

WHAT ABOUT ISRAEL?

Romans 9-11

Introduction

So far in the book of Romans we have dealt with the justification, the sanctification, and the glorification of the believer. In chapters 1-8, the Bible has taught us that our Salvation is totally dependent upon God. It is the presence of God's Holy Spirit dwelling in the believer that gives us the ability to recognize our sinfulness, to have a desire to repent, to be separated from sin, connected with God, and yield the members of our body to the service of righteousness instead of the service of sin. From here, we could move on to chapter 12; and begin to study the application of these truths in the life of the believer. However, the Holy Spirit saw fit to show us in these next three chapters how Israel fits into God's plan of salvation through Christ. This section will answer questions that may have been prevalent in Paul's day as well as today. Questions like the following:

- Why has Israel rejected the Messiah?
- Has God rejected Israel?
- If God has rejected Israel, will he be faithful to us?

Romans 9-11 will answer these questions and more. God will use this section to teach us that God is remaining faithful to His promises to Israel, and we can trust Him to remain faithful to us.

TWO ISRAELS

In order to understand God's dealings with Israel, we must first understand how God views Israel.

Introduction

In Galatians 6:16 we read the phrase, *the Israel of God*. There are two Israels. One is national Israel, the only one that the people of the world can see. The other is spiritual Israel seen only by God, the Israel of God.

National Israel

Romans 9:1-8 (KJV) I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, [2] That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. [3] For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: [4] Who are Israelites;

Paul says here with the Holy Spirit as the witness of his heart, that if it were possible he would be eternally damned to hell if his brothers and sisters according to the flesh, could all be eternally saved.

to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; [5] Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

There never has been or ever will be another nation like Israel. Israel is the only nation to ever have a personal, intimate relationship with God. The Israelites are the people of God. The children of God.

Exodus 4:22; And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn:

Deuteronomy 14:1 (KJV) Ye are the children of the LORD your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead.

Hosea 11:1; When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

Note the blessings of God given only to the nation of Israel compiled from verses 4-5 in the following:

- They dwelled in the glory of God.
- Entered into the covenants with God, (even the new covenant that we Gentiles participate in was promised to the Jews first (Jeremiah 31:31-33)).
- Received the law of God.
- Served God in the tabernacle.
- Received the promises of God concerning the Christ.
- Are the fathers of the line of the Christ.
- In fact, humanly speaking, Christ is an Israelite.
- However, concerning the deity of Christ, He is God.

As God Christ should be spoken well of forever. A-men.

Spiritual Israel

[6] Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

The word of God hasn't failed. There are two Israels, one within the other. There is a national Israel that is easily seen by the human eye, but within national Israel there is a spiritual Israel that is only seen by the eye of God.

The word of God continues faithful in spiritual Israel.

[7] Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.

Abraham had more than one child, and he wanted God to accept Ishmael, his first born, as the child to receive the promises of God.

Genesis 17:18 KJV And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!

However, God chose Isaac as the child of promise.

Genesis 21:12 KJV And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

So out of Abraham God chose one.

[8] That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

The Scriptures begin the explanation of the apparent rejection by God of Israel by opening our eyes to the way God views Israel. We see in the phrase *For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel* that God sees two Israels where we only see one. There is a national Israel and there is a spiritual Israel.

In the Old Testament we see how the nation of Israel rejects God, even to the point that by the time of the writing of Romans the nation of Israel had rejected their Messiah and God would soon scatter the nation to the ends of the Earth. However, as is also seen from the Old Testament there is the spiritual remnant of Israel that remains faithful to God and it is through this remnant that God will fulfill His promises to Israel.

Ezekiel 6:8 KJV Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries.

Seed is from G4690, *sperma*; it means *something sown*. The word originally referred to plants, but is used figuratively of people. By implication the word may also refer to the produce that comes from the seed. It is used to speak of the godly line of humans. Those who come to God through faith in the promise of God. Literally beginning in Genesis 3:15.

Genesis 3:15 KJV (15) And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The LXX uses *sperma* to translate the Hebrew word for seed into Greek. This verse refers to Christ. The promise of this seed can be traced through the Bible to Abraham through Isaac.

Genesis 21:12 KJV (12) And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

Through Jacob to the remnant of Israel.

Isaiah 1:9 KJV (9) Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.

Here again the LXX uses *sperma* for the Hebrew word translated *remnant* in the KJV. This *seed* carries all the way to Christ.

Galatians 3:16 KJV (16) Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

As you can see, all the natural born children of Abraham are not children of God. Only those who are of the promised seed, in Isaac are the children of God because through Isaac came Christ, the Savior of the world, the only way to God.

John 8:33-59 KJV They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? (34) Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. (35) And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. (36) If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (37) I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. (38) I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. (39)

They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. (40) But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. (41) Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. (42) Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. (43) Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. (44) Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (45) And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. (46) Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? (47) He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. (48) Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? (49) Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me. (50) And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. (51) Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. (52) Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. (53) Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? (54) Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: (55) Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. (56) Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. (57) Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? (58) Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. (59) Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

The idea of a national Israel after the flesh and a spiritual Israel after the promise is what Jesus was trying to teach to Nicodemus.

John 3:3-6 KJV Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. (4) Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? (5) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

In fact, all who are born of God, Jew and Gentile are born of the Spirit. *Sperma* is used to speak of the seed of God, the Holy Spirit Who is present in all that are born again through faith in the promised seed, the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 John 3:9 KJV Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Conclusion

In order to understand God's dealings with Israel, we must first understand how God views Israel. God isn't looking at national Israel after the flesh, but He is looking at spiritual Israel after the Spirit.