

Does God Love Everyone

By Bill McDaniel

sermonaudio.com

Bible Text: Romans 9:10-13

Preached on: Sunday, June 19, 2011

Lillja Road Baptist Church

14623 Lillja Road
Houston, Texas 77060

Website: www.lilljaroadbaptistchurch.net

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/lilljaroad

Now before I read, I would like to give a warning and that is that I am going to lay a very strong one on you this morning. This is a passage of Scripture that if anything is going to offend you in the Word of God it is going to be this passage this morning. And if you are going to get mad at me of anything, it would be this morning, though this is God's Word, not mine. Remember that.

So it is an offensive truth, but I prepared it days ago so no one is being picked on with this text this morning.

So look at Romans chapter nine and verses 10 through verse 13 particularly the 13th verse for our text of the morning.

Let me give you my subject before we read it so that you will know. My subject today is a question. Does God love everyone? Or I might give it this title. Did God really hate Esau? Well, that is what we are going to read today.

All right. Here are those verses, Romans 9:10-13. And, by the way, we are going to stay with the Scripture. We are going to quote the Word of God, not our own fanciful opinion.

So look at verse 10. Paul is explaining why so many Jews were perishing, why so many did not believe and why so many did not receive Christ of his own nation.

Now look at verse 10. He is explaining some things to them.

And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (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;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.¹

¹ Romans 9:10-13.

Now my subject today: Does God love everyone? Did God actually hate Esau? Or is there a way around this and to explain it away as many do?

Now let me begin like this. As we are aware, it is the general thought of the greater, the larger part of Christendom that the question at the head of our study this morning ought only to be answered in the affirmative. Yes, God does love everybody.

This has long been the contention of the largest part of Christendom that we call Arminianism. In fact, as an old time writer by the name of Stanley Gower expressed it way back in the early 1600s, he said that Arminianism made to stand upon two rotten pillars. Number one, that God loves all alike and, number two, that Christ died for all equally and alike. This, they say, is equally true of those that are saved as equally true of those that are lost and that perish. It is the contention of many that God loves the same those that come to salvation and are brought to heaven and those that die in their sin and perish. It is their belief that God died as much for those now in hell as he died for those that are in heaven with the Lord Jesus Christ, that he shed his blood as equally for Judas as he did for the apostle Paul.

Now this is where that grand, stout idol of theirs, free will, comes in which they say must decide the issue that we are dealing with this morning.

Now, if this be so, if God loves everyone and Christ died for everyone without exception, then I will tell you that there is little comfort in either the love of God or the death of Christ. If God made love and Christ may bleed for those who yet perished, these are not comforting doctrines to any, are they? What comfort to any who think God loves me, Christ died for me if I may yet lose my soul in spite of those things?

So Arminians make these things to be absolutely conditional. That is, God loves you, Christ died for you, but you must accept that for it to become a reality and for it to become effectual. Thus, the passage here in Romans chapter nine is a good one for the subject of the morning in that if you will notice and be honest, Paul calls by name one that God is said to hate.

And this is an exception to the general or universal rule of the universal love of God. "Esau have I hated,"² is very clear in this passage of the Scripture. This is a quotation from the Word of God. Paul did not pull it out of thin air. It is a quotation from the Word of God. Furthermore, there is made by Paul in this place, an intentional and a designed distinction in verse 13.

"Jacob have I loved, but [on the other hand] Esau have I hated."³

And he can say it is written. It is written in the Word of God, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."⁴

² Romans 10:13.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

Now such was right there in their Old Testament Scripture. Had they never read it? Had those Jews that treasured the Old Testament Scripture never read that?

However, it is necessary, first of all, for us to make the connection of verse 10 through 13 with the overall context and the overall flow of thought.

We are familiar with Romans chapter nine. We have studied it thoroughly. It is one of the strongest declarations of the sovereignty of God that you will find anywhere in the Scripture.

Now the question that is being dealt with by Paul in Romans chapter nine is how to explain the fact that so many Jews in that day were not believing on Christ, despite the many privileges that they enjoyed by Israel, whether this meant that the Word of God had failed. Has God's Word failed that many descendants of Abraham are falling down in unbelief? That it had come to nothing.

