**6** But it is not as though the word of God has failed.

For

not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, **7** and

not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring,

but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” (Genesis 21:12)   
**8** This means that

it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God,

but the children of the promise are counted as offspring.

**9** For this is what the promise said:

“About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son.” (Genesis 18:10,14)

**10** And not only so, but also

when Rebekah had conceived children

by one man, our forefather Isaac,

**11** though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—

in order that God's purpose of election might continue,

not because of works but because of him who calls—

**12** she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” (Genesis 23:23) **13** As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.” (Malachi 1:2-3)

**QUESTION**

**14** What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means!

**EXPLANATION**

**15** For he says to Moses,

“I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and

I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” (Exodus 33:19)

**16** So then it depends

not on human will or exertion,

but on God, who has mercy.

**17** For the Scripture says to Pharaoh,

“For this very purpose I have raised you up,

that I might show my power in you, and

that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” (Exodus 9:16)

**18** So then

he has mercy on whomever he wills, and

he hardens whomever he wills.

**OBJECTION**

**19** You will say to me then,

“Why does he still find fault?

For who can resist his will?”

**ANSWER**

**20** But who are you, O man, to answer back to God?

Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” (Isaiah 29:16)

**21** Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use?

**22** What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,

**23** in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—

**24** even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?

**25** As indeed he says in Hosea,

“Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people,’  
 and her who was not beloved I will call ‘beloved.’” (Hosea 2:23)  
**26** “And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’  
 there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’” (Hosea 1:10)

**27** And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel:

“Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved, **28** for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay.” (Isaiah 10:22-23)

**29** And as Isaiah predicted,

“If the Lord of hosts had not left us offspring,  
 we would have been like Sodom  
 and become like Gomorrah.” (Isaiah 1:9, c.f. Genesis 18-19)

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