

WOMEN WALKING WISELY
A STUDY OF ROMANS
THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

LESSON 9—ROMANS 9
THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD AND HIS SOVEREIGNTY

WOMEN WALKING WISELY MEETING:
SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

Romans Introduction

NOTE: You will often be asked in our study of the text to define words by looking at the Strong's Concordance to help understand the original meaning of a word in Greek (or Hebrew). You can simply do a Google search and type in Strong's #xxxx & press the enter button. This will take you to sites like biblehub.com or blueletterbible.org for a better understanding of what the specific word means.

Review: Romans 8...The Righteousness of God and Work of the Spirit

Romans 8:1 begins with an amazing truth for those who are in Christ Jesus. Write it down & remind yourself of the truth. What could the law not do? What has God done through His Son, Jesus Christ?

Verses 5 – 17: What does the mind that is set on the flesh produce in man? What does the mind that is set on the Spirit produce?

What picture or illustration does Paul use in v.15 to describe the believer's relationship with God? What family relational words does Paul use to describe this new relationship?

Verses 18 – 30: What did you learn about the anticipation and waiting for the future glory as a daughter of God? Summarize your thoughts.

Verses 31 – 39: Romans 8 ends with a great climatic expression of the richness of the believer's relationship with God. If this was a symphony, it would be played with a joyful crescendo and praise of the certainty & security we have in HIM! Write down any truths that you find encouraging or summarize this final section and meditate on the beauty of this passage.

Read through Romans 9.

This is the basic format for how this Bible study is designed. Following these steps will give us a close up look at the book of Romans. The Bible study steps can be organized as...

1. Read the assigned passage of Romans: Jotting initial thoughts at the end
2. Observe the section: Giving your own heading to the specific section(s) assigned to you
3. Evaluate the chapter: Identify the natural flow in the story as it moves along the chapter
4. Define the characters: Note the main actors in the story and give a description of each
5. Write out your questions: Look for anything you do not know and find the answer if you can
6. Answer the study questions: I will give you questions for each week that we will interact with
7. Interpret the text: Explain what the text said about and to the original audience and why
8. Apply the text: Look for the universal application that is true to the text and yet timeless

Read and Focus—Romans 9:1 – 5

In your first initial reading of these verses, how would you describe Paul's tone as he begins Romans 9? What emotions or feelings is he conveying in this opening part of the chapter?

Verse 1: As Paul transitions from the climactic close of Romans 8 to the beginning of Romans 9, he seems to take a turn of thought. In chapter 9, who is Paul speaking about (or some might even say, who is he speaking against)? What does Paul remind his readers that he speaks? Where does Paul's truth come from? Because Paul speaks the truth, his words are not what? A person who is trying to build a case will often call a witness for support. What is Paul's witness? Paul's conscience is tied to what? What is the difference between a believer's conscience and an unbeliever's conscience? (See the following: 2 Cor. 1:12; Heb. 9:14; 1 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:15)

"In order to work as God designed it, the conscience must be informed to the highest moral and spiritual level and best standard, which means submitting it to the Holy Spirit through God's Word." (*The MacArthur Study Bible, ESV*. Notes on 2 Corinthians 1:12. P. 1717.)

Verse 2: What did Paul feel for the unbelieving Jews? Can you think of anyone else in the Bible that experienced this type of emotion for God's chosen people (if you can, write it down)?

Verse 3: Because of his deep love for the Jewish people, what extreme language does Paul use in v.3 to convey this? Look up the meaning in the Strong's Concordance: accursed [#331]. Could Paul's "wish" really happen? What type of writing technique is this? What is Paul really implying by his strong statement or "wish"? What have we previously learned about the relationship of a believer with God in Romans 8:31 – 39...can a believer be separated from God?

Verses 3 – 5: In the remaining part of Romans 9:3 – 5, what are the descriptors that Paul uses for the Jews? With each of those terms that Paul uses to describe the Jewish people, write a brief summary statement or a meaning for each one.

Read and Focus—Romans 9:6 – 13

Verses 6 – 8: Has the Word of God failed the children of Israel? What do you think Paul is saying in these verses, "...not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring..."? Who was Abraham's true child of promise? Did Abraham have other children? Were they children of the promise?

Verses 9 – 13: What was the promise given to Abraham? Who were the children of Rebekah and Isaac? In the remaining verses (v.11 – 13), what do we learn about these brothers? What did Jacob represent? What did Esau represent? (See Malachi 1:2 – 5) Is the point of these verses both in Romans and Malachi hate for the individual person? What do we learn about the character of God in these verses?

