

Israel's Past Election – Part 2

Romans 9:14-33

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There's a lot of ways to look at Romans 9, 10, and 11, but some say that actually after Romans 8, Paul could have logically and theologically skipped over to Romans 12. He could've come to the end of Romans 8 nothing, "...shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," and that we have been chosen by grace and are kept by God's grace, and jumped right to Romans 12, which is the chapter that starts applying what he taught us in the doctrinal section where he said, "I beseech you,"—I beg you—"...by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable...which is your reasonable,"—act of—"service."

The problem is that there's an issue that would come up in many people's minds, that is, "Did not God choose Israel?" and "Did not God make promises to Israel?" and "Paul, you're now saying to us that God has set aside partially and temporarily the nation of Israel to build His Church, primarily of Gentiles, and that Israel rejected the Lord Jesus as Messiah and God then made promises that He would keep with them," so their conclusion was either Jesus is not the Messiah or the Word of God has failed and what God promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has fallen by the wayside. Those are pretty heavy issues.

Now, these questions Paul is basically anticipating, so he's kind of arguing with himself. He knows that in the mind of the Jew their question was, "Well, you say that God saves the Gentiles by grace and that He is going to keep them secure by grace and nothing can separate them from the love of God, yet what about the Jewish nation that God chose that now has been set aside? Is God finished with Israel? Has God's Word failed? Is God's Word not faithful? Does He not keep His promises?"

In this chapter that we're going to look at let me give you the survey of all three. In Romans 9, we see "Israel's Past Election;" in Romans 10, we see "Israel's Present Rejection;" in Romans 11, we see "Israel's Future Restoration." You need to keep in mind that all that we study tonight in this chapter needs to be balanced with Romans 10 and 11. If you just plant yourself in Romans 9 on the sovereign election of God, then you can become imbalanced. We need to be balanced believers, and we do that by taking all Scripture and keeping it all balanced together.

Paul asks four questions in Romans 9 and answered them vindicating God's character and actions. Let me survey this. First it deals with God's faithfulness, Romans 9:1-13, and the first question that is asked is in verse 6. Go back there with me. "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." The statement in verse 6 is God's Word has not failed, God's Word has not fallen to the wayside, God's Word is faithful. God will do what He promised He will do. In verses 1-13 Paul defends or vindicates the faithfulness of God. Secondly, verses 14-18, we'll get it tonight, Paul vindicates God's righteousness; in verses 19-29, he vindicates God's justice; and in verses 30-33, the end of the chapter, he vindicates God's grace. In all the answers that Paul gives to the four questions that

arise that he deals with, he actually points us to God's faithfulness, righteousness, justice, grace.

A.W. Tozer said that most failures to understand Christian doctrine can be traced back to ignoble or wrong thoughts about God. I think that's so profound. When you understand who God is, and you understand God's nature, it helps you to understand God's methods, God's work, and the issues of life. The Scripture says, "Acquaint yourself with God and be at peace." Getting to know He's faithful, He's righteous, He's just, and when you understand who God is, it answers a lot of the perplexing questions of life.

Let's take them one at a time, and there's going to be three more. We dealt with the first question in verse 6 last Wednesday night, we have three more tonight running from verses 14-33 in our Bible. It's so important for us to realize this. The first one begins in verses 14-18, that is, the question is, is God unjust? He's talking about God's sovereignty, he's talking about God's elective purposes, and the question would be, "Well then, God must be unjust," or "God must be unfair."

I wanted to remind you that last Wednesday night we looked at verses 6-13, and we saw God's purpose and that election transcends birthright. Remember that Abraham and Sarah, verses 6-8, had two sons, one was Ishmael and the other was Isaac. Ishmael was actually born to Hagar, the Egyptian handmaid; but of those two boys, Ishmael and Isaac, God selected Isaac. He rejected Ishmael and chose Isaac so the purpose of God in election and choosing out of those two boys.

