***The True Seed, No. 2
Romans 9:1-5
RO126-02***

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Please open your Bibles this morning to Romans 9:6-13. Our subject is, "The True Seed," and this is segment number 2.

**What One Believes Regarding Jesus Christ**

We have pointed out in this chapter, thus far, that the Jews of Paul's day, as the Jewish people in our day, by and large rejected the claims of Jesus Christ that he was the Messiah Savior which had been promised to the nation of Israel under the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants. Paul knew that the unbelieving Jews were wrong about Jesus Christ in his day as they around about it in our day. Furthermore, Paul knew that the consequence of that error to those Jews would be spending eternity in the lake of fire, as is the consequence to every Jew who dies today without Christ. He may be a very famous person. He may be a person who has done great service to humanity. But if he dies without Christ, being a Jew is not enough to carry him into heaven.

Paul knew this, and it grieved him that the Jewish people had committed themselves to such a terrible destiny. Believing the wrong thing, you see, about Jesus Christ, relative to the issue of salvation, has over the centuries since Paul's day, taken millions of Jews and Gentiles into hell.

The problem still is with us today. Most of the people you know, most of the people you and I associate with, are completely wrong in what they think about Jesus Christ. They are completely wrong about the issue of how a person goes to heaven instead of going into the lake of fire. And the reason that they are wrong is because they are looking to the wrong sources of information. Only the Bible can enlighten us on that subject.

The Jews mistakenly believed that they were assured of eternal life in heaven simply because they were descended from Abraham. That was a very great mistake. Just because they were descended seed of Abraham did not mean that they were going to go to heaven. The Abrahamic covenant promised divine blessings, indeed, to the Jews, which included the blessing of salvation, the provision of a Messiah Savior. Abraham himself was saved under this covenant by believing this promise of God, that He would send a Savior, who, subsequently, was the Lord Jesus Christ.

The failure of most Jews to obtain salvation, however, had suggested to some that God's Word had failed in its promise, that God's Word of promise to Abraham had somehow failed to be fulfilled. And so, the Apostle Paul says, "No, that's not true." He denies this accusation and shows that salvation is provided by God only to the true children of Abraham - that is, those who are born-again spiritually through faith in God's Savior, Jesus Christ.

So, just being a Jew, being under the Abrahamic covenant promise of blessing, was not enough to take one into heaven. Not every Jew in Abraham's posterity or seed is also a child of Abraham spiritually. The promise of salvation in heaven made to Abraham in his posterity is furthermore, by the sovereign choice of God, limited. First of all was Abraham, then, furthermore, we are told that the line of promise of divine blessing was through Isaac. Abraham had another son, Ishmael, but Ishmael was not chosen by God as the line through which salvation blessing would come. That was restricted to the line of Isaac. And indeed, Jesus Christ eventually came through the line of Isaac.

The point of this, now, Paul is moving into a very dramatic doctrine that gives some people a great deal of trouble, and that is the doctrine which we summarize in the word "election." We have previously, in the eighth chapter of Romans, looked at that in some detail. Now, it comes back in the picture again where Paul is using the certain events from Jewish history to illustrate that doctrine in order to establish, again, clearly that God is the one who determines how a person goes to heaven, and God is who determines who goes to heaven.

Thus, God sovereignly chooses, Paul is indicating, some Jews to salvation but not all. And, the Word of God's promise to Abraham is not broken just because some Jews don't make it into heaven. God provides grace and all that is needed to execute His promise. He did that by providing the miracle child Isaac and those who accept God's basis of going to heaven, they make it. Those Jews who do not, they do not make it.

So, Paul is pointing out that just because you're a Jew does not mean that you're a true Israelite. Only those born-again are true Israelites. So, to be a physical descendant of Abraham is not enough. One must also be chosen by God for salvation and come by the grace way of faith, just as Abraham himself did. And, as we read about that in Romans 4:3, "For what saith the scripture? 'Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.'" What did Abraham believe? He believed what God promised to do for him in a Savior. So, the first illustration that Paul uses to stress that God's Word is being fulfilled, even though not all the Jews are going to heaven, used to Sarah, Abraham, and Isaac.

**Rebecca's Pregnancy**

Now, in verses 10-13, Paul uses another illustration out of Jewish history. He goes to the second generation. And so, verse 10, we read, "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac." "And not only that." The expression here refers to the case of Isaac and Ishmael.

