

**Subject: *Divine Election***

**Scripture: *Romans 9:6-13***

The Bible reveals truth that sometimes seems difficult to our minds. It can at times be hard to understand and even hard to accept. When Jesus taught the people sometimes said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" Scripture is God's tool to test us. It tests us to see if we are willing to hear it, receive it, believe it, and obey it. We need to remember as we read the truth or hear it, God's Word is not on trial; we are on trial.

In Romans 9 Paul addresses of Jewish unbelief. In spite of Israel's many blessings and privileges, most Jews were not saved. Paul was deeply burdened for these lost fellow Jews, but he was also concerned that the readers of his letter to the Romans would not interpret this the wrong way. God had not failed Israel or rejected them. They rejected God and the gospel. Still yet, some of the Jews received the gospel and were saved. In Romans 9 and 10, Paul deals with this issue of why some of the Jews were saved and most were lost. In Romans 9 he says that Jews were saved because God elected (chose) them. In Romans 10 he tells that all Jews were lost because of their unbelief.

In 9:6-13, Paul presents the truth of divine election. In 9:14-24, he defends the truth of divine election.

## **1. BASIC TRUTH ABOUT ELECTION**

Paul says, in effect, there is an important distinction to be made between a physical Jew and a spiritual Jew. There was within the nation a spiritual, faithful remnant. Vance Havner used to say: "God has always been in the remnant business."

In verse 6, Paul assures us that God's Word had taken effect in some of the Jews. Some Jews had been saved and they were saved by hearing and believing God's Word. God gave this promise to the prophet Isaiah.

***Isaiah 55:11*** *So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*

Verse 6 in the Amplified Bible: *For it is not everybody who is a descendent of Jacob who belongs to the true Israel. See **Romans 2:28-29**. It is possible to be a Jew physically (outwardly), but not a true Jew spiritually (inwardly).*

When Jesus described Nathanael in *John 1:47* He called him *an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile (deception)*.

The central idea of Romans 9 is found in the last part of verse 11.

***Romans 9:11*** *(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)*

The word "election" refers to God's choosing people. Christians are often called God's elect or chosen people.

***Matthew 24:24*** *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*

**Matthew 24:31** *And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

**Romans 8:33** *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

**Colossians 3:12** *Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.*

**1 Thessalonians 1:4** *Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.*

In some cases Scripture uses the word "chosen."

**Ephesians 1:4** *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

**2 Thessalonians 2:13** *But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:*

**1 Peter 2:9** *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

## **2. CLEAR ILLUSTRATIONS ABOUT ELECTION**

Paul and his readers knew the Old Testament, and so he drew a couple of illustrations they were familiar with to make his point.

### **A. God chose Isaac instead of Ishmael**

Isaac and Ishmael were both sons of Abraham. Both were physical sons, but only Isaac was a spiritual son. Only Isaac received the blessing and the promises.

### **B. God chose Jacob instead of Esau**

Jacob and Esau were both sons of Isaac. Both came from the same father, but only Jacob received the promises and blessings. Verse 13 sounds harsh. It is from Malachi 1:2-3. We need to understand these words in a relative sense, not an absolute sense. Remember that Jesus said: *If any man does not hate his father and mother he cannot be my disciple.* What He meant was that our love for Him must be so great, that by comparison, our love for our father and mother will seem like hate.

As far as God's blessings were concerned, Jacob and his descendents were chosen over Esau and his descendents. Someone told Griffith-Thomas that he was having trouble because he couldn't understand why God hated Esau. Dr. Thomas replied, "I'm having trouble with that verse, too, but my problem is different. I don't understand why God loved Jacob!"

## **3. FIRM CONCLUSIONS ABOUT ELECTION**

We can conclude five things about God's choosing or election.

### **A. Election is not based on any family or physical connection**

Ishmael and Isaac had the same father, yet only Isaac was chosen. Jacob and Esau had the same father and mother, yet only Jacob was chosen. Just because a child is born in a Christian family is no guarantee that he or she will be saved.

B. Election is not based on any human factor (like birth order)

Jacob was chosen instead of Esau, but Jacob was the younger brother. This is contrary to our way of thinking. Usually the firstborn son was given special honor and privilege, but not in this case. Election runs contrary to normal thinking.

***Isaiah 55:9*** *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

***Romans 11:33*** *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*

C. Election is not based on human actions in the past

God made the choice before they were even born.

D. Election is not based on human actions foreseen in the future

It was not that God looked into the future and saw that Jacob would live a better life than Esau and therefore He chose him for the blessing. Verse 11 makes it clear that God's choice is not based on works or character.

E. Election is based entirely on God's sovereign purpose

Election is not based on anyone or anything outside of God Himself. He has His own reasons for what He does and why He does it.

***Deuteronomy 7:7-8*** <sup>7</sup> *The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:* <sup>8</sup> *But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

***2 Timothy 1:9*** *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*

The hard thing to believe is not that God chooses to save some people, but that God chooses any people at all.

***2 Peter 1:10*** *...brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.*

The Bible says there are two groups of people: the “whosoever wills” and the “whosoever won’ts.” To be more specific, the groups are: whosoever will repent of sin and whosoever won’t; whosoever will surrender to Jesus in total faith and whosoever won’t; whosoever will take up their cross and follow Jesus as a disciple; and whosoever won’t. Which group are you in?