

Romans Session 140

Israel's Unbelief Is Consistent With God's Person 2

Romans 9:14-24 (NASB)

¹⁴ *What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be!*

¹⁵ *For He says to Moses, "I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION."*

¹⁶ *So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.*

¹⁷ *For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH."*

¹⁸ *So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.*

¹⁹ *You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?"*

²⁰ *On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it?*

²¹ *Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?*

²² *What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?*

²³ *And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory,*

²⁴ *even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.*

We are looking at Paul's answer to the Jews arguments concerning God choosing those He desires to serve and to be His chosen vessel based on the fact that He is God and has the absolute right to choose and use vessels unto honor and to dishonor.

The first question is basically is God fair? In His choices. Is He fair in His dealing with men?

And Paul uses their own scripture to show them the reality of who God is and What is His right and His power, and that fairness is a man-made thing and does not apply to God. He is always just and the justifier of His creation.

The first scripture Paul Uses is with Moses;

Exodus 33:19 (NASB)

¹⁹ *And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion."*

He is doing this for the Roman Church to show them that God's purposes stand. He is God. He will do what He will do.

Fairness does not have any place in the kingdom of God.

The next verse Paul brings into view is from Exodus also, God's statement to Pharaoh;

Exodus 9:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ *But indeed for this 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.*

Being an absolute monarch, Pharaoh assumed that, certainly within his own realm, everything he said and did was by his own free choice to serve his own human purposes.

But the Lord made clear through Moses that Pharaoh was divinely raised up to serve a divine purpose, a purpose of which the king was not even aware.

Raised up, (*Exegetro*) carries the idea of bringing forward or lifting up and was used of the rise of historical figures to positions of prominence.

The word is used several times in the Septuagint. Speaking of the Messiah, Balaam declared to Balak the king of Moab

Numbers 24:19 (NASB)

¹⁹ **"One from Jacob shall have dominion, And will destroy the remnant from the city."**

Through the Prophet Nathan, the Lord told David that, because of his ;murder of Uriah and taking his wife, Bathsheba, for himself,

2 Samuel 12:11 (NASB)

¹¹ ***"Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight.***

One of Job's comforters rightly said of God that;

Job 5:11 (NASB)

¹¹ ***So that He sets on high those who are lowly, And those who mourn are lifted to safety.***

In much the same way He raised up Pharaoh, the Lord also raised up, the Chaldeans to do His will;

Habakkuk 1:6 (NASB)

⁶ ***"For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, That fierce and impetuous people Who march throughout the earth To seize dwelling places which are not theirs.***

And one day He will raise up a shepherd (antichrist) in the land who will not care for the perishing, seek the scattered, heal the broken, or sustain the one standing.

Zechariah 11:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ ***"For behold, I am going to raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for the perishing, seek the scattered, heal the broken, or sustain the one standing, but will devour the flesh of the fat sheep and tear off their hoofs.***

So, the Lord of all history put Pharaoh into a position of great authority in order to demonstrate His far greater divine power and authority that would bring glory to His name throughout the whole earth.

It was that very divine redemptive power that Jews have celebrated for millennia in Passover, remembering the Lord's gracious delivering power, as shown by His saving them from the oppressive hand of Pharaoh.

That feast is the benchmark of redemption. The physical deliverance of Israel from human bondage, and it foreshadowed Christ's infinitely greater spiritual deliverance of men from sin's spiritual bondage.

Using Pharaoh's proud arrogance, the Oord demonstrated that His miraculous power was far greater than the Satan impowered miracles of Pharaoh's magicians.

He made a path through the Red Sea to deliver His people and then brought back that same seas o rush over and drown Pharaoh's entire army.

Celebrating that gracious deliverance;

Exodus 15:1-6 (NASB)

¹ *Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and said, "I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea.*

² *"The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; This is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will extol Him.*

³ *"The LORD is a warrior; The LORD is His name.*

⁴ *"Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; And the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea.*

⁵ *"The deeps cover them; They went down into the depths like a stone.*

⁶ *"Your right hand, O LORD, is majestic in power, Your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.*

The song continues through verse 18, declaring God's sovereign mercy in behalf of His people and His divine wrath against their enemies.