Then Isaac, who married Rebecca, had two boys, Esau and Jacob (again, from the same husband and wife, same parents), but God bypassed Esau, in this case, too, who was the oldest, and He chose Jacob. I want to read that with you because I want to make sure that you understand it. Look at verse 10, "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; 11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to,—here's the word—"election,"—if you don't like the word "election," you can say choice—"might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger,"—which is not God's normal method, the elder should actually be the leader and the younger should serve him, so Esau would serve Jacob. This is the thing that throws people, we had to quickly go through it last week, verse 13, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." He's quoting from Malachi 1:2-3.

Again, I don't want to get bogged down and spend too much time on it, but I want to make it clear that this phrase is a Hebrew idiom for "loved less" or "preferred." It doesn't mean that God hated Esau, it means that God picked or chose or preferred Jacob. Jesus actually said that if you are going to follow Him, you should hate your father and your mother and your own life. You say, "Well, how does that work, Jesus? You say that we should love even our enemies, now You're saying we have to hate our own parents?" Again, it's a Hebrew idiom. It has the idea of comparison. In comparison to your love for God, your love for your parents should be likened unto hatred, so it's a preference or a choice. It doesn't mean that God actually hated

Esau.

It's a shame that some people have interpreted it that way and concluded that God actually hates certain people and loves other people and taught many times what is called double predestination—God chooses people to go to hell and chooses people to go to heaven. He does choose people, but He doesn't choose people to go to hell, He does choose people to go to heaven. You won't be able to fully reconcile this or understand that, we're going to get in some real kind of complex things tonight, but when they're clearly taught in the Bible, we accept them and believe that they are reconciled in a higher unity, that God knows how it works, even though we don't, but we need to accept it. What happens is people camp on one side or the other. Either they emphasize God's sovereign election and then they neglect man's free will and ability to choose or resist God's salvation, or they believe that God doesn't elect or God doesn't choose, which again is the denial of a clearly biblical doctrine in Scripture.

All that we're talking about in God's sovereignty in Romans 9 is primarily talking about God choosing a nation—Israel—and that He has a purpose and a plan for them. The question we want to go to first in verse 14 is, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?" Notice the answer is right in verse 14. Notice he asks a question. There's going to be

a bunch of question marks in these verses. Is God unfair that He would pick Jacob instead of Esau or Isaac instead of Ishmael? That's not right; that's not fair. "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?" and right in verse 14, I love this so much, Paul answers it. What does he say? "God forbid." Do you know what that is in the Greek? In the Greek it translates: "No way, Jose!" Obviously, I'm joking. But I like the way Paul answers this. He doesn't try to dance around the question. He doesn't try to soften the issue. He just says, "No! Perish the thought." The phrase "God forbid," does (and this is not a joke) mean, perish the thought, just, "Get that out of your brain! Don't even think like that, that there would be unrighteousness with God." God will never violate His own nature and character, and God is truly righteous.

Verse 15, "For he saith to Moses," I'm going to give you the references from the Old Testament and you can just make note of them and go back and read the context. "For he saith to Moses," taken from Exodus 33, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." Emphasize, "I will." God is speaking, and He's saying, "This is what I'm going to do. I'm going to have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." This does not teach double predestination. He doesn't say, "I'm going to create some people to go to hell; I'm going to create some people to go to heaven." No, every one of us deserves hell. Just thought I would encourage you tonight. It is so true. If you've studied the book of Romans up to this point, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" "There is none righteous, no, not one." All have sinned. All have fallen short of the glory of God, so we all deserve to go to hell. But God, in His grace and in His mercy and His love, chooses to save some. Amen?

All day long as I was studying this section, I was just thinking, God, I can't believe You chose

me. I can't believe You chose me. I can't believe You chose me. How good You are. I don't deserve Your grace, Your mercy. If you go out of here tonight thinking, I know why He chose me, you need help. The response should be, "I have no idea why God would choose me." I love John Newton's "Amazing Grace." If you ever want to read an amazing biography, read any of the great biographies on John Newton, the man who wrote "Amazing Grace." Amazing grace! how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch; like me! I once was lost, but now am found, Was blind, but now I see. We didn't deserve it, couldn't run after Him. I was lame. I was blind. I was dead. I was separated from God, and He rescued me by His grace. How marvelous that is!

