Preach the Gospel daily; use words, if necessary.
St. Francis of Assisi

ROMANS CHAPTER NINE
Prayer Study # 449
First Love Ministries, Inc., of Perry, Georgia USA

Chapters 9, 10, and 11 deal with the "Jewish" problem. Paul is dealing with the problem of the omniscient God choosing the Israel and the Jews as His chosen people and placing Israel in a unique place in God's purposes, especially as relates to the Last Days, even knowing that the Jews would reject and crucify His Son. These chapters were not written in anger but were written by Paul in heartbreak for his fellow Jews who had missed the coming of the Messiah.

Romans 9 Amplified Bible (AMP)

Two Israel's: Nature and Spiritual Israel

9 *I am speaking the truth in Christ. I am not lying; my conscience [enlightened and prompted] by the Holy Spirit bearing witness with me*
2 *That I have bitter grief and incessant anguish in my heart.*
3 *For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off and banished from Christ for the sake of my brethren and instead of them, my natural kinsmen and my fellow countrymen.*
4 *For they are Israelites, and to them belong God's adoption [as a nation] and the glorious Presence (Shekinah). With them were the special covenants made, to them was the Law given. To them [the temple] worship was revealed and [God's own] promises announced.*
5 *To them belong the patriarchs, and as far as His natural descent was concerned, from them is the Christ, Who is exalted and supreme over all, God, blessed forever! Amen (so let it be).*
6 *However, it is not as though God's Word had failed [coming to nothing]. For it is not everybody who is a descendant of Jacob (Israel) who belongs to [the true] Israel.*
7 *And they are not all the children of Abraham because they are by blood his descendants. No, [the promise was] Your descendants will be called and counted through the line of Isaac [though Abraham had an older son].*
8 *That is to say, it is not the children of the body [of Abraham] who are made God's children, but it is the offspring to whom the promise applies that shall be counted [as Abraham's true] descendants.*
9 *For this is what the promise said, About this time [next year] will I return and Sarah shall have a son.*
10 *And not only that, but this too: Rebecca conceived [two sons under exactly the same circumstances] by our forefather Isaac,*

11 *And the children were yet unborn and had so far done nothing either good or evil. Even so, in order further to carry out God's purpose of selection (election, choice), which depends not on works or what men can do, but on Him Who calls [them],*
12 *It was said to her that the elder [son] should serve the younger [son].*
13 *As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated (held in relative disregard in comparison with My feeling for Jacob).*

This first verse is full of meaning. *In Christ* is one of Paul's favorite expressions (Galatians 2:4, 2:16; 3:17; 1st Corinthians 1:2; 2nd Corinthians 1:21; Galatians 1:22; 1st Timothy 2:7). Paul can say he is speaking *truth* because he is *in Christ* and because his conscience and the Holy Spirit are in agreement and proper alignment. The spirit-led believer, walking in the Spirit, is always in the alignment of the Spirit controlling the Soul which is then controlling the Body. Paul had a clear conscience before God and man, but the conscience is not always infallible and can be seared, whereby the soul does not feel or consider the conscience, and can be defiled, whereby the conscience is no longer able to detect right and wrong. We know this is true because the more we sin in a particular area, the more we are less sorrowful for that sin. This, therefore, is giving us a pattern of walking in the Spirit. We follow the inner witness of the Holy Spirit, which works through our conscience, and never violates the Word of God.

Verses 2-5 show the deep love and compassion and grief and sorrow that Paul has. As a Jew himself, he is a brother to them in the flesh. He is saying that he would gladly give his own life and even be accursed or would accept banishment from God, if it would save the Jewish people. This a powerful statement from Paul because the dearest thing in all his life was the fact, as we read in Chapter 8, that nothing could separate him from the love of God. Paul was walking in love and giving us a pattern here. We must love the sinner before we try to save him.

Paul recalls in verses 4 and 5 the privileges the Jews were given in God's plan. They were children of God, specifically chosen and adopted into the family of God (Deuteronomy 14:1). They had the glory or *shekinah,* which was the divine light which descended when God was visiting His people. They had the covenants or unchangeable agreements that God entered into and promised to His people. The four main covenants were with Noah after the flood with the sign being the rainbow (This covenant promised that the world would never be destroyed by a flood); with Abraham that he would be a father of many nations with the sign being circumcision; with Moses and the Jewish people, with the sign being the law, that they would possess the promised land; and the New Covenant in Jesus Christ. The sign of the New Covenant is the blood of Jesus. The promise of the New Covenant is that we can have a new and intimate relationship with God. The fullness of the New Covenant will be at the Second Coming.

