

## Romans Lesson 10

### 1. Outline Review

1.1. Salutation	1:1-7
1.2. Condemnation: All are guilty	1:8-3:23
1.3. Justification: the Last Adam	3:24-5:19
1.4. Instruction: Law is the tutor	5:20-7:25
1.5. Sanctification: Abiding in Christ	8:1-39
1.6. Election: Israel in God's plan	9:1-11:36
1.7. Application: Faithful Conduct	12:1-15:13
1.8. Benediction	15:14-16:27

### 2. Chapters 9 -11

- 2.1. Paul is extending his presentation of the Gospel of Christ to now directly answer the questions: what about the Jews? Did God break His promises to them?
- 2.2. Chapter 9: Israel's rejection of Christ as their Messiah (they rejected Him, He did not reject them)
- 2.3. Chapter 10: The current condition of the nation of Israel
- 2.4. Chapter 11: God's promise to Israel's future

### 3. Paul's Love and Concern for Israel (9:1-3)

- 3.1. Paul often assures his readers that he is telling the truth and is not lying. In this case, he also includes the Holy Spirit as a witness to support the claims of his conscience.
- 3.2. Paul has great sorrow: (*megas lype*) "exceedingly great", "beyond compare" grief, heaviness, pain or mourning
- 3.3. Continual grief (*adaileiptos*): unintermitted, unceasing
- 3.4. Paul's grief for his own nation is so great, that he could even wish for himself to be accursed from Christ, if his life could be exchanged for his countrymen's rejection of Christ, resulting in their salvation
- 3.5. Paul is giving us an insight into his zeal for the Gospel and his love for all people to receive salvation.
  - However, intellectually, he knows this is not possible

- Paul's desire is consistent with God's will, and that of other true servants of God, such as Moses (Ex. 32:30-35)
  - Theological reality check: would Paul's deepest desire be at odds with the will of God?
- 3.6. The problem for Paul (which he knows) is that adoption by God is only according to personal faith; it is not from national heritage or birthright. God does not force faith upon anyone.
4. What is the Advantage of Being a Jew (9:4-5) Paul now returns to the question he began chapter three with.
- 4.1. Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God (3:2)
  - 4.2. Their adoption in God's family (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob)
  - 4.3. God's glory being revealed to them (the tabernacle, pillars of clouds and fire, Red Sea, etc.)
  - 4.4. The giving of the Law
  - 4.5. The services of God and His chosen people
  - 4.6. The promises of His Messiah to bring deliverance to them
  - 4.7. Of whom are the fathers (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob)
  - 4.8. And from whom, according to the flesh, Jesus Christ's heritage was derived from.
  - 4.9. Paul makes the distinction about "the flesh" because Christ's divine heritage is also from heaven, via the virgin birth
  - 4.10. Paul here clearly identifies Jesus as "the eternally blessed God." This clause alone should put to rest a whole host of heresies about the person and constitution of Jesus Christ as both fully divine and fully human.
5. God's Promises (9:6-7)
- 5.1. Paul answers the anticipated objection that God can be accused of not keep His promises if national Israel is not saved by their prior covenants in the New Testament era
  - 5.2. This objection is a misunderstanding of the promises and covenants God made with Abraham and Moses concerning His chosen people
  - 5.3. In terms of salvation and adoption into God's family, "they are not all Israel who are [born of] Israel
  - 5.4. Nor are they children [heirs] just because they are the seed of Abraham
  - 5.5. God draws a clear distinction between those who are children of the flesh (sin, rebellion), who are not His by their own choice and sinful conduct
  - 5.6. Rather, it is those who receive God's gift of salvation by faith who are counted as the promised seed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and thus His rightful heirs
    - Sarah had a son, who God elected as Abraham's seed

