

## December 7 Answers

- 1) Paul lamented the fact that the majority of his own people, the **Jews**, were not saved. However, Israel's lack of faith did not mean that God's Word had failed, because the promise was to the Israel of **faith**, not **ethnic** Israel (Rom 9:6–7). This meant that **physical** descent did not equal participation in the promised blessing of salvation. Was this unjust? By no means! God is free to grant mercy as He chooses, and by granting mercy to **all** (Rom 11:32), God showed that participation in the promised blessing has nothing to do with **human** effort (Rom 9:16). That being said, we are accountable for our sin, for God created us as **free** agents, and we're responsible for our decisions (Rom 9:19–23). God provided access to the promised blessing by **faith** in Jesus Christ, not by **works** of the law (Rom 9:32). This is precisely where the Jews went wrong, for they sought to establish their own righteousness through **law-keeping** rather than seeking God's righteousness by faith. The law had a righteousness that led to life in the sense that those who kept the law avoided the **death** that was threatened to law-breakers, but it never offered **spiritual** life. Did Israel's unbelief mean that God had rejected His people? By no means! There is even now a **remnant** of believing Jews who participate in the promised blessing by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. The Jews' rejection of Christ meant the **reconciliation** of the world to God (Rom 11:15). This implied that the Gentiles should not be **arrogant** of their inclusion in the olive tree of believing Israel, for even though unbelieving branches were **broken** off and they were grafted in, they too would be cut off if they did not **continue** by faith in God's kindness.