

Gratitude: Spiritual Gifts: Showing Mercy, Romans 9:10-13

The word *racham* is translated mercy but refers to an intensification of unconditional love and is expressed in lovingkindness.

God needed a disciplined people who had the courage to fight for the land He promised to give them.

Don't be confused; God could take the land all by Himself. If He decided to do everything, He wouldn't need us. He has created us and we, from our own free will have sinned and fallen into imperfection. He in His grace and mercy has decided to try and make the most of a bad situation. He therefore chose Israel to be His first Client Nation. In order for the people to take the land they must fight the people who are already there. In order for the people to maintain the land once taken they must be able to defend it. In order to determine who will fight and who will flee, God is forced to conduct tests. They are designed to reveal His plan and to demonstrate His grace and mercy while the people either respond through faith or react through unbelief.

Those who respond through faith will be the ones who will fight under Joshua. They will be authority oriented and skilled in crisis management. Those who react through unbelief will be the ones whose bodies will be strewn all over the *Jornada*. Yet during the 40-year period of testing, God made it clear that he would demonstrate consistent lovingkindness and longsuffering toward these people.

Exodus 33:19 - "I have been gracious on whom I will be gracious and I have had mercy on whom I will have mercy."

Whereas God was emphasizing his love and mercy to a rebellious generation, Paul uses the same verse to emphasize the imputation of escrow blessings in the Church Age.

Romans 9:15 NAS - For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."

This verse is a quote by Paul of the Lord's comment to Moses in Exodus 33:19.

Following Operation Golden Calf, Moses asked God not to abandon Israel, however if justice had executed the requirements of righteousness, then the Jewish nation would have been destroyed. Moses hoped that because He had won the favor of God that the Lord would spare the Jews and resume the journey with them in the *Jornada*. But God's answer was clear and simple, "*I am the One Who determines if grace and mercy is to be forthcoming, not the merit or favor of any man.*"

Again, we see that nothing depends on man. God showed grace and mercy to the Jews in time because His sovereignty decreed it in eternity past. Paul makes the same argument to explain why Jacob was favored by God over Esau.

Romans 9:10 - Rebekah, conceived twins by one man, Isaac our father,

Romans 9:11 - for not yet having been born, not having practiced any good or evil, in order that God's purpose according to His election might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls,

Romans 9:12 - it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger."

Romans 9:13 - Just as it stands written, "I love that Jacob but I hate that Esau."

There was no logical reason from human viewpoint that the younger Jacob would receive the privileges of the firstborn over Esau who was the firstborn. These things however were determined during Rebekah's pregnancy. Neither had sinned since neither had been born. If any favor was to be forthcoming it would naturally fall on Esau because of primogeniture—an exclusive right of inheritance belonging to the eldest son.

But in eternity past omniscience recognized that the firstborn Esau would reject Christ as Savior while the younger Jacob would accept Him. God decreed in eternity past that He would elect those who believe in Christ while leaving in just condemnation all those who do not believe. Omniscience knew that the older Esau would be an unbeliever while the younger Jacob would be a believer.

God's view of the two boys was expressed in anthropomorphisms, "*He loved that Jacob, but He hated that Esau.*" This is an expression of the policy of divine integrity. There is a righteous standard: faith alone in Christ alone. From this principal justice must apply salvation to those who believe and continue condemnation on those who do not believe.

Toward Jacob, justice was able to express lovingkindness, while to Esau He was forced to express condemnation. Then in our passage, Romans 9:15, we see that He directs His mercy and compassion towards Jacob and not towards Esau.