

## THE EPISTLES TO THE ROMANS

### ROMANS 9:1-11:36, VINDICATION OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

#### INTRODUCTION

##### A. Outline of Romans

1. Introduction (1:1-17)
2. The need for God's righteousness (1:18-3:20)
3. Justification: the position of righteousness from God (3:21-5:21)
4. Sanctification: from position to practice (6:1-8:39)
5. Vindication of God's Righteousness (9:1-11:36)
  - a. Election by God (9:1-18)
    - 1) God's promises and Israel's rejection (1-5)
    - 2) Concerning national Israel and true Israel (6-13)
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##### B. Introductory notes on Romans 9

1. Douglas Moo, *No conjunction or particle connects the two chapters, and the tone shifts dramatically from celebration (8:31-39) to lamentation (9:1-3).*
2. John Witmer, *Since God is the self-existent Being who is the Creator of everything that exists outside Himself, He is sovereign and can therefore use and dispose of His Creation as He wishes.*
3. C. E. B. Cranfield, *With striking emphasis and solemnity Paul declares his own sorrow at his fellow-Jews' unbelief and the strength of his desire for their conversion, thereby introducing the subject with which he will be concerned until the end of chapter 11.*
4. Grant Osborne, *Some have thought Romans 9-11 an afterthought disconnected from chapters 1-8, but it is integral to the development of Paul's message. In these chapters he is responding to the Jew-Gentile controversy and the place of the law in the church. Since the law had been fulfilled and culminated in Christ (10:4), the rituals of the law were no longer needed. This meant that by rejecting both Christ and the Christian gospel, the majority of Jews were no longer a part of God's people.*
5. Douglas Moo, *As the rehearsal of Israel's privileges in vv. 4-5 makes clear, Paul is also concerned that Israel's unbelief has ruptured the continuous course of salvation history: the people promised so many blessings have, it seems, been disinherited. It will be Paul's task to show that this is not the case.*
6. Warren Wiersbe, *Paul had argued in Romans 8 that the believer is secure in Jesus Christ and that God's election would stand (Rom. 8:28-30). But someone might ask, "What about the Jews? They were chosen by God, and yet now you tell us they are set aside and God is building His church. Did God fail to keep His promises to Israel?" In other words, the very character of God was at stake. If God was not faithful to the Jews, how do we know He will be faithful to the church?*

### ROMANS 9:1-18, ELECTION BY GOD

##### A. God's promises and Israel's rejection (1-5)

1. Paul had intense sorrow at Israel's rejection of God's righteousness (1-2), ***I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.***
  - a. He affirmed his love for his people.
    - 1) His declaration was based on a two-fold testimony.
      - a) It was based on his commitment to the truth concerning Jesus Christ.
      - b) Also, it was based on a clear conscience. Douglas Moo, *Paul assures the Romans that he has a good, or "clear," conscience about the truthfulness of what he is about to tell them. But one's conscience is only as good as the moral standards that it monitors. Hence Paul reminds the Romans that, as a believer with a "renewed mind" (12:1-2), his conscience testifies "by means of" the Holy Spirit.*