And you see that in verse six of chapter nine.

And then is it, "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel."⁵ That is very important.

In the NIV it has it this way. "Not all who are descended from Israel are Israel."⁶

That is very clear and that is Paul's premise here and he stakes a lot upon it.

Look at verse seven. He also said, "They are not children of God because they are the fleshly seed of Abraham."

The Jews thought that because they were Abraham's literally descendant, because they had the mark of the circumcision in their flesh, they thought that they were the children of Abraham and blessed with him.

But it was said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called,"⁷ way back in Genesis chapter 21.

Thus, the casting out of Ishmael, Abraham's son by the bondwoman Hagar, in no way at all breached the promise of God or the purpose of God at all, or was it an unfaithful act upon God's part to cast out Ishmael from the house of Abraham, because in Genesis chapter 21 and verse 12 God said to Abraham, "Let it not be grievous to you because of Ishmael, because of Hagar. He said, "Listen unto your wife Sarah. Cast out this bondwoman and her son."

You will find that in Genesis 21 and verse 10 and it is pertinent to our study in Romans chapter nine.

⁵ Romans 6:9.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Romans 9:7.

Why cast out the bondwoman and her son, Hagar and Ishmael? Because of this.

“For in Isaac shall thy seed be called.”⁸

He is more than a son of the flesh. He is more than a son of fleshly energy and ability. He is the son of promise through whom the promise will be realized that Abraham will be the father of many nations. The word of promise is this. God will come and Sarah shall have a son.

But yonder in Romans 9:10-13 there is even a stronger example of a sovereign discrimination in Abraham’s very own family, kin and offspring. In fact, in his grandson. In the twin sons of the promised son who was Isaac and his wife Rebecca.

Now, some might say circumstances and circumstances only determine the distinction between Ishmael and Isaac in that they had the same father, but they had different mothers and that might be the reason. They were born years apart. They were not twins and Ishmael persecuted and he mocked Isaac. And when Sarah saw that, she had him cast out of the house.

Nothing but sovereignty, however, explains the distinction between Jacob and Esau. For consider, if you will, what Paul says here in this place. They had the same father and they had the same mother. They were even twins. They were conceived at the same time, Genesis 25 and 21.

And Esau was even the first born, Genesis 25 and verse 25, and yet God loved Jacob, the second born and hated Esau the first born.

And Paul tells us very clearly this had nothing to do with their birth order. It had absolutely what we read in Romans nine, nothing to do with their birth order. It had nothing to do with any works, good or evil. And the reason is it was settled before they were born or had ever done any good or evil.

If you look at verse 11 Paul declares that these things that he is speaking of were in accordance with the purpose of God in accordance with election, “that the purpose of God according to election might stand,”⁹ which, in fact, explains the reason why some of Abraham’s seed believed and some did not. For as stated in Romans 11 and verse five as concerns the Jew, quote, “At this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”¹⁰

Just as there was in Elijah’s time in 1 Kings 19, God said, “I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.”¹¹

⁸ Genesis 21:12.

⁹ Romans 9:11.

¹⁰ Romans 11:5.

¹¹ Romans 11:4.

Look again in Romans 11 and verse seven, another distinction is made regarding Israel and this time in Israel it is between the elect and the rest, the remainder saying, what Israel sought it did not obtain, that is, a justifying righteousness in the sight of God.

But thought the whole of Israel did not obtain it, the chosen and elected individuals did. Look at Romans 11 and verse seven closer some time. And the rest were hardened. The elect obtained it and the rest were hardened or blinded.

Thus, the only explanation why so many Jews did not obtain righteousness by an through Christ while others did, is the purpose of God according to election in verse 11.

Also if you look in verse 11, Paul not only grounds it in the purpose of God according to election, but notice, to overthrow strong human prejudice and bias against sovereign election he adds, notice, that such purpose might stand and that it runs not, that is, it is attained not by works, not by works at all, but by the call of God, not of works, but of him that calleth. The effectual call of almighty God.

