

Romans 9-11

“What about Israel?”

7/18/12

Introduction

- The Content of Romans is not hard to understand
 - As long as you remember it is helpful to compare the content of Romans to a great theological city

The Book of Romans – The Great Theological City

#1 – The Courthouse – Romans 1-5

- Paul introduces the concept of righteousness by faith, but in order to show us our great need of salvation he spend the first five chapters showing we are all guilty before God

#2 – The Power Plant – Romans 6-8

- Chapters 6-8 help us understand that is power to live out this Christian life God is calling us to – Pastor Rob is doing an in-depth series from these three chapters on our weekend services, but we will cover them as well, just at a much more rapid pace

#3 – The Synagogue – Romans 9-11

- in chapters 9-11 Paul shares with us how Israel fits into God’s plan now that there is this new thing called the church and answers the questions, has the church replaced Israel, where do they fit into God’s plan and how does God’s sovereignty fit with man’s free will – great stuff in this section

#4 – The Church – Romans 12-16

- in Paul’s final section of this book we will study how the church is practically suppose to operate in light of all the amazing truths about God is this book – Paul ends all of his letters very practically; Romans is no exception

Tonight we are going to enter the third section

- many have called this section parenthetical, or a stop in the flow of the context of the book of Romans
 - but friends – I can not agree with that at all

If Romans, is a book of theology, on how God deals with His people – how He saved them, How He gives them power to walk, and in our final section, How to live in light of these truths

- Then the discussion of why there is a church in the first place is of much importance
 - Beyond that – God has made many promises to us in the previous chapters, so what of them???
 - If God did not keep His promises to Israel, what hope do we have???
- All of these things are address in this critical section of the book of Romans, we will call – the Synagogue – the answer to how Israel fits into the picture, how they are tied in with the church, and what their future will be

I get my view in that Romans 9-11 is not some rabbit trial that Paul gets on because he opens with the reason he is writing

- and there are really two main reasons

Why is Paul writing Romans 9-11?

#1 – A Personal Reason – Romans 9:1-5

- Paul pours out his heart here
 - That his heart breaks for Israel
 - In fact more than that – that he would be accursed from Christ – he would give up his salvation if Israel could be saved
- Now that is powerful, that is challenging to me
 - I don’t know if I could say that about the people God has called me to minister to – I would go hell as you got saved – that is love

Paul is writing this section for a very personal reason

- He wants Israel to understand why God has raised up the church and that it doesn't mean that they are no longer His people
 - It doesn't mean that God is done with them
 - He writes this section so they and us would understand this truth

But a side note for our study tonight

- Why was Paul so passionate about his countrymen
 - It certainly was not because of their kindness to Him – they tried to kill him every chance they got – that was not the source of the love

The source we find from the first verse of chapter 10

“My heart's desire and continual prayer to God is that Israel would be saved” – Romans 10:1

- Paul was praying for his countrymen

Now I know we understand and have talked about before how this is true of why Paul had such a heart for the churches, (his friends) - He was praying for them

- But what has ministered to me of late – is he also had great passion for those that were his enemies for the same reason – he was praying

And that is certainly what the Lord told us to do wasn't it

“You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you” – Matthew 5:43-44

- Jesus commanded us to do just the opposite of what we so often do – we can't stand those who are against us and if we pray for them, Lord break their teeth

And this has been something God has been ministering to me, that I wanted to pass on to you

- we are to pray for those we love – necessary
 - But if it is your desire maybe to see the lost saved, maybe to have a desire to reach out to the poor – and honestly that heart isn't there at the moment
- Begin to pray – pray for the lost, pray for that group of people you always around that you know need Jesus
 - Begin to pray for those who are against you
 - And watch what happens – You will begin to have God's heart for them

Paul says, “I would have been accursed from Christ, if my countrymen could be saved”

- that statement wasn't worked up by going to meetings
 - that statement wasn't developed by talking about how to reach those people
- It was developed in his prayer closet – taking time to intercede, certainly for those Paul loved, but also for those who were against him, for those that maybe previously he had no heart for at all – great lesson

Why is Paul writing Romans 9-11?

