

“GOD’S DIVIDING LINE”

Romans 9:6-13

Message 1877

In many lands there are dividing lines. We call them watersheds. If water from rain flows on one side of the divide then it flows out to a river or certain lake or ocean. If it falls on the other side of the watershed it will flow out to an entirely different place. We call that a dividing line or watershed.

In life there are also dividing lines, important dividing lines. For example: how much education should I have, how long should I go to school and where should I go to school. That is an important dividing line.

The choice of a life partner is also a very important dividing line. We get many letters from people asking us to pray that they may be led of the Lord to find the right life partner. That is very important, my friend, and it is a dividing line.

The choice of a job or what work you pursue, what employment you have, is also an important dividing line. So we have dividing lines in life.

In history there are also dividing lines. When a certain leader rises in a country it may mean a complete change in the government of that country. How the people are governed, whether they have representation or not, are important dividing lines. There are varying times and conditions that change the picture. So we have dividing lines. If we go one direction we will come to this conclusion. If we go another direction we will come to that conclusion.

Now in God’s plan there is also a dividing line. God’s plan for man has a dividing line. The Apostle Paul teaches us this in Romans 9:6-13.

6. *Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:*

7. *Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.*

8. *That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.*

9. *For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.*

10. *And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;*

11. *(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)*

12. *It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.*

13. *As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*

The Apostle teaches us where God’s dividing line is by three carefully chosen FOUNDATIONS. Follow me as we consider them.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORD OF GOD assures the certainty of the dividing line. The Word of God is effective. It is clear. It has meaning. The Apostle says in verse 6, “Not as though the word of

God hath taken none effect.” In other words, God does not speak words without meaning, words that have no effect. God is not like that. None of His words are useless. None of His words are without meaning. God’s words are clear words and when He speaks them they have the effect He intended.

So the first foundation for this dividing line of God is the foundation of the word of God which is clear and it is certain. It has a surety. God made a promise. He said, “The children of the flesh, they are not the children of God; but the children of the promise.” God does not speak words without purpose.

So when He told Abraham and Sarah that they were to have a son even in their old age, He meant what He said. He said it with surety, He said it with certainty, even though they were beyond the age when couples normally have children. God said as reported in verse 9, “At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.”

Now, my friend, when the word of God becomes as clear as that and as certain as that, we can be sure that what God has spoken will come to pass. God’s dividing line is firmly founded upon His Word. Yes, Amen!

THE FOUNDATION OF THE PROMISE OF GOD strengthens the purpose of the dividing line. Now, watch carefully because the Apostle says, the children of the flesh are not really the true children. We could turn back to Genesis 16 and see how Abraham and Sarah tried to answer their problem of not having children. In self effort they decided the way to take care of that was for Abraham to take Hagar, the Egyptian handmaid. This was contrary to God’s plan. That is why Hagar’s children are called here the children of the flesh.

But there are the children of the promise. God came to Sarah in Genesis 17. When Abraham and Sarah were beyond the normal age of child bearing God made them a promise. He said, “At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son.” I think he was a miracle baby, for it was certainly beyond all possibility that they would have a child in their old age. But the Bible tells us that they were not weak in faith but they believed God. Abraham took the promise of God and accepted it. He lived by it. He staked everything upon it and God honored his promise.

The dividing line is firmly founded upon the promise of God. You and I can find comfort and strength in that as well.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE PURPOSE OF GOD. Continuing with this patriarchal family, Abraham and Isaac, we learn that Rebecca, Isaac’s wife, did not have any children. Isaac was distressed over this and prayed asking God to open the womb of his wife, Rebecca. God answered his prayer. She conceived in her womb twins, two sons. During her pregnancy she had distress so she came to God in prayer and asked the Lord what this is? Why am I in such distress? In verses 11 and 12 in this text in Romans it is reported that God spoke to her. God said that according to His purpose “the elder shall serve the younger.”

When God responded to Rebecca’s prayer He told her that she was going to give birth to two nations. Those two nations would strive against each other like the babies were striving in the womb, for “the elder shall serve the younger.” In other words, Esau being the elder should serve the younger, Jacob.

God set the dividing line. Now we may wonder why but we cannot question God. The dividing line is firmly founded upon the purpose of God. That He has determined. We must understand God acts according to His holy will and foreknowledge. By the fact that God knows everything, all things actual and possible, He can order affairs according to His will and His foreknowledge. His dividing line is based upon His Word, His Promise and His Purpose. Yes, Amen!