

“I Will Call Them My People”  
(Romans 9:25-29)

I. Introduction.

A. Review.

1. Last week, Paul answered the objection: if God is sovereign, how can He blame me for rejecting Him?
2. The answer:
  - a. It's not God's fault that man rejects Him; it's man's fault; his sin.
  - b. No one stops men from coming to God; they stop themselves.
  - c. Also, God doesn't have to save anyone; He could reject everyone and still be perfectly just.
  - d. God can do what He wants with His creatures, especially fallen creatures.
  - e. What He chose to do was to save some and pass over others.
  - f. He chose to make some vessels for honor and some for destruction.
  - g. I used the analogy of the pallet guitar: Bob Taylor took fairly worthless lumber and used it for something special: a fine instrument.
  - h. In a similar way, God takes worthless men and turns them into something special: His children.
  - i. But the rest, He passes over and leaves to their own sin, as He has the right to do.
  - j. And they perish because they won't receive His Gospel.

B. Preview.

1. But Paul also reminded his readers that God didn't save Jews only: He also saved Gentiles.
2. He shows us that this is what God said He would do in the OT.
3. He also begins to show us here the Lord's plan to turn away from the nation of the Jews, for the most part, except for the elect Jews, and to begin working mainly among the Gentiles.
4. And if any Jews want to argue or complain, he applies what he already said earlier: if God hadn't had mercy on them, none of them would have been saved, but they would all have been destroyed as Sodom and Gomorrah.

II. Sermon.

A. First, Paul says the amazing thing about God's plan is that it included Gentiles.

1. The Lord began His work of redemption by calling Adam and Eve.
  - a. Out of their family, He called Seth, though there were others.
  - b. From Seth's family, Enosh; from Enosh, Kenan; from Kenan, Mahalalel; from Mahalalel, Jared; then Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, and Noah.
  - c. There really weren't Jews or Gentiles, but the city of God and the city of man, the line of promise and the line without the promise, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of evil one, the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

2. The same was true of Noah's family.
    - a. Shem was called, but not Ham or Japheth.
    - b. But there was in Noah's blessing a prediction or prophecy that Japheth's family would eventually enter into the Lord's house: "May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem" (Gen. 9:27).
  3. The promise continued down to Abraham.
    - a. The Lord set Abraham apart, made His covenant with him (Gen. 12; 15).
    - b. This was the beginning of the Jewish people, the covenant people of God.
    - c. The promise made with Abraham was passed to Isaac, and then to Jacob.
    - d. From Jacob came the twelve tribes, and salvation was promised only to them.
    - e. It really excluded the Gentiles unless they became Jews (Those Gentiles who followed the Jewish religion, but didn't become Jews were called God-fearers. That's what Cornelius was [cf. Acts 10]).
  4. But yet there were other predictions in Scripture that God would eventually turn to the Gentiles.
    - a. Such as this quote from Hosea, "I will call those who were not My people, 'My people,' and her who has not beloved, 'Beloved.' And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' there they shall be called sons of the living God" (vv. 25-26; cf. Hosea 1:9-10).
    - b. This was actually addressed to the N. kingdom of Israel, who had become so wicked that God was going to take them away into exile.
    - c. He was planning on returning to them, taking them again, bringing them back into the land to prepare for the coming of His Son.
    - d. But Paul uses it to refer to the calling of the Gentiles.
      - (i) Probably because the Jews were so hard as to be no different than Gentiles.
      - (ii) Notice the double fulfillment of the prophecy for Jews and Gentiles.
    - e. Hosea was predicting that God would bring the Gentiles into His church.
- B. But at the same time, Paul wants us to see that as God turns to the Gentiles, He is turning, for the most part, away from the nation of Israel.
1. He's not turning from His elect people, as Paul will show us later (Rom. 11:2). He's turning from the nation of Israel.
    - a. The elect are just a remnant of Israel. Paul quotes Isaiah, "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved" (v. 27; cf. Is. 10:20-23).
    - b. The reference to their number being as the sand of the sea shows that God fulfilled His promise to Abraham (Gen. 22:17).
    - c. But remember, "they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel" (9:6).
    - d. God's promise didn't fail. He never promised to save the children of the flesh, but of the promise. These are, and have always been, a remnant.
    - e. This shouldn't surprise us because the Bible says relatively few will be saved from both Jews and Gentiles.

- f. Jesus told us that the way that leads to life is narrow, and “few are those who find it” (Matt. 7:14).
  - g. As He also says in the parable of the wedding feast, “For many are called, but few are chosen” (Matt. 22:14).
2. What was the Lord intending to do with the rest of them?
    - a. “For the Lord will execute His Word upon the earth, thoroughly and quickly” (v. 28).
    - b. In the days of Isaiah, this referred to the judgment the Lord was bringing on unfaithful Israel by the Assyrians.
    - c. Here, Paul sees another fulfillment coming in the judgment on Israel in A. D. 70.
- C. But lastly, before He sweeps faithless Israel away for the last time, He was going to finish gathering His elect. “Just as Isaiah foretold, ‘Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left to us a posterity, we would have become as Sodom, and would have resembled Gomorrah’” (v. 29; cf. Is. 1:9).
1. This is why He sent John the Baptist.
    - a. The Lord said through Malachi the prophet, “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to *their* children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse” (Mal. 4:5-6).
    - b. John warned them to flee from the coming wrath (Matt. 3:7; Luke 3:7), which not only pointed them to repent and turn to the Messiah to escape hell, but also the coming judgment on the Jewish nation.
  2. This is why Jesus came first to the nation of Israel: to gather His elect. Mark writes, “And after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel’” (Mark 1:14-15).
  3. This was the continuing work of the apostles: to go to Israel first to gather together the elect before the coming judgment, which is what Paul is referring to here (Cf. Acts 1:8; 3:26; 13:46).
  4. If the Lord had not reserved some of Israel for Himself, for the sake of His promise to the fathers (Rom. 11:28), they would have become as desolate as Sodom and Gomorrah.
  5. If He hadn’t reserved an elect from all mankind, all would be destroyed and this world would have resembled Sodom and Gomorrah a long time ago.

### III. Application.

- A. First, we should thank the Lord for His mercy on the Gentiles.
  1. We’re in the church today, because of His purpose to save Gentiles.
    - a. We were once not a people, but now we are children of God.
    - b. We once had not received mercy, but now we have received mercy.

2. For the most part, we're descended from Japheth. But the Lord has enlarged the tents of Shem and brought us into it: adopted us into His family.
3. If you are outside of God's family this morning, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.

B. Second, we need to remember that God is not finished with the Jewish race.

1. He is dealing mainly with the Gentiles, but there is still a remnant of Jews, as Messianic congregations remind us.
2. We should not consider them cursed, anymore than any other unbeliever. If the Lord has chosen them, they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

C. Finally, we need to remind ourselves that if God hadn't chosen us, we would have finished out our lives the same way those in Sodom and Gomorrah did.

1. If there were no redemption, this world, if not destroyed, would be a sulfur pit. It would be a hell, just as Sodom and Gomorrah are a picture of hell.
2. But God has chosen to save, and because He has, the world continues, and we enjoy His blessings.
3. But remember, the elect will always be a remnant, a small number. There aren't going to be that many true Christians.
4. For this reason, we ought to love and appreciate each other more than we do, and be careful, as Paul tells us, to preserve the bond of unity in the Spirit of love.  
Amen.