#1 – A Personal Reason – Romans 9:1-5

#2 – A Theological Reason

- As we described in our introduction, Paul not only wrote this section because it was a personal matter to him, but also because he needed to show to us in his study of how God works in His people, the place of Israel and where the church came from in the first place
 - That we might understand – that we might not make the same mistake that Israel did

And that we might not begin to believe that somehow we have replaced Israel as God's chosen people

- For those reasons (Personal, and Theological) Paul wrote this section we want to tear apart

- Now for those of you who like simplified outlines as I do, it helps me get a handle on what the text is about...

A basic overview of these chapters is simply this

Romans 9-11

- **Chapter 9 – God sovereignly chose Israel**
- **Chapter 10 – Israel freely rejected God**
- **Chapter 11 – God is not done with Israel**
 - Lets look at each of these parts one at a time

Romans 9-11

#1 – God Sovereignly chose Israel – Romans 9:6-33

As we talked about on Sunday Morning, Romans 9-11 shows a great balance between the sovereignty of God and the free will of man

- we see in Romans chapter 9 that God choose Israel for no other reason that the purpose of His will
 - why do I believe that, well

Paul begins to build the case

- it was not about being one of Abraham's sons
 - for Ishmael was a son of Abraham, but God did not decide to go with him, He went with Isaac, the son promise, the son who was chosen
- It wasn't about being one of Isaac's son
 - For Esau was a son of Isaac, in fact the first born, as was Ishmael, the one the line normally would continue with
 - But it was not about who your father was, it was not about your birth position, it was about God going with Jacob, instead of Esau

And it wasn't about power and influence

- For God went with Moses, not Pharaoh, the most powerful man of the time

Now this section causes some confusion about the nature of God, and Paul anticipates this with the questions in verse 14, and 19

“Is there unrighteousness with God???” – Romans 9:14

“Why does God still find fault??? Who can resist His will???” – Romans 9:19

- You see on the surface it makes sense
 - If God is making these decisions based on nothing more than His plan, and who He wants for that plan
 - Well – that sound unfair, how can you fault people for being who God has picked them to be

And if you were here on Sunday we dealt with that question head on

- how can you reconcile the fact that God is sovereign with the fact that man seems to have responsibility, man seems to be held accountable by God for his actions
 - we dealt with those things on Sunday and you can get the CD

But understand for our study tonight – there is a point Paul is making and it is not that God chooses some individuals for salvation and some not

- God is not saying he chooses individuals for salvation, but he talking here about choosing a nation to fulfill his purpose and plan
 - Extreme Calvinist love to use Romans 9 and other places in the scripture like John 15 to show we have no real free will

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit” – John 15:16

- Sound pretty convincing, we have no choice in the matter
 - But precious ones context is everything – Jesus in John 15 is not talking to people about being saved, He is talking to his disciples about choosing them to be in the ministry and bear fruit

- And it is true – James and John, Peter and Andrew, they were not in Bible college deciding to serve the Lord – they were picked off of fishing boats – yeah this will bring glory to me

And that is what God tells us about calling us into the ministry

“But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.” – I Corinthians 1:27-29

- You know I have often said, myself and my Bible college roommate Jeremy Camp, the Christian musician, were really the last people any human would have chosen to be used in ministry going forward
 - There were young men up at the crack of dawn seeking the Lord
 - Jeremy and I were more interested at the time of breaking into the dean’s office and arranging his office furniture around the pool in the middle of the night
- We have grown, but God was like, awe, those two will do – those two will really get glory for me and not themselves – perfect!

