

# The Mystery & Tension of a Sovereign God (Part 2)

September 3, 2023

**Text: Romans 9:14-29**

**Introduction:**

**BIG IDEA:** God's truth is meant to guide us through the mystery and tension **to a place of rest in Him**.

**Review 1<sup>st</sup> Question: If many Jews did not love Jesus, did God's Word FAIL? (6-13)**

- God's Word has not and will never fail.
  - Paul explains that not every Jew born in racial Israel was a member of the true Israel.
  - From the beginning, being a true Jew was a matter of the heart and not something of the flesh.
- Abraham's two sons
  - Ishmael
  - Issac
- Issac's two sons
  - Jacob a pretty rough past but embraced God's promises.
  - Esau traded his stake in God's promise for a bowl of soup.
  - Esau represents those Jews who inwardly trade obedience to God's promise for indulging the lusts of their flesh.
- Why is it some of Abraham's descendants love God (are true Israel), and others do not. Paul's answer in Romans 9:11-13 is not hard to miss, it's just difficult truth to accept.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Question: Is God unjust in how He dispenses \_\_\_\_\_? (14-18)**

- The hardening of Pharaoh's heart is mentioned \_\_\_\_\_ x in Exodus.
  - Exodus 7:3, 13, 14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 12, 34-35; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 13:15; 14:4, 8, 17
- Some verses say God hardened Pharaoh's heart, while others say Pharaoh hardened his own heart.
- *Understanding how God "hardened Pharaoh's heart is the key:*
  - Exodus 34:6-7, God tells us who He is.
  - God hardened Pharaoh's heart with patience, grace, love, and mercy.
- God is not only faithful in His grace, but He is also faithful in His justice.
- The responsibility for Pharaoh's hard heart lies with \_\_\_\_\_ himself because he repeatedly rejected God's offer of grace.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Question: Is God unjust in holding us \_\_\_\_\_? (19-29)**

Answer #1 - God has the \_\_\_\_\_ to do as He wills (20-21)

Answer #2 - God delays his punishment to some in order to show his mercy to others (22-23)

Answer #3 - God \_\_\_\_\_ to show mercy to both Jews and Gentiles (24-29)

### Truth into Action

- Since God can change hearts, **check your heart toward God right now.** [Is there any part of your heart that is hardening toward God?]
- Instead of complaining God is unjust for not saving everyone, **rest in the precious reality that God is gracious and merciful to save anyone.**

### Connect Card:

- **Is there any part of your heart that is hardening toward God?**
- **How can we pray for you?**



Please understand we want to help you know Jesus personally and journey with you in taking fresh steps of obedience daily. We would love to pray with you and for you. Join us at the end of the service for prayer or send us your request on the Connect Card and we will lift them up throughout the week.

### Table Talk

Warm Up: Discuss what the difference is between *JUSTICE* and *MERCY*?

1. Who can you think of, in addition to Paul, who was not seeking God when God found them?
2. If you had to pick one word to define your heart when God found you, what would that be and why (hard, broken, fearful, hopeful, selfish, tender)?
3. Look up the places where the Bible uses the analogy of the potter and the clay that Paul uses (Isaiah 29:16; 45:9–11; Jeremiah 18:1–6).
4. How is your heart toward God now? Is there any part of your heart that is hardening toward God?
5. How would you use Romans 9 to answer someone who says God is unjust?

Closing prayer: God let us grow in understanding of God-thoughts and to live NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL.