

God's promises never fail – Romans 9

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning, everyone, to welcome you here in the name of our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

This morning I just thought I'd quickly touch on the announcements, the baptism classes as well as the leadership classes. So my apologies, the baptism classes didn't get into the bulletin last week already.

The first class will be starting this coming Saturday. We'll be trying for 2 o'clock this coming Saturday, and so if there's anyone interested here in attending those classes, please come out.

And then for the following Saturday on the 26th, the leadership class is starting. There is a conflict there with the timing and so on with the baptism classes, but we will sort things out with the baptism class on when a good time is for those that do show up to have those classes so the day and the time and so on could change, and that'll free things up, make it work for the leadership classes.

So for the leadership classes, we'll be going through the same books, the biblical eldership books that we went through a couple of years ago.

[1 : 2 6] Very good in-depth teaching on leadership. And I'd like to encourage all men to try to come out.

Absolutely a commitment. Doing it two Saturdays a month. Taking the afternoon and doing that for some of us. I know we're working. But I think if you talk to anyone that attended those classes there a couple of years ago, it's well worth it.

It is valuable teaching, valuable information for not only for church leadership, but leadership in the home, at work, and so on.

There's all areas of our life where leadership is needed. It affects that. So I'd like to encourage all men to try to come out for those classes.

All right, so we're still moving through the book of Romans, looking into chapter 9 today.

[2 : 3 2] And so we're going into a little bit of a history lesson here this morning. So I hope you guys do enjoy history. We're looking at Israel.

So, Paul looks to the Israelites here in chapter 9. So as we've worked our way through Romans to this point, Paul has been warning them already that they're just as guilty as the Gentiles are.

And they're being descendants of Abraham, having the law and so on. Those things in no way save them. And now there's a promise from God that causes him to realize the seriousness.

And so he's addressing this. Israel has rejected Christ.

They rejected Jesus. And so now, what of God's promise to them, to the Israelites? So the two things that I want to look at today in this passage, looking through verses 1 through 13 here.

[3 : 49] I've titled today's message as God's Promises Never Fail. So, thank you, Willie, for reading that text for us. So, to start things off, I want to back up and look back into chapter 8, into a portion that Pastor Peter looked at last Sunday already.

It just kind of brings into perspective what he's bringing out into chapter 9 here. So, I'm just going to read through chapter 8, verse 35, to the end of the chapter there.

I'll reread that. It says, It says, So, So, just imagine Paul writing this portion of Scripture.

He begins by asking the question, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? As these words cross his mind, as he's writing this, and words are given to him as he continues on, there's an excitement that builds up inside of him, as he lifts off these things.

He's getting excited, and a joy fills him. We are more than conquerors, and nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God.

[5 : 47] Wow, isn't this great? You feel the excitement that Paul has. These are types of verses that an evangelist might use to motivate and to build up.

But, something happens as the final words of chapter 8 are written, which is, In Christ Jesus our Lord.

Then I'll bring in verses 1 and 2 of chapter 9. I tell the truth in Christ. I am not lying. My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and continual grief.

So, as we imagine Paul writing, we see here, we see his shoulders slump, and his head hang down. Maybe even the tears start falling.

Why is this? We've seen in chapter 8, he was building and building, and just as he reaches the top of the mountain, these final words in chapter 8, they send him crashing down into a valley.

[6 : 54] The excitement, the joy he was feeling, it's gone. Why is that? Isn't this great news? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

There's nothing that can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is great news. It's the best of news. Why this sudden change in Paul?

Why is there such joy? And then this sadness. Why does such a great truth as this bring him sadness? What is it in this news that he's bringing to them that changes his joy to great sorrow and continual grief?

find the answer in the following verses, verses 3 to 5. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the services of God, and the promises, of whom are the fathers, and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God.

Amen. So here we see the source of Paul's sorrow. He wishes that he could be accursed from Christ for his brethren, his countrymen.

