

Romans 9-11 **Parenthetical or Pivotal: The Missing Link**

The Place of Romans 9-11

Paul has dealt with the theology of righteousness- (Positional-Justification and Practical- Sanctification) in chapter. 1-8

A. The Problem - Sin

1. Paul introduces the concept 1:16-17
(Is salvation the same as justification or a broader category?)
2. Paul explains that all have fallen 1-3
 - Pagans 1:18-32
 - Cultured gentiles 2:1-16
 - Jews 2:17-3:18

Conclusion: All have sinned and fallen short 3:23, 6:23

B. The Solution

Salvation is to be seen as past, present and future

1. Past - justification by faith 4:1-5:21 - Penalty of sin
(Romans 5:10 is beginning the transition)
2. Present - sanctification 6:1-8:18 - Power of sin
3. Future - glorification 8:19-39 - Presence of sin

Conclusion: In light of what God has done there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God.

NB: Instead of going on from the positional to the practical as is Paul's custom in Ephesians (Eph. 1-3 positional/doctrinal, 4-6 practical/deportment) and Colossians, Paul now takes on this pivotal topic of Israel. Why??

If at the end of chapter 8, Paul says there is nothing that can separate us from God's love, then does the history of the Jews reveal that perhaps there is something that can stop God's love? Perhaps He stopped loving the Jews. Can His love and faithfulness stop or

change? If it could change for the covenantal people, then could it change for the church?

Paul is to answer three questions:

1. *Why are so few Jews being saved?*

If the gospel is to the Jews first and it is powerful (1:16) then, why is it not working as it should?

Answer: Today, there is a remnant (11:1-10). Tomorrow, all Israel will be saved (11:23-32)

2. *How can the gentiles trust God's Word when His promises to Israel have not been fulfilled?*

Answer: Israel's failure is related to pride and not with God. Israel's rejection is not complete or total.

3. *Has the gospel to the gentiles nullified the future promise or fulfillment to Israel?*

Answer: Israel's rejection is not fatal or final. There is a future day for the Jews.

These three questions are answering the basic question of 3:1 "Then what advantage has the Jew...?"

These questions also allow Paul to answer the question raised from the promise of chapter 8 that the love of God will not fail. The Jews will be back in the picture--and the land.

How Safe and Secure Are Gods Saints?

Romans 9:1-33

I. The Predicament of Paul 9:1-5

II. The Power of God 9:6-13

A. The Question- Has God failed?

B. The Answer- NO

1. Pronouncement of the Answer 6a

2. Principle of Selection :6b-7

3. Proof of the Principle :8-13

a. Declaration 8

b. Demonstration 9-13

Child of Promise: Abraham Two Sons (Gen. 18:10)

Child of Purpose: Rebecca Two Sons (Gen 25:21-23)

III. The Person of God 9:14-18

A. Question- Is God Evil? 14a

B. Answer- NO 14b

C. Explanation 15-17

To Moses (Ex 33:19)

The principle of Sovereign Choice

To Pharaoh (Ex 9:16)

The Principle of Sovereign Control :17

The Lord raised up Pharaoh to his high position for His purpose and plan.

(This is does not say that God elected Pharaoh to hell- more in 9:22)

D. Conclusion :18

Does this imply that God hardened Pharaoh's heart? See 9:22

Pharaoh in Exodus 8 and 9, as well as the Book of Romans hardened his heart but we also find that God hardened Pharaoh's heart (see Exodus 8:15, 32, 9: 34, Exodus 7:13, 22, 8:19, 9:7,35, also see Exodus 4:21, 7:3, 9:12, 10:1, 10:20, 27, 11:10, 14:4) How can both be true? How can we harmonize the two ideas that God hardened Pharaoh's heart and yet Pharaoh hardened his own heart? We must remember the context in that Pharaoh rejected the Lord many times before these events. It is also true that God through His moral law reached out to all men not just to Pharaoh as Paul indicated in Romans 1:20-23. The focus in Rom. 9:17& 22 is on Pharaoh alone as opposed to a general audience. What is interesting is that, in Romans 9:22, it appears that God gave Pharaoh a chance and patiently endured his blasphemy and his treachery. However, each time Pharaoh apparently and insincerely repented, his heart seemed to get a bit harder. Even though God was merciful, it resulted in God indirectly hardening Pharaoh's heart through the personal action of Pharaoh. (He seared his own conscience) In Exodus 9:16 it is clear that Pharaoh was allowed by God to remain for His ultimate glory. God could have dealt with him many times before, but God's attributes of longsuffering and mercy permitted Pharaoh to become the agent and take the initiative of his hardening his own heart. (Romans 9:22)

IV. The Problem for Man 9:19-21

A. Question Why Does God Find Me Guilty? :19

B. Answer- "Who Are you Oh man" :20-21

V. The Proposal of God 9:22-29

A. The Power of God :22-24

1. A Theological Issue

This opens up a great theological difficulty and question. We can only look at it briefly. Does this indicate that man has no free will and that God is the author of sin or does man have free will and hence man is the author of sin?