- Rebecca also conceived twins, but of the two, only Jacob would carry on the promised seed; God rejected Esau
6. Jacob and Esau (9:11-13)
- 6.1. God elected, by His foreknowledge, Jacob over Esau while they were still in Rebecca's womb, before either had done any good or evil
- 6.2. God's election is not of works, but it is of faith
- Esau despised his birthright, selling it for a morsel of food (Gen. 25:33, Heb. 12:16)
  - Jacob, while still an unrighteous man, wrestled with God and desired to receive His blessings as a matter of faith (Gen. 32:22-32)
7. Is God Unrighteous to Use Election? (9:11-13)
- 7.1. Certainly not
- 7.2. God elected Jacob to receive and carry forward the covenant promises He made with Abraham and Isaac
- He could have elected anyone, but He sovereignly chose Abram in Gen. 12:1-3
  - He could have elected Ishmael, but He sovereignly chose Isaac in Gen. 21:12
  - In like manner, God chose Jacob over Esau
- 7.3. These are examples of God's sovereign election at work, which are central to national Israel's heritage
- 7.4. God's sovereignty is demonstrated and magnified each time He makes elections that differ from the wisdom of men
- Why choose Noah?
  - Why choose Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldeans?
  - Why choose Isaac over Ismael?
  - Why choose Jacob over Esau?
  - Why choose Joseph over the other 11 sons?
- 7.5. God elects at His own will to demonstrate that His sovereignty over all.
- 7.6. Mankind may find it odd or unthinkable that a younger sibling would have greater honor than an older one, but...
- God looks at the heart (1 Sam. 16:7)
  - God knows all about us in eternity, He does not wait and watch for events to unfold before Him. "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you (Jer. 1:5)

- He chose us before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love (Eph. 1:4)

7.7. He has a unique and divinely-crafted plan for every individual. The question is who will obey Him and follow that plan and who will not?

- A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps (Pro. 16:9)
- I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope (Jer. 29:11)
- He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He will also hear their cry and save them. The LORD preserves all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy (Ps. 145:19-20)

7.8. But the Lord will not prosper those who reject His counsel

- Woe to the rebellious children, who take counsel, but not of Me, and who devise plans, but not of My Spirit, that they may add to sin (Is. 30:1)
- And they say, "That is hopeless! So we will walk according to our own plans, and we will every one obey the dictates of his evil heart." Therefore thus says the LORD: "... Because My people have forgotten Me, they have burned incense to worthless idols...I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy; I will show them the back and not the face in the day of their calamity." (Jer. 18:12-17)

7.9. Is God ever unrighteous in His election or His actions towards any human being?

- Certainly not! (Just stop thinking that way!)
- God has no obligation to show mercy to anyone!
- God is sovereign and will not be judged by anyone. Therefore, He is fully righteous when He states to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."
- God is right to find fault with man, but man can never find fault with God!

7.10. God shows mercy and compassion at His own will

- Not because someone will to be shown mercy
- Not because of someone who strives in haste or runs a race course
- God knows all and looks at the heart and shows mercy based on His own judgment

8. The Pharaoh Paradox (9:17-18)

8.1. Scripture says of Pharaoh (at the time of Exodus)

- For this reason I have raised you up:
- That I may show My power in you

- And that My name may be declared in all the earth

#### 8.2. Conclusion, God is sovereign:

- God has mercy on whom He wills
- God hardens those whom He wills to not show mercy

#### 8.3. Who hardened Pharaoh's heart?

- Pharaoh did
  - But when Pharaoh saw there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not heed them (Ex. 8:15)
  - But Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them (Ex. 8:19)
  - But Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also (Ex. 8:32)
- The LORD God did
  - But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh (Ex. 9:12)
  - Now the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants (Ex. 10:1)
  - But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart (Ex 10:20)
  - But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart (Ex. 10:27)

#### 8.4. So who really hardened Pharaoh's heart?

- Pharaoh rejected the LORD God of Israel and completely hardened his heart toward Him (Chapter 8)
- The LORD did not relent or change His demands to let Israel go. Because God continued to demand that His will be done against Pharaoh's own will, God's righteous actions caused Pharaoh's heart to remain hardened Chapters 9-10), or to grow even harder when confronted by the superior strength and power of the Almighty God.
- Pharaoh rejected God, and hardened his heart toward Him.
- In this situation God elected to show mercy to sinful Israel and Moses, who were willing to obey Him in response to His calling.
- God did not show mercy to Pharaoh who had rejected Him, and hardened their hearts to accepting Him as the LORD God.
- He could not show mercy to both Pharaoh and to Israel at the same time; their circumstances were incompatible and only one outcome was possible – showing mercy to Israel was, by extension, against the will of Pharaoh's heart.

