

# Romans Chapter 9

Charles Dailey © 2022 NLT CPS  
Updated 9/21/2022 Printed 9/21/2022

## Introduction:

Paul now turns his focus to the Jewish segment of the church at Rome. He has established that the gift of salvation in Christ was available for both Jews and Gentiles (Romans 3:30). But the main group of the Jewish people was still worshiping in the *synagogues* and believed they were saved by obedience to the Law of Moses. Paul addresses this falsehood by demonstrating that there is a smaller “true Israel” inside of physical Israel.

## PAUL’S SORROW AND GRIEF FOR ISRAEL

### Romans 9: NLT

**(1) With Christ as my witness, I speak with utter truthfulness. My conscience and the Holy Spirit confirm it.**

- Paul wants to emphasize a **truth** and he uses strong language to set the stage. He uses **Christ** and the **Holy Spirit** as well as his **conscience as witnesses** in what he is about to say.

**(2) My heart is filled with bitter sorrow and unending grief (3) for my people, my Jewish brothers and sisters. I would be willing to be forever cursed -- cut off from Christ! -- if that would save them.**

- Paul experiences sorrow and **grief** for his countrymen, even willing to give up his own salvation if that would change the outcome. But, of course it cannot.
- **Burton Coffman** describes Paul’s experience with his countrymen:

Paul had more than sufficient reason, if he had been of a mean and vindictive spirit, to hold bitterness against his Jewish kinsmen because of their unrelenting persecutions and harassment of his ministry and apostleship.

Forty of them, on occasion, had bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink until they had murdered him; and emissaries from the Jews in Jerusalem had dogged his every step on the mission field.

They had preferred charges against him before kings and governors; and yet, despite all this, his love for Israel was undiminished. How noble are Paul's thoughts in such a context as that which frames them here.

**(4) They are the people of Israel, chosen to be God's adopted children. God revealed His glory to them. He made covenants with them and gave them His law. He gave them the privilege of worshiping Him and receiving His wonderful promises.**

**SAMPLES FROM ISRAEL'S HISTORY:**

- As the children of Jacob developed into a nation in Egypt, they were **ADOPTED**. God spoke to Moses saying:

**Then you will tell him, "This is what the LORD says: Israel is My firstborn son."** Exodus 4:22 NLT

- God showed His **GLORY** to Israel. David spoke of this in a Psalm:

**I have seen You in Your sanctuary and gazed upon Your power and glory.** (Psalms 63:2 NLT)

- Making **COVENANTS** with His people was in God's plan for them as they became a nation:

**I will make a covenant with you, by which I will guarantee to give you countless descendants.**" (Genesis 17:2 NLT)

- God wanted the nation of Israel to be released by the Pharaoh of Egypt so they could **WORSHIP** Him:

**"Go back to Pharaoh," the LORD commanded Moses. "Tell him, "This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says:**

**Let My people go, so they can worship Me.** (Exodus 9:1 NLT)

- God had **PROMISED** often. Zachariah, father of John the Baptist, spoke of His **promise** that foretold of a coming Savior:

**He has sent us a mighty Savior from the royal line of His servant David, just as He promised through His holy prophets long ago.** (Luke 1:69-70 NLT)

Besides direct **promises** in the prophets, there were **promises** in the lives of people such as Isaac (Hebrews 11:19) and Joseph (Hebrews 1:22), **promises** in the ceremonies and sacrifices and **promises** in the architecture of the tabernacle and temple.

**(5) Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are their ancestors, and Christ Himself was an Israelite as far as His human nature is concerned. And He is God, the One who rules over every- thing and is worthy of eternal praise! Amen.**

- The three great patriarchs were Israel's ancestors and **Christ**, in **His Human nature**, were in their family tree. The nation of Israel had **God** in their family line! The deity of Christ is strongly affirmed.
- This **God** deserves everlasting **praise**.

