



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Chapter 9

Bishop Youssef



Introduction

- After St. Paul has finished his explanation of justification in Christ, and lest some of the readers may get the impression that God has rejected Israel, St. Paul in chapters 9-11 explains that God has not rejected His people
- St. Paul first expresses his own concern for his fellow Israelites (1-5)



Introduction

- Then St. Paul elaborates on who the true children of God are (6-29)
- The children of God are children of promise not children of flesh
- They are the object of God's Mercy
- They are from both the Jews and gentiles
- Then he explains that the basis for God's choice is "faith" (30-33)

Israel's Rejection of Christ (9:1-5)



- He speaks as in the presence of Christ, with a conscience enlightened by the Holy Spirit
- This grief is not because of his suffering at their hands but because they were without Christ
- St. Paul loved his brethren so completely that he would even be willing to be cut off from Christ for their sake
- They have received six blessings

Israel's Rejection of Christ (9:1-5)



- The chosen people, the ark of the covenant, which was a token of God's presence
- The tables of the covenant, the judicial law, the ceremonial law, and the promises which were made to Abraham
- Also they have two important privileges: the fathers and Christ
- Verse 5 is a very manifest testimony of the Godhead and divinity of Christ

Israel's Rejection and God's Purpose (9:6-13)



- Has the word of God taken no effect?
- No, because they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.
- The first proof is taken from the example of Abraham
- Isaac only was considered the son
- The children of God are not the mere fleshly descendants of Abraham (Ishmael), but the children of the promise (Isaac)

Israel's Rejection and God's Purpose (9:6-13)



- Isaac was born by the power of the promise, so the chosen seed are children of promise
- Another strong proof taken from the example of Esau and Jacob
- Both were Isaac's seed according to the flesh; the promised seed, and both equally without works, neither having done good nor evil
- God's election is based not on our works but on His promise and calling

Israel's Rejection and God's Purpose (9:6-13)



- Note that this election was not to eternal salvation, but to become the head of a people
- When it comes to salvation, the calling is for all
- Esau never served Jacob, but the Edomites served the Israelites
- The election here is that of a race
- The servitude of Esau was associated with the hatred of God, and the lordship of Jacob with the love of God (Mal 1: 2, 3)

Israel's Rejection and God's Justice (9:14-29)



- If God loves or hates without any consideration of worthiness or unworthiness, then is he unjust
- This is in answer to a request of Moses for a high privilege (Ex 33:19)
- The Lord grants it, not because he deserves it, but because of grace
- When God is gracious, it is not because a human will or work puts Him under obligation, and forces Him to give

Israel's Rejection and God's Justice (9:14-29)



- The gift is of Him, due to His Mercy, which He has the right to bestow where He wills
- The scripture says to Pharaoh (Exo 9:16)
- It is not said that God raised him up to destroy him
- His power might have been shown by Pharaoh yielding to His power
- The election is not of an individual to destruction, but of a man to be a king for a particular purpose

Israel's Rejection and God's Justice (9:14-29)



- Accordingly He does show mercy in His own terms, namely, on them that accept His grace
- And whom He wills, namely, them that do not accept His grace, He hardens: leaves to the hardness of their hearts
- He now meets another objection: If God's will is dominant, why should He find fault, for no one nation can withstand His will
- If God hardens, the nation that is hardened only submits to Him

Israel's Rejection and God's Justice (9:14-29)



- Shall men charge God with injustice?
- We have no right to strive with our Maker
- He has the right to declare His own conditions upon which He will have mercy
- God has the right over us as the potter has over his clay
- One lump the potter can use for a splendid vase; another for a vessel for base uses

Israel's Rejection and God's Justice (9:14-29)



- What if God: Now if God, in the exercise of His right, has done something like this, in His dealings with the Jews and Gentiles
- Willing to show His wrath: Though provoked to incur punishment on the Jewish nation for their sin in rejecting Christ, thus demonstrating His power, yet He has endured the vessels of wrath with much longsuffering thus far

Israel's Rejection and God's Justice (9:14-29)



- God, in the exercise of His sovereign will, has thus far deferred the exhibition of His destructive wrath
- What if God endured vessels fitted for destruction, was there wrong in this?
- What if He thus made known the riches of His glory on vessels of mercy, was there wrong in this?
- The preparation: to save the Gentiles and the Jews

Israel's Rejection and God's Justice (9:14-29)



- He endured the vessels of wrath that He might make known His mercy in calling both Jews and Gentiles
- The destruction of the Jewish nation was delayed in mercy until tens of thousands of Jews, as well as of Gentiles, accepted Christ
- God suffered the sins of the Jewish nation, without cutting it off, because its existence was essential in His plans for saving the world

Israel's Rejection and God's Justice (9:14-29)



- Of it Christ came; from it the apostles were chosen; in it the church was formed; and from it went forth the gospel preachers
- It was God's plan aforetime to call the Gentiles to salvation (Ho 2:23) and (Ho 1:10)
- Not only do the prophets show that the Gentiles are to be called, but that a great part of Israel is to fall from God (Isa 10:22)
- Only a remnant shall be saved

Israel's Rejection and God's Justice (9:14-29)



- This prophecy originally applies to the return of the Jews from the Captivity, but, like many other prophecies, has a double application
- God's righteous judgment will cut the rest off from His favor (Isa 10:23)
- The "short" seems to mean the completing of His word, both in cutting off the one portion and saving the other.

Israel's Rejection and God's Justice (9:14-29)



- Isaiah spoke this before he wrote what is quoted in Ro 9:27,28
- This passage, like the other, shows that only a remnant of Israel shall be saved (Isa 1:9)
- Sodom and Gomorrah had perished on account of their sins
- Had it not been for God's mercy, Israel would have been blotted out for the same cause

Present Condition of Israel (9:30-33)



- The Gentiles, who ignorant of righteousness, had secured righteousness by accepting Christ, through faith in Him
- While, Israel, who followed the law of righteousness, has failed to secure righteousness before God through unbelief
- Why this failure on the part of Israel? Not because God willed that they should be rejected

Present Condition of Israel (9:30-33)



- Not because of any foreordination, but because of their unbelief in Christ
- Because they sought not the righteousness that comes from faith in Christ, but a righteousness of works by keeping the law of Moses
- The stumbling stone: Faith in Crucified Christ (Isa 8:14; 28:16)
- The Jews, who expected a mighty earthly king, stumbled and fell when they saw the Crucified



Conclusion

- How much love did Paul have for the nation of Israel?
- Who are the true children of God?
- Which O.T. prophet foretold that Gentiles would be a part of the people of God?
- What did Isaiah say would happen to the nation of Israel
- Why are Gentiles among the saved?
- Why are some Israelites going to be lost?