

Romans 9:17-33

17. For the Scripture says to the 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 IN ALL THE EARTH."

A. For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh

1. **the Scripture**- This is a Title for the Lord Jesus Christ! Notice it says the Scripture says, "I have raised you up."

a. (Gal 3:8 NKJV) And **the Scripture**, **foreseeing** that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, **preached the gospel** to Abraham beforehand, *saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."*

b. Here we see Scripture foresaw and preached the gospel to Abraham! Jesus preached the gospel to Abraham!

c. Jesus is the Word of God- the Scripture!

2. **Pharaoh**- This is a title for the Egyptian leader and not a personal name.

a. Till now Paul had used examples from the line of Abraham to speak of election by grace through faith. Now he will use a heathen. Both Jews and Gentiles are accepted or rejected on the same grounds- faith in the Lord or unbelief.

B. For this very purpose I have raised you up

1. **For this very purpose**- Gr. **eis touto autos**- *unto this thing*

2. **raised up**-Gr. **exegeiro**- *ex-out of*; **airo**- *to lift up- to lift up out of*

3. God's purpose is never for evil. God has a good purpose for every human being that has ever lived. It is up to us to believe in the Lord and to follow that purpose.

C. that I may show my power in you

1. **show**- Gr. **endeiknumi**- *to exhibit*

a. This was the original purpose God had for Pharaoh. He raised him up and out of obscurity so that His power would be shown **IN** him!

2. God's purpose for Pharaoh was that he would believe upon Him and God's power be shown in and through him. However, Pharaoh thorted that call and purpose of God in unbelief so God's power had to be shown **TO** him instead of **IN** him!

D. and that my name be declared in all the Earth.

1. This was also the original purpose God had for Pharaoh. He was the world leader. If Pharaoh had believed upon the Lord, God would have shown his power IN him and THROUGH him. God's name would have been broadcast throughout the world.

2. If we fail to believe or follow God's purpose does not mean God's

purpose will be stopped. God's purpose was fulfilled in spite of Pharaoh's unbelief. God's name was spread around the Earth through the miracles done against Egypt and by the Red Sea.

18. Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

A. Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills

1. Many take this verse out of context to prove God just chosen randomly those who He will have mercy on, and the rest He hardens their heart to show them His wrath by sending them to an eternal hell. We need to keep a text in context because if we remove a text from context then we are left with a con!
2. We have seen exactly who God will have mercy on! It is anyone who believes in God's grace through Jesus Christ. There is no guessing on this. Again, God has come up with the plan of redemption. He came up with the way of salvation- the finished work of Christ and the mode of receiving salvation- which is by faith. Anyone that agrees to that plan God has mercy on. Those who do not then God's mercy cannot reach them.

B. and whom He wills He hardens

1. **hardens**- Gr. **skleruno**- *make dry and hard*. This is a present tense verb. *He is hardening*. We get the word **sklerosis** from this word.
2. The same sun that will melt wax will harden clay. It is not the sun's fault. It is the make-up of what the sun is shining on that makes the difference. A person who believes in God then God's dealing with them will mold that person's heart. Someone who is in unbelief then the dealing of God with them will end up hardening their heart. It is the condition of the heart that softens or hardens the heart.
3. Pharaoh participated in hardening his own heart.
 - a. [Ex. 7:13] He [The Lord] hardened Pharaoh's heart
 - b. [Ex. 7:23]- He did not **set his heart** to this first miracle
 - c. [Ex. 8:15]- he [Pharaoh] hardened his heart
 - d. [Ex. 8:32]- Pharaoh hardened his heart
 - e. [Ex. 9:34]- [Pharaoh] hardened his heart
 - f. [Ex. 10:1]- I [the Lord] have hardened his heart
 - g. In the above verses we see that Pharaoh's heart being hardened was not the exclusive work of the Lord. Pharaoh participated in this process. Notice in verse 23 that he did not set his heart towards God! His heart just became more and more fixed in the position that he set it! This will happen to us folks! It is important to set your heart towards God in faith!

h. As in Judo you accelerate the already set direction of a person coming towards you, so it was with Pharaoh's heart. It was moving against God and God simply accelerated this process by His dealings with Him.

19. You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?"

A. Find fault- Gr. *memphomai*- *to blame due to fault*

1. Here we have a Jewish objector with a guilty conscience trying to clear himself. He knows he is at fault but thinks God made him that way. From the very beginning man has blamed God for his own sinful choices. Adam blamed God for Him giving Eve to him. Today people that choose sinful behaviors will claim God made them that way.

