

## Lesson 19 – The Book of Romans

As we move through chapters 9, 10, and 11 all of which deal with the Nation of Israel, the Jews, we are looking at why Paul has broken into this letter to inform everyone of the uniqueness of the position God has set with His people, Israel

As stated, Paul starts out pouring out his heart over his brethren (the Jew) and their condition before God.

We noted that as an *intercessor*, Paul was willing to be separated from Christ himself for the sake of the Jew. Knowing the impossibility of this, he lays out for all to see the past, present and future for this people.

Last time we started discussing the importance of the Covenants that God made with Abraham and of course the Jews. As noted, the covenant God made with Abraham included not just the “sands of the sea” (the Jew) but also the “stars in the heavens” which represents the Church of Jesus Christ.

We noted that the “cutting of the covenant” was completed by God Himself, with God Himself and Abraham was put to sleep. The reason for that was that it was an **unconditional** covenant of which Abraham and his descendants were the recipient with no input on their part.

We further noted that the **behavior** of the Jew had no impact upon the **validity** of the covenant. It was not dependent upon their behavior. Truth is, they failed miserably but that failure had no impact on the covenant itself.

An important verse for us to understand is verse **4** of **Romans 9** which states in part; “who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, **the covenants**, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the **promises.**”

Herein is our authority to discuss the covenants and their importance.

So, we discussed the **Abrahamic Covenant** last time and started the **covenant** regarding the **land**. God gave specific boundaries of the land to Abraham (which as you read closely, encompasses a great deal of the land that the Arabs are presently occupying) and after the tribulation period, the Jew will occupy this land – period.

It will be the land that the Jewish Nation will inhabit.

As mentioned last time, after WWII, the Jews were gathered from the entire earth and have been returning to the land of Israel since. They have a legal right according to scripture to occupy this land and will do so totally one day in the not-too-distant future.

Again **Ezekiel 36** speaks about their regathering in the land, and says nothing about their *repentance* to do such. God is in the business of fulfilling this prophesy. Notice also that their return to the land is also without their *having the “Spirit” of the living God*.

Both of these things will happen as the millennium reign begins and David sits on the throne in Jerusalem.

That brings us next to the **Davidic covenant**

This covenant was promised to the Tribe of Judah. David was to be their King according to **Ezekiel 37:21** and following: “surely, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land – **verse 24** “David, my servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd: **verse 25** “and My servant David shall be their prince forevermore. **Verse 38** “the nations will also know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.”

O.K. having covered the issue of eternal covenants and realizing that there is still more in store for the Jewish Nation, and having proved that God is not through with them and that the everlasting covenants are still in effect,

Paul now takes on yet a second “sticky wicket” as some would say. He now delves into the area of **divine election** and **free will**.

As we go there, let me take you to **Luke 4**. Lets start in verse **24** and move through verse **29** Jesus said: *“Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country, but I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up 3 years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all of the land, but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. Then verse 27 – “And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha, the prophet, and none of the was cleansed except Naam the Syrian.*

**Verse 28** – *So all those in the synagogue when they heard these things were filled with wrath and verse 29 – and rose up and thrust Him out of the city and they set about to kill Jesus for saying such a thing.”*

Why did they react this way? What was unique about these two folks? They were upset because both of these examples were **Gentiles**.

That did not set well with the “anointed, called out ones” We the Jews are God’s chosen people, not the gentiles. They had no right to these miracles.

Then in verse **6 of Romans 9** – Paul says “For they are not all Israel who are Israel”, nor are they all the children because they are the seed of Abraham. but in Isaac your seed shall be called”

Paul now makes a distinction between physical and spiritual Israel. Again, he is talking about the Nation of Israel, not the church.

You will recall that Abraham had children through Hagar and Keturah. These were not the children of promise. They were the children of the “flesh”.

Notice in **verse 7** Paul states; “nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham., but in Isaac shall your seed be called.

Isaac was the promised child. The miracle child that God had to get involved with. You will remember that Sarah was barren, unable to produce a child because her womb no longer functioned. God had to get involved for her to conceive with Abraham.

What Paul is alluding to here is that the divine birth of Isaac is what is necessary for he to be considered the seed of Abraham. Isaac was the “child of promise” and therefore considered counted as the “seed” Not the children that Abraham had through the other women – Just through Sarah.

**Verse 9** “for this is the word of promise “at this time I will come and Sarah will have a son.”

Side Bar here beloved -

Now some things need saying here.

Scripture teaches that there are NONE that seek after God.

There would be no one in the Church unless God called them and gave them ears to hear and the ability to respond to Him.

There are none righteous, no not one – scripture teaches.

There is no question but each of us deserve to go to Hell because of our sins.

The fact that any of us are redeemed is a miracle of God.

Before we met Him, we were all “horse thieves” We would steal a horse not in order to become a horse thief, but because were already a horse thief. Do you understand my point here?

We do not have to teach our children to lie, cheat or steal. That kind of comes with the first birth. We do however have to teach them not to steal, cheat or lie.

Now as you read **verse 10** – “and not only this, but when Rebecca (Isaac’s wife) also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac. (For the children not yet being born, *nor having done anything good or evil* (as though this would determine anything), that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works (as though either had to do anything) but of him who calls) it is said (**verse 12**) **the older** (Esau because he came out first and was the older) **shall serve the younger** (Jacob because he came out last and was the younger) This is contrary to the norm. The first born has preeminence.

Then **verse 13** – Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated.

Before they were even born – God had chosen Jacob over Esau, loved him and hated Esau.