That illustration that he's just given is not the only proof that receiving salvation does not depend only on genetic descent from Abraham, but it depends on something else. It depends on being aligned with certain divine decisions and choices. God says, "I am choosing Isaac over Ishmael," and somebody might say, "Well, the reason for that was because Ishmael was the son of a slave, servant woman, but Isaac was the son of the free woman, Abraham's wife, and that's why Isaac was chosen and Ishmael rejected."

So, Paul says, "No, that is not true. And I want to point this out by giving you another illustration." Because what Paul is doing, while he is indicating divine choices here relative to these people in Old Testament history, he is also making a point here about how people are chosen for eternal life to this very day. And so, Paul says, "Not only this illustration, but."

And then he refers to Rebecca. "Rebecca" looks like this in the Greek Bible: "Rebecca." Rebecca was the wife of Isaac. The name "Rebecca" is a very complimentary name. It actually means, "one who ensnares men by her beauty." Rebecca was a very handsome woman, and she was a lady of considerable culture and refinement and had a great impact on Jewish history. So now, Paul says, "Here comes another illustration. I'll talk to you about Rebecca."

All of you know Rebecca, the famous wife of Isaac. She had conceived. The word "conceived" is the Greek word "koite," and with the word "had" in the Greek language, "koite" actually means, "bed." So, what it says is when Rebecca "had bed," which is the Greek way of saying, "when she conceived," it's idiomatic for being pregnant. So, when Rebecca had conceived "by," and the Greek word is the preposition "ek," which means "from," indicating the source of that pregnancy, one namely, a father, our father, the Jewish father, "Isaak." "Isaak." "Isaak," the husband of Rebecca.

So, verse 10 says this, "And not only that." (The fact that God, in the case of Isaac and Ishmael, chose Isaac and rejected Ishmael as the line of the divine promise.) "And not only that [illustration]; [but there was] Rebecca also [who] had conceived by one [man], our father Isaac." Now, the word "one" is the Greek word "heis," and it is an important word here. It is put in for a very specific reason, because now this illustration going to point out that here were two children who had the same parentage. They had the same father. They had the same mother. And yet, there was a differentiation between them. In the case of Isaac and Ishmael, they had the same father, but different mothers. And one could say, "You see, there was a human reason why God chose one and rejected the other." Now, he says, "I'll give you an illustration to make sure that that's not the reason."

Here are two boys with the same parents. And yet, there is a difference between them. Still, God exercises a sovereign choice in deciding which of these twins would bear the line of the promised Messiah Savior. And this is even stressed further because naturally, you would say, "Well, the oldest boy is the one who has the right to bear that line of descent. The oldest boy is in that primal genitor responsibility and honor." But what does God do? God says, "No, the older boy isn't going to have it. I'm going to choose the younger one as My choice."

So, the principle, again, is stressed, that salvation comes via a specific line set forth by God which is not subject to human manipulation. And basically, we are talking about salvation. Indeed, we are talking about the Jewish nation in terms of these historical events. But ultimately, what Paul is talking here is that God chooses to salvation, and he does not choose everybody. He bypasses some.

Now, verse 11 says, "For." The Greek word is "gar," which is a word which is introducing an even more impressive evidence of God's sovereign choice to salvation blessing. The divine differentiation between the children of Rebecca is even greater evidence of the divine election in terms of the comparison to Isaac and Ishmael.

Because here, he says, "For the children be not yet born." "Not yet" looks like this in the Greek Bible; it's the word "mepo," and "mepo" indicates, "previous to something else." And what is it previous to here is the "gennao," which means, "to be born," so that, before the physical birth of these twin boys, which is being referred to here, God did something. At some point before they were born, a decision was made about them.

So, this is the aorist tense in the Greek Bible (at a point in the past). Passive: the decision was made not by them, but it was made about them by somebody else. Passive tell us, here again, that the human element is not what is deciding this. We would translate this in this way, "For though the twins were not yet born." And then, furthermore, just to stress that the human element is not involved, he puts another comparison word, "mede." "Mepo, mede." "On the one hand, on the other hand," is the idea here.

"Neither before they were born, nor having done." The Greek word is "prasso," which means, "to practice something." It refers to personal conduct. At no point in time had these boys done actively done anything. Done what? He says, "Before they had done any good." The word "agathos" refers to something that God would approve, or that they did something "phaulos," bad, referring to something that God would condemn as evil.