### **THE ISRAEL WITHIN ISRAEL**

**(6) Well then, has God failed to fulfill His promise to Israel? No, for not all who are born into the nation of Israel are truly members of God's people!**

- Within Israel the **nation**, there is the **true Israel**. They were **God's people**, so **God's promise** had not **failed**. We must distinguish between **true members of God's people** and those who were merely physical descendants of Abraham.

**(7) Being descendants of Abraham doesn't make them truly Abraham's children. For the Scriptures say, "Isaac is the son**

through whom your descendants will be counted," though Abraham had other children, too. (8) This means that Abraham's physical descendants are not necessarily children of God. Only the children of the promise are considered to be Abraham's children.

- Being true Israel requires more than simply being a **descendant of Abraham**. Even being counted as a physical **descendant of Abraham** was limited to the **descendants of Isaac** even though **Abraham had other children**.

(9) For God had promised, "I will return about this time next year, and Sarah will have a son." (10) This son was our ancestor Isaac. When he married Rebekah, she gave birth to twins.

- The quotation in verse 9 is from Genesis 17:10.
- So the special **son** grew up and married **Rebekah**. She had **twins**, **God** had chosen the younger to carry on Heaven's purposes instead of choosing the older twin, the one who would normally lead the family.

### GOD DECIDES BASED ON HIS PURPOSES

(11) But before they were born, before they had done anything good or bad, she received a message from God. (This message shows that God chooses people according to His own purposes; (12) He calls people, but not according to their good or bad works.) She was told, "Your older son will serve your younger son." (13) In the words of the Scriptures, "I loved Jacob, but I rejected Esau."

- The **choice** was not based on age or merit. **God** has plans and they do not coincide with our way of making decisions. The quotation (vs. 13) is from Malachi:

**"I have always loved you," says the LORD. But you retort, "Really? How have You loved us?" And the LORD replies, "This is how I showed My love for you: I loved your ancestor Jacob, but I rejected his brother, Esau, and**

**devastated his hill country. I turned Esau's inheritance into a desert for jackals."** (Malachi 1:2-3 NLT)

**(14) Are we saying, then, that God was unfair? Of course not! (15) For God said to Moses, "I will show mercy to anyone I choose, and I will show compassion to anyone I choose."**

- **Was God unfair?** The quotation of verse 15 is from Exodus 33:19. Just who are we to decide **fairness** for the Maker of the universe? We need to thank Him for providing air to breathe. **God's Fairness** is not ours to decide.

**(16) So it is God who decides to show mercy. We can neither choose it nor work for it.**

- So **God** does not check with us before **showing mercy**. We can't even earn **mercy**.

### **GOD USED PHARAOH TO BECOME FAMOUS**

**(17) For the Scriptures say that God told Pharaoh, "I have appointed you for the very purpose of displaying My power in you and to spread My fame throughout the earth."**

- Paul draws heavily on the Jew's knowledge of their Old Testament **Scriptures** and acceptance of them as religious authority. On this point, he was on common ground with his readers.
- How did **God tell Pharaoh?** Through the words of His man Moses. Here are the words from Exodus:

**But I have spared you for a purpose -- to show you My power and to spread My fame throughout the earth.**

(Exodus 9:16 NLT)

**God** will get His way using **Pharaoh**, the pagan idolater who thought he was in charge of everything in sight. That is the way it worked out as the story unfolded. **Pharaoh** could have obeyed God and God would have become famous. Either way, **Pharaoh** will serve **God's** purposes.

**(18) So you see, God chooses to show mercy to some, and He chooses to harden the hearts of others so they refuse to listen.**

- God showed mercy to His people Israel but **hardened** the **heart** of Pharaoh as recorded in Exodus 9:12, 10:20, 10:27, 11:10 and 14:8. God made the choices.

There were also cases where the same Pharaoh **hardened** his own **heart**. Exodus 7:13-14, 7:22, 8:19, and 9:35. In these cases, he made the decision.

