

In step with Jesus 177

November 9, 2025

Key Text: ⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth *is* Mine. ⁶ And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel." Exodus 19; 5-6

Introduction.

Last week we looked at the work of God in choosing and knowing who would be His, and the fact that we all have free will and the ability to accept or reject Gods calling in our lives and His sacrifice on our behalf. In the time of Abraham and Moses, God called a nation to be His special people, to show His love to the world. But they had freedom as individuals within that nation to choose to follow and worship Him. They were Gods special people, but as a nation they repeatedly failed in the mission they had been given. However all was not lost, and there were, and still are individuals who hold to the faith and task that they were given. Let's us read on

Romans 9 1-18

9 I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, ² that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, ⁴ who are Israelites, to whom *pertain* the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service *of God*, and the promises; ⁵ of whom *are* the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, *the* eternally blessed God. Amen.

But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they *are* not all Israel who *are* of Israel, ⁷ nor *are they* all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called." ⁸ That is, those who *are* the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. ⁹ For this *is* the word of promise: "At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son."¹⁰ And not only *this*, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, *even* by our father Isaac ¹¹ (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 works but of Him who calls), ¹² it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger." ¹³ As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."¹⁴ What shall we say then? *Is*

there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! ¹⁵ For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.” ¹⁶ So then *it is* not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. ¹⁷ For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.” ¹⁸ Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

Reflection:

The nation of Israel was chosen to evangelise the world. They were to be a model nation, showing Gods loving character to peoples steeped in idolatry paganism and darkness. However, so often they failed in their chosen task. But God in His mercy forgave and brought them back time and again.

Abraham was promised by God that he would be the fathers of a great nation, but as he approached the age of 100, and was still childless, he began to doubt Gods word, and taking matters into his own hand, became the father of Ishmael and through Isaac; the grandfather of Jacob, who when he was older deceived his brother and contributed to division that is still causing problems today. God chose the family of Isaac through Jacob, to be the ones to carry the message, but that doesn't mean that those who are not of his line are excluded. Paul writes in Ephesians 3 verse 6, ⁶ “that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel”.

All those who profess a love of Christ and commit themselves to follow him are counted as Spiritual Israel and children of promise, and the seed of Abraham. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, is the God of all those who believe in Him, and put their faith and trust in Him. He calls whom He calls, and has mercy on them. There is no “grandparenting” into the family of God. Each person must make their own decisions and commitment. It's all very well being in the “right family” or church, but if you don't know God, then there is no promise of salvation. Faith in Christ and His sacrifice, and a faith that works by love shows those that are the children of promise.