John 15 is about Jesus choosing disciples for ministry and Romans 9 is about God electing a nation

- a nation that God says about them in Deuteronomy 7

“The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the Lord loves you” – Deuteronomy 7:7

- God said I picked you, not for salvation, but to be used by me because you Israel, like Jason and Jeremy one day, will bring me the most glory
 - If I picked the Romans or the Greeks – they would get the glory
 - But I picked the Jews – yeah you will do

You see you go through this entire text

- Verses 10-13 – the extreme Calvinist says, look God picked Jacob before he was even born, before he did anything good or bad – just like he chooses us for salvation
 - No – the text is clearly talking about the nations they will become
 - Verse 13 is not a quote from Genesis – God never looked at the actual person and said, “I hate you” – find that verse for me in Genesis
 - Now it comes from Malachi at the very end of the Old Testament speaking about the nations Jacob and Esau became – Israel and Edom

Jacob went on to be the father of 12 sons, who were the twelve tribes of Israel - Esau went on to be the father of the Edomites

- God seeing this – “hated” Esau, but loved Jacob
 - The idea of “hated” is the one of going with one group, and not devoting to the other – more than the idea of hating as we think

It is the same idea in the gospels, when Jesus says if anyone does not hate mother and father, or own life – He is not fit to be my disciple

- Jesus is not teaching you are to hate your mom
 - That is not the heart of God
 - We are to respect our mother and father

But that you are to make a choice to go after Him, more that you do even your family, your loved ones or even yourself.

- It is a choice that God calls us to make
 - It is a choice that God made to pour into Jacob, more specifically the nation he would become and to do a work through them

And as a side note the know the most amazing thing about verse 13 it not that God hated Esau.

- Esau was a jerk, with no heart for God
 - It does not amaze me that God did not go with Esau
- It amazes me that God loved Jacob
 - For he was just as bad as his brother

You see it doesn't bother me that God can look in to eternity's future

- and see what a sinner I am
 - To see how my heart can be hard toward God
 - And choose not to go with me
- What amazes me, is that God looks in the future and sees what a jerk I am
 - And loves me anyway
 - And chooses to work in my life
 - That is amazing and hard for me to grasp.
- But again Romans 9 is not about personal salvation, but about God choosing a nation apart from anything they had done, to bring about His glorious plan

But wait, the extreme Calvinist would say, what about what Paul says in verses 16-23

- even if Paul begins speaking about the nation of Israel and not personal salvation, these verses show us the real nature and character of God
 - that He has mercy on whoever he wants and whoever he wants – what does the scripture say – He hardens
 - and Paul uses the example of Pharaoh, God hardening his heart and the vessels prepared for destruction – what about those verses

God prepares people for wrath???

- no – that is not what it says, not in English or especially in Greek

“What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction” – Romans 9:22

- that word “prepared” there is very interesting.
 - It is in what the Greek scholars call, (I am not one, but I can read), and they say it is in the middle voice, meaning it is a reflective action verb
- **“prepare” – is a reflection action verb – meaning “they prepared themselves”**
 - That simply means what it is saying; prepared themselves. It is them who is preparing them for destruction – It is God who is enduring

You see if my wife does not succeed in changing my eating habits, and I continue to pound eggs with cheese, toast with butter, fried chicken, pizza – I am getting hungry – if I continue this direction, I know my life will end one day, and as they determine the cause of death the as an Ultimate cheese burger is lodged into my left vertical, I will have no one to blame but myself – I spend my whole life preparing my body for a heart attack – God lets me walk in my decision and knowing everything, has programmed it into his plan (which I hope in my case is the development of pill that when I 50 that removes all bad and cholesterol from your body) – I'm not holding my breath

We see this with Pharaoh

- God hardened Pharaoh heart

We'll look at the story in Exodus - 20 times we see Pharaoh's heart becoming hard

- half the time – it says – “The Lord hardened..”
- but the other half it says, “Pharaoh hardened..”

God was working his plan, but Pharaoh saw the miracles of God, He saw God's power

- Yet He would not repent

- And so God hardened him in his decision, a decision Pharaoh made freely, God hardened him in that decision to accomplish his plan
- He spend his life preparing himself for destruction
- And God endured it, went along with it, knowing it would happen, implemented it into His plan, the plan to bring about His glory

The same thing is true with what Romans 9 calls “Vessel prepared for destruction” “What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?” – Romans 9:22-24

- What “if” – notice if
 - What if God wanted to show who He is
 - His wrath, His power, His longsuffering, His mercy, His love
 - He wants to show He is both love and just, so what doe He do???