- 2) His declaration was made despite the harsh treatment he received from them.
    - a) Thomas Constable, *Some might have thought that Paul hated the Jews since he had departed from Judaism and now preached a Law-free gospel. Therefore he took pains to affirm his love for his fellow Jews.*
    - b) Douglas Moo, *To the Jewish Christians in the church Paul therefore wants to make clear that his focus on the Gentile mission has by no means meant the abandonment of his concern for, and, indeed, plans for, the salvation of their fellow Jews.*
  - b. He expressed deep pain at Israel's rejection of Christ.
    - 1) *Sorrow includes pain of mind or spirit, affliction.*
    - 2) *Unceasing anguish speaks of a heart that is continually grieved.*
    - 3) Grant Osborne, *Paul here echoes Jeremiah, who is called "the weeping prophet" for his tears over the apostate nation of Judah (Jer 4:19; 6:24; 9:10).*
2. Paul was willing to be accursed for Israel (3), ***For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.***
- a. *For* indicates the depth of his concern for the Jewish people.
  - b. His degree of hurt was expressed by a wish for something that couldn't happen.
    - 1) He was willing to be a substitute for Jews if it could bring them to Christ.
    - 2) Of course, Jesus is the only substitute for Jews and Gentiles.
    - 3) Such concern was shared by Moses for the people he was leading, Exodus 32:32, *But now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written.*
  - c. The point of Paul's concern for Israel is emphasized by declaring they are *accursed and cut off from Christ*.
    - 1) *Accursed* is a reminder of the seriousness of the Gospel, Galatians 1:8, *But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.*
    - 2) *Cut off from Christ* is permanent for those who reject His substitutionary atonement.
      - a) Matthew 7:23, *And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'*
      - b) Matthew 25:41, *Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'*
  - d. The basis of Paul's love for the Jews.
    - 1) Some believe it was his love for his fellow countrymen.
    - 2) Others believe it was his love for Christ and that He not be blasphemed.
    - 3) I agree with John Calvin who wrote, *I do not thus accept the opinion of those who think that Paul spoke these words from a regard to God alone and not men. Nor, again, do I agree with others, who say that he had regard only to the love of men without any consideration for God, but I connect the love of men with zeal for the glory of God.*
3. Paul's sorrow was based on Israel's rejection of its privileges (4-5), ***They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.***
- a. Paul's concern was for Israelites.
    - 1) They are the chosen people of God, Romans 2:28-29, *For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.*
    - 2) Jews is the term that distinguished them from Gentiles, Douglas Moo, *It is therefore no accident that Paul in Rom. 9–11 generally abandons the word "Jew," which has figured so prominently in chaps. 1–8, in favor of the terms "Israelites" and "Israel." Paul is no longer looking at the Jews from the perspective of the Gentiles and in their relationship to the Gentiles but from the perspective of salvation history and in their relationship to God and his promises to them.*

- b. Paul lists blessings that distinguish them as God's chosen people.
- 1) C. E. B. Cranfield, *Their recital serves at the same time to underline the sadness of the Jews' present unbelief, to explain the depth of Paul's grief on their behalf, and also to indicate the continuing fact of their election.*
  - 2) A list of Israel's blessings
    - a) Adoption
      - 1] Exodus 4:22, *Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, Israel is my firstborn son,*
      - 2] Hosea 11:1, *When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.*
      - 3] This adoption conveys all the rights and privileges from the Old Covenant, Douglas Moo, *Paul's choice of the term "adoption" is a deliberate attempt (after 8:15, 23) to highlight the continuing regard that God has for Israel, despite her widespread unbelief. It may therefore hint at the new and ultimate work of God among the people Israel that Paul predicts in 11:25-28.*
      - 4] There is a distinction between the term adoption for Christians and Israelites.
        - a] Christians obtain adoption by God's grace through faith in Christ alone.
        - b] Israelites are adopted corporately as God's covenant people with no guarantee of salvation of individual Israelities.
    - b) Glory
      - 1] *Glory means fame, renown, honor.*
      - 2] C. E. B. Cranfield, *Glory, ...is the outward sign of God's presence with His people. It is always an act of God's grace and is not controlled by His people.*
      - 3] The Israelites dwelt in God's glorious presence (Shekinah) as Christians have God's presence within us by means of the Holy Spirit.
        - a] Exodus 24:17, *Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel.*
        - b] Exodus 40:34, *Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.*
        - c] I Kings 8:11, *so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.*
    - c) Covenants
      - 1] *The covenants*
        - a] It is *the declaration of one person's will, not the result of an agreement between two parties, like a compact or a contract, a solemn agreement involving reciprocal benefits and responsibilities.*
        - b] The covenants include the Abrahamic (Genesis 15:18), Noaic (Genesis 9:9), Mosaic (Exodus 19:5), Davidic (2 Samuel 7:12-16), and New Covenants (Jeremiah 31:31-34).
      - 2] Importance
        - a] God initiated covenants which bound Him to the nation of Israel.
        - b] Grant Osborne, *Each covenant emphasized the place of Israel in God's plan.*
    - d) The Law
      - 1] It means *legislation, enactment of the Law, specifically the Jewish or Mosaic Law.*
        - a] Deuteronomy 4:14, *And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, that you might do them in the land that you are going over to possess.*
        - b] Note Deuteronomy 5:1-22.
      - 2] Importance
        - a] C. E. B Cranfield, *The fact that (the Law)is mentioned among the excellent privileges of Israel is clearly of the greatest significance for our understanding of Paul's view of the law. That he is thinking of the law as divinely given goes without saying.*
        - b] Douglas Moo, *...he wants to focus on the law as given to Israel by God, not on its negative effects on the people as a result of the power of sin.*
        - c] Grant Osborne, *The law was the sign of God's favor to his chosen people and signified the wisdom and knowledge of God given to enable his people to walk with him rightly.*