Beloved, the mystery is not why would God hate Esau, but rather why would God love Jacob? Why would God allow anyone into His presence knowing what He knows about us?

Some would say ‘well God lives outside of time, and knows the end from the beginning’ and this is very true. We also know that in the days to come that Esau would reject his birthright and sell it for a bowl of stew, but I don’t believe this is the reason why God chose one brother over the other. He made the choice because He is God. Period.

We don’t like this answer.

Paul asks the question in this chapter – Well then is there unrighteousness with God? Beloved, unrighteousness from God would be noticed if someone was calling out to Him and is rejected by Him. If someone was pleading with God to accept Him and He would turn away.

Anyone coming to Him, He would in no way cast out **John 6:37**...

We need to settle in our minds this entire issue. Even though God knows the end from the beginning, He did not look down the road and see the time in which you or I would “walk uprightly” and then decide to bring us to Himself. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. **Romans 5:8** “but God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

I have no problem with God choosing the small nation of Israel. Why? Because He is God. Period. I have no problem with God delivering Israel in the Old Testament time and time again even through they continually murmured against Him. Why? Because He is God.

**Verse 15** Paul says: For He said to Moses – I will have mercy on whomever I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I have compassion – (Why) Because He is God. And no one can stay His hand.

**Verse 16** is a tough one for some, a blessing for others. Paul writes – “So then it is not of him who **wills** (that is the individual who really desires in his heart), nor of one who **runs** (that is that does everything in his own power) but of God who shows mercy.”

**Verse 17** “for the scripture says to Pharaoh, for this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show my power in you, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.” .ie. I have put you in power, I have set things up, I have hardened your heart so that you will not let my people go, brought plagues upon you and your people, brought you with a hook in your mouth to follow my people to the Red Sea, opened the sea and drowned you and your army just so my name made be great throughout the entire earth, and everyone will know that I am God.

Well some would say, that doesn’t seem fair”” Knowing that comment is coming, Paul states in **verse 19** “you will say to me then, why does He still find fault, for who has resisted His will?”

Then the rubber really hits the road – **verse 20** “but indeed O Man, who are you to reply against God? Keep quiet silly man, you have no idea who you are talking to. “Will the thing formed (ie. You and me as folks) say to Him who formed you, (God Himself) why did you make me like this?”

Anticipating this question Paul gives us **verse 21** “does not the potter (God) have power over the clay (folks) to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor? He is after all - God, can't He do as He wishes with the people He creates?”

Notice in **verse 22** that there are “vessels that have been *prepared for destruction*. And then God would make the riches of His glory on *vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory*. One group prepared for **destruction**, the other **glory**.”

Paul then goes on to quote from the book of Hosea by taking folks that were not His people and making them His people, now the Sons of the Living God. He then quotes Isaiah; though the number of children of Israel are as the sands of the sea, there is only a remnant will be saved. For if the Lord had not left a portion of the “seed” they all would have become like Sodom and Gomorrah. (Totally annihilated.).

Notice then that Paul changes gears and mentions the Gentiles. They did not pursue righteousness, yet obtain righteousness by faith. Israel on the other hand, thought they were O.K. – did not seek righteousness because they didn't think it necessary because they kept the law and rejected the need for faith.

Result – a stumbling stone and rock of offense for the Jew.

Now I want to bring up another matter here that, if possible, could separate the people of God. I have a pretty strong position and would be very happy to explain what that is. On the other side of this position, there are beloved brothers that take a different approach, and I can truthfully say, I am O.K. with that.

I think that we all agree with the fact that if God had not intervened in the lives of man, no one would be saved.

We both agree that without “ears to hear” we would not be able to hear what God is saying. The question arises, how do you get ears to hear. Some seem to have them, others do not. How they get them is the issue, and to me and my experience is that He gave them to me.

Such quotes as “He that hath an ear to hear, listen to what the scripture sayeth” To me that statement presupposes something. Not everyone has been given ears to hear. You may disagree with that and that is O.K. with me. Others take the position regarding “election” that some have a chance to be the elect, others do not. I can live in peace with you if you disagree with me. That is quite O.K. with me and I do not want to break fellowship with you should you disagree.

Another “sticky wicket” that seems to fall between great men and women of God, is the idea that “God wants all men to be saved” Quoting from **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:4**, scripture says

God our Savior “who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth”

My problem here is that I was originally taught that this verse belongs to the previous verses. *Reading in context from verse 1 of Chapter 2, it states “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplication, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence, (vs 3) For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior (vs 4) who desires **all men** to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

My teacher taught me that the “all men” listed here starts with the “kings and all who are in authority” means – **all without distinction, not all without exception**. I.e. Wealthy folks, people in authority (kings) etc. In other words, not all wealthy, not all in authority not everyone, but every class of people.

The prayers supplication intercession and giving thanks if given to every class of people. Kings and all who are in authority are just an amplification of classes of folks.

The problem we face with God wanting all men to be saved, causes us to wrap ourselves into a pretzel to understand how other scriptures fit into that case. We know that Judas was appointed to do what he did. We know that Pharoah did what he did and many times it says that “God hardened his heart” and Jacob (trickster and the 2<sup>nd</sup> born) was chosen over Esau.

Beloved, we need to stick to the understanding that God is God. He is sovereign over His creation and does what He does without input from you and me.

You may disagree with me on this issue beloved, but it is not worth our breaking fellowship over.

You and I must grow in our understanding of the **grace of God** (receiving what we do not deserve) if we are to ever grow in our **knowledge of Him.- 2 Peter 3:18**

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