So, here are these two children who are in the womb of Rebecca, and God makes a decision about them. The decision can't be because they've got different mothers or different fathers. The decision can't be because these two human beings have done something so that one of them deserves to be chosen and one of them does not deserve to be chosen, because the decision is made before they're born, before they've had a chance to do anything good or bad.

So, Esau and Jacob start off on the same level, but there is a distinct, sovereign difference of divine choice between them. The ground of the selection and of the rejection was not in the twins; it was in God alone. This is also stressed by their being descended in Isaac in whom Abraham's promise would be fulfilled. You would think that, "Well, since they're the descendants of Isaac, they would both be in this position," but no. God says, "One of you will be; one of you will not be, even though you're both the sons of Isaac." So, the divine line of blessing, as you know, went to the younger twin, to Jacob. Why? Just because God decided.

Verse 11 says, "For the children not yet being born, neither having done anything good or evil, that." This is the Greek word "hina," which is the conjunction, and it introduces to us the basis of this decision. The basis is God's purpose. The word "purpose" is "prothesis." "Prothesis" is a word we have studied before when we were in Romans 8. I remind you that it refers to all that God in eternity past planned to do. We call the purposes of God "His divine decree." That's just a theological term, the divine decree. That's the overall plan of God, of everything that's going to happen, take place in God's universe, He has a laid-out plan.

So, the purpose, thus, of all that God does in His sovereign choices, is included in this prothesis, and that includes this choosing of some to one thing and others to another. God's planned purpose, furthermore, is not haphazard, that God is working it out as He goes along. You and I operate that way. We have problems, so we make a decision, and we work things out as we go along.

But Ephesians 3:11 points out to us that God's plan is all before there was such a thing as time. It's all pre-temporal. Ephesians 3:11, "According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is the eternal purpose of God; it is before there was time. The purpose of God is decided by Him alone, apart from the character or the works of the human beings who are involved.

This is pointed up to us in a couple scriptures. For example, 2 Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." And you've got it all there. "Who had saved us." "God who has saved us." You do not save yourself. God does the saving.

"And He has called us with an holy calling." You are saved because He has called you to salvation. And why did he call you? Not according to your works. You see how ignorant the average person is who thinks that he is going to make into heaven on the basis of something he does with his works: how he behaves, how he conducts himself. When the Word of God says, "God has called us with a holy calling," that is, "with a calling that is legitimate and that cannot be contradicted." It comes from God, but it isn't because of something we have done any more than it was something that Jacob and Esau did.

**God's Ultimate Plan**

But it is according to his own "prothesis," according to His own divine plan. And, His grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, in that divine plan, put into effect before the world began. You see, it's pre-temporal, before any of us or anything actually existed.

So, the plan of God for everything in His universe stems simply from His love, from His own character, from His own good pleasure. This plan, furthermore, that Paul is talking about, he says, "Is according to election." This plan of God was in reference to election. The word "election" is "ekloge." "Ekloge" means, "a choice means of selection." It connotes selecting one from among a number of options. So, it stresses the promises by which God expressed His love for some unto salvation.

Before these children were born, before they had done anything, good or bad, God had a purpose. That purpose was established according to His election, to His personal, divine choice. And, this purpose of God was based upon the election, the decision of God, so that it might stand. The word is "meno." It means, "to abide, or to be established." It is very hard for people to understand that God has provided a salvation which cannot be contaminated by human beings. He has provided a salvation which cannot be reversed by people. And once you understand that it is indeed a very great comfort.

This past week, I received that a very important, influential person in my life from my teenage years had died. One of the things that was said about this lady was that she had come to a point in life where the physical body had broken down. There was the physical debilitation, and she had come to a point in life where she was simply looking forward to going home and being with her Lord. And I found that many times, I've had occasion to deal with people who are in just that position. They have come to the point of physical condition in life where there just is nothing more that they want to do except to go home to be in God's presence. They have born the burdens. What they want to do is to go out there where it's really at.

Now, if they really do not know what is there, or if they are not sure what is there, then you have a different picture all together. Then you have a person who is clutching life, gripping it with agony, with fear, with intense concern, because they don't know whether they have enough good works. They don't know whether they've done everything that God expects them to do.

And you see, and this is what Paul is stressing here. One of the marvels of the doctrine of election: God does have a plan! He has a purpose. He has an overall plan. That plan is based upon decisions that He has made relative to individuals in terms of eternal life that He calls "election," and it is a plan that He has made so that it would "meno," it would stand. That is, it would be established. This is in the present tense. That there would not ever be a time when it would not continue to be established. It is active voice; it is God's purpose in election to do this. And it is subjunctive, which is potential that God has done something that is possible. It is possible to have a salvation that you're certain of.