Hard Determinism:

E.H. Palmer, a defender of Dortian Calvinism puts it this way "foreordination means God's sovereign plan, whereby He decides all that is to happen in the

entire universe . . . He decides and causes all things to happen that do happen . . . He has foreordained everything . . . : The moving of a finger, the beating of the heart, the laughter of a girl, the mistake of a typist, even sin”.

Dave Anderson reveals the implications of such a view as he states:
“Hence, in this view of hard determinism all things happen not only according to the counsel of His Will but because God determines that they will happen and actively initiates them often using secondary or instrumental causation but He is still the primary efficient cause of all actions in the universe. It’s no good simply to say that He is not the instrumental cause for in this system He is both the primary efficient cause and the instrumental cause indirectly, although He may use other instrumental causation directly as well. But at the end of the day, He is responsible because He planned all things to take place. Hence, when one looks at predestination and double predestination it simply results in this formula: A person will spend eternity in hell because God determined before all time that he would. Since God elects before the foundation of the world and since God knows all things in an instant, not a linear fashion, therefore, God determined before all time that a person born in time would spend eternity in hell.”

John Calvin states: “all external circumstances which contribute to the binding of the reprobate are the instruments of His wrath. Satan himself who works inwardly with compelling power is God’s minister in such a way that he acts only by His command. Paul does not inform us that the ruin of the ungodly is foreseen by the Lord but that it is ordained by His counsel and Will. Solomon also teaches us that not only was the destruction of the ungodly foreknown but the ungodly themselves have been created for the specific purpose of perishing”. (Calvin’s Commentaries)
Hence this leads to Double predestination

Will Durant, the famous philosopher, concluded of John Calvin’s doctrine double predestination by saying “we shall always find it hard to love the man who darkened the human soul with a most absurd and blasphemous conception of God in all the long and honored history of nonsense” (The Story of Civilization vol. 6)

“You will be saved or damned **for** all eternity
because you were saved or damned **from** all eternity.” George Bryson

2. Expository Details (:22-23)

a. The Word ‘prepare’ in v 23

proaitoimase. Aorist tense active voice, third person singular. The subject of the verb is God and He was actively involved in the preparation of this vessel of mercy ahead of time. The use of a prefix “Pro” on the verb which is translated by the term “beforehand” indicates that God did this prior to the

events that leads to His glory. God is the direct agent and the efficient cause of the action.

b. The Word Prepare in v :22

katartismena. The verb is a perfect participle, neuter plural, middle or passive voice which agrees with the word ‘vessels’. The perfect tense describes “a state of being” concerning the vessels. The voice of the term is in the middle or passive voice (they are the same form so context determines) If passive then the vessels had been prepared- hardened hearts. If middle it tells us first that God is not the one who is directly involved in this action or operation at all. God is not the subject of this verb and the verb is not active in its voice. The middle voice would indicate that the subject acts upon itself. In Greek the middle voice has the idea of “I washed myself”, “I prepared myself”. Hence, the vessels of wrath did it to themselves.

By translating the verb in verse 23 the same as verse 22, even though there is a different word and a different tense and different voice, it makes it sound like God prepared both vessels of wrath just as He did those of mercy, but this is not what happened. The vessels of mercy were prepared beforehand which the prepositional suffix ‘pro’ makes evident, but the vessels of wrath did it to themselves if the middle voice is maintained. (See Dave Anderson FGS)

The question of election and free will has always been and will continue to be a theological point of debate. Perhaps we can classify it as a mystery that we might not fully determine what exactly is in the mind of God. (Perhaps more next week???)

B The Plan of God

1. Too the Gentiles 24-26

Paul applies a promise made to Israel toward the Gentiles (Hosea 1-2)

2. Too the Israelite 27-29

Paul utilizes Isa. 10 to remind the Roman church that God has a plan for the Jews (See Romans 11:25-26)

The mercy of God is to both Jews and Gentiles (Rom 1:16-17)

VI. The Pondering of the Message 9:30-33

A. Question- What shall we say?

B. Answer

1. WHAT- Gentiles received salvation even though they were not looking for it. Israel looked for it through LAW and did not get it.

2. WHY- Looked for it through works- But no flesh justified by works of the law- (Rom 3:19-24 Gal 2:16)
They rejected the very solution to their problem.

They stumbled over the provision of the stone.
But “He who believes in Him will not be disappointed.” 9:33
This sets up the key passage of Rom 10:9-10

Notice The gentiles who were reject by God found mercy from God
The Jews who were chosen by God rejected God & God rejected them Matt 23

The Principle is seen in that the publicans and sinner responded to Jesus
while the religious leaders- Pharisees rejected Jesus.

The plan and purpose of God will find its perfect end with the people of God. His plan is from eternity past to eternity future and includes both Jew and Gentile and this is why Paul is “not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God unto salvation for the Jew first and also to the Greek.” Rom 1:16-17

And this is why Paul concludes in Rom 11:33 “Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable are His ways.”

**Our God is an awesome God- He reigns from heaven above.
Worship Him and Let God be God to you.**