

Studies in Romans

Review: Romans 9:6-13 – Two Examples of the Lord Sovereign Election

This Lesson: Romans 9:14-33 - Paul's defends the Doctrine of Election and the Lord's honor in it.

Quick Overview of Romans:

Romans 1-3:20; Our sinfulness and condemnation

Romans 3:21-5:21; Our Justification in Christ

Romans 6:1-8:39; Our Sanctification through Christ

Romans 9-11; Our Election by God

Romans 12-16; Our Practice of Holiness

Fuller Overview of Romans:

See the lesson on v.9:6-13

One of our brethren in this assembly submitted these nine blessings that the Jews had conferred upon them according to Romans 9:4,5

- a.** Election - vs 4, "who are Israelites" - 6 - distinguishing between seed who are spiritual and those who are of the flesh (posterity).
- b.** Adoption - God chose Israel for his own out of all the people and nations in existence at that time. Wonder of wonder, Ezekiel 16:6 God describes how God "passed by" and saw this newborn who had been thrown away, dumped into an "open field" (vs 5) and left to die. God took pity on that bit of waste, this throw-away. God lovingly gathered the infant to himself, cared for and raised the child and made it his own (Exodus 19: 5 and 6 and Exodus 16:13). So God was as it were the adoptive parent of Israel.
- c.** Divine glory - this could mean the sign of God's presence. The Shekinah glory as the evidence of God's presence as it filled the temple in the wilderness or in Moses' plea that God would show him His glory (Ex. 33:18). Whatever it means it was wonder inspiring, almost frightful in beauty and in separating the insignificance of man and the greatness and power of God.
- d.** Covenants - God's promises to Israel by way of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Joshua. Among them are to make Israel a nation of people; God gave them the charge, not only to grow and multiply, but to also be the nation whom all the world would be blessed (receive the gift of salvation [Gen 12:2 and 3]); God would be their God and they would be his people; he would protect them from their enemies and would go before them and after them to punish every enemy to raise a hand against them. The most blessed and precious of the promises was that our of this nation and from the seed of their beloved David, would become their savior and the savior of the world.
- e.** Receiving of the law - no other nation had such an advantage - the special arrangement by which a people could know for sure what was expected of them by their God, how they could be in right relation with their God and to be assured of his blessings. Other nations could only presume, take a stab in the dark and hope to get it right, when worshiping their gods made of perishable material from the earth. Israel's God spoke audibly and personally to his people to give them the way to righteous and forgiveness until the coming of the true way of life. Romans 7:12 tells specifically how having the law accrued for good to the people of God.
- f.** Temple worship - Do we think to lightly of David's words learned in the nursery Sunday School, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. (Ps. 122:1) or later, more grown up, "Lord, I have loved thy habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth (Ps 26:8)? For the Israelites, and for us, the temple is a special place of meeting between God and His people. Theirs was through the rituals of blood sacrifice looking forward to

the time of their Messiah; ours through the death, burial and resurrection of a Savior who lived, taught and walked among us, who is now at the right hand of his Father, ever making intercession for us.

g. Promises - From Gen 3:15 to Noah, to Abraham (Gen 12:3) unto Mal: 3:16 - 18 and on to Chapter 4, are many promises in between. Once again, the greatest of these was of the Messiah.

h. Patriarchs - These are Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (including the sons making up the 12 tribes); representatives and conduits of God's leading, teaching, guidance, protection, correction and blessing. As God chose this special people of all the nations of the world, so only these people had the leadership of such men under God's will and way in their lives.

i. The people of the lineage of Christ - like the proverbial thread that runs red throughout God's Word, the greatest of the advantages, that was of a Messiah to come (Acts 3:26). The shame is that they (*but thankfully, not all*) missed Messiah's coming, then rejected him; we dismiss his preeminence.

Reference	Notations
<p>Rom 9:14-33 KJV What shall we say then? <i>Is there</i> unrighteousness with God? God forbid. (15) For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. (16) So then <i>it is</i> not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. (17) For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. (18) Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will <i>have mercy</i>, and whom he will he hardeneth. (19) Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? (20) Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed <i>it</i>, Why hast thou made me thus? (21) Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? (22) <i>What</i> if God, willing to shew <i>his</i> wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: (23) And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, (24) Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? (25) As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. (26) And it shall come to pass,</p>	<p>Ex 9:16</p> <p>Ex 7:13,14,22;8:15,19,32;9:7,12,34,35;10:1,20,27;11:10,14:8</p> <p>Jer 18:3-6</p> <p>Hosea 2:23</p> <p>Hosea 1:9,10</p>

