

FOR DAILY MEDITATION

MONDAY, Apr. 26. II Cor. 5:14-21.

A new creation. Salvation means we are reconciled to God through Jesus' sacrifice. God no longer charges our sins against us. We can start fresh because we are new creations. Forgiveness is complete because Jesus' sacrifice is complete. "It is finished!" Jesus cried out on the cross. At that moment, He reversed everything spiritually and made it possible for us to be made new through faith in Him.

TUESDAY, Apr. 27. Gal. 1:1-5.

Rescued from present evil. The Father, Son, and Spirit shared in the work of making Paul an apostle. God planned salvation for all of us, and Jesus died to provide it by being the sacrifice required for our sin. God raised Jesus up by His great power. This is the gospel that has rescued us from the evil around us. At Christ's return, He will remove us completely from the evil world.

WEDNESDAY, Apr. 28. Heb. 2:14-18.

Freed from death's power. Jesus is not just man; He is also God. Jesus rose again, overcoming death's power. In this manner, He has become the Firstborn in the resurrection (Col. 1:18). Because of Him, we have been given the opportunity to also be freed from death and become children of God and coheirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17).

THURSDAY, Apr. 29. Phil. 1:18-23.

Desire to be with Christ. To live as Christians is a matter of having Christ and living in union with Him. Paul was not concerned about himself but about getting the Word out so many would come to Christ. That was his prayer

from his damp, dark prison cell. Paul's Christian courage was not necessarily fearless. It was an act of faith in Christ's steadfastness. Jesus also promises rewards for our faithfulness as we wait to be with Him. A Christian's death is only a departure to eternal fellowship with Christ in heaven.

FRIDAY, Apr. 30. Matt. 10:25-31.

No grounds for fear. God knows our every need. He knows us intimately and cares for us deeply. He loves us completely and extends His care to even the most insignificant bird. He will graciously and lavishly care for us. Any time we do God's work, He will back us and personally help us. God's plan may be hard to discern or explain, but God will reveal truth as we trust in Him. Do not be afraid to proclaim the gospel.

SATURDAY, May 1. Ps. 103:8-18.

God's great compassion. Praise be to God that He is as gracious as He is just. The vastness of outer space, which we are still discovering, cannot contain all of His love for us (vs. 11). He knows our fragile nature and provides hope and meaning to our short times on earth. He desires to bless, love, and provide for us. God is Master of all, and He has compassion on those who fear Him.

SUNDAY, May 2. Rom. 8:28-39.

God is for us. Verse 28 does not say all things will automatically work for our good or that only good things will happen. This promise is for those who love God. God will work all these, even bad things, hard things, and painful things, for the good of His children. This good is sanctification, the process through which we become more like Jesus. In this way, we can say like Joseph, "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good" (Gen. 50:20).

—Sherry Newcum.

LESSON 10

MAY 9, 2021

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT

ROM. 9:6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.

10 And not only *this*; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;

11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.

13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

14 What shall we say then? Is there 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 it is 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 have mercy, 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 it, 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?

NOTES

Elected by God

Lesson Text: Romans 9:6-21

Related Scriptures: Ephesians 2:2-10;
Romans 4:13-17; Isaiah 45:8-12

TIME: A.D. 56

PLACE: from Corinth

GOLDEN TEXT—"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth" (Romans 9:18).

Lesson Exposition

Our lesson this week investigates one of the theological implications of the gospel—the doctrine of election. This often-debated, and sometimes divisive, doctrine directly confronts all man-centered viewpoints of the salvation relationship. With humility, we learn that God planned for the salvation of His children before the foundation of the world.

GOD'S DESCENDANTS OF PROMISE AND PURPOSE—Rom. 9:6-13

Authentic descendants according to God's Word (Rom. 9:6-9). The apostle Paul had an undeniable love for his Jewish countrymen by birth, coupled with an unwavering belief that not everyone in the nation of Israel had experienced eternal salvation. This spiritual tension caused Paul to restate his absolute trust in the unfailing character of God's Word to His authentic descendants.

