

Lesson 20 – The Book of Romans

Remember that what we learned from Chapter 8 of this Book is that none **justified**, can be condemned and none “in Him” can be **separated**. That was the commitment that Paul makes in Romans 8.

And if that is true, how about the Israelites who were sovereignly chosen by God and given unconditional promises ever be separated from God.

We, in the Church, bask in the assurances of Romans 8 that none can condemn us, and nothing can separate us from Him.

Well, then the question comes about with the Nation of Israel. Is the same true with His people Israel? Most assuredly it is true of them also.

This was first brought up in Chapter 3 of Romans when Paul asks “what profit then does being a Jew have? and we have been over that.

However,

Chapter 9 verse 6 states: “It is not that the Word of God has taken no effect, for they are **not all** Israel who are of Israel.”

What does that mean?

Firstly, it does not say “not any” only “not all” - Who then is an Israelite? That is a key question regarding Israel today. The majority of Israel today are agnostic humanists.

Paul then delves into the difference between physical and spiritual Israel.

The name Israel is mentioned 75 in a total of 73 verses in the New Testament and is always referring to the Nation, *never the Church*. Note **Galatians 6:16** which includes yet distinguishes, the Israel of God.

Romans 9:7 says” “Nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham: but in Isaac your seed shall be called”. By natural birth, the Midianites, Ishmaelites and the Edomites would be included in the seed of Abraham. Yet it was through Isaac (whose name means laughter) shall thy seed be called.

Truth is, it is through Isaac not Ishmael that the seed is called. Why? Because Isaac was a miracle birth of which Abraham had no help with.

Paul is using this example as an example of the *sovereignty of God*. Thus, the birth of Isaac, the birth of the Nation of Israel and the Church also speaks of the sovereignty of God.

Verse 8 says: “that is, that the children born of the flesh (Hagar and Abraham), these are **not** the children of God, but the children of the promise (Abraham and Sarah) **are** counted as the seed. The physical decedents of Abraham were not enough to inherit the promises

Proving what John said in **chapter 3: vs 6** that which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Spiritual Israel **has never** included all of physical Israel.

Verse 9 says: “for this is the word of promise, at this time will I come and Sarah shall have a son.” We know him as Isaac.

Verse 11 – it is important that we note that there is a parenthesis at the beginning and the end of this verse. There was a war going on between these two before they were born. It started in the womb, for they were not yet born, nor had done anything good or bad. Paul is speaking about the doctrine of Election. Elect before they were even born.

It is very interesting to me as you read about these two being not yet born, (**read Genesis 25: 19** & following; Abraham begot Isaac, and when Isaac was 40 years old he took Rebecca as his wife, Isaac pleaded with God over the barrenness of his wife Rebecca, God heard his cry and she conceived twins but (**vs 22**) “*the children struggled together with her in the womb to the point she cried out “if all is well with me why is this happening?*”

The Lord answered her (**vs 23**) saying: there are two nations in your womb – **two peoples shall be separated from your body, two nations**, one shall be stronger than the other, and the *elder shall serve the younger.*

They (the two people started fighting in the womb and do so even today. The Arabs and the Jews.

Verse 12 says; The elder shall serve the younger. I.e; Esau because as a twin he came out first- would serve Jacob – the younger of the two.

Now as discussed last time, we tend to look upon Esau and wonder why God hated him when in actuality we should look upon Jacob (who by the way – his name means *trickster*) and wonder why God **loves** him.

A closer look at the life of Jacob and we discover that his name itself means “**trickster, supplanter.**” We note that Jacob’s father- Isaac - loved Esau, his elder brother. (**Genesis 25:6**) Jacob cooked up a stew for his brother Esau and made Esau “give up his birthright, in order to eat the stew.” Then you notice in **Genesis 27** that Isaac asks his son Esau to take his bow and go and collect meat for a stew that Isaac loved to eat.

Isaac wife Rebecca heard her husband request this of Esau and set about to deceive her husband into giving his blessing to Jacob. Together, they concocted the idea of taking a skin from an animal, placing it on Jacob’s arms and neck (because Esau was a hairy man and Jacob a smooth skinned man) and Isaac was an old man with poor eyesight – fixed the soup for her husband Isaac and then Jacob would go into his dad’s presence and proclaim that he was Esau. The old man could touch the back of his neck and arms and feel the fur of the animal and think he was blessing his first-born Esau.

Isaac was old and near blind and without hesitation, blessed Jacob not knowing this was not Esau.

Jacob lied to his father Isaac and told him that he was Esau, so Isaac blessed him thinking he was Esau. Isaac also wondered how Esau (actually Jacob) could have gone hunting and come back so soon, and again Jacob lied and told him that the “Lord **your** God” had brought it to him” So Isaac asks Jacob “are you really my son Esau, my first born” and again Jacob lied to his dad and said “I am”

So, thinking Jacob was Esau, Isaac blessed the son in front of him.

As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, his son Esau arrives with the killed meat for stew

Esau then asks for his blessing, and Isaac realized that he had already blessed Jacob (the trickster) Can't do it son, I have already blessed Jacob. Proving what we sing about in **Numbers 23 – 20** “once blessed, He cannot reverse it.”

Esau then proclaims in **verse 36** “have you not properly name my brother Jacob? He has supplanted me two times, taking away my birthright and now my blessing.

Read all about it in **Genesis 27 1-40**- Then in verse **41** it says “Esau hated Jacob because the blessing was stolen” Esau heads up the Arab Nations, Jacob – Israel.