Note that the choices here were not about eternal life, but choices about this world.

**(19) Well then, you might say, "Why does God blame people for not responding? Haven't they simply done what He makes them do?"**

- An objector might say that the **people** did not have an option. They are only doing what **God makes them do**. Paul promptly responds to this objection in verse 20.

### **PEOPLE ARE FREE TO CHOOSE**

**(20) No, don't say that. Who are you, a mere human being, to argue with God? Should the thing that was created say to the One who created it, "Why have you made me like this?"**

- We do not have a "right" to challenge **God's** choices.

**(21) When a potter makes jars out of clay, doesn't He have a right to use the same lump of clay to make one jar for decoration and another to throw garbage into?**

- Paul's point is that a **potter** can use his **jars** any way he chooses. There is a lesson here.

**(22) In the same way, even though God has the right to show His anger and His power, He is very patient with those on whom His anger falls, who are destined for destruction.**

- **God**, like the potter, has the right to show **His anger** and **power**, but is **very patient** instead of rightfully angry.

**(23) He does this to make the riches of His glory shine even brighter on those to whom He shows mercy, who were prepared in advance for glory.**

- **C. R. Erdman's** comment seems especially helpful:  
God's sovereignty is never exercised in condemning men who ought to be saved, but rather it has resulted in the salvation of men who ought to be lost.

**(24) And we are among those whom He selected, both from the Jews and from the Gentiles.**

- This patience of God applies to both **Jews** and **Gentiles**.

### **THE PROPHETS TOLD OF GENTILES AND A REMNANT AMONG THE JEWS**

**(25) Concerning the Gentiles, God says in the prophecy of Hosea, "Those who were not My people, I will now call My people. And I will love those whom I did not love before."**

- This quotation is from Hosea 2:23.
- *Some background:* The first wave of **Gentiles** to become believers in Christ were those who attended the Jewish synagogue and sat in back by themselves. **Gentiles** could easily have learned about Christ from Isaiah 53. Dr. Luke and governor Theophilus may have been in this group.

If Gentiles made the trip to Jerusalem for the feasts, they were allowed in the **Court of Gentiles**, but never in the Court of Men, Women or Priests. They were spoken of as Proselytes of the Gate and were not full-fledged Jews.

**(26) And, "Then, at the place where they were told, 'You are not My people,' there they will be called 'children of the living God.'"**

- This quotation is from Hosea 1:10. The reasoning is intricate, but we quote **Burton Coffman** to summarize:  
This prophecy is also from Hosea and is a clear promise of the coming of the Gentiles into the relationship with God as "sons." Hosea made this development to lie in the future, as it

indeed was when he wrote; but under the preaching of the gospel this had already begun to be fulfilled, the letter to the Romans itself being proof that Gentiles were indeed called "sons of God," thus making them to share in the highest and holiest blessing life on earth has ever afforded. How incredible it seems that Israel's leaders did not heed these prophecies, nor even the fulfillment of them taking place at that moment before their eyes! But Paul was by no means finished; he would pile prophecy upon prophecy.

**(27) And concerning Israel, Isaiah the prophet cried out, "Though the people of Israel are as numerous as the sand of the seashore, only a remnant will be saved. (28) For the LORD will carry out His sentence upon the earth quickly and with finality."**

- This quotation is from Isaiah 10:22-23. **Isaiah** speaks of a time when there would be many citizens in **Israel**, but only a **remnant will be saved**.
- In verse 28 (above) **Isaiah** was referring to the Babylonian invasion of Palestine and **Israel's** subsequent exile. The **sentence** was God's work of judgment. In quoting these words Paul is saying that what had happened to **Israel** in the past could and would happen again.
- In Matthew, Jesus spoke of the **remnant** without using the word:

**For the hearts of these people are hardened, and their ears cannot hear, and they have closed their eyes -- so their eyes cannot see, and their ears cannot hear, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to Me and let Me heal them.'**