<p><i>that</i> in the place where it was said unto them, Ye <i>are</i> not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God. (27) Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: (28) For he will finish the work, and cut <i>it</i> short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. (29) And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. (30) What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. (31) But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. (32) Wherefore? Because <i>they sought it</i> not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; (33) As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.</p>	<p>Isaiah 10:20-23</p> <p>Isaiah 1:9</p> <p>Ps 118:22; Is 8:14,15; Is 28:16; Matt 21:42-44; Mark 12:10,11; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; I Pet 2:7,8</p>
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Regarding v.14 –

The flesh cannot hear of this wisdom of God without being instantly disturbed by numberless questions and without attempting in a manner to call God to an account... The predestination of God is indeed in reality a labyrinth, from which the mind of man can by no means extricate itself: but so unreasonable is the curiosity of man, that the more perilous the examination of a subject is, the more boldly he proceeds; so that when predestination is discussed, as he cannot restrain himself within due limits, he immediately, through his rashness, plunges himself, as it were, into the depth of the sea... Let this then be our sacred rule, to seek to know nothing concerning it, except what Scripture teaches us: when the Lord closes his holy mouth, let us also stop the way, that we may not go farther. – John Calvin’s commentary on Romans

Regarding v.16 –

but of God that sheweth mercy; in a free sovereign way and manner, which he is not obliged to by anything the creature wills or works; he is at full liberty, notwithstanding whatever they will or do, to give his grace and mercy, when, where, and to whom he pleases; and therefore to give it to some, and deny it to others, can never be accounted an act of injustice, since he is not bound to give it to any. ... the true sense is, that as election, which is the leading step to salvation, is not owing at all to the will of men, but to the good pleasure and will of God; and not at all to the works of men, that being done before them, and they being the fruits and effects of that, but to the free love, grace, and good will of God; so salvation in all its parts and branches, as redemption, justification, regeneration, calling, and conversion, faith, repentance, hope, love, &c. and eternal life, is not to be ascribed at all to the will of men, nor at all to the works of men, but entirely and alone to the love, grace, and mercy of God through Christ. – John Gill’s commentary

Regarding v.17

The Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, – that is, the Scripture showeth how Moses was commanded to say unto Pharaoh, Exodus 9:16, – Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up. – Here is the destination of Pharaoh to his destruction. That I might show My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth. – This is the end and design intended by it. It was not, then, by any concurrence of

fortuitous circumstances that Pharaoh was seated on the throne of Egypt, and invested with the power he possessed when Moses was appointed to conduct Israel out of Egypt. He was raised up, or made to stand in that place, in order that, by his opposition, from the perversity of his heart, in him God might show His own power and exalt His own name. It is not merely alleged that God had not shown mercy to this king of Egypt, or that He had suffered him to go on in his wicked ways; but, in language which the unrenewed heart of man will never relish, it is declared, 'Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth.' For this very end, the birth, the life, and the situation of Pharaoh were all of Divine appointment. This is language so clear that it cannot be guiltlessly misinterpreted. The unbelieving heart of man will revolt, and his ingenuity may invent expedients to soften this explicit declaration; but it never can be successfully evaded. All the shifts of sophistry will never be able fairly, or even plausibly, to explain this language in a sense that will not testify the sovereignty of God. The above truth respecting Pharaoh is what the Scriptures declare; and we ought never to pretend to go further into the deep things of God than they go before us, but submissively to bow to every Divine declaration. We know that all sin will be found with man; but here we are taught that even the sin of man will turn out for the glory of God, and for this very purpose the wicked are raised up. If we cannot fathom this depth in the Divine counsels, still let us be certain that what God says is true, and must be received by us. We are assured that the Judge of all the earth will in all things act righteously, although we may not be able to comprehend His ways. Nor are we required to comprehend them. We are required to believe His word, and to believe that it is consistent with the eternal righteousness of His character.

—*Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*, Robert Haldane

Review Question:

What does Hebrews 12:15-17 have to contribute to our understanding of the outworking of Romans 9:13?

Questions:

1. What are the claims that Paul anticipates from his readers regarding the doctrine of God's sovereign election?
2. What are the answers to these claims?
3. What attributes of God are stressed in this section of Scripture?
4. What is the meaning of the word "remnant" in v.27?
5. Why is the Lord Jesus called a "stone of stumbling and rock of offense" in v.33?
6. To whom is righteousness granted according to v.30-33?

Appendix:

From the London Baptist Confession of 1689, Chapter 3, *Of God's Decree*, the 1st of 7 paragraphs

1. God hath *(a)* Decreed in himself from all Eternity, by the most wise and holy Council of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever comes to passe; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, *(b)* nor hath fellowship with any therein, nor is violence offered to the will of the Creature, nor yet is the liberty, or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather *(c)* established, in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power, and faithfulness *(d)* in accomplishing his Decree.