#### 9. Can God Still Find Fault? (9:19-20)

9.1. An objector will say, “Why then does He find fault with those who reject Him or who have not received His mercy?”

- For it seems that no one can resist His will
- Did Pharaoh have any choice in the matter at all?
  - This is an invalid question based on an incomplete understanding of God and Pharaoh's own actions
  - Pharaoh never repented, changed his heart, or sought to yield to the will of God.
  - Does that mean he could not have?
  - God has perfect foreknowledge, and knew exactly how Pharaoh would respond,
  - However, we cannot conclude that Pharaoh was obeying the will of God by hardening his heart and rejecting the will of God at the same time. This is a logical impossibility.
  - God does not say, “Let My people go,” but at the same time tell Pharaoh’s heart, “Do not let My people go.”

9.2. But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God (charge God with wrongdoing or unrighteousness)?

9.3. Paul has already demonstrated in chapters 1-3, that we humans are the unrighteous ones.

9.4. Paul has further taken on the task in his thesis statement (1:16-17) of revealing to us the righteousness of God.

9.5. So, when man questions God with unrighteousness, he is out of line in every way.

9.6. This is why Paul tells us over and over in Romans, “Certainly not! God Forbid! Do not even permit yourself to think this way!”

10. The Potter and the Clay (9:20-21)

10.1. Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, “Why have you made me this way?”

- How absurd a question
- Clearly the potter has absolute authority over the lump of clay, while the clay has no ability to say or act on its own against the potter, and certainly not to question his actions
- How much more so between God and man?
- If we lose sight of the fact that God is perfectly righteous, and we have zero righteousness in us, unless the Lord God has sown mercy to us and given us His own righteousness, we will find ourselves in desperate peril with not only our Creator, but our Savior.

10.2. Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

- By logical extension, yes, the potter can form the clay in whatever manner he so chooses. It all depends on the will of the potter.
- If God is the Potter (and He is), then does He not have every right to form us in whatever way He so chooses?
- Does God ever form or create a being whom He intends, from the beginning, to be unrighteous and to oppose Him so as to accomplish a greater purpose?
- Did God create Satan to be His enemy and to trouble His creation?
- Did God create Pharaoh just to use Him as a pawn to bring His Ten Plagues against?

## 11. What if? (9:22-24)

### 11.1. Would God be unjust if:

- He created some vessels knowing, that He would destroy them in the end?
- He used the vessels destined and prepared for destruction in order to show His plans and mercy the vessels who will receive the riches of His glory?
- He showed mercy to vessels from every ethnic people group who receive Him by faith?

### 11.2. Prepared for destruction? (9:22)

- Who is preparing who for destruction?
  - God is not the initiator of this preparation
  - The Greek verb tense is clear – the vessels are preparing themselves (by rejecting God) for their own destruction
- God is enduring with these vessels
  - To accomplish His divine purposes
  - To permit an opportunity for repentance

### 11.3. Paul's Thesis Affirmed (9:22-24)

- Reviewing what Paul has already revealed to us:
- There is no shame whatsoever in the Gospel of Christ
- God has done His part in all righteousness
  - None of His actions are unrighteous or immoral
  - God has nothing to explain or apologize for in His actions
- God's measuring rod of who receive His mercy, and who does not receive His mercy, is based on faith alone, for the Just shall live by faith (Rom 1;16-17; Hab. 2:4)

- God is also perfectly justified in revealing His wrath upon all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men
- Therefore, God is perfectly righteous to allow vessels, who have long since hardened their hearts to Him and are destined and prepared for destruction, to remain alive and unjudged for the present time in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon whom He has shown His mercy.
- We are all vessels of God's wrath, and we are all destined and prepared for destruction in our old, unregenerate man
- We only become vessels of mercy prepared beforehand for glory when we are born again by faith
- Just because God knows the end from the beginning and every one who will ultimately receive His grace and mercy does not mean He makes those choices for us
- God is sovereign, but man is made in His image, and we also have a sovereignty over our own will. If we reject God, He is not at fault. Man's rejection of God does not mean that He was unwilling save us or that he predetermined our choices
- The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9)

## 12. God's Sovereign Will (9:25-29)

12.1. Hosea 2:23 God always intended to show His love and mercy to the Gentiles

12.2. Isaiah 10:22-23 God always ensured a remnant from Israel is able to partake of His mercy and His promise

12.3. Isaiah 1:9 God has protected and preserved the seed of Israel and Abraham according to His promise

## 13. Israel's National Failure (9:30-33)

13.1. The Gentiles have attained what God desired for Israel to possess, but they nationally failed to do so

13.2. Righteousness was and is only obtained through faith

13.3. Israel has been so focused on fulfilling the Law of righteousness that they have neglected the faith God requires