Well as Paul says, same author by the way in I Timothy 2:4 says

- **God desires all to be saved – I Timothy 2:4**
- **He has made a way for all to be saved, - I John 2:2**
- **yet all do not respond to His will – Matthew 23:37**

So He then endures the lives of those who have prepared themselves for destruction, that is what verse 22 is saying,

- That He might show more of who He is, the “riches of His glory on those vessel of mercy”
- The ones (catch the two fold reality of these vessels of mercy) - Those who God had prepared
 - And the word is the same tense, meaning those who had prepared themselves as well.

You see I believe the idea of God’s sovereignty showed to us in Romans 9 does not portray this God who wields his power in an unfair and unloving way

- But a God who “draws near to those who draw near to Him”
 - A God who lets people do what they choose to do, but uses it for His purpose
- The purpose of lavishing grace on as many as will come to respond to the love, He has given

For God so loved the world, and desires non to perish

- But in his infinite wisdom and sovereignty, lets those who wants to go there own way do so.

For as He lavishes love of the vessel of honor

- we see His grace and mercy, goodness, longsuffering

And for those who do not respond

- we see God’s justice and holiness
 - as He does not pardon sin, uncleansed by the blood of Jesus
 - But hardens the decision of those who have chosen to be hard hearted

On one side I see his – grace and mercy, longsuffering

On the other – I see his justice and holiness

- which is exactly what God said He was when Moses asked in Exodus 34

“And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.” – Exodus 34:6-7

- This is who He is

He shows His love and grace, by pursuing you and me, and I believe everyone – He desires all men to be saved

- but in doing that – when men don't respond, He also shows His holiness and justice
 - giving us a beautiful picture of who He is
 - Merciful loving, but at the same time Holy and Just

The question is what you will be???

- and object lesson of His love and grace
 - or of His uncompromising Justice
 - God has done everything He can to save you, but if you will not respond, He will be just in sending you away for eternity
- Which will it be?
 - Well back to Romans 9

The point Paul is trying to make in this section is – God choose the nation of Israel, and their forefathers, not because they deserved it, but because of grace

He put them into his plan, not because they deserved to be in the plan, but because they responded to the love and grace, He has shown them

- and at the same time He allowed those who had prepared themselves for destruction by their rejection of that grace to be hardened and continue in that decision – Why??? - because He has a plan!

The point Paul is making is not that God chooses some individuals for salvation and others not

- but that He choose to go with the nation of Israel to fulfill His plan
 - you see there was no reason in them, that He decided to go with them
 - however there was a reason in Him

He wanted to pour His glory out upon the nation of Israel that other nation may see the goodness that was coming upon Israel and turn to the true and living God as well - and as we consider the history of Israel that certainly happened.

We learn in Scripture of the Rechabites

- They were a tribe of people who when Israel was first entering the promise land, they saw how God had blessed them
 - And so they kept God's commands and laws
- And we see in the book of Jeremiah, that God didn't say to them, "I'm sorry you are not Jewish, I can't bless you, you're not chosen."
 - No – He honored their decision to follow Him
- In Jeremiah 35 we see that even as Israel is walking away from the Lord, and not keeping His commands, they were following the laws laid down by their godly fathers
 - And the Lord blessed them

Again just another picture of how God's sovereignty and Man's responsibility are both seen in scripture

- God choose Israel – But that did not mean other nations who would follow Him were rejected.
 - Both sides are working in scripture and in Romans 9-11

God had a plan, to bless Israel, to give them His commandments and laws and as they lived by them, the nations would see the value of being set apart to the Lord

- and sometimes that is exactly what happened
 - but that truth is, by in large Israel rejected the plan that God had for them