These verses point out other privileges God had given the Jew. They were given the law and thus could never plead ignorance of God's will. They had the worship of the

Temple so that they were able to have a special approach to God. They had the promises of God. They had the ancestors, tradition, and history. They had the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and yet they rejected Him.

In verses 6-13 Paul is letting the Jews know that not all Jews rejected Christ. Indeed, many Jews had embraced Jesus. In these verses he is saying that there are Jews who are Israel in the flesh and there are Jews who are Israel in the Spirit. The latter are the true Jews. Then also there is the child of promise and the child of the flesh, Isaac, and Ishmael. In addition to Ishmael, there were other children who were born of Abraham but were not in God's sight counted as the spiritual seed of Abraham. None were true Israelites unless they could trace their ancestral line back to Isaac. In fact, after Sarah died, Abraham, believe it or not, married again. His second wife was Keturah, and together they had at least 6 sons (Genesis 25:1-6).

14 *What shall we conclude then? Is there injustice upon God's part? Certainly not!*
15 *For He says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion (pity) on whom I will have compassion.*
16 *So then [God's gift] is not a question of human will and human effort, but of God's mercy. [It depends not on one's own willingness nor on his strenuous exertion as in running a race, but on God's having mercy on him.]*
17 *For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, I have raised you up for this very purpose of displaying My power in [dealing with] you, so that My name may be proclaimed the whole world over.*
18 *So then He has mercy on whomever He wills (chooses) and He hardens (makes stubborn and unyielding the heart of) whomever He wills.*

Basically, Paul is saying in this passage that God is God and could do anything He wants. (Actually, God cannot do anything. For example, He cannot do anything contrary to His nature, such as lying or being unrighteous. But Paul's point, nevertheless, is well-taken.)

Isaac is a Christ figure in the Old Testament.

Verses 15-18 concern God. God was angry with Israel and would have destroyed the nation had it not been for the intercession of Moses (Exodus 33:16-19). He extends mercy to whom He will. He judges men by their faith, not by
their works.

19 *You will say to me, Why then does He still find fault and blame us [for sinning]? For who can resist and withstand His will?*
20 *But who are you, a mere man, to criticize and contradict and answer back to God? Will what is formed say to him that formed it, Why have you made me thus?*
21 *Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same mass (lump) one vessel*

for beauty and distinction and honorable use, and another for menial or ignoble and dishonorable use?
22 *What if God, although fully intending to show [the awfulness of] His wrath and to make known His power and authority, has tolerated with much patience the vessels (objects) of [His] anger which are ripe for destruction?*
23 *And [what if] He thus purposes to make known and show the wealth of His glory in [dealing with] the vessels (objects) of His mercy which He has prepared beforehand for glory,*
24 *Even including ourselves whom He has called, not only from among the Jews but also from among the Gentiles (heathen)?*
25 *Just as He says in Hosea, Those who were not My people I will call My people, and her who was not beloved [I will call] My beloved.*
26 *And it shall be that in the very place where it was said to them, You are not My people, they shall be called sons of the living God.*
27 *And Isaiah calls out (solemnly cries aloud) over Israel: Though the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea, only the remnant (a small part of them) will be saved [from perdition, condemnation, judgment]!*
28 *For the Lord will execute His sentence upon the earth [He will conclude and close His account with men completely and without delay], rigorously cutting it short in His justice.*
29 *It is as Isaiah predicted, If the Lord of hosts had not left us a seed [from which to propagate descendants], we [Israel] would have fared like Sodom and have been made like Gomorrah.*

There are two Greek words for *will: thelo,* which means *wish* or *desire* and *boulomai,* which means *resolve, counsel, deliberate determination.* In verse 18, the word *thelo* is used twice. In verse 19, the word *boulomai* is used. So, who can resist the deliberate determination of God to do what He wills?

