Romans chap. 9

Israel of the flesh

1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, 2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. 3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: 4 Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; 5 Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. 6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: 7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. 9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son. 10 And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; 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;) 12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. 14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. 15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. 17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. 19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? 22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, 24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? 25 As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. 26 And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God. 27 Esaias also

crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: 28 For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. 29 And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. 30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. 31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; 33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Before we get started on our studies on Israel I must warn my readers that my views on Israel are sometimes harsh and cutting. I am a staunch anti-dispensationalist so you will never hear the Christian zionist rhetoric from me. Having said that I am also fully aware that anti-semitism is wrong and a sin and the Jewish people have suffered horrible atrocities over the centuries. So I want to pray that Jesus would give me tact and wisdom in our discussion of the delicate issue of Israel and her apostasy and estrangement from the Christ. I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: Paul here relays his grief and anguish over his countrymen and their bitter hostility towards his gospel of grace. He was regarded as a traitor to the dearest interests of his people and was beaten, whipped and stoned by them and eventually imprisoned and beheaded by the Romans. It took a combined effort to blot out Paul and his gospel of grace which is very symbolic of the last days when Jerusalem and Rome will again combine forces to blot out the gospel of grace and those who preach it from off the face of the earth.

Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. These verses utterly demolish the dispensational gospel that is so popular today. I often run into dispensationalists who refuse to acknowledge that Gentiles are even part of the new covenant promise that was only for the house of Judah and the house of Israel. Christians who have partaken of the Lord's supper and preached the gospel and shed their blood for 2000 years are just imposters and usurpers to the promise of God according to these modern Arminians. In the book of Acts the

Gentiles received the Holy Spirit just like the Jews so they do fall into the house of Judah or the house of Israel. I present one scenario for a Spiritual Israel in my prophecy studies but another is that converted Jews fall into the house of Judah and converted Gentiles fall into the house of Israel. The house of Judah was higher than the house of Israel indicating that converted Jews are higher than converted Gentiles in God's economy. The church was originally started by ethnic and converted Jews.

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; It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. The great subject of election is here touched upon. We know that God's election is not national because there was a remnant of Israel that was saved from within the main body so the Gentiles as a complex body would never replace Israel as a complex body. If the promise of God was in any way based on a fleshly descent then Ishmael and the children of Keturah (Abraham's 2nd wife) would also have a claim but Isaac was called and Ishmael was rejected. The case of Jacob and Esau is even more telling because they came from the same mother and father of the promise (Isaac). But Jacob was chosen and Esau was rejected who both struggled in and came from the same womb. This is a hard saying for those who depend in any way upon their works for Salvation. God chooses one and rejects the other by the discretion of his Divine will. There is also a principle that is laid down here that we will touch upon later - sheep live by faith while goats live by works.

What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Paul next uses the example of Pharaoh who was used by God to display his power in the earth and then cast aside like a toy that was no longer valued. This subject can be very hard for the carnal minded. Our purpose in the Christian walk is to grow in faith and part of that growing is learning that God is the potter and we are the clay. True repentance for sin is being able to confess like John the Baptist - He must increase, but I must decrease John 3:30. God has a purpose for his sheep and he also has a purpose for the goats. The purpose of the sheep is to receive the promise and be fitted for heaven while the purpose of the goat is to refine the character of the sheep. Sheep are by nature very trusting and easily deceived so God exposes them to the goat so they will become wise to its craftiness. One of the most famous goats of all time was Judas Iscariot who was handpicked by Jesus himself and part of the original twelve disciples. This shows that goats can rise very high in the kingdom of God but they eventually reveal themselves and are cast aside. The other eleven disciples loved

Jesus above all things while Judas loved money above all things. Here again we see that sheep live by faith and love while goats live by money and works.

I feel it is important to share some of my experiences with Calvinists who often present themselves as the elect of God and see everyone else as non-elect or reprobates. This has to be one of the most unchristlike and unloving presentations of the gospel I have ever come across. Calvinists have such a narrow view of predestination that they reject everything else the bible has to say most notably the writings of John. John spoke of Christ as being the savior of the world more than any of the disciples and his understanding was most definitely that of the whole world with everyone in it. Calvinists will write ten pages of treatise to get around 1John 2:2 when the meaning couldn't be any clearer even to the babe in Christ. Jesus had a saying for hypocrisy like this - let your yea by yea and your nay, nay: because everything else cometh from the evil one.

It is very difficult to reconcile an atonement that is finished and complete for the whole world with an election according to grace. But the sacrifice of Christ was exceedingly abundant above all that we could ask or think and is the true expression of self-sacrificing love. He died for the sheep and the goats. He died for the elect and the non-elect. He died for the reprobates to the Calvinist's dismay. The most important thing to understand about predestination is that only God knows who the elect truly are not the holier than thou Calvinist. So down here on planet earth on the battlefields of sin our job is to take the gospel to every living creature under the sun without discrimination. We need to have the mentality of the Marine who just kills 'em all and lets God sort 'em out. The only difference is that our weapon of choice is the word of God which is sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart - Heb. 4:12.