Jewish believers in Rome:

"Have the promises of God to Israel _____?" (9:6a)

God had promised Abraham that He would make him a great nation and that all the families of the earth would be blessed through his seed (Gen. 12:1-3). He had promised that a Son of David would reign, from Jerusalem, over the whole earth (Is. 9:6-7; 11:1-10; Jer. 23:5-6). He had promised that Israel would be regathered, restored, and redeemed, with a new covenant written on their hearts (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-28).

The kingdom of the Messiah was at the forefront of every Jewish believer's mind (cf. Acts 1:6). Was all that now gone? The church was filling up with Gentiles while most of the Jews continued to reject the gospel. How could Paul explain this?

PAUL'S PASSIONATE DESIRE FOR HIS PEOPLE (9:1-5)

- Paul continually _____ for his people.
- Paul sacrificially _____ his people (cf. Ex. 32:32).
- Paul personally _____ his people's blessings.

The adoption

The giving of the law

The glory

The service of God (in the temple)

The covenants

The promises

The fathers

The Christ, the eternally blessed God

Romans 9-11 is full of problems as a hedgehog is full of prickles. Many have given it up as a bad job, leaving Romans as a book with eight chapters of gospel at the beginning, four of application at the end, and three of puzzle in the middle. —N. T. Wright

When I come to a text that speaks of election, I delight myself in the doctrine of election. When the apostles exhort me to repentance and obedience, and indicate my freedom of choice and action, I give myself up to that side of the question. As wheels in a complicated machine may move in opposite directions and yet serve a common end, so may truths apparently opposite be perfectly reconcilable with each other, and equally serve the purposes of God in the accomplishment of man's salvation. —Charles Simeon

It seems incredible that a man would desire to be damned, in order that the damned might be saved. —Martin Luther

Paul's sorrow for his people is a spark from the fire of Christ's substitutionary love.

—James Denney

PAUL'S PASSIONATE DEFENSE OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY (9:6-29)

- **God's promise has always been for those who have the _____ of Abraham not just the _____ of Abraham** (9:6-9; cf. 2:28-29; 4:1-25; 9:30-33; Gal. 4:21-31; Gen. 15:1-21).
- **God's promise has always been based on God's sovereign elective _____** (9:10-13; cf. Gen. 25:19-23; Mal. 1:2-3).
 - God sovereignly chose Jacob over Esau for His purposes.
 - God's choice was not based on their future character or works but on God's sovereign wisdom and plan.
 - God's choice of Jacob over Esau (and Israel over Edom) was an expression of His particular love for him (cf. Luke 14:26).
- **God's promise has always been a free gift of His sovereign _____ and _____** (9:14-24; cf. Exodus 33:18-19).
 - God is free to give the gifts of His mercy and grace to whomever He wants since they are totally undeserved.
 - God is free to judicially harden someone, who has already hardened their heart against the Lord (cf. 1:18-32), to accomplish His greater purposes (cf. Acts 4:27-28).
 - God is free to do as He wills as our Creator and Lord (cf. Isaiah 29:16; 45:9; Jer. 18:1-6; Job 38-42; Ps. 115:3).
- **God's promise has always been above and beyond our human _____** (9:25-29; cf. Isaiah 55:8-9).
 - Just as God loves to shower grace on Israel, He also loves to shower grace on the Gentiles (cf. Hosea 1:10; 2:23).
 - No matter how far Israel may fall, God will always preserve a remnant for His purposes (cf. Isaiah 1:9; 10:22-23).

Paul is teaching us LIFE 101: God is _____ and we are not!

God's hatred of Esau is best understood as God's decision not to bestow this privilege on Esau. It might best be translated 'reject.' 'Love' and 'hate' are not here emotions that God feels but actions that he carries out.

—Douglas Moo

The strong contrast is a Semitic idiom that heightens the comparison by stating it in absolute terms.

—Robert Mounce

Neither here nor anywhere else is God said to harden anyone who had not first hardened himself.

—Leon Morris

God's hardening of Pharaoh was a judicial act, abandoning him to his stubbornness, much as God's wrath against the ungodly is expressed by "giving them over" to their own depravity (1:24-28).

—John R. W. Stott

God judicially hardened already calloused people in order to accomplish redemption for all people, including those who were being judicially hardened (11:32).

—Leighton Flowers

The moment God draws back his restraining influence there is hardening. That is one of the ways God produces hardening: He leaves them to themselves.

—D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

God prepares men for glory, but sinners prepare themselves for judgment.

—Warren Wiersbe

The correlation between divine sovereignty and human freedom and responsibility is ultimately a mystery that is beyond our finite comprehension.

—Thomas R. Schreiner