Paul rebukes the Jews in this passage for answering for and daring to dispute with God. He introduces the potter and clay analogy. Of course, the potter is the creator, and the clay is the created thing. This is a great analogy, but we must remind ourselves that our faithful Father does not treat us as a lump of clay, but he treats us as a loving father treats His children.

Just as God chose Isaac, Jacob, and Israel (the nation) and made them vessels of honor and mercy, He could choose believing Jews and believing Gentiles to be the same. And as He chose Ishmael, Esau, and Pharoah to be vessels of dishonor and wrath, so He could choose unbelieving Jews and unbelieving Gentiles to also be vessels of dishonor and wrath.

Verses 25 and 26 come from the book of Hosea, verses 2:23 and 1:10. Hosea represent Jehovah God. His wife Gomer represents Israel. Hosea's second child was

named “Loruhamah,” which means “I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel.” His third child, a son, was named “Lo-ammi,” which means “for ye are not My people and I will not be your God.” These “sign” children signified the rejection and setting aside of the house of Israel by the Lord God. Hosea’s prophecy tells of a time when the very people who were not God’s people would become the sons of the living God. Paul uses these verses to show that both the Gentiles, who were not God’s people, and even the Jews who were rejected because of their rejection of Christ, would become God’s people by the new birth under the New Covenant by the mercy of God extended to both the Jews who had been cast off and the Gentiles who had previously not been the people of God. All of this was beginning to take place in Paul’s time.

In the final verses of this passage Paul quotes from Isaiah, one of the nation’s own Hebrew prophets. Isaiah foretells of Israel’s rejection, casting off, and subsequent restoration through the New Covenant. Isaiah uses the word *remnant* where Paul uses the word *seed.* Like He did to Sodom and Gomorrah, God would have done to Israel if there had not been a godly seed or faithful remnant.

30 *What shall we say then? That Gentiles who did not follow after righteousness [who did not seek salvation by right relationship to God] have attained it by faith [a righteousness imputed by God, based on and produced by faith],*
31 *Whereas Israel, though ever in pursuit of a law [for the securing] of righteousness (right standing with God), actually did not succeed in fulfilling the Law.*
32 *For what reason? Because [they pursued it] not through faith, relying [instead] on the merit of their works [they did not depend on faith but on what they could do]. They have stumbled over the Stumbling Stone.*
33 *As it is written, Behold I am laying in Zion a Stone that will make men stumble, a Rock that will make them fall; but he who believes in Him [who adheres to, trusts in, and relies on Him] shall not be put to shame nor be disappointed in his expectations.*

Verses 30-32 summarize the whole problem. The Gentiles had obtained righteousness by faith. The Jews were trying to obtain righteousness by keeping the law and by works. The Jews did not understand that they could not keep the law in their own strength, and they did not understand that the mercy of God was extended to not only the Jew but also to the believing Gentile. The Jews insisted that the Gentiles come by way of Judaism, whereas God insists that both Gentiles and Jews come through Christ Jesus.

Sion or Mt. Zion foreshadows the New Jerusalem, the city of the living God (Hebrews 12:22-24, Psalm 87). The stumbling block or rock of offense for the Jew was faith in Jesus Christ. However, the same stone that was a stumbling stone to the Jew was a steppingstone to the Gentile. Yet *he who believes in Him* applies to both Jew and Gentile.

When We All Get to Heaven
Eliza Hewit
1898

Sing the wondrous love of Jesus
Sing His mercy and His grace
In the mansions bright and blessed
He'll prepare for us a place

When we all get to heaven
What a day of rejoicing that will be
When we all see Jesus
We'll sing and shout for victory!!!

While we walk the pilgrim pathway
Clouds will over spread the sky
But when traveling days are over
Not a shadow, not a sigh

When we all get to heaven
What a day of rejoicing that will be
When we all see Jesus
We'll sing and shout for victory!!!

Let us then be true and faithful
Trusting, serving everyday
Just one glimpse of Him in glory
Will the toils of life repay

When we all get to heaven
What a day of rejoicing that will be
When we all see Jesus
We'll sing and shout for victory!!!

Onward to the prize before us
Soon His beauty we'll behold!
Soon the pearly gates will open
We shall tread the streets of gold

When we all get to heaven
What a day of rejoicing that will be
When we all see Jesus
We'll sing and shout for victory!!!