The people sang;

Exodus 15:14-15 (NASB)

¹⁴ *"The peoples have heard, they tremble; Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia.*

¹⁵ *"Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed; The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them; All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.*

Just as the Lord had predicted, that great deliverance caused His name to be proclaimed throughout the whole earth. He became known by the pagans as the awesome and fearful God who delivered Israel from Egypt.

The Hivites came to Joshua and said among other things;

Joshua 9:9 (NASB)

⁹ *They said to him, "Your servants have come from a very far country because of the fame of the LORD your God; for we have heard the report of Him and all that He did in Egypt,*

Even earlier in Israel's history, as the conquest of Canaan began the Gentile prostitute Rahab verified that the Lord's intention was being fulfilled, telling the Israelite spies in Jericho;

Joshua 2:8-11 (NASB)

⁸ *Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof,*

⁹ *and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you.*

¹⁰ *"For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.*

¹¹ *"When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.*

Psalms 105, 106 and 136 all celebrate God's sovereign demonstration of His power and glory by delivering His people from Egypt.

One commentator has observed, Pharaoh was the open adversary of God, and avowed enemy following his own designs; yet a divine purpose was being fulfilled in his life. Only that purpose, and nothing else, can explain Pharaoh's very being.

That might act of God demonstrated two great truths.

He delivered Israel to exhibit His sovereign **mercy on those whom He desires**, and He raised up and destroyed Pharaoh to exhibit the corollary truth that **He hardens those whom He desires**.

Only His divine desire determines which it will be.

Moses was a Jew, whereas Pharaoh was a Gentile; but both were sinners. Both were murders, and both witnessed Gods miracles.

Yet Moses was redeemed, and Pharaoh was not.

God raised up Pharaoh in order to reveal His own glory and power, and God had mercy on Moses in order to use him to deliver His people Israel.

Pharaoh was a ruler, whereas Moses people were slaves under Pharaoh. But Moses received God's mercy and compassion, because that was God's will.

The Lord's work is sovereign, and He acts entirely according to Hi own will to accomplish His own purposes.

The Issue was not he presumed rights of either men but rathe the sovereign will of God.

Hardens translates *skleruno*, which literally means to make hard and metaphorically means to render stubborn and obstinate.

The Exodus account of Moses confrontation with Pharaoh speak ten times of God's hardening that ruler's heart, But the same passage also informs us that Pharaoh hardened his own heart.

Exodus 8:32 (NASB)

³² ***But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go.***

Exodus 9:34 (NASB)

³⁴ ***But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned again and hardened his heart, he and his servants.***

He confirmed God's act by his own.

Now these passages point out the humanly unreconcilable tension between God's sovereignty and man's will.

Esau was rejected before he was born, and, also before he was born, Judas was appointed to betray Christ;

Acts 1:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ ***"Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.***

John 6:70-71 (NASB)

⁷⁰ ***Jesus answered them, "Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?"***

⁷¹ ***Now He meant Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him.***

Yet both men chose to follow sin and unbelief.

During His incarnation, Jesus clearly revealed that God's choosing of men always precedes their choosing Him. He told a group of unbelieving Jews;

John 6:44 (NASB)

⁴⁴ *"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day."*

On another occasion He explained to His disciples;

John 15:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ *"You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you."*

But note also He said to the unbelievers;

John 8:24 (NASB)

²⁴ *"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."*

In the familiar words of John 3:18;

John 3:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ *"He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."*

Because of men's natural and willing unbelief, God is just in condemning those who already deserve it.

So, we need to get rid of the idea that fairness plays any part in God's will and actions. Only Mercy, and compassion, and justice. So, Paul answers the Jews at Rom.

Next time we will take on the next question and Paul's answer.