So, when you finally come to that point where you know you're about ready to check out of this life, you can do it with the full confidence that what you're headed for is certainly a whole lot better than what you're going through at that moment. God's purpose and election is in beautiful, and therefore it is certain to be fulfilled. The Word of God that God gave to Abraham, the promises made to Abraham, had not failed because some Jews were not going to heaven. And that's Paul's point here. It is not a failure, because those who are going to heaven have been elected by God's plan, and the reason some are not going to heaven, is that election has not been there, and they have not responded with that faith toward Christ.

"So," Paul says, "that this purpose, according to election, that it might stand." And then at the end of verse 11, he stresses again, "not." And he uses the strong Greek negative. "In no way would it stand on 'ergon.'" "Ergon" is the word for, "human works, human activity." "It would not stand on human efforts which we have done, but it would stand on the basis of Him who called." The Greek word, "kaleo," here refers for what theologians call, "the efficacious call of God," that when God calls you to salvation, because his election and his plan has establish that he wants you in the family of God, when he calls you, you say, "yes." That's His efficacious call. And it's God who does the calling.

So, God here is doing the calling to the line of Jacob. That is the line that has been promised the blessing, and it is God who is calling them to the fulfillment of the promise according to the purpose in election. The ground of God's choice in salvation is not those who are chosen but the God who does the choosing. And of course, God is at liberty to choose who he pleases to be the recipients of the blessings of his kingdom. Because he is a God of justice, this choosing is fair. It is true we don't have all the information we would like to have on the basis on which he makes the choice, but we know that it is fair.

Do not fall into the trap of saying, "Well, if God decides who is going to be saved, who is going to be invited in, then it's not fair." That is not true. We know that He is a God of fairness, and when He calls, it is because there is a basis upon which He has done that which is absolutely fair. The truth of the matter is, you see, nobody has the right to salvation. And so, God has the right to choose from all those of us who are losers, those that he wants to bring into the category of winners.

**God's Preference Between Jacob and Esau**

Now, he ties this up in verses 12-13 by stressing again divine choice which is involved in here. Paul is really hammering away at this in a very intense way. He says, "It was said unto her." That is, to Rebecca. The word here is "lego," the word, "to say," referring to information which was given to Rebecca about her unborn twins.

This historic fact is recorded for us in Genesis 25:23, "And the Lord said unto her [to Rebecca], 'Two nations are in thy womb.'" One nation would be the Jewish nation, continued from Abraham through Isaac through Jacob. The other through Esau would be the Edomite's nation. And the Edomite nation became a very powerful nation, indeed.

So, the Lord said unto her, 'Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be born of thee; and the one people shall be stronger than the other; and the elder shall serve the younger.'" Now, that's the historical background that Paul is referring to.

So, he says, "It was said." This is the word "lego." It's at the aorist tense. It's at the point that Rebecca actually made an inquiry of the Lord about a problem she was having. She noticed that the children were indeed active. The babies were kicking in the womb, but in the verse 22, in Genesis 25:22, you have the reason that she went and inquired of the Lord concerning the way these children were acting. "The children struggled together within her; and she said, 'If it be so, why am I thus?' And she went to enquire of the Lord."

What was happening was that the two children were jostling with one another within the womb. Now, it's, I'm sure, uncomfortable enough when a baby kicks, but to have two of them fighting, now that does raise a whole new degree of problems. And this began to get on Rebecca's nerves, and so, she went to the Lord, and she says, "Why are these kids acting like this? Why can't they just be nice?"

And then, the Lord says, "Because, within you are two potential nations." And she received the information from the Lord. "Furthermore," He said, "the reason they are jostling with one another in this way is because there was a contention between them even with the womb."

And the Lord went on to say to her that the elder (this is the Greek word, "meizon," which means, really, "the greater," here it means, "the older one," referring to Esau) is going to serve. "Douleo" means, "to be a servant, to be subject to." And this is future tense, so that sometime in the future history of this child whose name will be Esau and who will be the oldest son, he will be the oldest born of these twins, at some time in the future, he and his posterity (mostly his posterity) will find themselves serving the descendants of the younger child who is going to be born second. The older boy is going to be an active servant of the younger. Esau himself actually did not serve Jacob, but Esau's descendants certainly served the progeny of Jacob.

