

Romans Chapter 9

Romans 9:1-2 "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost," "That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart."

We will see in the beginning of this chapter a sorrowful Paul. As we have said before in these lessons, Paul was a Pharisee and he never would quite give up on his Jewish brothers. He went to great lengths to try to reach them over and over. His greatest opposition came from his own people. In many cases, Paul practiced the old Jewish law to try to win them to Christ, but even this failed and Paul went away sorrowful.

Your "conscience" and "In the Holy Spirit" is speaking of only when the Spirit controls the conscience, can it be trusted, but it remains imperfect and its warnings must always be evaluated against the Word of God.

It is a very good idea that any time you hear something you are not sure of, that you confirm it by the Word of God. That's what the Bereans' did in Acts.

Acts 17:10-11 "And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming [thither] went into the synagogue of the Jews." "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Romans 9:3 "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:"

The Greek word for accursed is anathema meaning "to devote to destruction in eternal hell".

We see here, in this verse that Paul would have gone to almost any length to have his Israelite brothers come to Christ. He says that he would even give up his own salvation, if this would have saved them. Paul makes it clear, here, that these Israelites are his brothers in the flesh, not the spirit. His spiritual brothers are Christians.

Although Paul understood the exchange he was suggesting was impossible, it was still the sincere expression of his deep love for his fellow Jews.

Romans 9:4 "Who are Israelites; to whom [pertaineth] the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service [of God], and the promises;"

This just means that God had chosen the Hebrews (Israelites), to give the law to, and he had chosen them to be a peculiar people set aside to worship Him. God's first choice for the salvation message to go to was these Israelites.

Three times in the New Testament the word "covenants" is used in the plural. All but one of God's covenants with man are eternal and unilateral, that is God promised to accomplish

something based on His own character and not on the response or actions of the promised beneficiary. The 6 biblical covenants include:

- (1) The covenant with Noah;
- (2) The covenant with Abraham;
- (3) The covenant of law given through Moses at Sinai (The Mosaic Covenant);
- (4) The priestly covenant;
- (5) The covenant of an eternal kingdom through David's greatest Son;
- (6) The New Covenant.

All but the Mosaic Covenant are eternal and unilateral. (Unilateral means something which is done by only one party). It is neither, since Israel's sin abrogated it and it has been replaced by the New Covenant.

Romans 9:5 "Whose [are] the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ [came], who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

The fathers mentioned here are the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob through whom the promises of the Messiah were fulfilled.

"Christ ... God blessed for ever" is not intended primarily as a benediction, but as an affirmation of the sovereignty and deity of Christ.

Romans 9:6 "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they [are] not all Israel, which are of Israel:"

This refers specifically to the privileges and promises God had revealed to Israel. Not all Israel who are of Israel means that not all the physical descendants of Abraham are true heirs of the promise.

Those who follow God are His children. The followers of God which are not true Jews are considered grafted in Jews. Not those who were born into the house, but those who chose to follow God.

Romans 9:7 "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, [are they] all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called."

Isaac was the son of promise. He represented the Spirit. Abraham had a son of the flesh (Ishmael). The promises God had made to Abraham came through the Spirit, not through the flesh. You see from this that the Spirit of God and the promises thereof are for the Spirit, and not for the flesh.

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

To illustrate the truth of verse 6, Paul reminds his readers that even the racial and national promises made to Abraham were not made to every physical descendant of his, but only to those who came through Isaac.

Romans 9:8 "That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these [are] not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

“Children of the flesh” is a reference to Abraham's other children by Hagar and Keturah who were not chosen to receive the national promises made to him.

“Children of God: Paul’s point is just as not all of Abraham’s descendants who belonged to the physical people of God, or national Israel - not all of those who are true children of Abraham through Isaac are the true spiritual people of God and enjoy the promises made to Abraham’s spiritual children.

Romans 9:9 "For this [is] the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son."

This scripture comes from (Genesis. 18).

Gen. 18:10 “And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard [it] in the tent door, which [was] behind him.”

Genesis 17:19 "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, [and] with his seed after him." You see again here that the promise that God made to Abraham was to come through the child of promise (Isaac), the child of the spirit.

We can see the chain of blessings from the following verse (in Genesis).

Genesis 25:11 "And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi."

Romans 9:10 "And not only [this]; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, [even] by our father Isaac;"

Rebecca also had 2 sons; one of the flesh (Esau) and a son who the promises of God would flow through (Jacob), whose name would be changed to Israel.

Romans 9:11-12 "(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."

This business of election is sometimes hard to explain. We find that all through the Bible there are people who have been chosen out and called to do a certain thing for God. A very good

example of that is John the Baptist who seemed to live for one purpose (to tell of the coming Messiah). God has elected that certain things will happen to get the job done that He wants done.

We see in the verse above, that He has chosen Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to funnel the spiritual blessings to all the believers in the world.

I Peter 1:2 "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

We see from this, that God actually knew from the foundation of the world who would choose to follow Him and who would not. He did not predestine, He foreknew.

If we look back into Genesis we find this about Esau and Jacob as this was told to Rebecca.

Gen. 25:23 "And the LORD said unto her, Two nations [are] in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and [the one] people shall be stronger than [the other] people; and the elder shall serve the younger."

We see in this that Ishmael (son of the flesh), served Isaac (son of the spirit). We also see in this, that Esau (the oldest son), served Jacob (the younger son). Since we are looking at the spiritual side of these lessons, we can not overlook the fact that the law was given first to the physical house of Israel, and that grace was given to the spiritual house of Israel (Christians). Grace is better than the law.

