

The Distinction and the Promise through Isaac (vv. 6-9)

VERSE 6 But *it is not as though the word of God has failed* (Οὐχ οἶον δὲ ὅτι ἐκπέπτωκεν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ [*neg. ouk + pro.nom.nt.s. hoios as though + conj. de but + conj. hoti + pf.act.ind.3s. ekpipto fail + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. logo + d.a.w/noun gen.m.s. theos*]).

For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel (οὐ γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ [*neg. ou + conj. gar + adj.nom.m.p. pas all + d.a.nom.m.p. "who" + prep ek + noun gen.m.s. Israel + pro.nom.m.p. houtos who + noun nom.m.s. Israel*]);

VERSE 7 nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: **"THROUGH [IN] ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL BE NAMED** (οὐδ' ὅτι εἰσὶν σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ πάντες τέκνα, ἀλλ', Ἐν Ἰσαὰκ κληθήσεται σοι σπέρμα [*conj. oude nor + conj. hoti that + pres.act.ind.3p. eimi + noun nom.nt.s. sperma seed + noun gen.m.s. Abraham + adj.nom.m.p. pas all + noun nom.nt.p. teknon children + conj. alla but + prep en + noun loc.m.s. Isaac + fut.pass.ind.3s. kaleo call + pro.dat.s. su + noun nom.nt.s. sperma seed*])."

VERSE 8 That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants (τοῦτ' ἔστιν, οὐ τὰ τέκνα τῆς σαρκὸς ταῦτα τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας λογίζεται εἰς σπέρμα [*pro.nom.nt.s. houtos that is + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + neg. ou + d.a.w/noun nom.nt.p. teknon child + d.a.w/noun gen.f.s. sarx flesh + noun nom.nt.p. houtos noun nom.nt.p. teknon + d.a.w/noun gen.m.s. theos + conj. alla but + d.a.w/noun nom.nt.p. teknon + d.a.w/noun gen.f.s. epangelia promise + pres.pass.ind.3s. logizomai count + prep eis + noun acc.nt.s. sperma seed*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 6-8

1. The unbelief (-vol.) of Israel which occasioned Paul's great sorrow is not to be attributed to any shortcoming with respect to God's word (v.6).
2. Any inference of this sort is to be rejected.
3. Paul proceeds to make a distinction with respect to racial Israel.

4. There exists within the race a true Israel.
5. There is a genuine Israel within greater Israel.
6. This distinction appears as well in Rom. 2:28, 29.
7. Jesus made this same distinction in Jn. 8:30-32.
8. The “Israel” that is to be distinguished from the Jews at large are those who make the salvation adjustment (cf. Gal. 4:28-29 “And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who *was born* according to the Spirit, so it is now also.”).
9. “He who was born according to the flesh” refers to Ishmael and the occasion of the persecution was the weaning of Isaac (age 3) in Genesis 21 (vv. 8 & 9).
10. Race qualifies no one for salvation, even those born to the chosen race (Jn. 1:13 “who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”).
11. This is the thrust of v. 7.
12. Appeal to the original ancestor, Abraham, is futile.
13. A true Israelite in the best sense of the word is “in Isaac” (Gk. has preposition *en* in).
14. The quote here is from Gen. 21:12 where God told Abraham to listen to his wife in the matter of Ishmael and his mother Hagar.
15. To be true Israel two qualifications must be satisfied: (1) a descendant of the first family- Abraham and Sarah; (2) a believer in the messianic promise.
16. Ishmael failed on both accounts.
17. “Through Isaac” is the racial and spiritual descendants in the complete sense.
18. “In Isaac” the true descendants of Abraham are designated (v. 8).
19. “In Isaac” refers to the seed of Abraham which is Jesus Christ (cf. Heb. 11:17-18).
20. “In Isaac” occurs 3X: Gen. 21:12; Rom. 9:8 and Heb. 11:18.
21. To be “in Isaac” a person must be believer in Jesus Christ.
22. Isaac was a type of Christ and so this illustrates positional sanctification for CA believers.
23. “That is” (*tout estin*) sums up the previous discussion.
24. “Children of the flesh” (as in the case of Ishmael and Esau) alone does not confer “children of God” status.
25. “Children of the promise” refers to those who are born again through the promised Messiah.
26. “Descendants” refers to all who are properly related to OT “promise” of a coming Redeemer.
27. Jews of Jesus’ day onward fell into the trap of supposing that a mere genetic connection to Abraham via Isaac was enough to qualify a person as a child of God.
28. The WOG does not support such a conclusion (cf. Jn. 1:12, 13; 3:5, 6; 1 Pet. 1:23).

The Thesis Illustrated in the 2nd and 3rd Generations (vv. 9-13)

VERSE 9 For this is the word of promise: "AT THIS TIME I WILL COME, AND

SARAH SHALL HAVE A SON (ἐπαγγελίας γὰρ ὁ λόγος οὗτος, Κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον

ἐλεύσομαι καὶ ἔσται τῇ Σάρρα υἱός [*noun gen.f.s. epangelia promise + conj. gar + d.a.w/noun*

nom.m.s. logos + pro.nom.m.s. houtos this + prep kata + d.a.w/noun kairos time + pro.acc.m.s.

houtos + fut.dep.ind.1s. erchomai come + conj. kai + d.a.w/noun dat.f.s. Sarah + noun nom.m.s. huios son])."

