They Are Not All Israel

At the beginning of Romans 9 we have seen that Paul is in great anguish. The reason for it is that the Jews, his fellow Israelites, in spite of the many privileges that belong to them have been rejected by God.

- What are the privileges Paul lists that belong to Israel (verses 4 and 5)?

- Israel's rejection raises a question that must be answered. What about the promises? What about promises like, "I will be their God and they will be my people?" Has God failed to keep His promises? Has God's word failed? What is Paul's answer to that question (verse 6a)?

- What is the first thing Paul says in support of His answer — it's the foundation for the rest of his case (verse 6b)?

- How does Paul explain what he means when he says, "They are not all Israel who are of Israel" (verses 7 and 8)?

- How does Paul prove the point he has made in verse 6 (verses 7 and 9 – 13)?

- Why, do you think, does Paul emphasise that Sarah's son was born as a result of a promise made by God (verse 9)?

- What does Paul want us to see as the reason for Jacob being born a child of the promise when Esau was not (verses 11 – 13)?

- Why is it important to know that it is God's choice that determines who is a true Israelite (verse 11)?

- What would you say to someone who asks, Why is the doctrine of election so important?