[8 : 35] He's talking about the Israelites. So what is it about the Israelites that burdened Paul and made him wish that he could be accursed for them, rejected of Christ and not them?

The reason was that the Israelites had rejected Christ, the very same Christ that it talks about in the end of chapter 8, where nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Wherein is the love of God toward us? It's in Christ Jesus our Lord. And Israel had rejected him. They had denied him as being the Savior, and they'd even crucified him.

Therefore, the Israelites are the ones who are accursed, not all. There's those among them who did believe. But the majority of the Israelites had rejected Christ.

And this is where Paul's burden lay. So many of his people, his relatives, because of their unbelief.

[9 : 55] Let's turn to John chapter 3 and read verses 16 through 18. Very familiar portion of Scripture.

Scripture. John 3 verses 16 through 18.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

He who believes in him is not condemned, but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. So we read in verse 16 here, God's love to us is shown through his Son.

It's the same thing we heard in the last verse in chapter 8 of Romans. And then in verse 18, it's the reason for Paul's sorrow.

[11 : 12] He who does not believe is condemned already. And Israel did not believe. The Old Testaments had prophesied of his coming. The angels have given the shepherds a message regarding who this baby was, baby Jesus, that he was the Savior.

And the shepherds made it widely known. They spread the word. John the Baptist, he bore witness of Christ. The disciples, they were sent out on these small missionary journeys.

For three years, Jesus walked about teaching great multitudes. He performed many miracles. Yet Israel refused to believe.

And they were condemned because of it. What a burden that Paul carried. Whom he knew they were condemned.

Let's turn back to our text. Back in Romans chapter 9, looking at verse 4, it says, Who are Israelites?

[12 : 33] So who are the Israelites? They're the object of Paul's sorrow and grief. Notice that he calls them Israelites.

He doesn't call them Jews. If he had put in Jews, it would be kind of more of a sense in political terms, just as a country.

He calls them Israelites. So what comes to mind when we hear the name Israelites? We've read about them, right?

The Israelites. If we read through the Old Testament, there's a lot said about the Israelites there. They're a great nation under God.

And that's exactly what Paul goes on to describe in verses 4 and 5. to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises, of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God.

[13 : 48] So he gives a list and I figured I'd take a moment to look at each one of the things that Paul lists here. the things that pertain to the Israelites or belong to them would be another word we could use.

So first of all, the adoption. God chose Israel to be his chosen people. In Exodus 4, chapter 22, Paul, or not Paul, God tells Moses to, as he's heading back towards Egypt, to go to Pharaoh and when he stands before Pharaoh, he tells him to say to Pharaoh, Israel is my son, my firstborn.

So to bring that recognition to the world that God has chosen Israel as a son, the adoption. Next, there's the glory.

So this is referring to, during the Exodus, the glory of the Lord that went before, before the Israelites. Went before them as a cloud during the day and as a pillar of fire at night.

Later, when the tabernacle was built and they put the Ark of the Covenant with the mercy seat on it, they put that into the tabernacle. The Lord came over over the Ark and he hovered over it.

[15 : 24] He dwelt over the mercy seat that was on top of the Ark of the Covenant. So, speaking of the glory that belonged to Israel. Next, there's the covenants.

So God, he made a covenant with Abraham back in Genesis chapter 15 and a covenant that was often renewed through his descendants further down the line in Israel.

The covenant was often renewed with different men. And then he lists the giving of the law which in Exodus 20 we have the Ten Commandments and it follows with a long list of ordinances and so on.

And another thing that belonged to them, pertained to them was the service of God. And so, these were the ordinances of God's worship among the Israelites.

So, things like the temple, the altar, the priests, sacrifices, the feasts and so on. All these things were part of the service of God.

[16 : 39] It had been given to the Israelites. Then there's the promises. So, the many promises from God. There was a promise to Abraham in Genesis 12 and there's a promise in the commandments, in the Ten Commandments, in the Fifth Commandment that if you honour your father and mother, you are to honour your father and mother that your days may be long upon the land which I have given you, which the Lord your God has given you.

another example, another promise is the promise of the Messiah. It was given to the Israelites. And then he says, of whom are the fathers?