VERSE 10 And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac (οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ Ῥεβέκκα ἐξ ἐνὸς κοίτην ἔχουσα, Ἰσαὰκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν [*neg. ou + adv. monos only + conj. de + conj. alla + conj. kai also + noun nom.f.s. Rebecca + prep. ek + adj.gen.m.s. heis one + noun acc.f.s. koite marital bed; conceive + pres.act.part.nom.f.s. echo have + noun gen.m.s. Isaac + d.a.w/noun gen.m.s. pater father + pro.gen.p. ego "our"]]);*

VERSE 11 for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad (μήπω γὰρ γεννηθέντων μηδὲ πραξάντων τι ἀγαθὸν ἢ φαῦλον, [*adv. mepo not yet + conj. gar for + aor.pass.part.gen.m.p. gennao be born + conj. mede and not + aor.act.part.gen.m.p. prasso do + pro.acc.nt.s. tis anything + adj.acc.nt.s. agathos good + conj. e or + adj.acc.nt.s. phaulos bad*], **so that God's purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls** [ἵνα ἡ κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ θεοῦ μένη οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ καλοῦντος [*conj. hina so that + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. ekloge election; "purpose" + noun nom.f.s. protheisis plan, purpose + d.a.w/noun gen.m.s. theos + pres.act.subj.3s. meno abide + neg. ouk + prep. ek + noun gen.nt.p. ergon work + conj. alla but + prep. ek + d.a.w/pres.act.part.gen.m.s. kaleo call*]),

VERSE 12 it was said to her, "THE OLDER WILL SERVE THE YOUNGER (ἐρρέθη αὐτῇ ὅτι Ὁ μείζων δουλεύσει τῷ ἐλάσσονι [*aor.pass.ind.3s. eipon say + pro.dat.f.s. autos her + conj. hoti that + d.a.w/adj.nom.m.s. megas great; "Older" + fut.act.ind.3s. douleo serve + d.a.w/adj.dat.m.s. elasson lesser; "Younger"]])."*

VERSE 13 Just as it is written, "JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED (καθὼς γέγραπται, Τὸν Ἰακώβ ἠγάπησα, τὸν δὲ Ἡσαῦ ἐμίσησα [*conj. kathos just as + pf.pass.ind.3s. grapho write + d.a.w/noun acc.m.s. Jacob + aor.act.ind.1s. agapao love + conj. de but + noun acc.m.s. Esau + aor.act.ind.1s. miseo hate*])."

ANALYSIS: VERSES 9-13

1. God made a promise to Abraham that in his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:3c).
2. The blessing is the promise of a coming Savior and is conferred on all who come to saving faith in that Savior.
3. In order for this aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant to be realized Abraham had to have a physical heir, who like him, was a believer in the promise.
4. Early on in Abraham's life he became a believer (Rom. 4:3-5, 9-11, 22-24; Gal. 3:9 "So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.").
5. The situation (test) was such that Abraham was brought to a place where he had not qualified heir in his old age and God appeared to him and promised him a son/heir through his wife Sarah within a year (Gen. 18:10).
6. The occasion was the unexpected visit to Abraham's tent by Yahweh and two angels.
7. Abraham, against all odds, believed the promise (Rom. 4:19-21).
8. Abraham knew two things about this promised child/son: (1) that he would become a believer; (2) that "in Isaac" and his line the Messiah would eventually appear.
9. The distinction between a mere genetic descendant and a completed descendant is illustrated in the 3rd generation from Abraham.
10. "And not only this" points to the 3rd generation headed up by Isaac and his wife Rebekah.
11. Rebekah who conceived twin boys experienced major physical pain and discomfort, so much so she inquired of the LORD the reason for her situation.
12. "Our father Isaac" parallels "our father Abraham."
13. Both denote spiritual kinship.
14. The incident is found in Gen. 25:21-22.
15. The LORD revealed to her the reason and significance of the inner struggle of the twins (Gen. 25:23).
16. Jews might contend that Ishmael was not a legitimate child of Abraham and had no rights as opposed to Isaac.
17. Unbelieving Jews would contend that they were the natural and therefore legitimate descendants of Abraham based on natural descent.
18. To this Paul responds in vv. 10-13.
19. God made a distinction within the same family with the same father and mother; twin boys nonetheless.
20. In fact, one twin had it over on the other—the twin born first—Esau.
21. He had the legal right to primogeniture (e.g., rights of the 1st born).
22. However, the elder was rejected by God based on the fact that God knew (foreknowledge) Esau would remain in a state of unbelief.

23. Even before the twins were born and had not made any volitional decisions, good or bad, God had already rejected the older son.
24. This is based on the doctrine of foreknowledge and election previously studied in Romans 8.
25. God's choice of Jacob over Esau was revealed to Rebekah by oracle while she was still pregnant.
26. God's choice was not based on anticipated human accomplishments.
27. God is no respecter of persons.
28. He simply knew Esau, the elder, would never become a believer.
29. What was revealed to the mother included the historical preeminence of the younger over the older (v. 12).
30. This was illustrated when the twins were born and Jacob has a grip on Esau's ankle.
31. Also, God's choice of Jacob over Esau was not based on deeds, even good deeds they did during their lifetimes, since salvation is not of works.
32. Calling his here featured in the instance of Jacob and this follows the pattern of Romans 8:29-30.
33. So in time God actively pursues those He knows will come to saving faith.
34. The quotation from Mal. 1:2 & 3 serves to reinforce the oracle of Rebekah.
35. Divine love is for all (Jn. 3:16), and it is not a contradiction for God to hate negative volition, especially when it involves the way of salvation.
36. God's love for Jacob, even before he became a believer is based on divine foreknowledge.
37. And so, His hatred for Esau is based on what God knew about Esau even before he was born.
38. All who refuse to believe in Christ for salvation God hates as illustrate by their eternal fate.
39. God is displeased even with believers who reject sound doctrine (cf. Heb. 10:38 "BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH, AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK MY SOUL (divine essence) HAS NO PLEASUE IN HIM.").
40. Divine hatred carries the nuances of disfavor, disapprobation, including a vehement quality.