

Cornerstone Bible Church

What About Israel?

Part 1

(Romans 9:1-33)

Survey of Romans part 35

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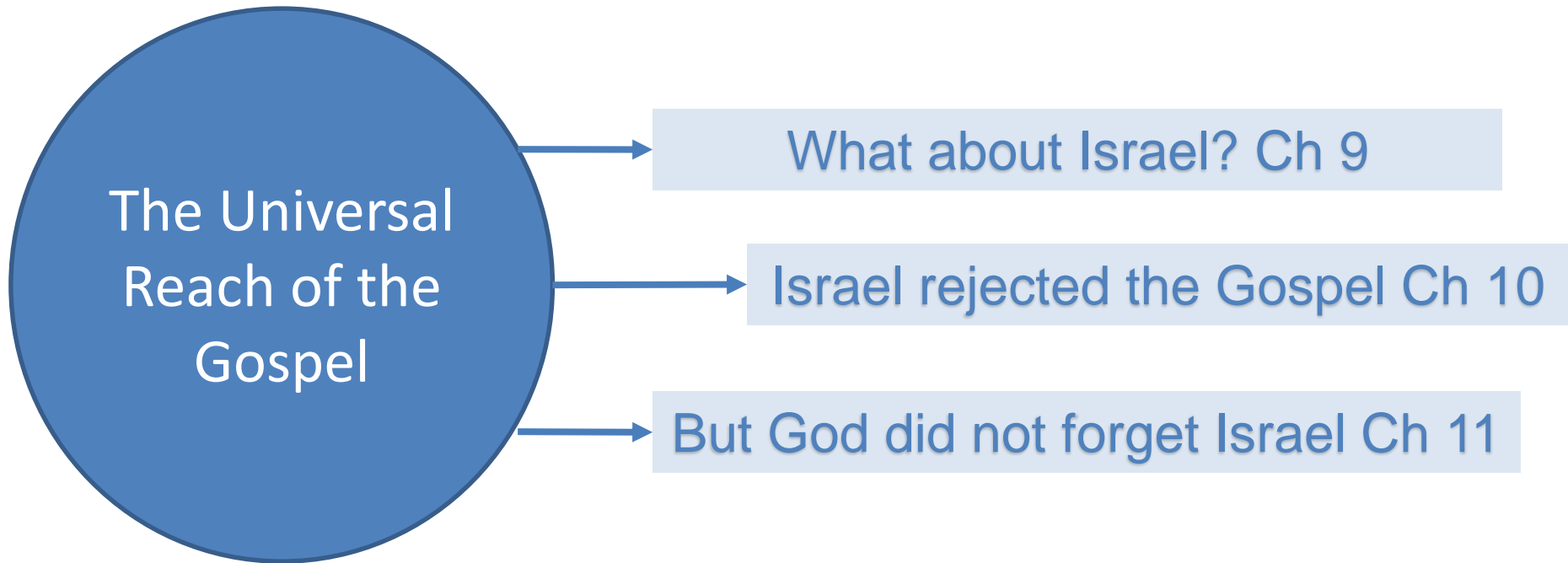
Romans 9:1–5 (NAS): I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, ²that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. ³For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, ⁴who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, ⁵whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen"

Introduction:

Romans 9 - What about Israel? - Part 1

- Even when it may seem that Paul is **changing gears** and going on a tangent in chapter 9, he is still connecting the dots about the gospel.
- **Jews and Gentiles worshipped together** in Rome, and the Jews had never met Paul, but only had heard about this converted Pharisee who was a friend of the gentiles.
- **Paul was a disowned Jew**, and it was time for him to make a statement about the place of Israel in God's redemptive history.
- These three chapters are not easy to dissect, they have been the subject of **historical controversies** in Christian doctrine.
- Romans 9 can cause visceral **reactions and rejection**. My aim is to explain it in context, alluding to the controversies that rise from it, but without discussing them.

A SUMMARY OF ROMANS 9-11:



Today...

Romans 9 - What about Israel?

1. Israel **Covenantal Privileges** 1-5
2. Israel **True Identification** 6-8
3. Israel **Sovereign Election** 9-24
4. Israel **Remnant and Gentile Inclusion** 25-33

I - COVENANTAL PRIVILEGES 1-5

a) Paul's personal remark 1-3

“...³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.”

This declaration sounds hyperbolic and unbelievable.

- Paul prefaced it by invoking God as a witness: “I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit.”
- He said he'd rather go to hell instead of the Jews.
- Only one person could do that, but this shows Paul's big heart!
- Why? Because as a Pharisee he knew of their zeal and sincerity.
- **What a statement against “sincerity” and “efforts” apart from Christ!**

I - COVENANTAL PRIVILEGES 1-5

b) What are those Covenant Privileges?

- They were adopted by God from all peoples **Deuteronomy 7:7-8**
- They had the Glory of God with them - **Shekinah - Exodus 13:21-22**
(a pillar of cloud by day, a column of fire by night)
- They received God's covenant promises
- They received the Law at Sinai
- **Christ** is from their lineage according to the flesh, who is God above all.
- An amazing declaration coming from a Jew.