- e) The worship
- 1] *Worship means to perform religious rites, sacred service, to venerate.*
    - a] Exodus 12:25, *And when you come to the land that the LORD will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service.*
    - b] Hebrews 9:1, *Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness.*
  - 2] Importance
    - a] *Worship is a means provided by God for fellowship with His creatures, worship ordered by God.*
    - b] *For Israelites, worship was to the true God in contrast to worship to that devised in men's hearts, 1 Kings 12:33, He went up to the altar that he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, in the month that he had devised from his own heart. And he instituted a feast for the people of Israel and went up to the altar to make offerings.*
    - c] *C. E. B. Cranfield, ... the term embraced also the faithful non-sacrificial worship of synagogue and pious Jewish home, including such things as prayer, the reading of the Scriptures, the observation of the Sabbath, the reciting of the Shema, and, indeed, all that is meant by the phrase of Mic 6:8, 'to walk humbly with thy God.'*
    - d] *Grant Osborne, The true purpose of the temple was to enable the nation to experience the presence of God in worship, and the sacrificial system was meant to enable the people to approach God ritually clean so they could worship God in his temple.*
- f) The promises
- 1] It refers to promises made by God to the Israelites.
    - a] Acts 13:32, *And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers,*
    - b] Ephesians 2:12, *remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*
    - c] Hebrews 11:17, *By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son,*
    - d] Romans 15:8, *For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs,*
  - 2] Promises made by God.
    - a] *To Abraham, Genesis 12:7, Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.*
    - b] *To Isaac, Genesis 26:3, Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father.*
    - c] *To Jacob, Genesis 28:13, And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring.*
    - d] *Messianic promises, 2 Corinthians 1:20, For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.*
  - 3] Importance
    - a] *Grant Osborne, While Israel often failed to fulfill its promises to God, he never failed his people, and that is Paul's primary point in this section.*
    - b] *Thomas Constable, The promises revealed to the patriarchs guaranteed God's action for them just as God's promises to Christians guarantee His action for us (8:31).*
- g) The patriarchs
- 1] *Patriarch means father and here, it means forefathers*
    - a] Romans 11:28, *As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers.*
    - b] *Paul was looking back to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the twelve patriarchs, the sons of Jacob and others like David note Acts 2:29, Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.*

- 2] Importance
  - a] Douglas Moo, *Descent from the patriarchs is valuable because God gave promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that were valid both for them and for their descendants...Much of what Paul says in Rom. 9–11 is an attempt to explain just what the Israelites legitimately can expect to inherit from their founding fathers.*
  - b] Grant Osborne, *Everything they are and everything they were destined to become stems from these fathers of the nation.*
  
- h) The Messiah
  - 1] Jesus' humanity, according to the flesh, came through Jews.
    - a] Jesus is from, or better, *came through* the Jewish race.
    - b] Thomas Constable, *The Messiah came from Israel, though He was not exclusively theirs since He is the sovereign eternally blessed God (John 1:1).*
    - c] C. E. B. Cranfield, *Paul completes his list by stating what is the supreme privilege, the supreme dignity, of the Jewish people—the fact that the Messiah Himself is, so far as His human nature, His existence as man, is concerned, of their race.*
  
  - 2] His deity
    - a] From eternity, Jesus Christ is fully God.
    - b] Colossians 1:16-19, *For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,*
    - c] Douglas Moo, *Connecting “God” to “Christ” is therefore exegetically preferable, theologically unobjectionable, and contextually appropriate. Paul here calls the Messiah, Jesus, “God,” attributing to him full divine status.*
  
  - 3] Importance
    - a] The culmination of the importance of the nation of Israel to salvation history is the coming of Messiah Who is the ultimate promise.
    - b] Grant Osborne, *The greatest gift of all is that God himself should become incarnate in Jesus and become the suffering servant who gives his life for the salvation of sinners (Phil 2:6–8). He is supreme “over all,” meaning cosmic lordship over all creation (Col 1:15–18)...He is not only Messiah but also God himself, and so the Jewish people refuse to believe in their God, their Creator.*

***Romans 9:6-18 coming soon, Lord willing.***