2. God found fault with Israel because of their unbelief. God did not make people not believe.

B. resisted- Gr. *anthistemi*- *stand against; oppose*.

1. The way we can stand against and oppose God is by unbelief and pride. God resists the proud and God wins.

20. But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed *it*, "Why have you made me like this?"

A. But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God?

1. **reply-** Gr. *to contradict in reply, to answer by contradiction, reply against*

a. This Jewish objector is trying to contradict God's assessment of Him.

B. Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, Why have you made me like this?

1. Even if God did make this person to have unbelief, God has the right over His creation as long as it did not violate His own nature and character. However, God did not make this man like this. Man loves to choose to do evil and say God made me this way!

21. Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

A. Does not the potter have power over the clay

1. **potter-** Gr. *kerameus*

2. **power-** Gr. *exousia*- *authority*

3. **clay-** Gr. *pelos*

B. for the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor.

1. **lump**- Gr. **phurama**- *to mix liquid with a dry mass*
2. **vessel**- Gr. **skeuos**- *an implement; household utensil*
3. **honor**- Gr. **time**- *value, weight, significant*
4. **dishonor**- Gr. **atimia**- *lacking value, weight, significance*

C. What Paul is saying here is not that God made people to believe and go to heaven and some to disbelieve and go to hell. What He is saying is that even if he did, the creation does not have the right to tell God what to do or how to do it.

D. Again, some love to take isolated scriptures and divorce them from the rest of revealed scripture that shows God died for all men, wants all men to be save, calls all men, and saves those who believe.

22. What if God, wanting to show *His* wrath and to make His power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,

A. What if God

1. **if**- Gr. **ei**- *first class condition- if it be the case.*

B. wanting to show His wrath

1. **wanting**- Gr. **thelo**- *willing*
2. **show**- Gr. **endeiknumi**- *to exhibit*
3. **wrath**- Gr. **orge**- *deep seated anger*

C. and to make His power known

1. **power**- Gr. **dunatos**
2. **known**- Gr. **gnorizo**

D. endured with much long suffering

1. **endured**- Gr. **phero**- *to bear with*
2. **longsuffering**- Gr. **makrothumia**- *patience towards people*

a. These words show that God was not eager to exhibit his wrath although He was willing to because of His holy and just nature. He took no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He was slow and long suffering with them so that they would have space to repent and believe.

E. the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction

1. **prepared**- Gr. **katartizo**- *to fit out, suited, equip, put in order, arrange, adjust.* This verb is in the perf. pass. part.

a. God created all people with a honorable purpose. It is the individuals that prepare themselves to be vessels of wrath by their unbelief and pride. They become suited for

destruction. Notice here it does not say God prepared them for destruction, but we see it said God Himself prepared vessels for glory. God is a God of life. He only prepares vessels for glory. People prepare themselves for wrath.

23. and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,

A. and that He might make known the riches of His glory

1. **riches of glory**- This is God's grace, mercy, long suffering, goodness and truth. This is what God proclaimed to Moses when he asked to see God's glory! [Ex. 34:6]
2. In eternity future God will reveal His exceeding riches of His glory to us! [Eph. 2:7]

B. on vessels of mercy

1. These are all those who believe upon Jesus Christ.

C. which He had prepared beforehand to glory

1. Here we see that God is the one who prepares vessels of mercy to glory **BEFOREHAND**.
2. In the previous verse it does not say God prepares vessels of wrath beforehand. The vessels of wrath are self prepared in their own lifetime. God only prepares vessels of mercy for glory. God is a good God.

24. even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

A. even us whom He called

1. "even us" is those who have believed, both Jews and Gentiles.
2. Some say that God only calls those who He chooses to save. This is not scriptural. Jesus Himself said, Many are called, but few are chosen. [Matt. 20:16] If He saved all he called, then Jesus would have said many are called, and many are chosen.
3. The chosen are the ones who answer the call to believe upon Christ.

B. not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles

1. The covenant people of God are those who believe on and receive the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

25. As He says also in Hosea: "I WILL CALL THEM MY PEOPLE, WHO WERE NOT MY PEOPLE, AND HER BELOVED, WHO WAS NOT BELOVED."