Now we come to that verse, that dreaded verse, verse 13. It is the from Paul the shot heard round the world of Christendom, a further justification of the doctrine that he had been advancing earlier in Romans nine that all Israel are not Israel and that the children of the flesh, such as Ishmael, but the children of the promise are counted as the seed, such as Isaac and Jacob.

Notice again here he says, "It is written."¹²

He means in the Old Testament oracles. And the place that he refers to is Malachi chapter one. Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament and right there in the chapter one, verses one through three it is written what Paul quotes, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."¹³

Now before we look at this, let us realize that this is really a thorn in the side of those who hold to the universal love of God and universal atonement. They have gone to great lengths, dishonest lengths, may I say, to blunt the words of Paul, "Esau have I hated."¹⁴ They make it to mean, "Esau I loved less." Some render it, "Esau have I slighted." You might find that in some of the newer translations of the Scripture. Some say it means, "Esau I regarded less."

The are content with such an obvious distortion of the Scripture to be rid of a hard saying in the Word of God.

So a double reply, I believe, is in order to the view that they try to take to get around the Scripture.

¹² Romans 9:13.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Number one, remember something. I am not aware that the Arminians actually hold the view that God loves some more and some less until they are pinched with this text in Romans nine and verse 13. Then they invent new meaning of words so that now hate means to love less.

And then we ask, “Well, if hate means to love less, does love then mean to hate less on the other hand?” If God loved Esau less did he hate Jacob less?

Esau I have hated.

You know, it is amazing how some good theologians have stumbled here. This is a hard saying for people to agree with and to swallow. Even Charles Hodge I read this week, professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, held the view on Romans nine and verse 13 that hatred here could and should be understood simply as loved less.

Another example of Arminian double speak is seen in a book, a set of books that I have by Kenneth Weith, *Study in the New Testament Word Pictures*. And he wrote on Romans nine and verse 13, quote, “The word ‘hate’ is μισεω (mis-eh’-o) meaning to hate. Here it does not retain its original meaning of literal hatred, but a lesser degree of love. God cannot be said to hate anyone. The idea is Jacob I loved, but I Esau I love less,” unquote. The words of Kenneth Weith.

Now just for the sake of comparison, this is the word “hate” here applied unto Esau. It is the same word that Paul uses in Romans chapter seven and verse 15, “What I hate that I do.”¹⁵ It is the same word that we have in Romans 9:13.

Does Paul mean what I love less that I do? Does he mean what I love less that is what I wind up doing?

Jude verse 23 we have the same word again. Here the text is, “...hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”¹⁶

Does Jude mean loving less the garment spotted by the flesh?

One more, Hebrews chapter one and verse nine, a prophecy concerning our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ when it is said of the Son, quote, “Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity,”¹⁷ unquote.

Now would any dare that any say that the Son only loved iniquity less?

“Thou hast loved righteousness, and loved iniquity less.” Silly, isn’t it?

¹⁵ Romans 7:15.

¹⁶ Jude 23.

¹⁷ Hebrews 1:9.

Secondly, even if it be conceded here that word hate only means to love less, that God had different degrees of love for Jacob and for Esau, let me tell you this is not the end of the matter. You haven't gotten over it yet. You are not out of the woods, because we would come back with the question, "What reason will you give us why God should love Esau less than he loved Jacob?"

What reason could God have to have a greater degree of love for Jacob and a lesser degree of love unto Esau, except that God hates the sin of sinners is how some get around it?

Then some do argue not Esau personally did God hate, but his sins, his ways, his works, his doing, not Esau, but his sin, that God hated the sins of Esau, but he loved the person or the individual of Esau.

But is not all clear in verse 11? He excludes all consideration of good or evil. Both of them are absolutely excluded, of sin as well as works. That for the simple reason, the divine determination was made concerning them before they were born or had done any good or evil.

