

PREDESTINATION AND GOD'S CHOICE: DOES GOD HATE PEOPLE? Romans 9-11

Since the time of Augustine this section has often been misunderstood because it has been interpreted from the point of view of the individual and not as the answer to the BIG questions of the 1st century.

The BIG questions: 1) How can Gentiles enter God's household without circumcision and kosher adherence? 2) Why are so few Jews responding to the gospel?

#2 is the question that Paul is answering. Paul has had to hone his scriptural arguments through lots of intense public disputations with Jews.

Paradigm scripture: Luke 14:15-24

Luke 14:21-24 *"The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.' 22 "'Sir,' the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.' 23 "Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that **my house will be full**. 24 I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet."*

Romans 9-11

Chapter 9—The first reason Israel is not responding is that it is God's plan to reach humanity by promise and not Torah.

Romans 9:8 *In other words, it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring.*

Romans 9:12-13 *not by works but by him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." 13 Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."*

In both Malachi (1:2-3) and here, Jacob and Esau symbolize people groups and NOT individuals. Jacob, the younger rebellious son, represents the sinners and Gentiles; Esau, the elder brother, represents the Jews who sell their inheritance for a bowl of porridge or gruel.

Why has this happened?

Romans 9:30-33 *What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but the people of Israel, who **pursued the law** as the way of righteousness, have not attained their goal. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone. As it is written: "See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who believes in him will never be put to shame."*

Chapter 10—Is the problem that the Jews haven't heard the message?

Romans 10:12-13 *For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

Romans 10:18 *But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did: "Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."*

Romans 10:21 *But concerning Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and **obstinate** people."*

Again, the problem is the refusal to accept Jesus as the Messianic sacrifice instead of relying on Torah adherence.

Chapter 11--Does this mean God hates and rejects Israel? (The Olive Tree)

Romans 11:1 *I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin.*

Romans 11:11-12 *Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their **full inclusion bring!***

Paul looks forward to a time of the full inclusion of the Jews.

Romans 11:19-21 *You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.” Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but tremble. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.*

Romans 11:25-26 *I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, and in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written: “The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.*

Gentile-Christians are to have a humble and faithful attitude about these things.

Insights

1. Predestination is Paul’s “battering ram” doctrine to prove that God has opened the floodgates of heaven to let multiplied millions of “unclean” Gentiles flood into the church. It is NOT a doctrine about a miserly God who picks a few and damns the rest. *Luke 14:23 “...so that **my house will be full!**”*

2. Paul reveals that God is doing everything that can possibly be done to reach humanity without violating human freewill. He is the God of radical love for people.

Romans 5:6-8 *You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. **7** Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. **8** But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

3. God wants us to have the same mindset as He does.

Romans 12:1-2 *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. **2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*