In verse 16 it says, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Now, remember in verse 14, is God unrighteous? Perish the thought! All these verses you're reading, don't impute unrighteousness to God. Verse 17, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh," so we go from Moses to Pharaoh, and this is taken from Exodus 9, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Here's the summary to this first section that God is not unjust, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth," in the context of God speaking unto Pharaoh. I love the fact that, again, Paul says, "Don't even think that God for a moment can be unjust."

J. Vernon McGee said, "If you do not like what God does, perhaps you should make your own universe, start your own universe, and then you can move out of God's and live by your own rules." I love that. Who are you to impute God with unrighteousness? So, Paul's life's great questions, all answers come from Scripture. I'm going to go back over this, but notice in verse 17, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh." That's such a great statement. Learn to answer life's questions from the Scripture, the Bible. By the way, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh," when you go to the passage in the book of Exodus 9, guess who's speaking? God is, so they're one and the same—when the Bible speaks, God speaks. This is many times why when I'm preaching I'll say, "God, speak through what You've spoken." God spoke His Word. God speaks to us in, and through, and by His Word.

When you quote Scripture, you can say, "Thus saith the Lord." You can actually look right at a person and say, "This is what God says." Now, they freak out. They say, "Who are you to quote God or know what God has to say?" You have the Word of God, a sharp, powerful, two-edged sword. Amen? So, they're one and the same. What the Scripture says is actually what God says, God is speaking.

The first answer that Paul gives, verses 15-16, is what God said to Moses in Exodus 33:19. The context of this, going back to verses 15-16, was that Moses had just got the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments, on Mount Sinai, and when he came down the mountain, he found all of the people of Israel having this big drunken orgy, they were worshiping a golden calf, and they'd already violated the very Scriptures that God just wrote in stone. Moses, in anger, broke the stones; and God actually said to Moses (and I'm paraphrasing), "Scoot over. Get out of the way. I'm going to wipe 'em all out. I'm going to just wipe 'em all out."

Moses interceded for them, like Paul did in the earlier verses of our chapter where he said, "For I could wish that myself were accursed...for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Moses said, "Lord, if You do that, then take me out of Your book of remembrance." In that statement, Moses heard God say to him, "I'll have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will actually then show compassion on whom I will show compassion." He ended up destroying three thousand of the people of Israel and sparing the rest, but He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

Notice it says, verse 16, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." God deals savingly with sinners not on the basis of justice but on the basis of mercy. The word "willeth" in verse 16 means man's desire. You're not saved because of your desire, nor of your running, which the word means your effort. So, not your desire or your effort will produce your election, it's all a sovereign work of God's grace.

Notice in verse 17 what God said to Pharaoh, and that's taken from Exodus 9:16. Look at verse 17. "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Then, verse 18 is a summary, as I said, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Again, people get really, really upset with God because of how He dealt with poor, little ol' Pharaoh. I don't know why. I'm not that concerned about Pharaoh, nor do I have any desire to question God. Whatever God wants to do is fine with me. I'm not going to question Him or say, "Why are You doing what You're doing?"

I want you to understand in the Old Testament book of Exodus that the Bible says that Pharaoh hardened his heart. You've read the story, right? You know that the Bible says Pharaoh hardened his heart, so why is it now we're reading that God hardened Pharaoh's heart? It's speaking that God allowed Pharaoh to resist God and God's will, God's purpose, and God's plan, God's revelation, and thus God judged Pharaoh judicially by allowing him to make his own choice and to suffer his consequences of that choice.

You know, one of the worst things God could ever do to anyone is let them have their own way, is let them run their own direction? But God will do that. He won't violate your free will. Now, we won't be talking about man's responsibility and free will until we get to Romans 10. There's hints of it in Romans 9, so don't freak out, don't give up, wait until we get to Romans 10 and it will balance out Romans 9, and in Romans 11 we'll bring it all together. We'll put a bow on the whole thing.