Look at the tie between verse 11 and 12 as to Rebecca conceiving before they were born. Therefore, before they did any good or evil it was said to their mother, these words, "The elder shall serve the younger."¹⁸

Before they came to term and before they were born, the elder shall serve the younger. You will find this in Genesis 25 and verse 23. Before they saw the light of day, before their acts or their action, before the exchange of the birthright, when Esau sold it unto Jacob, before Jacob called upon the name the Lord after sleeping the night with his head upon a pillow and before Esau swore in his wrath that he would kill Jacob for what he had done. While they were yet in the womb two things are noted, Genesis chapter 25, which led to a special revelation to Rebecca who was their mother.

Number one, she had conceived twins and as they developed they struggled together in the womb. They struggled together within her. And the implication is that it was more than the ordinary movement that women feel when they are becoming mothers. It was excessive and that is why it troubled Rebecca and why she went before the Lord.

I notice that the NIV renders it this way, quote, "The babies jostled each other within her," unquote.

Calvin described it this way. "Carrying on intestine war," unquote.

Maybe this is a digression which I hope will not distract our minds off of the subject where we are this morning and the text at hand, but remember in Luke chapter one and verse 41 when John the Baptist and Jesus were yet in the wombs of their mothers respectively and on a certain occasion their mothers came together for a visit that John

¹⁸ Romans 9:12.

leaped in the womb of his mother Elisabeth. And you can see that in verse 44 of that chapter of Luke.

Again, this was more than normal movement and the ordinary. Elisabeth had never felt this before. As they came together, John leaped in the womb in the presence of Jesus the very Son of God.

And, as I heard one preacher say one time, John leaped in the womb as if to say, “That’s him, that’s him, that’s him,” as he stood there in the presence of our Lord.

Also remember an amazing thing in Luke one and 15. He, John would be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother’s womb is the prophecy of that man.

Thus, in the case of these two mothers there were evidential circumstances of something that was extraordinary and even a precursor of things to come that were extraordinary and in the case of Rebecca not only did the twins struggle and tussle in the womb, but when they were born and Esau came out first, Jacob took hold upon his heel, if you remember that passage of Scripture. Thus, he was named “heel snatcher or supplanter,” Genesis 27 and verse 36, יַעֲקֹב (yah-ak-obe’), that is, heel snatcher or supplanter, which God later changed his name to Israel in Genesis 32 and 28, יִשְׂרָאֵל (yis-raw-ale’), a prince having power with God.

From supplanter, to prince with God. His name was changed.

Now, one more thing. It is not surprising, therefore that Rebecca favored Jacob of the two sons. He was her favorite. She looked over him with a special love and devotion, Genesis 25 and verse 28.

Isaac loved Esau because he would go in the field and bring him fresh meat and venison. And he loved and favored Esau because he kept him well supplied with wild game with which to eat, while Rebecca was motivated by that revelation received during her pregnancy, the younger shall rule of the elder. Her affections, therefore, were stronger toward the younger, that is toward Jacob. And she helped him obtain meat for Esau. For the prophecy was the elder shall serve the younger.

And, by the way, consider Genesis 27 and verse 29. When Isaac thought that he was blessing Esau, but it was Jacob dressed up in hair skin he said this to him.

“Be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother’s sons bow down to thee.”¹⁹

He said that to Jacob, though unbeknowing yet he said it unto him.

In Genesis 27 Isaac said unto Esau in verse 40, “Thou shalt serve thy brother for he had sent forth an irrevocable blessing upon Jacob that he could not call back.”

¹⁹ Genesis 27:29.

Now Arminians have tried everything that their wits can fashion to blunt the truth of Romans nine verse 10 through 13, such as saying some of them deny that Paul is even speaking of the spiritual state of these two sons in this place, that it is not about election and reprobation, they say, nothing to do with salvation, they say. The truth is, he is talking about their spiritual state to illustrate the two kinds of descendants of Abraham. He speaks in verse 11 of the purpose of God according to election. He speaks of calling in that verse.

And Arminians also deny that Paul is speaking of the individuals Jacob and Esau, but is only speaking of their posterity or their offspring. This they argue from Genesis 25:23.

“Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people.”²⁰

And they argue also from Malachi at chapter 1:1-3 through three which does speak of the descendants of Jacob and of Esau.