A. As he says also in Hosea: "I will call them my people, who were not my people,

1. Gentiles were excluded from the covenant of God in the OT.
2. **people-** Gr. **laos-** I am now a person who belongs to God!

B. and her beloved, who was not beloved

1. **beloved-** Gr. **agapao-** This is a covenant term of commitment. God loves everyone, even wicked unbelievers. However, they are not called beloved because they have not received His love. To be the recipient of God's love you must believe upon Christ and receive Him. This is receiving the love of God in your heart. God is love. When someone believes upon Christ the love of God is shed abroad in their heart by the Spirit of God. [Rom. 5:5] When someone does this they are called God's beloved.

26. "AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS IN THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THEM, 'YOU ARE NOT MY PEOPLE,' THERE THEY SHALL BE CALLED SONS OF THE LIVING GOD."

A. and it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them- [Hosea 1:10]

B. you are not my people

1. where it was said you are not my people- this "where" is outside of Christ and His covenant.

C. there they shall be called sons of the living God

1. the "there" spoken here is in Christ and in His covenant.
2. **sons-** Gr. **huios-** *adult legal sons that can participate in the family name and possessions.*
3. **living God-** idols are not alive. God is the only God that is alive!

27. Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: "THOUGH THE NUMBER OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL BE AS THE SAND OF THE SEA, THE REMNANT WILL BE SAVED.

A. Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel

B. Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved.

1. **number-** Gr. **arthimos-** *we get our word arithmetic from this.*
2. **as the sand of the sea**
 - a. It was prophesied to Abraham that his offspring would be as the sand of the sea and the stars of heaven. [Gen. 22:17] The sand of the sea represents natural Israel. The stars of heaven represent the heavenly offspring of Christ- the church.
 - b. Here only the sand of the sea is mentioned so it is referring to natural Israel.

3. the remnant will be saved

- a. **remnant-** Gr. **kataleimma-** *a remainder left*

- b. **saved-** Gr. **sozo-** The remnant that will be saved is the natural race of Jews that accept the Messiah Jesus Christ by faith. They will also become as the stars of heaven and be part of the church.
- c. There is not two separate gospels or plans of salvation for the Jew and Gentile. Both are saved by the same gospel which is faith in God's grace through Christ Jesus.

28. FOR HE WILL FINISH THE WORK AND CUT IT SHORT IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, BECAUSE THE LORD WILL MAKE A SHORT WORK UPON THE EARTH."

A. For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness

- 1. **finish-** Gr. **sunteleo-** *make a complete end together*
 - a. God will complete together His redemptive plan for both Jew and Gentile.
- 2. **work-** Gr. **logos-** *word, matter, account*
 - a. God will finish or complete His word to the Jew and Gentile.
- 3. **cut it short-** Gr. **suntemno-** *make a cut off together*
 - a. God is going to make a cut off of sin and this present evil world. The wicked of both Jew and Gentile will be cut off together.

B. because the Lord will make a short work upon the earth

- 1. **short-** Gr. **suntemno-** *make a cut off together*
- 2. **work-** Gr. **logos-** *word, matter, account*

29. And as Isaiah said before: "UNLESS THE LORD OF SABAOOTH HAD LEFT US A SEED, WE WOULD HAVE BECOME LIKE SODOM, AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN MADE LIKE GOMORRAH."

A. And as Isaiah said before

B. Unless the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed

- 1. **Lord of Sabaoth-** Gr. **kurios sabaoth-** *Lord of Armies*
- 2. **left us a seed-** Jesus is the Seed that was left for us both Jew and Gentile! He is the Seed of Abraham.

C. we would have become like Sodom and we would have been made like Gomorrah

- 1. Without Christ Israel would have become like Sodom and Gomorrah.
- 2. Israel in the Old Testament practiced all the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah.
- 3. There is no difference between fallen Jewish flesh and fallen Gentile flesh! Without Christ we all are perverse and detestable in God's eyes. Through faith in the Seed that was left us, we can experience freedom from sin and degradation and be saved from being destroyed by the Holy wrath of God.