Romans 9-11

#1 – God Sovereignly chose Israel – Romans 9:6-33

#2 – Israel freely rejected God – Romans 10:1-21

- In the Old Testament and in the New as we have seen earlier in the book of Romans, righteousness has never been about keeping the law
 - The law was a school master to lead us to Christ
 - But we still need Christ
- Righteousness doesn't come by the law, but through faith
 - And Israel would not seek Him by faith
 - With Abraham it was by faith, for Isaac it was by faith (read Hebrews 11) and so on and so on
- But Israel as a whole would not seek Him by faith, they would not believe in the work of Jesus the Messiah
 - They wanted to establish their own righteousness from the law
 - And now that Christ had come, that was impossible

And for these reason – they were rejected

- not because God was bored and wanted to work with a new group of people
 - But because He had chosen to go with this group, by grace, but they were unwilling to continue through faith.

The Word of God says that righteousness is available to “whoever believes” (Romans 10:11) and to “whoever calls upon the name of the Lord” – (Romans 10:13)

- That is true for Jews, Gentiles, for me, for you!!!!

The redemption from our sins, comes through our hearing of the word

- we have heard it
 - Paul was preaching it
 - Some received it
 - And sadly most did not
- So since they rejected God's plan, and rejected God's remedy, well there is always results when we do this

The results of their rejection

- God is his grace didn't just say, “I'm done with mankind”
 - He began to work with a new group of people, a group that included Jews, Gentiles, Slave and Free
 - A group that would come to be known as the church

And as we just read, it wasn't something God just came up with; the development of the church was something He promised in Scripture

- we see again the beautiful working of things together by the Lord
 - He has taken the rejection of Israel
 - And opened up the gospel to you and me
- Wonderful

Too bad Israel rejected Him

- But praise God for you and me – the church

However – the other side of that – what happens to Israel, is God done with His people,

- well Paul answers that in chapter 11

Romans 9-11

#1 – God Sovereignly chose Israel – Romans 9:6-33

#2 – Israel freely rejected God – Romans 10:1-21

#3 - God is not done with Israel – Romans 11:1-36

- He opens up by saying, “Has God forsaken Israel”
 - No way – No way at all
- But how can we know for sure
 - Paul lists 2 evidences – the rule of a remnant, and the reason the church exists

How do we know God is not done with Israel?

#1 - The rule of a remnant – Romans 11:1-10

- The Jews have gone through times of great unbelief and rebellion, but there have always been pockets of those who have stayed close to the Lord
 - Paul uses Himself as an example – He was a Jew
 - And yet believed God by faith and accepted the Messiah
- He was evidence – God is not done with His people, He saved me
 - And boy did God ever
 - Paul conversion was radical – and it was evidence God still has a plan for His people

Paul references the time of Elijah as another proof of there always being a remnant

- those were dark days in Israel
 - Ahab and Jezebel ruled Israel – and God had just done a great work on Mount Carmel – you would think Elijah would be overjoyed and full of faith, - he was not

He ran and hid, and cried out to God – I am the only one – and I love the Lord's response "take a nap, eat some food" and then after that – God spoke to Him – I have 7,000 that have not bowed their knees to Baal – you are not the only one

- And for all of Israel history to this day – that has been the case
 - When I visited Israel we sat down every few days with Messianic Jews – who are saved by faith, and accept their Messiah
 - God is not done with His people

Of course there will be a day – the book of Revelation tells us when God seals 144,000 to be witnesses of Him during future dark time on planet earth, known as the Tribulation

- God is not done with His people

How do we know God is not done with Israel?

#1 - The rule of a remnant – Romans 11:1-10

#2 - The reason for the church – Romans 11:11-36

- we are called to be salt and light to the whole world
 - but Paul mentions something else and that is to provoke Israel to jealousy
 - I love the ministry of my in laws – smiling and leading people to Christ – I thought "That will never work, it has – He is showing them the peace He has in Jesus
- The fact that it is our mission is evidence God is not done with His people

We have not replaced Israel

- we have been grafted in, and God makes a promise through the apostle Paul that one day, many in Israel we be grafted back in
 - the church has not replaced Israel
 - we do have a similar mission – to provoke the world and Israel
- So Paul just erupts in praise!!!