

The Book of Romans 9:1–29 | God’s Sovereignty and Mercy

God has not failed. He is sovereign, and salvation rests on his mercy. We approach this passage with humility and gratitude for his grace.

1 Paul grieves for those who reject Christ

Romans 9:2 “I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.”

- Paul longs for his fellow Jews to receive salvation through Jesus, their Messiah.
- Israel’s privileges and spiritual heritage do not automatically bring salvation.

2 God’s word has not failed

Romans 9:6 “For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.”

- God’s children are the children of the promise. Bloodline and human effort cannot secure salvation.
- God chose Isaac and Jacob to carry his promise forward. Jacob was chosen before either twin had done anything good or bad.

3 Salvation depends on God’s mercy

Romans 9:16 “It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.”

- God is free to show mercy and to harden. Paul points to Moses and Pharaoh as examples of his sovereignty.
- The wonder is that a holy God shows mercy to sinful people. We cannot earn or demand his grace.

4 God is the potter and we are the clay

Romans 9:20 “But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God?”

- The potter has authority over the clay. God’s decisions are not subject to our approval.
- God’s goodness does not diminish his holiness or authority. We need humility when his sovereignty challenges our expectations.

5 God calls people into his family

Romans 9:25 “I will call them ‘my people’ who are not my people.”

- God reveals the riches of his mercy by calling people from both Jews and Gentiles. Isaiah also speaks of a remnant of Israel being saved.
- We respond with thanks and praise because God has graciously called us to belong to him.