

Romans 9:1-18

March 16, 2022

Having given us the wonderful truths of our position in Christ, Paul takes time to cover God's dealings with the nation of Israel: past, present, and future. Chapter 9 uses the past history of Israel to address the difficult question of God's sovereignty versus man's free will.

"Sovereign" means free to act without external constraints. A sovereign country, for example, is independent and not subject to a larger empire. God by His very being must be sovereign: Who can overrule Him?

We learned from the early chapters of Romans that all deserve condemnation from God. Here we find that God

uses His sovereignty to show mercy and compassion on some. Nowhere is it said that God sovereignly decides to condemn anyone (although our human reasoning might wrongly infer that).

As you read this chapter, ask yourself, "Did Esau and Pharaoh have opportunities to regain God's favor? What did they do with those opportunities?" Then ask yourself if God was in any way unfair. "He judges the world with righteousness; He judges the peoples with uprightness" (Psalm 9:8).

Questions:

1. What is the source of Paul's anguish in verse 2?
2. What is Paul saying he would sacrifice for his people in verse 3?
3. Is the "adoption" of verse 9:4 the same as 8:23?
4. What are some of the promises mentioned in verse 4? How might some think they had failed?

5. Verse 7 says that some who are Abraham's natural descendants are not his true offspring. Explain this.
6. Verse 12 is cited from Genesis 25:23. Why is it important that this prophecy was given before the twins Esau and Jacob were born?
7. Verse 13 comes from Malachi 1. is it still talking of the unborn brothers? Is it speaking of persons or nations? (What nation came from Esau?)
8. Read verses 14-16. Can we earn God's mercy through our actions?
9. How does God harden someone?