

## Jacob I Loved but Esau I Hated Romans 9:10-13

March 17, 2021

The Bible's teaching on salvation turns upside down our culture's values

1. **John 15:16** "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide..."
2. The Christian has been saved ultimately not because of a choice he made, but because of a choice God made
3. **Col. 3:12** "Put on then, as God's **chosen ones**, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,"
4. **1 Th. 1:4-5** "For we know, brothers loved by God, that **he has chosen you**, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction..."
5. **Rev. 17:14** "They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and **chosen** and faithful."

Our text teaches about God's election of individuals unto salvation, and the basis of such election

### Review and Context

*Theme of Romans:* The gospel of God (1:16-17)

Chs 9-11 The gospel and Israel

- In 9:1-5, the apostle in a very personal way introduced the problem (from the human standpoint) of Israel's unbelief (rejection of the Messiah)
- *Thesis:* 9:6a "But it is not as though the word of God has failed."
  - The OT's numerous promises to the nation of Israel, of spiritual salvation through the Messiah
  - Examples include Deut 30:6; Eze 36:24-28; **Jer 31:31-36 (especially 33-34)**
- The apostle proves that the word of God has not failed, using several arguments that center on the following:
  1. God's sovereign election of some individuals and not others (9:6b-29)
  2. Israel's reliance on works rather than faith (9:30-10:21)
  3. The remnant of believers within Israel (11:1-10)
  4. God's temporary rejection of Israel (11:11-24)
  5. Israel's future salvation (11:25-32)

*By Steve Sherman, Pastor of Christian Fellowship Church, North Brunswick, NJ.*

*Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version (ESV).*

## **Sovereign election of individuals as a reason God's word has not failed: The example of Jacob and Esau (10-13)**

There is a spiritual Israel within the nation of Israel (6b-7a), and this spiritual Israel is the result of God's sovereign choice of individuals.

The previous example of Isaac

*Question:* What does Genesis teach us about the birth of Jacob and Esau and the events surrounding their birth?

10 "And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac,"

verses 11-12

1. Refers to **Genesis 25:22-23**
2. *Question:* Why did Jacob, and not Esau, inherit the promise made to Abraham?
3. God chose to set aside the older son and to bless the younger, Jacob, "not because of works"
  - They "had done nothing either good or bad"
  - God chose Jacob without any consideration of His behavior
  - God's choice was not conditioned on anything in Jacob. God chose unconditionally.
4. God chose Jacob "because of him who calls."
  - The ground of divine election unto salvation is God himself
  - God's sovereign calling is determinative in salvation
  - **8:30** "And those whom he predestined he also **called**, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified."
  - Sovereign calling effects the saving faith spoken of in chapter 4. It effects what God has purposed.
5. Here, "election," refers to God's sovereign unconditional choice of individuals for spiritual salvation (cf. the focus on the salvation of individuals in verses 1-3, 6b-7a)

6. Election is about God's eternal "purpose." God has purposed to glorify Himself through the salvation of His elect ones.
7. God chose the younger son, contrary to the custom of the day that gave priority to the eldest. God clearly disregarded their birth order.

**13** "As it is written, 'Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.'"

**1. Malachi 1:1-5**

- The Lord loved Israel with a sovereign, electing love
2. *Calvin*: [The Lord was saying,] "I yet chose the one, and rejected the other; and I was thus led by my mercy alone, and by no worthiness as to works."<sup>1</sup>
  3. Both sons deserved to be rejected by God, just as all of us deserve. Election is about grace and mercy.

The apostle's point is that, from the beginning of Israel's history, it has been clear that God has sovereignly chosen among Abraham's physical offspring some and not others for spiritual salvation. Therefore, the salvation of some of Paul's fellow Israelites and not many of the others does not mean the word of God has failed!

Paul's teaching here on election does not just pertain to Israelites

- **Eph. 1:3-6** "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he **chose** us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved."

## Conclusion

The teaching in some churches that election is based on foreseen faith is contrary to the Scriptures.

Self-centered man rebels at the notion of election by sovereign grace.

Part of the nature and glory of God is His freedom to be gracious to whom He will be gracious, and show mercy on whom He will show mercy.

- We are to praise and thank God accordingly.

---

<sup>1</sup> John Calvin's commentary on Romans 9:13.