

**"God's Relationship with Israel"**

**Romans 9-11**

**Part 9**

**Introduction:** Last week in our study of Romans we were looking at the privileges that God had given to Israel. Paul listed 8 privileges entrusted to the nation. But there was a problem. God had made the Covenants with them, He had made many promises to them, He chose them to be His people to represent Him in the world, He promised that from them would come the Redeemer, Jesus Christ, He promised them the land, the King and His eternal Kingdom, but when Jesus showed up they crucified Him. They rejected their Messiah and so many of them died in their sins and were sentenced to eternal destruction.

So, the question many would have would be, "What happened to God's Word?" Have the promises just fallen to the ground powerless? Has his Word run aground with no fulfillment? The answer is, "NO".

**Notice Romans 9:6a**

The phrase "taken none effect" means "to fail" or "to fall powerless to the ground". Israel failed to see Jesus Christ as he Messiah, but the Word of God has not failed. This first part of verse 6 is meant to contrast the response of Israel. Israel failed to accept her Messiah, but God's Word never fails. Last week we looked at how this phrase is really one word and it is used in Acts 27 and there it means "to run aground" when speaking of the ship which Paul was on. The promises of the Word of God had not "run aground" and failed.

Paul explains in this verse why it "looks" as though the Word of God had failed. You see many Jews had died in their sins and went to hell, so they would not see the covenants, or the promises fulfilled. For this reason, combined with the rejection of Jesus Christ by many Jews, it looked as though the Word of God had failed.

**Notice Romans 9:6**

Paul tells us here that they are not all Israel who are of Israel. When we think of Israel we think of the nation and that is correct. But just because someone has descended from the Abrahamic line it does not mean they are a true Jew. Here when Paul refers to those who ARE OF ISRAEL, he is referring to those who are from Jacob. Jacob was given the name "Israel" in Genesis 32.

**Genesis 32:28**

<sup>28</sup> *And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.*

So what Paul is saying here is that just because someone is a descendant of Jacob that does not make them a true Israelite. Last week I reminded you that a true Israelite was someone who had 4 fathers. They had to be able to claim Jacob, Isaac, Abraham and God as their fathers. In other words, a true Israelite had to be from the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and they had to be saved. They could be circumcised in the flesh but if the heart was not circumcised it had no spiritual value.

### **Romans 2:28-29**

<sup>28</sup> *For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:*

<sup>29</sup> *But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

As we move on to the next verse Paul is going to illustrate two things:

1. He is going to illustrate that just because someone is a descendant of a prominent person does not automatically make them a recipient of God's promises.
2. He is also going to illustrate the sovereignty of God as He brought about the Nation of Israel.

### **Notice Romans 9:7**

This verse is very important for us to understand. Paul tells us that just because someone is a descendant of Abraham that does not make them an Israelite/a recipient of God's covenants and promises. We see here in this verse that God chose to bring about the Nation of Israel through Isaac. So, the other sons of Abraham were not Israelites.

Before the birth of Isaac, Abraham fathered Ishmael through Hagar.

### **Genesis 16:1-4, 11**

*Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.*

<sup>2</sup> *And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.*

<sup>3</sup> And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.

<sup>4</sup> And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

<sup>11</sup> And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.

Ishmael was not an Israelite. Abraham also had other children to Keturah.

**Genesis 25:1-2**

Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.

<sup>2</sup> And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.

These children were not Israelites either. Ishmael and these children were Gentiles. The Israelites would come through the line of Isaac only. These were all children of Abraham, but God, in His sovereignty, chose Isaac to be the seed through which the covenants and the promises would be fulfilled.

In the days of Jesus, the Jews believed all who came from Abraham were recipients of the covenants and the promises. They took great pride in the fact that Abraham was their father. Let me show you their thoughts on being a descendant of Abraham.

**John 8:37-39, 44**

<sup>37</sup> I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

<sup>38</sup> I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

<sup>39</sup> 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.

<sup>44</sup> 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.

We can see from the conversation Jesus had with these people that they did not understand that a true Jew had to have 4 fathers. They believed that because they were of the seed of Abraham, they were then automatically recipients of the promises.