30. **What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith;**
- A. **What shall we say then?**
 - 1. What is the conclusion of this chapter?
 - B. **That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness**
 - 1. **pursue-** Gr. **dioko-** *to follow hotly; to persecute*
 - 2. Gentiles did not pursue righteousness by legalistic works and hard effort as the religious Jews did.
 - C. **have attained to righteousness**
 - 1. **attained to** -Gr. **katalambano-** *to seize upon firmly*
 - 2. Righteousness can only be firmly grasped by faith in Christ and not works of the law and self effort.
 - D. **even the righteousness of faith**
 - 1. Here is the conclusion of this chapter that has so much been twisted out of shape by Calvinists.
 - 2. What is the conclusion of this chapter? The Gentiles were saved because they believed upon Christ and received God's righteousness as a gift. The Jews sought it by another means, by their own works and self effort. The Gentiles accepted God's terms for salvation and the Jews did not. God was righteous in condemning the Jews because they refused His terms. God was also righteous in saving the Gentiles because they accepted His terms. God sovereignly chose the way of salvation which was by Christ Jesus and the mode of salvation which was by faith.
31. **but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.**
- A. **but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness**
 - 1. **pursuing-** Gr. **dioko-** *to hotly pursue, to persecute.*
 - a. The Jews in pursuing their own righteousness persecuted those who believed you are made right with God by faith and not works.
 - 2. **law of righteousness-** God never gave the law to make someone righteous. He gave the law to reveal the unrighteousness of man. Israel misunderstood why God gave the Law and thought they could obtain righteousness by it. [Duet. 6:25]
 - B. **has not attained to the law of righteousness**
 - 1. **attained-** Gr. **phthano-** *to arrive at*
 - 2. Israel tried to live up the righteous standard of the law to make themselves righteous but every man who tried failed. All sinned and fell short of God's glory. [Rom 3:23]
 - 3. The law was a shadow of Christ. [Col 2:15] Christ was the only perfect

man that kept the Law. Christ came and fulfilled the righteousness of the law by His perfect life and bore our trespasses and fulfilled the sacrifices. By faith in Christ we are forgiven freely and given Christ's righteous standing with the Father as a gift! Israel stumbled over this in their blindness.

32. Why? Because *they did not seek it* by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

A. Why? Because they did not seek it by faith

1. Israel did not obtain righteousness because they did not seek it by faith.
2. We see that God's way of righteousness was by faith. We see that in Abraham. [Gen. 12:6] Even the prophets testify to this point. [Hab. 2:4] All the men in chapter 11 of Hebrews got there by faith. They represented men of different dispensations and times.
3. Here we see the mystery of this chapter solved. Who has God predestined to salvation? It is those who pursue righteousness by faith instead of works.

B. but as it were, by the works of the law.

1. No man shall be justified by the works of the law. [Rom. 3:20, Gal. 2:16]

C. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

1. **stumbled**- Gr. *proskopto*- *to strike against*
2. **stumbling stone**- Gr. *lithos proskomma*- *stone of stumbling*
 - a. Jesus was the chief cornerstone the builders rejected. [Matt. 21:42] Grace through Christ is the chief cornerstone of the church. The builders in the church of time past largely rejected or neglected it. It is being restored to the church.
 - b. Grace through Christ and our faith in it is the cornerstone in our lives. If we fail to build around it the structure of our lives will crumble.

33. As it is written: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STUMBLING STONE AND ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND WHOEVER BELIEVES ON HIM WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME."

A. As it is written, "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense

1. **Behold**- We are to gaze upon Christ.
2. **I lay**- God Himself established the plan and mode for righteousness for us. We must accept it.
 - a. If we lay down our own righteousness then our building will fall.
3. **stumbling stone and rock of offense**
 - a. **stone**- Gr. *lithos*- *small stone*- This Greek word was used of the tables of stone the law was written on. [2 Cor. 3:7] The law was a

shadow of Christ. Israel stumbled over the shadow and missed the very person casting the shadow.

- b. **rock- petra-** *large rock*- This word was used of the revelation of Christ as the Son of God. [Matt. 16:18] Israel looked at Christ but did not see the Son of God before them.

B. and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.

1. **whoever-** This word shatters the Calvinistic doctrine that some people God picks to save and others have no choice. Here we see the word **WHOEVER!!**
2. **believes on Him**
 - a. This is the terms of God's plan of salvation. We must believe upon Christ and His finished work. This is the crux of who gets chosen by God to salvation and becomes a vessel of mercy or not.
3. **will not be put to shame**
 - a. **shame-** Gr. **kataischuno-** *disgraced*
 - b. Those who trust in their own righteousness will suffer with shame, guilt, and a sense of distance from God.
 - c. Those who trust in Christ as their sacrifice for sins and as their righteousness will be free from shame and guilt and have a closeness with God.