

LESSON 10 ROMANS 9:1-33: ELECTION & GRACE

I. Introduction

If Romans 8 was “meaty”, Romans 9 is equally pivotal in building a solid understanding of how God’s sovereignty and mercy is revealed through our election into the fullness of His grace. Paul started the chapter in a very emotional tone as he lamented that the Israelites, whom God intended to save first, were still rejecting the gospel. However, on a positive note, all of this played into God’s masterplan as that rejection opened a pathway for gentiles to also receive the gospel. Our salvation is not about our human effort or desire, it is solely based on God’s grace. Paul explains that not all descendants of Abraham are part of God’s promise, but rather, it is those whom God elects through His grace.

Indeed, Paul pointed out the following illustrative examples: Isaac was chosen over Ishmael, and Jacob was chosen over Esau, thus demonstrating that God’s choice is not dependent on human actions but on His divine will. More importantly, Paul addresses God’s love for all through the inclusion of the Gentiles in His plan of salvation, showing that God’s grace extends to all who believe, not just the Jewish people. Salvation is obtainable solely by faith and if it were by human works, God’s justice and mercy could be credibly challenged.

To be clear, justice and mercy are key attributes of God. However, because of the sorrows, evil and chaos of the world, ignorant people sometimes question if God is indeed a just God. That sentiment is what Paul tries to address in verses 14-15. In essence Paul clarifies that God is just and has absolute discretion in the exercise of His mercy, whether we understand His actions or not!

Finally, Paul concludes in quoting two Old Testament prophets to show that only a remnant of Israel will be saved. He explained that Israel had pursued righteousness through the law but that was not viable as righteousness in Christ is only obtainable by faith according to Romans 3:22. The irony is that Christ who was meant to be the cornerstone of Israel’s salvation became a stumbling stone for many in Israel.

II. Study the Scriptures: Read the Passage Romans 9:1-33

Note your thoughts as you read:

Write down any questions that come to mind as you read:

III. Think Through the Following Questions:

1. What are some of the privileges that Paul mentioned that Israel had and why was he so aggrieved about his nation?
2. At what point did believers become God's elect? Support your answer with a scriptural reference.
3. In Romans 9 verse 1, did Paul contravene the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:37 that said anything beyond yes and no comes out of evil?
4. What is the meaning of the statement that not all descendants of Israel are true Israel?
5. What does the story of Isaac and Jacob tell us about God's election? What can we learn about God's sovereign choice?
6. How does the metaphor of the potter and the clay illustrate God's sovereignty over His creation?
7. What do the prophecies of Isaiah and Hosea reveal about God's plan for Israel and the Gentiles?
8. How can we relate the concept of God's justice and mercy with the revelation of Christ as a cornerstone and Christ as a stumbling block?

IV. Lessons Learned: Are there any new things you learned from this passage today?

V. Application: How Do You think this will impact your thinking and/or actions going forward?