**Notice Romans 9:8-9**

Paul tells us the children of the flesh are not the children of God but only those who are the children of the promise are counted for the seed. Then in verse 9 Paul quotes from Genesis 18:10, 14. Let me show you the difference in the children of the flesh and the children of the promise.

**Genesis 16:1-4**

*Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.*

*<sup>2</sup> And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.*

*<sup>3</sup> And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.*

*<sup>4</sup> And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.*

Here is the account of Ishmael who is the child of the flesh. Abraham and Sarah were getting older and there was no sign of the fulfillment of God's promise. So, they came up with a plan to "help" God fulfill the promise. Let me show you what God told Abraham in Genesis 15.

**Genesis 15:1-5**

*After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.*

*<sup>2</sup> And Abram said, LORD God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?*

*<sup>3</sup> And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.*

<sup>4</sup> And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

<sup>5</sup> And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

This was the promise and so in the next chapter we find Abraham trying to fulfill the promise **IN THE POWER OF THE FLESH**. This act, as we know, was not the will of God.

**Genesis 17:15-19**

<sup>15</sup> And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

<sup>16</sup> And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.

<sup>17</sup> Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

<sup>18</sup> And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!

<sup>19</sup> And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

Then we read of the birth of Isaac in Genesis 21.

**Genesis 21:1-5**

And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

<sup>2</sup> For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

<sup>3</sup> And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

<sup>4</sup> And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

<sup>5</sup> And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

Ishmael was a child of the flesh and Isaac was the child of promise. It would be through him the covenants and the promises would be fulfilled. Isaac's birth was far different than

Ishmael's birth. Ishmael was the result of the works of the flesh. Isaac was the result of the power of God at work in Abraham's life.

**Application:**

There are some very important lessons in all of this.

**1. The end NEVER justifies the means.**

The end result of Ishmael was that Abraham had a son that he fathered. But the means were completely wrong. Abraham was outside the will of God when he married Hagar and fathered Ishmael through her. This was never God's intention.

Let us remember that God is far more concerned with the means than He is with the end result as we serve Him. He can bring about the end results which He desires and therefore, our responsibility is to walk in His will no matter what the situation looks like. It is our responsibility is to live by faith.

**Hebrews 10:36-38**

*<sup>36</sup> For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*

*<sup>37</sup> For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*

*<sup>38</sup> Now **the just shall live by faith**: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

What happens in our lives is that we desire to see God's will be fulfilled so much that we get involved with the flesh and we step outside the will of God in hopes of bringing about what we want. This often happens in the area of evangelism. Churches develop all kinds of "techniques" which they believe can be used to get people saved. They pressure people into a prayer of some sort, or they get them to fill out a decision card or some other kind of "technique".

The Bible tells us that faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. People get saved when they hear the Word of God and the Spirit of God convicts them and they then place their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. In the fleshly "techniques" God has no part. Just like the conception of Ishmael. It is all in the flesh as a means to bring about an end result which is really no result at all because when God is not in it there can

be no salvation. Salvation is a miraculous working of the power of God in a person's heart just like the conception of Isaac was the miraculous power of God at work in Abraham.

**2. God will NOT accept that which is accomplished in the power of the flesh.**

**Genesis 17:17-19**

<sup>17</sup> Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

<sup>18</sup> **And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!**

<sup>19</sup> And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

Abraham desired for God to work through Ishmael, but God would not. He would not accept the work of the flesh. Isaac was different because he was the result of the power of God working in Abraham's and Sarah's lives after their reproductive systems were dead.

Some day we will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ and on that day, there will be many who offer to the Lord the works of the flesh and He will completely refuse them. Like Abraham who cried, "O That Ishmael might live before thee", many will cry, "Lord, how about what I did here or what I did there?" But it will all be rejected because it was not in the power of the Spirit.

**Conclusion:**

**2 Corinthians 5:10**

<sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; **that every one may receive the things done in his body**, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

**1 Corinthians 3:13-15**

<sup>13</sup> **Every man's work shall be made manifest**: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

<sup>14</sup> If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

<sup>15</sup> If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.