And then, as the scripture went on, "this older would serve the younger." The Greek word there is "elasson." The "elasson" means, "the less." Here, it means, "the younger," and it refers to Jacob, the one who was born second. So, the nation of Jacob became the dominant power over the Edomites of Esau. And, the divine election of Jacob to superiority here demonstrated again that God was making a choice.

And when the children were born in Genesis 25, this divine selection was even evident in the process of their birth. Genesis 25:24, "And when her days [Rebecca's days] to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau [which means "hairy," or "thick-haired"]. And after that came his brother [and what's his little brother doing? His brother's] hand took hold on Esau's heel [the younger brother coming out, and he's already showing that he is going to be the dominant one in God's program, and he's grabbed hold of his brother Esau. He already symbolically shows that he is going to control the older boy. He is going to be the superior nation.]; and his name was called Jacob [that is, "the supplanter," the one who is going to take what really should have been the oldest son's right]: and Isaac was sixty years old when she bore him." So, it was a very dramatic birth.

And then, verse 13 of Romans chapter 9 goes back again to scripture. Paul quotes a passage of scripture to tie this up. Remember what he's saying, "God has made the promise of the Jewish people to bring them salvation. He did this to Abraham. God has provided what He needed to provide in a Savior to fulfill that promise. The Jews are thinking that because they're descended from Abraham, through Isaac, through Jacob, that they're automatically going to come under the blessing of salvation of that covenant. And if they don't, the Jews are going to point their finger at Paul and say, "So, you're suggesting that the Word of God won't be fulfilled?"

But Paul knows very well that Jews are dying around him left and right and that they're opening their eyes in Hades in agony, prepared to enter an eternity in the lake of fire. And Paul says, "No, not everybody who is a Jewish, genetic descent is a true Israelite. Those who are really Israelites who are born-again, who have trusted the Savior that most of you are rejecting." And then, he illustrates that from divine history by showing that God selects those whom He takes into His eternal heaven, that God lays out the path by which you will get there. He lays out the line. He lays out the ground rules. He lays out the people that are involved. You don't tell Him; He tells you.

So, he's used the illustration of Isaac and Ishmael. Now, he's using the illustration of Jacob and Esau, and now in verse 13, he adds a quotation from the Old Testament. "As." The Greek word is "katheper." This means, "just as." It is going to introduce the scripture reference of God's personal motivation. You know, that comes up the motivation: why did God do this? What is God's motivation in taking this younger Jacob?

He wasn't all that much of a sweet patootie, you remember, as he grew up. He was a deceiver. He was indeed a supplanter. He was one of the original con men. If there had been television in his day, he'd have been one of the charismatic TV evangelists - one of the best of them all. Jacob just had that kind of a knack. This is the one that God chooses.

So, Paul says, "I'll explain it to you just as it is written." And this is sort of a technical term in scripture, "it is written." It is the Greek word, "grapho," and it refers to the written scriptures of the Old Testament. It is in the perfect, which means it is something that has been produced in the past by God the Holy Spirit through men that He led to write, and that this scripture stands in Paul's day. "Perfect" means it happened in the past, and it's still here with us today. Passive: the Bible was written by men of God under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Indicative: a statement of fact.

He's referring to the book of Malachi here, chapter 1:2-3. The first chapter of Malachi is dealing with the fact that God is bringing judgment upon the Edomites. He's blessing the descendants of Jacob. He's bringing judgment upon the descendants of Esau. So, in Malachi 1:2, he says, "'I have loved you,' saith the Lord. 'Yet ye say, 'In what way hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother?'' saith the Lord: 'yet I loved Jacob. And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the jackals of the wilderness.'"

So, here, God says, "I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau. So, I blessed Jacob, because I loved Him. And I devastated the descendants of Esau because I hated their progenitor." Now, that was very strong language. Jacob, this younger son, his name is "Iacob," in the Greek, and it says, "the Iacob," in the Greek - the very specific one of history. "I have loved him." "Agapao." The Greek word "agapao" refers to a mental attitude. It is an attitude of the mind of God. It is an attitude of goodwill. It is an attitude that is free of bitterness. It is an attitude that connotes favor. It is not an emotional thing. It is an attitude of the mind.

Here, God says, "I loved Jacob. I had this attitude of mind toward him. Then, he says, "But," and he gives this Greek word "de," which is a differentiation, a contrast, "the other boy, Esau, I had a different attitude toward him. For him, it was not "agapao." For him, it was "miseo," which means, "to hate." That's what it means; it means, "to hate."