Basically, the Scripture says that he was, "...afore prepared unto glory," but the wicked are, verse 22, "...vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." We'll get there in just a moment, but that "fitted" actually means that they fitted themselves, and "afore prepared unto glory" is actually God's preparation for those whom He elects or whom He chooses. Again, a footnote in light of that statement that God spake to Pharaoh, yet Paul said, "This is what the Scripture says." So, who hardened Pharaoh's heart? Pharaoh did, but God allowed him to harden his heart and God then judged him for the hardened heart. One concept that you can think of, too, is that

God strengthened Pharaoh in his already made decision.

It's kind of like the law of atrophy. If you don't use a certain organ of your body, you'll lose its use. It's kind of: "Use it or lose it." If you harden your heart toward God, your heart can become so hardened that you cannot believe, but you can't blame anyone but yourself. Again, all through this section tonight, I can summarize it like this: If you are lost and you die in your sins and you go to hell, you have no one to blame but yourself because God has sent out the lifeline to rescue you—Jesus Christ. If you're saved and you're going to heaven, you have only one Person that is responsible, that is, God, by His grace and mercy who loved you and chose you and saved you. You say, "I don't understand how that works." Neither do I, but I believe they're both taught in the Bible.

Notice verse 18, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Paul sees God's words to both Moses and Pharaoh as complimentary and sums them up in verse 18 with this "Therefore." God is not unjust. All have sinned. None deserve to be saved. It is a wonder and a mystery of God's mercy that some are even saved. All could be judged by God and it would be perfectly righteous for God to do that, but God wanted to display His love, God wanted to display His mercy, so He chose to elect some and save them for His purposes.

Here's the second section tonight, verses 19-29. It's a larger section, and we'll move faster. Why does God still blame us? If God is sovereign, God chooses by divine election, then how can man be responsible? How can He blame us? How can we have blame or are responsible? If salvation is due entirely to God, is it fair of God to hold us accountable when He makes all the decisions? Who can resist Him or resist His will? I want you to note the issue, verse 19, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he,"—that is, God—"yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?"

When you read these questions you go, "Yeah! That's pretty good. Yeah! That's awesome! Yeah!" Then we need Paul to answer his own questions from the Scriptures to shed light on this. Paul gives three answers to this charge. I want you to look at them. First of all he says, "Who are we to argue with God?" That's pretty simple, but notice verses 20-21, "Nay but,"—he says, "No"—"O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Good question. Notice verse 21, "Hath not the potter,"—who would be God—"power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" Paul answers the question with two more questions in verses 20-21.

Note that you need to be careful not to press the clay image too far. Sometimes I think we do what's called hyperliteralism and we'll take a metaphor, an analogy, or an illustration and we'll read into it more than what the Scriptures intend us to. All he's talking about is the disparaging difference between God, who is God and sovereign, and man, whom God could judge or God can save. It's all up to him. It's a matter of his own free will and his own choice. Human beings are not merely lumps of clay to liken humans to pottery is to emphasize the disparity between

us and God.

The Bible also teaches that we were created in the image and likeness of God and that we are rational, we're responsible, that we're moral beings, we're spiritual beings, that we have freedom of choice. So, to say that we're just lumps of clay is to give a hyperliteral view of that analogy of just how God is basically sovereign—He can do as He chooses. God does not create sinful beings in order to punish them, but He does have the right to deal with sinful beings according to His good pleasure, either to pardon them or to punish them, now uses the analogy of the potter and the clay.

I love this picture. The picture is that God can take a piece of clay, He can mold it into whatever kind of vessel He wants. It's God's choice. If you're a potter, and you go into your shop and put some clay on the wheel...when I was in high school, I had an arts and crafts class. They wanted us to learn to throw pots. We had potter's wheels. I could never, ever, ever get the clay to cooperate. Have you ever tried to throw a pot on a wheel? These were electric wheels, too, so if you gave it too much gas, it would start to spin and SHWOOO! fly off the wheel, SMACK! hits the wall, put a couple little dents in it, make an ashtray, and give it to my mom, "Here, Mom, have an ashtray." She didn't smoke, but "Here's an ashtray."