So, speaking of the Israelites' forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. These three men that the Israelites held in very high esteem.

And he ends off with, and from whom? According to the flesh. Christ came. Christ, he came through the lineage of Abraham.

Christ, the greatest belonging that the Israelites had, that they could have, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Such a great nation, Israel.

[18 : 03] Such a great heritage. God chose them, of all nations on earth, to be his people. Time and again, throughout all scripture, we can read how they turned away from him.

So because, because of all of this, all sorrows, and he carries, carries a huge burden for his own people, his fellow countrymen, because they have rejected Christ, therefore they are accursed.

Does this portion, does this portion of scripture speak to us today? Can we relate to Paul? Do we too share his burden?

Maybe there's those around us who do not believe in Christ, who reject him. Maybe it's countrymen, our co-workers we rub shoulders with, maybe the neighbor living beside us, maybe it's closer to home, maybe it's brothers and sisters, parents, children.

We share Paul's burden. If we look at our nation today, where are we at? Where is Canada at? Are we a nation that honors God?

[19 : 33] Not at all. At every turn, decisions are made that go directly against God's standards. Abortions are okay. Drugs, we may as well make them legal.

The moral lifestyle, they're even encouraged. The Lord's prayer, the Bible, they've been taken out of our schools. All around us, we hear the Lord's name being taken in vain.

God is mocked. Do we see the fear of God anywhere in our nation? Hardly. As a nation, our land is spiritually dead.

Do we have a burden for our land? for the people of Canada? What about closer to home? Family?

Are there loved ones around us not living for the Lord? Does their rejection of Christ cause us great sorrow and grief? It does, doesn't it?

[20 : 45] Their rebellion, their sinful lifestyles, cause us great pain. Or maybe they're stuck in religion, in a works program, and they refuse to hear about salvation through faith.

it burdens us. We don't want anyone we know and love to miss out on heaven. You know, we were just talking about this the other day.

I hear much preaching on hell these days. things. The truth is, though, there's only two destinations when our time on earth is done.

It's either heaven or hell. As sad as it is, the reality is that anyone who rejects Christ, including those in our family, will not be spending eternity in heaven.

There's only one way to heaven, and that's through Jesus Christ. So Paul has a great burden for his countrymen, the Israelites, and I think we can all feel along with him.

[21 : 58] We can feel what he's going through. In Paul's case, it seems it's magnified because his sorrow is in relation to the Israelites.

It's incredibly blessed people. God had chosen them as his people. He delivered them from Egypt. He protected them. He fought for them, given them a land of their own.

And we've seen the list here in verses 4 and 5 in our text. So many rich blessings, yet time and again they've turned away from God and they needed punishment.

And as we read in the Old Testament time and again, God would hear their cries during their punishment and even have mercy on them and deliver them.

So you'd think through all their suffering, through all the punishment, you'd think with time they would learn. And yet, God sent his only son to be their savior.

[23 : 04] Israel took it to the next level and they killed him. So what about God's purpose for Israel?

Has his plan come apart at their rejection of his son? Did God make a mistake in choosing the Israelites as his people? Maybe sum that all up in one question.

Does God make mistakes? Not so. Let's read verses 6. But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect.

For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham. But in Isaac your seed shall be called. So despite his sorrow over the Israelites, Paul doesn't lay the blame at God's feet.

It is not that the word of God has taken no effect. God's word, his purpose, or his promise, and his purpose, has not failed.

[24 : 23] It is not God's doing, it is man's doing. Israelites were not accursed because God's plan backfired and they just happened to be the victims.

They were accursed because they chose to reject Christ rather than to accept him. God was never at fault here. We know God to be all-knowing and in his foreknowledge he knew what would happen.

He knew exactly what the Israelites did. If he knew all this beforehand, why did he then go ahead with his promise, right? His purpose does not fail.