**"But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.** (Matthew 13:15-16 NLT)

A few people were willing to see and hear what Jesus was saying. **The choice was theirs to make.**



**(29) And Isaiah said the same thing in another place: "If the LORD of Heaven's Armies had not spared a few of our children, we would have been wiped out like Sodom, destroyed like Gomorrah."**

- This quotation is from Isaiah 1:9. The prophet is speaking of a time when God had (or would) **spared a few** out of Jerusalem. This speaks of saving a remnant without using that word. **Sodom** and **Gomorrah** were destroyed entirely and the nation of Israel faced the same danger.
- We have heard from Hosea twice and **Isaiah** twice. The prophets have indeed spoken (verse 25).

**(30) What does all this mean? Even though the Gentiles were not trying to follow God's standards, they were made right with God. And it was by faith that this took place.**

- **Moses Lard** says,  
Here the reason for the reception of the **Gentiles** is broadly and clearly set forth. Prior to the offer of Christ to them, they were, as compared with Israel, a rejected people, and were not seeking justification. But as soon as the gospel was presented to them, they obeyed it; and thus obtained the favor of God. Their reception of Christ, therefore, and consequent justification were the reason why they became God's people.
- **Cases where Gentiles were made right with God:**  
The household of Cornelius, the first Gentile converts:  
**Even as Peter was saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were listening to the message. The Jewish believers who came with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles, too. For they heard them speaking in other tongues and praising God. Then Peter asked, "Can anyone object to their being baptized, now that they have received the Holy Spirit just as we did?" So he gave orders for them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterward**

**Cornelius asked him to stay with them for several days.**  
(Acts 10:44-48 NLT)

Paul presented the message of Jesus before a Gentile governor on Cyprus:

**When the governor saw what had happened, he became a believer, for he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.** (Acts 13:12 NLT)

Take note of Paul's report to the largely **Gentile** Church at Antioch:

**Finally, they returned by ship to Antioch of Syria, where their journey had begun. The believers there had entrusted them to the grace of God to do the work they had now completed. Upon arriving in Antioch, they called the church together and reported everything God had done through them and how He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles, too.**

(Acts 14:26-27 NLT)

**(31) But the people of Israel, who tried so hard to get right with God by keeping the law, never succeeded.**

- **Israel's** huge failure was in believing they could be **right with God by keeping the law.** **The law** was not set up to save those who broke any part of it.

**(32) Why not? Because they were trying to get right with God by keeping the law instead of by trusting in Him. They stumbled over the great rock in their path.**

- What was this **rock**? It was a Person, as seen in the next verse.

**(33) God warned them of this in the Scriptures when He said, "I am placing a stone in Jerusalem that makes people stumble, a**

**rock that makes them fall. But anyone who trusts in Him will never be disgraced."**

- This quotation is a combination of Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16. God Himself would intervene and place a stone of stumbling, a rock that makes Israel fall. The way to avoid stumbling was to trust -- have faith in -- the Rock.

Jesus himself quoted this about Himself in the Matthew account:

**Then Jesus asked them, "Didn't you ever read this in the Scriptures? The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone. This is the LORD's doing, and it is wonderful to see.' I tell you, the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation that will produce the proper fruit. Anyone who stumbles over that stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone it falls on. "**

(Matthew 21:42-44 NLT)

Peter quoted this about Jesus:

**Yes, you who trust Him recognize the honor God has given Him. But for those who reject Him, "The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone." And, "He is the stone that makes people stumble, the rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they do not obey God's word, and so they meet the fate that was planned for them. (1 Peter 2:7-8 NLT)**

<b>MUSIC BOX</b>		
<i>Come, let us sing to the LORD! (Psalms 95:1 NLT)</i>		
<i>Verse</i>	<i>Link:</i>	<i>Put in Browser:</i>
21	Change My Hear O God	<a href="http://bitly.ws/qeZP">http://bitly.ws/qeZP</a>