Romans 9:13 "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

Jacob and Esau were born approximately in 2005 B.C. Esau was the first born and when he was born, it was discovered that Jacob was holding onto his heel. He was called "heel-grabber". It is of Hebrew origin, and its meaning is "he who supplants, trips up another and takes his place."

Esau was also the father of the Edomites.

We know that God would not hate Esau without a cause. God hated Esau, not because of who he was, but because he did not regard his birthright as being very valuable. In fact, he thought so little of it that he sold it to his brother for a bowl of soup.

Malachi 1:2-3 "I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? [Was] not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob," "And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness."

The blessing of God through Abraham and Isaac then would come through the second son Jacob. From him, the 12 tribes of Israel would come. I say again, God did not just hate Esau without a cause. Esau turned his back on God.

Now having said all of that let me explain the love and hate being mentioned.

Actual emotional hatred for Esau and his offspring is not the point here. Genesis mentions no divine hatred toward Esau but (Obadiah 1-21), indicated that the Lord's hatred was against Esau's idolatrous descendants. In the same way, the Lord's love for Jacob refers to his descendants who were His sovereignly elected people through whom the world's Redeemer would come.

The love/hate relationship language does not signify a comparative love in which God loved Jacob more and Esau less. Rather, the context here speaks of love as "choosing for intimate fellowship" and hate as "not choosing for intimate fellowship" in the realm of redemption.

Romans 9:14 "What shall we say then? [Is there] unrighteousness with God? God forbid."

If this had been predestined some would say this was unfair, but this was not predestined, only known ahead of time by God.

Paul had once again anticipated his reader's objection to Paul's theology: If God were to choose some people for salvation and pass over others apart from their merits or actions, that would make God arbitrary and unfair.

Romans 9:15 "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

It is God's world and we are His creation. He can do with us whatever He chooses to do. We are His creation and He is the Creator.

This is quoted from (Exodus 33:19). In response to the accusation that such a teaching about God's sovereign election is inconsistent with His fairness, Paul cites this text from the Old Testament that clearly indicates that God is absolutely sovereign, and does elect who will be saved without violating His other attributes. He determines who receives mercy.

Romans 9:16 "So then [it is] not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."

Many will seek to do the things of God, but many will do these things for the wrong reasons. Just being a good person and doing things their way according to how they believe, no matter what they do, will not be shown mercy. We live in a society today that this has become the norm. Many have created their own God instead of obeying God's Word. This will be a fatal mistake as many in that day will cry out "Lord, Lord" but the Lord will tell them, "Depart, I never knew you."

It is God and He alone who shows mercy. It is His gracious choice of certain people unto eternal life. Salvation is not initiated by human choice and even faith is a gift of God. Salvation is never merited by human effort.

1 Peter 2:9-10 "But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his

marvelous light:" "Which in time past [were] not a people, but [are] now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

We read also in Titus:

Titus 3:5 "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"

Romans 9:17 "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."

This Old Testament quote proves that God does sovereignly choose who will serve His purposes and how. The "raised thee up", was often used to describe the rise of leaders and countries to positions of prominence. Pharaoh no doubt thought his position and actions were of his own free choice to accomplish his own purposes, but in reality, he was there to serve God's purpose.

We know that the 10 plagues that came upon Egypt were for the purpose of discrediting the false gods of Egypt. Egypt represents the world. God shows, through Pharaoh's rebellion, that the gods of this world are no match for the real God. We see an almost identical Scripture in the Old Testament account of this event.

Exodus 9:16 "And in very deed for this [cause] have I raised thee up, for to show [in] thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."

1 Samuel 2:7-8 "The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up." "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, [and] lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set [them] among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth [are] the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them."

Look also at Proverbs:

Proverbs 16:4 "The LORD hath made all [things] for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."

This all speaks for itself, we need no more comment here.

Romans Chapter 9 Questions

1. Paul says in verse 1, that what bears him witness?
2. Why did Paul keep on trying to win the Jews to Jesus?
3. In the third verse, what did Paul say he wished himself, if it would save his Jewish brothers?

4. These Physical Israelites were Paul's brothers in the _____.
5. Who were Paul's spiritual brothers?
6. Who had God chosen to give the law to?
7. Who was God's first choice to give the salvation message to?
8. Who does the physical house of Israel belong to?
9. Who do the Christians belong to?
10. Who are the true Israelites?
11. Which of Abraham's sons would the promise come through?
12. Which of Abraham's sons was thought of as the son of the flesh?
13. In Galatians 3:29, we find that who are the heirs?
14. In Galatians 3:26, we find that we are children of God by what?
15. What unbelievable thing can God raise sons of Abraham of, if He has to?
16. In Genesis God promises Abraham a son, what is his name?
17. After Abraham's death, God blessed his son _____.
18. What was the names of the 2 sons of Rebecca?
19. Which of these sons would the blessings of God come through?
20. What are the names of the 3 patriarchs who the blessings would flow through to all believers in God?
21. In 1 Peter 1:2, the elect was according to what?
22. When did God know who would follow Him?
23. God did not predestine, He _____.
24. Since we are looking at the spiritual, what does the fact that the second son ruling over the first tell us?
25. In verse 13, who does God hate?
26. Why did God hate him?
27. What absolutely ridiculous question is asked in verse 14?

28. Why does God not have to explain what He chooses to do?
29. In 1 Peter 2-9, what are those who have come into the Light out of darkness called?
30. Not our righteousness saved us, but what?
31. Why did God bring the 10 plagues on Egypt?
32. In Proverbs, we read that God made all things for whom?
33. We find in 1 Samuel that _____ makes the rich and the poor.