He sees it through. Let's turn to Isaiah chapter 55. Isaiah 55, I'll read verses 10 and 11.

Isaiah 55, 10 and 11. For as the rain comes down and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth.

[26 : 02] It shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it. It speaks to God's purpose, his word, it goes forth.

It does not return to him void. It accomplishes what God please. Back to our text.

So what about God's promise to Abraham, though? In Genesis 12, didn't he promise to be the God of Abraham and the God of his seed to make them a great nation, to bless them, to make their name great, and yet now they're accursed?

What of that promise? Did Israel understand that promise? Do we understand that promise? Paul goes on and he explains this promise.

they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham. Not all of Abraham's seed according to the flesh were part of this promise.

[27 : 32] It's clarified in the last part of verse 7, but in Isaac your seed shall be called. And that is a quote coming out of Genesis chapter 21 verse 12.

So in this quote in Genesis 12, it is God's response to Abraham. When Abraham is displeased, Sarah has just come to him.

she is upset at Hagar and Ishmael and she wants Abraham to send Hagar, the maidservant and Ishmael, his firstborn son.

She wants Abraham to send them away. And Abraham is displeased. This was God's response to Abraham to go ahead and to send them away.

his promise is not through Ishmael. But in Isaac your seed shall be called.

[28 : 38] So the promise that had been to Abraham, it was to come through Isaac, not through Ishmael. God's promises do not fail.

Let's read on in verses 8 and 9 of our text. That is, those who are the children of the flesh are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.

For this is the word of promise, at this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son. Now Israel, they've boasted in their blood lines.

They were of the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. To them God had given the law. And in their mind all this was part of what made them the children of promise.

In fact, you could venture to say that Israel had made these things of the flesh, the blood lines, the laws, and made them idols before them.

[29 : 45] These things were not their saving grace. These things came through the flesh. God's not interested in the things of the flesh though.

Yes, there are the works that we do. God is well pleased with them. But they are the fruit, the evidence that's taken place. These works are not what saves us.

God wants to see fruit in us, and yet the only way he sees this fruit is through the root, through the foundation, the cornerstone. Does the fruit that we produce, does it come through the flesh, or does it come through our faith in Christ?

Looking back to Israel, God, he shoots down their boasting in the flesh. Essentially, he's telling them, being descendants of Abraham does not make you my children.

You need to take a better look at the promise, I gave to Abraham. And he goes on to remind them of the promise. In verse 9, for this is the word of promise, at this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son.

[31 : 10] God made a promise, and his promises are special. They will not fail. He sees them through. didn't matter that Sarah was beyond childbearing age.

God had promised she would have a son, and he kept his promise. He didn't need Abraham and Sarah to be young in their childbearing years to accomplish his promise.

promise. God's promises come about in his time, when and where he wills. His promises do not fail.

So we've already talked about two of the patriarchs, about Abraham and his son Isaac. So let's bring in the third one.

Paul brings in the third one as well, Jacob. God leaves Israel without a leg to stand on. The last few verses in our text.

[32 : 12] And not only this, but when Rebekah also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac, for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of the works of him, but of him who calls.

It was said to her, the older shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob I have loved, and Esau I have hated. God's promise, it's working its way down the line through Israel.

It's going forward, his word is going forward. First through Abraham, now it is through his promised son, Isaac. God gives a promise to Rebekah, to Isaac's wife.

The older shall serve the younger. Let's turn to Genesis chapter 25, and let's read the promise there.

Genesis 25, verses 21-23. Genesis 25, 21-23.

[33 : 31] Now Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife, because she was barren, and the Lord granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived. But the children struggled together within her, and she said, If all is well, why am I like this?

So she went to inquire of the Lord, and the Lord said to her, Two nations are in your womb, two peoples shall be separated from your body. One people shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger.

So here, as with Sarah, God works through a barren woman. Is there anything that God cannot do?

