*Northwest Bible Church – Jun. 13, 2004 – Worship Service – Alan Conner*

**Romans. 9:6**

*The Israel within Israel*

**INTRO**

**I. 1ST RESPONSE: GOD’S WORD HAS NOT FAILED (v. 6a).**
        "But it is not as though the word of God has failed."

            "word of God" = see vv. 4-5, but specifically the promises of salvation.

            "has not failed" = Mt. 24:35; Isa. 40:6-8; 14:24. See also Rom. 9:11.

**II. 2ND RESPONSE: NOT ALL PHYSICAL ISRAELITES ARE AMONG THE SPIRITUAL ISRAELITES, CHOSEN BY GOD’S GRACE, TO WHOM ALONE BELONG THE PROMISES OF GOD (vv. 6-13).**
    A. "For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel" (v. 6). In other words, Paul addresses here the key issue of who is the Israel to whom God promised salvation? His answer is that there are two Israels, and only one of them receives the fulfillment of the promises of salvation.

        Who does this true Israel refer to?

            1) The church, both Jews and Gentiles in Christ – Gal. 6:16 with 3:7, 14, 29; Rom. 2:28-29 (the true Jew); Phil. 3:3 (the circumcision); Rom. 4:9-25; Gal. 4:28 where Paul calls Christians "children of promise, like Isaac". Also Gentiles are eventually included in v. 24 and grafted into Israel’s olive tree in Rom. 11:17-24 and OT texts that refer to Israel are applied to Gentiles (Rom. 9:24-26).

            2) Ethnic Jews only who believe in Christ – this seems the better view in this context. a) The issue here is whether or not the promises made to ethnic Israel will be fulfilled (vv. 1-6a). b) The following context of vv. 7-13 focuses only on illustrations from ethnic Israel’s history. c) The Gentiles are not introduced until v. 24. Even then Paul consistently distinguishes throughout chs. 9-11 between Israel and the Jews on the one hand, and Gentiles on the other. d) in 9:27-29 Paul has the "remnant" of Israel in mind in these quotations.

    B. This "spiritual" Israel is according to God’s sovereign purpose and choice and not on mere physical descent from Abraham (vv. 7-13).

        Thus, God’s word and promises to Israel are faithful and true because they did save the chosen remnant which was their intent from the beginning.

    OUTLINE:
        9:1-5 The problem of Israel’s unbelief in light of their promises and privileges.
        9:6 God’s word has not failed because of the principle: not all Israel is Israel.
        9:7-13 Principle restated and illustrated from Israel’s past history. God sovereignly chooses whom He will save among Israel.
        9:14-18 God’s sovereign choice is not unjust but defended from Scripture.
        9:19-23 God’s sovereign choice is defended by an analogy.
        9:24-29 God’s election includes both Gentiles and Israel’s remnant.

**III. ATTACKS AGAINST ELECTION IN ROMANS 9.**
    A. Romans 9 does not deal with salvation but the historical destinies of people.

        PRO: v. 12 where "the older will serve the younger" deals only with temporal destinies of the two nations that come from these two men.
        CON: 1) v. 12 is being used by Paul as an example of God’s sovereign choice of Jacob over Esau to explain the problem dealing with Israel’s lack of salvation.
         2) the terminology used by Paul shows salvation is in view and not historical destinies:
                 a) "children of God" and "children of promise" (9:8; 8:16; Phil. 2:15; Gal. 4:28).
                 b) Paul contrasts "works" with "calling" (v. 11) which is salvation language.
                 c) "vessels of wrath" and "vessels of mercy" in v. 22-23.

 d) Salvation is the theme in vv. 27, 30, 32.

    B. Romans 9 does not deal with individual salvation but national (or corporate) salvation.

        PRO: the references to Isaac and Jacob in vv. 7-13 refer to their descendants who comprise the nation of Israel. Also when Esau is mentioned Paul means the Edomites.

        CON: 1) even nations are made up of individuals. But Paul uses these individuals to show why the nation as a whole are not saved. Jacob and Esau represent themselves in 10-13.
         2) the focus on the remnant in 9:6-8; 27; 11:5 clearly has only some individuals within the nation in view. Individuals get saved, not nations.
         3) When Israel is used, it never refers to the whole nation, either the spiritual Israel or the unbel. Israel. (exception 11:26?)
         4) To argue that God saves nations and not individuals does not escape the difficulty of God’s sovereign choice. If choosing some individuals to be saved is wrong in their view, then why not also choosing one nation among many to be saved?

**CONCLUSION**    We have taken the first step in understanding the mind of God revealed through the apostle Paul. The doctrine of election stands before us and there is no turning back. We must now prepare to trace the mind of Paul into this glorious truth of God’s word.