Read and Focus—Romans 9:14 – 18

Verse 14: Paul anticipating the questioning of his readers, asks the question himself. Answer the following: "Is there injustice on God's part?" Does injustice fit the character of God? (See Gen. 18:25-26; Ps. 7:9; 71:19; 119:137, 142; Jer. 9:23-24)

Verses 15 – 19: Paul goes back to the Old Testament for examples of God's righteous and just character on display. In what book of the Bible would you find Moses and his interactions with Pharaoh of Egypt? Paul quotes from Exodus 33:19, a conversation between God and Moses. What does God mean that "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion"?

See the Greek words: mercy [Strong's #1653] and compassion [Strong's #3627]

What do God's mercy and compassion not depend on? What do they depend on? Ultimately salvation comes from whom and not from whom?

See the Greek word: exertion [Strong's #5143]

Were the actions of Pharaoh a surprise to the plan of God? Not only were they not a surprise to God, what do we find out about God's plan in verse 17? (See Exodus 9:15 – 18) "Undoubtedly, Pharaoh 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." (*The MacArthur Study Bible, ESV*. Notes on Romans 9:17. P. 1666.)

In verse 18 we read Paul's conclusion of what he has just stated from the example of Moses and Pharaoh. What is the conclusion? (See Exodus 9:35 & 10:1) What have you already learned about the heart of man in the book of Romans (see Romans 1:24, 26, 28; 3:10-18...from these verses, does God actively cause disbelief in the hearts of men?) Can you think of other examples in Scripture where God showed His mercy to some but hardened the hearts of others?

Compare Romans 9:14 – 18 to Ephesians 2:1 – 10. Are there any similarities between the 2 passages?

Read and Focus—Romans 9:19 – 29

The next set of verses begins with a series of rhetorical questions. For those who believe in a sovereign God, the answers are easy to come by, but the truth of the meaning behind those answers can be difficult for our human minds to justify. For unbelievers who wrestle with these deep truths of Scripture, there may be extremes of self-justification followed by anger at the reality of God's righteousness and justice on display. As believers, if we are being truly honest, what do we know that each of us truly deserves?

Verses 19 – 24: Read through the questions presented by Paul in these verses. Write down the questions if it is helpful and wrestle with the answers to these questions keeping in mind who God is and His very character & all that we have learned to this point from the book of Romans.

Verse 22: Some vessels have been prepared for what purpose? And according to this what does it display about God's character?

Verse 23: God has prepared other vessels for what purpose? In order to make known what? What does it mean that God has prepared beforehand?

Verse 24: Those who belong to God have been what? And the verse goes on to say that those who are God's are not just His chosen people but who else has been called?

Verses 25 – 26: From what Old Testament book does Paul quote from? (See Hosea 1:9-10; 2:23)

Verses 27 – 28: From what Old Testament book does Paul quote from? (See Isaiah 10:22-23)

What happened to the children of Israel during the time of the prophets? Read Deuteronomy 28. If Israel followed all that God had commanded what do the verses in Deuteronomy say would happen to Israel? But if Israel disobeyed and turned against God, what would happen to them? If you read all the way through the passage in Deuteronomy, you can see the exact truth that was prophesied in Hosea and in Isaiah.

“...Paul’s emphasis in this passage is not Israel’s ultimate restoration to God but her present alienation from God. As already noted, the apostle’s primary point is that the unbelief of Israel that cause her alienation and scattering was not inconsistent with God’s sovereign plan for His people. On the contrary, historically and in regard to the time of Messiah, God foresaw and predicted Jewish rejection and its consequences long before it occurred.” (MacArthur, John. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Romans 9 – 16.* P. 47.)

Verse 29: However, in God’s divine plan and in His mercy and grace, what does it mean that Lord of hosts has left an offspring? Because of this offspring, God’s people will not become like what two infamous cities? What do these two places represent?

“My friends,’ Paul is saying, ‘the failure of the Jews and the inclusion of the Gentiles has been in God’s plan from the beginning. God is just. His word has not failed.’” (Hughes, R. Kent. *Romans: Righteousness from Heaven.* P. 180.)

Read and Focus—Romans 9:30 – 33

Verse 30: What is it that leads a person to righteousness? (See Rom.1:17)

Verse 31 – 33: What was it that kept Israel (and even many today) from righteousness? (See Rom. 3:20 & 8:3. See also Gal. 2:16; 3:10-11) Paul once again quotes Old Testament scripture (Isaiah 8:14 & 28:16). What is it that they stumbled over? What is the stumbling stone? (See 1 Peter 2:8; Luke 2:34)

“To every human being, Christ is either the means of salvation if they believe, or the means of judgment if they reject the gospel. He is like a stone in the road that causes a traveler to fall.” (*The MacArthur Study Bible, ESV.* Notes on 1 Peter 2:8. P. 1891.)