So we see Rebekah conceives, but not everything feels well, and so she inquires of the Lord. God, what's happening? And God gives her the answer.

There's two nations in your womb. The one people group will be stronger than the other. The older will serve the younger. Rebekah, you're going to have twins.

[34 : 42] Normally, the firstborn child, the firstborn son, would receive the birthright, and the younger one, the younger children, would serve him. Rebekah, it's not going to be this way with your boys.

So, let's turn back to our text. It's a little bit of a different scenario now. Abraham had been two sons through two different mothers.

Here in Jacob's case, with I, Rebekah, it's two sons of the same mother. father. But, still the same scenario was with Abraham and Sarah.

God chose one son to further his promise, and not the one that tradition would have set forth. Normally, it was the firstborn, would be the one who would receive the birthright, and the greatest blessing.

God didn't go that route. It's interesting that Israel put so much weight on who their forefathers were, when according to tradition, maybe they shouldn't even have been in the position they were.

[36 : 05] they had elder brothers, especially in the cases of Isaac and Jacob. Did a little bit of research on Abraham, and there's those that believe that maybe he wasn't the firstborn either, but not sure on that one.

But, in the case of Isaac and Jacob, both of them had an older brother. Would have received the birthright and the blessing. God does things according to his will, though.

not the ways and traditions of man. His purpose was to be fulfilled through Sarah's son, Isaac, and through Rebecca's younger son, Jacob, not the elder Esau.

And in both cases, as it always is, even today, it is through God's purpose that his will is accomplished, not through the works of man. The promise was to come through Isaac and not through anything that he had done because God chose him to carry forward his promise before he was even born.

And the same thing goes for Jacob. The promise that Esau would serve Jacob had nothing to do with anything that Jacob did because he wasn't even born when that promise was made.

[37 : 36] So in both cases, before both of these boys were born, before they even had a chance to do good or evil, to do any kind of a good work that would make God put his favor upon them, God chose them for his purpose before they had a chance to do any good or evil.

That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him who calls. God's plans, they go forward through his election, through his calling, not our works, through his choice, and not our doing.

And then in verse 13, it says, as it is written, Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated. This love and hate, just to clarify that, it is not based on emotions.

It was simply that Jacob had been the one chosen over Esau to bring forward God's promise. promise. So looking back through our text this morning, we saw the promise from God in the final verses of chapter 8, that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It's a wonderful, wonderful promise. promise. And in Paul's day, this promise gave him a burden. His countrymen, the Israelites, had rejected Christ Jesus through whom God's love was extended.

[39 : 30] Those who rejected Christ were accursed. This caused Paul great sorrow and grief. Today we share Paul's burden.

We have loved ones around us who reject Christ as well. We pray for them, we plead with them. Still it seems hopeless, they're not changing their ways.

Do not give up hope. All is not lost. God has a plan, a purpose. He is at work. His word will go forward.

He is changing lives. His purpose will stand. God's promises never fail. We may break our promises but not so with our creator.

God keeps his promises. They won't fail. God has given us another wonderful promise. We find that one in the second half of Hebrews chapter 13 verse 5.

[40 : 35] It reads this way, For he himself has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. this promise too was a promise that in the Old Testament, he gave this promise that he would never leave him or forsake him.

He gave that promise to Jacob. He gave it to Moses and to Joshua and to the Israelites. And now he's given that promise to us as well.

So just remember, God keeps his promises. They will not fail. Let's pray. Lord God, we thank you that you are true to your word.

We thank you that your promises do not fail. And we need only look through scripture and read the accounts of your promises being fulfilled.

We thank you for your promises to us. And nothing shall separate us from your love which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. And as well the promise that you will never leave us nor forsake us.

[41 : 48] May we rest assured in these promises you promised to us. We pray for those who to this point refuse to surrender to you, to give in to your calling.

God, we ask that you would soften their hearts. Soften their hearts today and draw them near. Hear our prayers for them.

That they too may enter into your rest and to be secure in your promises. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.