

God's Will and Man's Freedom

Dr. William E. Bell

Scripture Basic: Romans 9:1-10:13

Focal: Romans 9:14-15, 19-24, 30-32, 10:12-13

Outline:

II. What God Has Done for Man: Justification by Faith (1:18-11:36)

A. What It Is (1:18-5:21)

B. How It Affects Conduct (6:1-8:39)

C. Why Most of Israel Has Rejected It (9:1-11:36)

1. Introduction: Paul's sorrow because of Jews' rejection of Christ (9:1-5)

2. Israel's situation viewed in the light of the attributes of God (9:6-29)

a. His veracity: God's promises are not abrogated (9:6-13)

(1) Rejection of the notion of the supposed failure of God's
promises to Israel (9:6a)

(2) The fulfillment of the promises seen in the proper
understanding of "Israel" (9:6b-13)

(a) Not all Israel is Israel (9:6b)

(b) The children of promise have always been only
a portion of the total children (9:7-13)

b. His justice: Sovereignty is not unjust (9:14-29)

(1) Rejection of the supposition that God is unjust (9:14)

(2) Reasons for rejecting the charge of injustice (9:15-29)

(a) The Old Testament supports God's right to sovereign choice (9:15-18)

(b) Finite man is in no position to criticize an infinite God (9:19-21)

(c) The beneficence of God's actions shows only mercy - not injustice (9:22-29)

3. Israel's situation viewed in the light of human responsibility (9:30-10:21)

a. Israel itself is to blame for its rejection by God (9:30-10:13)

(1) They sought righteousness - but not according to God's method (9:30-33)

(2) Reiteration of Paul's great desire for Israel's salvation (10:1-2)

(3) They refused to give up their own method - the Law (10:3-13)

Applications:

1. God's ultimate blessings have always related to those who would trust Him. Ethnic, national and "religious" considerations are not the criteria. We should be careful that we do not misunderstand and overemphasize them.

2. The "Israel of God" (Galatians 6:16) was ultimately intended to include all believers - Jew or Gentile. A sovereign God has every right to bless whom He will.

3. National Israel's lost condition is typical of every unbeliever's lost condition: it stems from an attempt to be saved by works rather than by grace.

4. Paul was so burdened for Israel's salvation that he would have forfeited his own if that could have saved them. Do we have that kind of concern for the lost today?