II – ISRAEL TRUE IDENTIFICATION 6-8

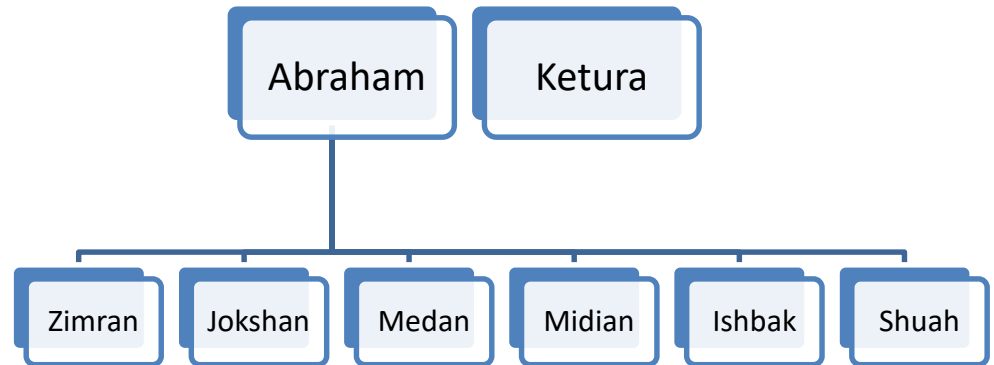
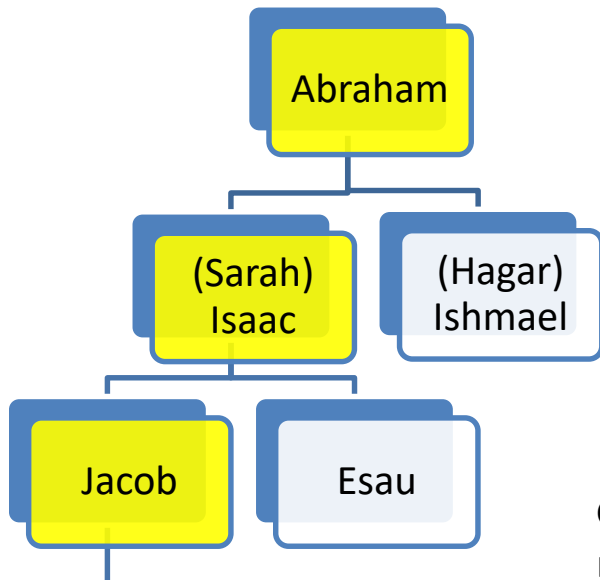
Romans 9:6–8 (NAS): “But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; ⁷nor are they all children because they are Abraham’s descendants, but: “through Isaac your descendants will be named.” ⁸That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants”

a) Paul answers a sincere question:

- Why does Israel appear dispersed, rejected and alienated from God’s redemptive plan? *Has the word of God failed?* What happened to the covenant privileges and promises?
- Paul’s answer extends all the way to chapter 11.
 - ... but it starts with this: “not all who descend from Israel according to the flesh are Israelites”, cf. Romans 2:28-29 “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. ²⁹But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart...”
- At the outset, Paul establishes that not all Israelites are Israel.

II – ISRAEL TRUE IDENTIFICATION 6-8

c) **To prove his point**, Paul goes to Abraham’s lineage (the Jewish pride), but he shows how the Jews are not the only bearers of Abraham’s seed. “*Hey, you have some siblings out of wedlock.*” I’m not unique? That hurts!



Genesis 25:1-8 “Now Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. ²And she bore to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah... ⁵**Now Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac;** ⁶but to the sons of his concubines, Abraham gave gifts while he was still living, and sent them away from his son Isaac eastward, to the land of the east.”

The 12 tribes of Israel

II – ISRAEL TRUE IDENTIFICATION 6-8

- Ishmael and Esau were born first, but they were ***not the firstborn***.
- *A side note to understand **Colossians 1:15** about Jesus being the “firstborn of all creation.” Firstborn is not the first created, but the Principal or Primordial.*
- The point: “it is not the children of the flesh who are regarded children of God, but **those who received the promise** are regarded as descendants.”
- This is key to understand not only Romans 9 to 11, but the whole gist of **Covenantal Theology**.
- The Jews thought *they were superior by race*, they failed to understand their privilege was a covenantal gift of Grace.

II – ISRAEL TRUE IDENTIFICATION 6-8

THEOLOGICAL SIDE NOTE:

- God has one people/one church, His elect and called out from Jews and Gentiles.
- Paul was consistent in this teaching **cf Ephesians 2:18-21**.
 - a) He saw the church as one group (Jesus having broken the dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles)
 - b) That one church was founded upon OT prophets and Apostles, where Jesus was the Chief Cornerstone.
- In Revelation the church is portrayed as a city with 12 gates with the names of the **12 tribes of Israel**.
- The city has a wall founded on 12 stones with the names of the **12 apostles**.
- Get the connection? 12 tribes / 12 apostles / One city

END
Questions?