Paul began his discussion by noting that God's election of the nation of Israel was not based solely on their physical Abrahamic lineage (cf. John 8:33). They were confined to the lineage of Isaac, the promised seed (cf. Gen. 21:12).

Chosen descendants according to God's promise (Rom. 9:10-13).

Paul continued his teaching on God's election with his reference to Isaac and Rebecca and the birth of their twin sons, Jacob and Esau. While the twins were in Rebecca's womb, before they had done or thought anything, God made His sovereign choice and revealed to Rebecca that the descendants of Esau would be subject to Jacob's descendants (cf. Gen. 25:23). Additionally, God's sovereign election was based solely on the presence of His unconditional love for Jacob and the absence of this special regard for Esau (Mal. 1:2-3; cf. Gen. 29:30-33).

GOD'S DECREES OF JUSTICE AND MERCY—Rom. 9:14-18

God's decree to Moses (Rom. 9:14-16). Following Paul's vibrant discussion of God's election, he seemed to anticipate a certain response from his readers concerning the possible discordance between God's election and His justice. Paul used strong language to refute any possible conflict between the two.

Paul once again appealed to the

Old Testament for his position. He referenced a conversation God had with Moses concerning God's sovereign choice to bestow or withhold His mercy (cf. Ex. 33:19). God's choice had nothing to do with human will or effort. God's sovereignty was based solely on His gracious compassion.

God's decree to Pharaoh (Rom. 9:17-18). Next, Paul affirmed his theological position on election with a reference to God's interactions with Pharaoh (cf. Ex. 9:16). In stark contrast to Pharaoh's belief in his man-centered deity, God clearly revealed to Pharaoh the purpose of his existence. Pharaoh was God's sovereign choice to be one whose defeat and judgment would display God's power and glory.

Christians constantly fight the battle between being high-minded and sober-minded (cf. Rom. 12:3). On the one hand, we know we are created in God's image and exist to bring Him glory. Conversely, we acknowledge we are underserving sinners living in a fallen world.

The secret to a balanced life of spiritual victory is humility. Pridel men like Pharaoh certainly lack this balance. A combination of dignity and humility in our lives is a powerful testimony to God's election and grace.

GOD'S DETERMINATIONS OF VALUE AND REPROACH—Rom. 9:19-21

Man's audacious questions (Rom. 9:19-20). Paul once again anticipated a response to his teaching about the consequences of God's election. Since God sovereignly chose individuals, how is it possible for God to hold them personally accountable and assign them blame and punishment?

Paul used a strong metaphor to counteract his readers' hypothetical disagreement with his teaching on election. Using the image of a potter and his material, Paul asked several penetrating questions. The first set

dealt with the material, questioning whether the clay was in control of the creative process. Paul's assumed answer was a resounding no.

God's absolute resolves (Rom. 9:21). Paul asked a second penetrating question. He wanted to know whether the potter was in complete control of the creative process and whether the final result would be a product worthy for sale or an unfinished product for the scrap heap. Paul's answer was that the potter is in complete control.

The doctrine of election should be a source of comfort rather than controversy. Scripture is clear that election in no way contradicts our moral responsibility before God or the free invitation of the gospel message.

—Thomas R. Chmura.

PRACTICAL POINTS

1. A personal relationship with Jesus Christ is not dependent on an earthly bloodline but on a divine bloodline (Rom. 9:6-7).
2. Even Gentiles can become spiritual descendants of Abraham, and this is unreservedly supported by the sovereign promise of God (vss. 8-9).
3. All purposeful acts of the Lord God are confirmed by His sovereign choices, not by human effort (vss. 10-13).
4. We can do nothing to earn the Lord's mercy (vss. 14-16).
5. The ultimate consummation of all God's sovereign acts is the profound proclamation of His powerful name (vss. 17-18).
6. Questioning God's character from a place of hard-heartedness and unrepentance is inappropriate (Rom. 9:19-21; cf. Job 42:1-6).

—Thomas R. Chmura.