But, you should understand that the Bible uses the word "hate" to connote certain attitudes that actually are free of animosity, and it is obvious that God would not hate Esau with animosity, with bitterness, the way human beings hate out of their sin nature. He hated Esau in a different way.

This is illustrated in Matthew 6:24, which uses this word, "hate." Matthew 6:24 says, "No man can serve two masters: for he will either hate the one [and it's this word "miseo,", and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and money." And you see that here, when he uses the word, "hate," he actually means, "prefer." "No man can serve two masters. Either he will prefer the one or the other," is the idea. He will hold to one; he will despise the other.

This is illustrated in another place. Take a look at Luke 14:26. This is speaking about those that are the true disciples of Jesus Christ. Luke 14:26, "'If any man come to me, and hate not.'" And it's this word right here, "miseo." "'.Comes to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.'" True disciples of Jesus Christ are going to hate their parents and family members in some kind of a specific way that, again, is not with animosity.

This same incident is described in Matthew 10:37, and eliminates the meaning of hate in Luke 14:26. Matthew 10:37 says this, the same subject, "'He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.'" Here, describing the same thing, Matthew uses the word, "love," instead of the word, "hate," clearly indicating that when Luke is using the word "hate," he is using it in the sense of "prefer." When Matthew is using the word, "love," it is, "I prefer you over against you." He is indicating by both these words that what is in mind here is a preference. So, when God says that He hated Esau, He is indicating that He has rejected Esau for the line of Messianic blessing because He does not prefer him over Jacob. God's attitude was that He preferred the youngest boy. Esau was thus the object of God's divine disfavor as Jacob was the object of His favor.

So that, Paul has made it very clear that, indeed, there is a difference between the Jewish people. That difference is not the fact that God's Word has failed. But that difference is because those who go to heaven are selected by God, and they go when they are selected on the basis of grace, and they go on the basis of the path that that grace has laid out. And he illustrates that from the fact that there has been a national selection here of Israel, but not all the nation has been selected for national blessing - only those who, again, meet certain specific criterion, which is determined by God's own choosing.

So, the concept of election deals with a sovereign, divine purpose, which is formed by God independent of human merit, human descent, or human cooperation. When the Bible uses words like "call," and "choose," and, "elect," it is talking about something that God does apart from any human elements that can influence Him. In the case of Jacob and Esau, before they were even born. The word "election" does indeed imply that God chooses some for salvation, but He does not choose all. As in the case of Israel, He chose some, but He didn't choose all. That still fulfilled the promise of the Abrahamic covenant.

Furthermore, divine election, we remind you again, was accomplished in eternity past. The Godhead held an eternal life conference, so-to-speak, relating to everything that was going to happen in human history. And God made His plan. His purpose was established. And in that plan, there was the election of certain people for eternal life. Jesus Christ was going to die to make that possible. God the Holy Spirit was going to apply that provision.

So, election, therefore, does not take place in time. There is always someone that says, "God elects people on the basis of the fact that He looks at them, and He sees that someplace down the line, they're going to believe the Gospel, so he elects them to salvation." No. The reason God knows somebody is going to be saved is because He's already elected Him for salvation. You see, if you say that God looks down the corridors of time and sees who's going to believe, then you're telling us that God is not omniscient. He's learning something at some point. But God already knows, because He's already decided. So, election is not merely resting on knowing something ahead of time. Of course, election is immutable. If you are elected to eternal life, you're going to go in.

But, God also has a procedure into bringing you into that eternal life, and that is that somebody has to give you the Gospel. How are you going to be saved unless you hear? How will you hear without a messenger? So, the messenger - whether it is you as an individual Christian giving the Gospel to somebody, or a missionary in a foreign field - is the way God does it.

I wish I could fully explain to you the relationship between the free will of man and this divine election of the God, but that the Bible doesn't reveal. But the Bible does reveal that we have volition for which we are held responsible. Yes, you have a will, and you may freely use it. You'll be held accountable for how you use it, but it also tells us that God has a sovereignty that man's will does not override. He makes decisions; nobody frustrates those. The example from Jewish history before us are prime examples of that.

If you are a child of God this morning, feel honored that He decided to choose you, and feel relieved that He decided to make that decision to take you to His heaven apart from anything that you have done good or bad, but just because it pleased Him.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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