Everything would be fine. I'd center the clay and just get the wheel turning, but the minute I touched the clay...if I didn't touch the clay, everything's great. The minute I touched the clay, WHOO, WHOO, WHOO, WHOO, WHOO WHEW! It flew off! I could never, ever throw a pot. I have a son that's a great potter. He could throw a pot and do all these neat pots, but I can't do that.

God is the potter, we're the clay, and that's really as far as it should go. God can make the pot whatever He wants to make. God's sovereign, and this is what this whole section is all about—the sovereignty of God.

In Jeremiah, he talks about the potter and the clay. He talks about the clay becoming marred in the hand of the potter, but God can make it again. The problem is not with God, the problem was with the clay, so the clay can resist Him and become marred in the hand of the potter, but who are we to argue with God?

Secondly, verses 22-23, notice God has His purposes. In verse 22 it says, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much,"—please notice this word—"longsuffering,"—so God is longsuffering and patient with—"the vessels of wrath," and the King James Bible has "fitted" which in the Greek grammar literally means it's in a tense that means fitted himself to destruction. If you are a vessel of destruction, it's because of your own sin and we are responsible. Actually, it's resisting God's plan and purpose.

Verse 23, "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." In verse 23, Paul contrasts, "...the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory," to the vessels of destruction. I read a quote by Charles R.

Erdman that I want to read that I thought was so good. He said, "God's sovereignty is never exercised in condemning men who ought to be saved but rather it is resulted in the salvation of men who ought to be lost." I think that's an amazing statement to realize that God's sovereignty is used to freely choose some to rescue them, and again God can do that righteously based on the fact that He sent Jesus Christ to die on the cross for our sins, and He has been propitiated and thus He can communicate righteousness to us and we can be forgiven of our sins.

Notice question three, "Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" From verses 24-29, Paul basically rushes through this section and what he does is show God's way of dealing with Jews and Gentiles. It was another illustration of His purpose in election clearly foretold in the Old Testament Scripture. He's going to just rip off a bunch of Old Testament verses to show that God could choose to do one way with the Jews and one way with the Gentile nations. Let's read it, verse 24. "Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? 25 As he saith also in Osee,"—Hosea 2:23—"I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved."

Hosea, in the Old Testament, was referring to Israel and how when they went into captivity God would actually call them back out of captivity, and those who were His people would become His people again. Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, uses it to show us that God can pick Gentiles and call them His people. Then, he quotes from Hosea 1:10, beginning in verse 26 of our text, "And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God." Again, Paul using it to refer to Gentiles who were at one time not God's people, God by choice have now made them His people; but in the Old Testament book of Hosea, it was a reference to Israel and their Babylonian captivity in being brought back as now he quotes from Isaiah, verse 27. Look at it with me. "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel,"—and this is Isaiah 10:22—"Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." Remember, God rejected Ishmael and chose Isaac; God rejected Esau and chose Jacob; now God sets aside some of Israel and He chooses Gentiles. Basically, Paul is just arguing biblically and scripturally for: God can pick, God can choose, God's free to do what He wants to do, and no one can shake their little fist at the face of God. He's quoting from all these Old Testament passages.

Verse 28, "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Then, he quotes Isaiah 1:9, "And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth,"—which is the Lord of hosts, a reference to the angels of heaven—"had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha." He's talking about how God chose a remnant of the nation of Israel. Remember earlier in the chapter, "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." Again, he just keeps hammering home this idea that God has the freedom and the right to choose whom He will and save whom He will.

Here's the conclusion, question three, verses 30-33, "What shall we say then?"—this is the summary—"What shall we say then?"—note the question mark, "What are we going to say?

What shall we say to all this?" Here's the summary—"That the Gentiles,"—and the article is not there in the Greek, it's just—"That Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness,"—that's how we just applied verses 24-29—"which followed not after righteousness,"—read the first few chapters of Romans, they followed after wickedness—"have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith,"—notice that.