Eventually Isaac did bless Esau and you can read about it in verses **39 & 40**, but they were not the spiritual blessings.

God later changed Jacob's name to Israel.

Like it or not, the choice belongs to God and God alone. For our edification and learning, God chose Abel, not Cain, not Japheth, but Shem, not Ishmael, but Isaac, not Esau, but Jacob, not Manasseh, but Ephraim, not Aaron but Moses, not Eliab but David, not the Old Covenant, but the New, not the **first man** Adam, but the **last Adam** (Christ)

I say all of this to say that inheritance is not automatic, but rather is the father's choice.

The choice of Isaac over Ishmael and Jacob over Esau are there for our learning and understanding that it is always “faith over works” as well as “grace over law”

To be true Israel, one needs to hold to the faith of Abraham – why? Because God has no grandchildren. You and I get “in” because of our decision, not because of birth or lineage. Every one of us that gets “in” with God, must do so on our own faith. Not because your dad was a former deacon at this church, or your mother played the piano.

Verse 15 tells us that God's mercy is not extended as a recognition of human will, nor as a reward for human work.

If it were not for His will at work in our lives, we would all reject Him

Remember beloved, election (that is God choosing us) has nothing to do with justice. It is all about “free grace”

God is God – and He does as He chooses. Period.

The only way for mankind to avoid eternal torment would be if God Himself took action. Aren't you glad He did?

Remember – man is lost and cannot save himself – man is guilty and none could acquit him but God Himself – we were by nature a “child of wrath” and unable to change – we were allied with God's enemy, not subject to His will – doing things worthy of death (separation) and any movement toward God must start with Him and finally everything within us would oppose Him were it not for His intervention in our lives.

Election is outside of a human's wheelhouse, and is altogether of God Himself.

Verse 24 is an interesting verse – it says “*even us whom He called, not of the Jews only but also of the Gentiles.*” Don't you just love that? *You will love **verse 25** also.*

History tells us that the Jews sought righteousness before God through their own works and were rejected by God. Now the Gentiles who did not have the privilege of the Jews were received. The reason – the Jews, trying to achieve righteousness, acted according to their works, the Gentiles were simply received righteousness by faith through the grace of God.

The Jews stumbled over a crucified Messiah. They wanted a Messiah to lead them to political freedom and glory and that could not possibly come through crucifixion.

In **Chapter 9** of the book of Romans, Paul's position is to present Israel's position in the plan of God. Israel was an elect nation, given privileges no other nation received yet failed in God's plan to bless the entire world.

Now I want to examine the issue of *Inheritance*. **Inheritance** is not automatic. The word actually is tied to a life of **faithfulness**.

Look with me at **Hebrews chapter 1**. Again, for our edification, the book of Hebrews was written to the Hebrews to tell them to stop acting like Hebrews. **Verse 4** says; Jesus received a more excellent inheritance by name than the angels. This is the father's choice. **Verse 14** says concerning the angels that they are ministering spirits sent to those who will inherit salvation.

Speaking of the believers the writer writes in **Chapter 6 vs 12**: “that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through *faith and patience* inherit the promises and then in **chapter 12 vs 17** he says: speaking of Esau who sold his birthright for a pot of soup later wanted to repent and inherit the blessings, but was unable to even though he sought it diligently through tears.

There are portions of your inheritance that you cannot lose You will always be a **son** and therefore an heir, but not necessarily a *Joint Heir*. My point is that inheritance is not

automatic. We need to continue to “keep on keeping on” because it is realized through *patience and faith*.

Not so sure about a “joint heir” (which is firstborn status) It may be provisional based upon our steadfastness until the end.

Justification is a free gift by God to all who believe. We did nothing to earn it. Sanctification on the other hand is something happening within each of us. Justification declared the sinner righteous; Sanctification makes the sinner righteous.

Justification removes the guilt and penalty of sin; Sanctification removes the growth and power of sin in our lives.

Why am I mentioning this? There is a difference between shopping at Kroger, and owning Kroger. There is a difference between visiting Target, and owning Target. There is a difference between being there (heaven) and owning heaven.

I could be missing this, but it seems to me that just being there will not be enough. It will be wonderful no doubt, but once there, I want to ensure that I get everything possible because of my activity here on earth. I want a “full measure” of blessings in my cup and want the same for you.

I believe there is going to be a difference between “going to heaven” and being a partaker in heaven. As a believer, we are going. However, when we view a couple of scriptures, it may appear as though there is a part we play in our enjoyment and fulfillment when we get there.

Let us look closely at **2 Corinthians 5:10** “*for we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*”

1st Corinthians 9: 26&27 *Therefore I run thus, not with uncertainty. Thus, I fight not as one who beats the air, but I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest when I preach to others, I myself should become disqualified.*”

1st John 2:28 *And no little children, abide in Him, that when He appears we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.*

You and I can become disqualified from the prize. How so? By throwing in the towel, by quitting before the race has finished, by failing to keep on keeping on.

Jesus achieved His inheritance by perseverance and suffering- **Hebrews 2:10&11** As partakers (His words) we will inherit in the same manner. Doesn't sound like much fun here, does it?

Look again with me at **Romans 8:17** “*and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we **suffer with Him**, that we also may be glorified together.*”

What are you suggesting here Tom? Could there be a relationship between our suffering with Him and our heirship with Him?

Hebrews 3:4 *“for we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.”*

The word partakers mean “those who share in, companions, comrades, partners (in a work, office or dignity)

All Christians will be in the kingdom, but not all will be co-heirs there.

The Apostle Paul did not want to become a castaway, nor should we.

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