

Wrestling with the Sovereignty of God & the Freedom of Relationship Romans Chapters 9:19-29

Section 3 - Vs 19-29 = God's Judgment that led to Exile & through it God's Promises to Abraham fulfilled to the world

- Romans 9:19-24
- Romans 9:19

Let's remember again where Paul has taken us since verse 6

1. Started with the Patriarchs
2. Continued thru the Exodus
3. Now he is moving on to the Exile

The setting now is Israel in judgment

God has prodded, promised, sent Prophet after Prophet

And now, after continually hardening their hearts God has no choice but to judge them and whittle them down to a very small remnant

2 passages that Paul draws from:

Jeremiah:

And the central image God uses is the potter and the clay from Jeremiah 18

In Jeremiah, Israel is stubborn and evil (18:12)

They are idolatrous (18:13-17)

God therefore claims the right to do with Israel whatever the Potter chooses (18:5-11)

This is one of Jeremiah's many images of the purpose of the Exile

Israel will be judged severely, but God will establish a new covenant

The image makes the point that **Israel has forgone their rights**

Israel has no right to complain if God makes His own path

Isaiah: (29:16)

The context is again God's judgment against Israel

After judgment God will restore His people

(also echoes the Wisdom of Solomon)

FACED WITH HUMAN EVIL GOD HAS THE RIGHT TO:

- a) withhold judgment for awhile to spread salvation to the world
- b) remake nations & people in a new way

- Romans 9:19-21

God is Sovereign – then aren't we (ETHNIC Israel) just puppets in this grand plan?

Israel has no right to answer back or even appeal His decisions

Israel's real choice then is:

- a) accept immediate judgment
- b) accept instead God's strange ways of remolding His people to make sure the saving plan of Genesis 12 gets carried out

* Again taken out of context this looks like God just remolds people into whatever He wants whenever He wants

- a) Goes against everything we studied in the intro – respects our decisions
- b) Has nothing to do with this passage – it is about Ethnic Israel not believing

- Romans 9:22-23

“Suppose for a moment this is what God has in mind...”

“willing” = thelo = not causal but rather concessive, inclined

“Although all the time He was inclined to reveal His retribution and demonstrate His power...”

- Romans 9:23

God has with GREAT PATIENCE gone on putting up with those...

God is not desiring to unload wrath but rather is creating breathing space

Immediate judgment is deserved, but God desires to create breathing space for Ethnic Israel

And thus also to spread mercy to more folks

People like Pharaoh and ISRAEL are called “vessels of wrath”

Not in the sense that they were created for wrath

And not in the sense that they are the one’s to bring wrath on others

But rather that they are the appropriate recipients of wrath

Carry this thought forward when the Jews rejected Jesus

Had God simply judged them, they would have had no chance to turn

Or for the Gentiles to be brought in

- Romans 9:24

Kind of a tricky sentence...Paul never finishes his “what if” statement in 23

All he is saying is the “vessels of glory” will not now just come from the Jews

Again, God’s goal since Genesis 12...God is keeping His word, He is righteous

- Romans 9:25-26

Paul will now quote twice from Hosea and twice again from Isaiah

Hosea 2:23, 1:10 speak of restoration after judgment

Ethnic Israel was cast away for infidelity and has become “not my people”

[Who is God talking about here?](#)

The Gentiles will be added

Again, Paul’s argument...this is not a new argument...this has ALWAYS been God’s goal

And who are you to question God for staying judgment for a time so He can utilize ethnic Israel for His greater redemptive purposes

And “THE CALL” here is the call of God’s Gospel story where both Jew & Gentile enter

- Romans 9:27-29

Is. 10:22-23 – Declares that even if the Abrahamic promise comes true it will only include a remnant

Out of the judgment God will bring about a faithful remnant

This remnant will be the “seed” (survivor in some translations)

Meaning the true children of Abraham by faith

If God hadn't interceded, there would have been NOTHING LEFT like Sodom
* These two cities were destroyed at the same time as the promise
This pattern of idolatry, stayed judgment, and a remnant being withheld has ALWAYS
been a part of the story
[Remember Lot in Genesis 19:29? What happened?](#)

Summary:

Paul has told the story from Abraham and the promises thru the Exodus, judgment, and remnant

ALL thru the story God has affirmed He would retain a remnant to ultimately build a covenant people with both Jew and Gentile

And that the new family was never going to be ALL of ETHNIC ISRAEL

But rather Abraham's children by faith (Romans 1-8)

All Israel, and Gentiles are in sin

And if God left Israel alone

a) there would have been no one faithful left and

b) the Gentiles would never have been reached

Having explained how He has righteously dealt with sin, he will now explain how God's righteousness thru faithfulness to the covenant generates a worldwide family of faith in Jesus

And Paul has answered all 3 questions:

- a) Has God's Word failed because Ethnic Israel doesn't believe?
- b) Is God fair to pick who He would use to carry the message forward?
- c) Why does He find fault if the bearers didn't pick?