Verse 31, "But Israel"—here's the contrast—"which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness." You had the Gentiles, pagans, following their wicked, worldly pagan lifestyle, rescued by God's sovereign grace and mercy, which is the majority of us here tonight, right? If we stood up and had a testimonial service about how we lived before we got saved, some of you would scoot a little over in the pew from the person sitting next to you, "Oh my goodness! I can't believe that!" Such were some of you, Gentiles saved by His marvelous grace. How marvelous that is! "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness." Why? Here's the question in verse 32, "Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone,"—this is the stumblingstone referred to as the skándalon. Jesus is a stumblingstone to many Jews and is still today.

Verse 33, "As it is written,"—and he quotes from Isaiah 8:14—"Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." The last half of verse 33 is a quote from Isaiah 28:16. Again, Paul is just taking this massive amount of Old Testament verses and piling it on showing that God can elect or that God can choose. Again, we're going to get to Romans 10 and see man's responsibility, so don't freak out. But if you're saved, then you can rejoice, especially if you're a Gentile, that God saved you by His marvelous grace. To me that's amazing!

So, he begins with a description of the topsy-turvy situation, verses 30-31, and then he gives an explanation, verse 32, of what's going on. I love the fact that as Gentiles, we weren't even seeking after God, but God came to rescue us; and the Jews who tried to get righteousness by the law, by the keeping of the law, by willing and running and trying to keep the law, they didn't seek it by faith, they missed getting the righteousness of God.

This is so often the case today with people who try to get right with God in religion or in religious systems by baptism and confirmation, keeping the sacraments, and doing all the hard work and trying to do your best to be deserving, to earn, merit, or deserve salvation—getting all the dietary laws down, worshiping on the right day, getting a religious haircut, wearing the religious robes and getting confirmation and keeping all the Commandments of God. Then, they miss by a mile the righteousness of God which comes by faith.

Read Philippians 3 where Paul says, "All those things that were my religious pedigree, 'Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching...the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.'" He said, "I counted all them a pile of manure, it's just refuse, 'And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.'"

Paul closes this section, verses 30-33, by showing that God wanted to have mercy on the Gentiles, and one of the reasons why Israel was partially blind and temporarily set aside was so that He could now show mercy to the people who were not His people, to Gentiles, who He could save by grace through faith. It's also teaching what Paul taught earlier in the book of Romans that salvation is by faith alone. Look at verse 32. How did they find righteousness? "Because they"—the Jews—"sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled," but "...the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness,"—because they sought it by faith. How marvelous that is! So, simply believing, trusting, and putting your faith in Jesus Christ to save you.

Now, Paul ends with this biblical confirmation in verse 33, as I said quoting Isaiah 8 and Isaiah 28, and basically saying the Jews stumbled over Jesus. You can talk to Jews today and they'll say, "He's not the Messiah, He was crucified. He didn't set up the Kingdom, He doesn't reign on the throne of David. He's not our Messiah." They reject Jesus Christ. Their eyes are blinded. But it doesn't negate the fact that God didn't choose them and that God is going to restore them, Romans 11, but at this time, we're seeing Gentiles come into the Church. When we come into the Church, there are Jews as well. Not all Jews have rejected Jesus as Messiah. Remember, Paul said in the Church there is neither Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female, we're all one in Christ? So that's why the Church is kind of what's called a new humanity. It's a new man—it's not Jew, it's not Gentile, it's one new man in Christ.

How are we saved? By grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Paul explains why people are saved—it is the sovereign election of God's grace—and he shows why people are lost. The explanation is that they have their own responsibility for their rebellion, unbelief, and rejection of God's salvation in Jesus Christ.

I want you to note in verse 33 the, "...whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Doesn't that sound like John 3:16? "...whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Isn't it amazing that in the whole chapter where God is presented as sovereignly choosing, that it says, "...whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed?" So, I believe in a "whosoever" gospel—whosoever believes in Him shall be saved. That statement "...not be ashamed," means not be disappointed. If you have trusted Jesus Christ to save you, you're not going to be disappointed. If you have come broken, destitute, sinner, naked, weary, blind, and just said, "Jesus, I trust You to save me," whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. You will not be disappointed. Amen? Let's pray.