But one thing is beyond dispute in Romans 9:10-13. Paul is speaking of the individuals Jacob and Esau. If not, then it has no bearing on Paul’s line of reasoning or argument at all.

“Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”²¹

Because we see here in verses 10 through verse 13 how it is the individuals Jacob and Esau that are his examples and that are in view of the apostle.

Verse 10 when Rebecca conceived.

Verse 11 the children he speaks of.

Verse 11, “The elder shall serve the younger.”²²

Verse 13, “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”²³

So that even in Malachi one, the distinction between Israel and the Edomites was owing to the original distinction between progenitors, Jacob and Esau. Thus, God loved Israel and treated them favorably while laying Edom waste, their mountains and their heritage waste.

John Murray wrote in relation to the passage in Malachi chapter one, these words, quote, “The judgments upon the Edomites imply the disfavor of God,” unquote.

²⁰ Genesis 25:23.

²¹ Romans 9:13.

²² Romans 9:12.

²³ Romans 9:13.

And they have a direct connection to the declaration, “Esau have I hated.”

Let us bear this in mind. This was not less love. This was not less favor to Esau as less love or less favor hardly accounts for the sever judgment against the Edomite was a positive disfavor. Esau have I hated.

It was a holy hatred, not the kind of hatred we have which is always motivated by something sinful. It was not born on account of his character or of his action that he did not love Jacob for doing good or hate Esau for doing evil. Paul is very clear. Jacob did no good that caused God to fix his love upon him. Esau did no evil that caused God to fix his hatred upon them.

And then we have something else and that is that in their live and experience manifestation this love and hatred was manifested toward the actions of the boys themselves. Esau selling his birthright, hating it despising it. Jacob getting the blessing. These were the outworking of the sovereign purpose of God to bring to pass the saying, “The elder shall serve the younger.”²⁴

Look again now at Romans 9:10-13 when Rebecca had conceived in verse 12.

“It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger,”²⁵ before they were born, before they did good, before they did evil. This was the purpose of God according to election.

There is another name for this hatred of God toward Esau, another doctrine here, that is the doctrine of reprobation that hate is the designation of the reprobate. So love is the designation of the elect.

God’s love is particular. Whom he loves he deals with redemptively. The objects of God’s love are all redemptively redeemed by Christ because, as Ephesians two and verse four, “for his great love wherewith he loved us.”²⁶

He loved his own which were in the world. He loved them to the end, John 13 and verse one.

Such distinctions are meaningless, brother and sister, if God loves all alike. These following Scriptures and distinctions are meaningless if God loves everyone exactly alike.

Consider Proverbs three and 12 and together with Hebrews chapter 12 and verse six.

“Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.”²⁷

²⁴ Romans 9:12.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ephesians 2:4.

²⁷ Hebrews 12:6.

Revelation 3:19 to that church.

“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.”²⁸

Now can you bring up John 3:16? Then we require them to consider the various ways in which the word “world” is used in the Scripture, hardly ever meaning all without exception.

Again, if God loves all without exception what of those who perish in the lake of fire? Does God yet love them? If he loved them as he loved all others, does he yet love them? Will the objects of his love become the objects of his eternal wrath in the life to come? Can God’s love turn into hate in the case of any?

And besides the redemptive love of God is exercised through Jesus Christ and the love of God that comes with election. Those he elected in Christ he loves having made them accepted in the beloved, Ephesians one and verse six. He loves the Son. He loves those chosen in the Son and the Son loves those given unto him by the Father, while the reprobate, not being chosen in Christ or devoid of any divine or saving favor, a positive disfavor is expressed toward them.

“Esau have I hated.”²⁹

And in the providence of God, in the outworking of their lives and the respective love and hatred of God unto those two, God’s dealing with them and their posterity or their descendants clearly, clearly demonstrate the original.

“Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”³⁰

Whom the Lord loves Christ redeems. Then he calls them and he blesses them. Those he loves are graciously forgiven. Those he hates are justly and righteously punished for their actual sins against God.

This is in accordance with the purpose of God according to election.

What shall we say?

“Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”³¹

There it is. There it is by name.

²⁸ Revelation 3:19.

²⁹ Romans 9:13.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.