

## **Romans, Part 26**

At the end of Romans 8, we are shown the depth of God's love and commitment to those He has redeemed. By not sparing His Own Son, God made it clear that He is for us and loves us. God's commitment has made all of His resources available through Christ. The depth of the riches of His commitment to us is seen in His willingness to make us conquerors over whatever comes against us.

**Romans 8:37-39 NIV84** No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**God demonstrated His purpose for believers and then He secured that purpose by the sacrifice of His Son.**

Nothing can prevent God from achieving His purpose and nothing can separate us from His love. God's determined will is to accomplish His purpose for those He loves.

**To demonstrate God's determined purpose and sovereignty, Paul focused on Israel.**

**Romans 9:1-3 NIV84** I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit— I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race,

If it were possible, Paul would have given himself for Israel. Have you ever been so deeply concerned for someone that you would have given yourself for them?

**Moses had that feeling in Exodus 32 after Israel had made for themselves gods of gold.**

**Exodus 32:32 NLT** But now, if you will only forgive their sin—but if not, erase my name from the record you have written!"

Moses was ready to be judged in the place of Israel.

**In 2 Chronicles 25:4 God said,** "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sins."

**Ezekiel 18:2-4 NKJV** "What do you mean when you use this proverb

concerning the land of Israel, saying: ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children’s teeth are set on edge’?” “As I live,” says the Lord God, “you shall no longer use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die.”

Paul’s soul was deeply burdened as he considered his own people. God had given them great potential and privileges.

**Romans 9:4-5 NIV84** Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

**God’s covenant people had every possible privilege and promise.**

In Exodus 4:22, God told pharaoh, “*Israel is my first born son.*” God claimed the children of Israel above all peoples on the earth and revealed His divine glory to them. That radiant shekinah glory of God symbolized His presence among His people. Under the covering of the glory cloud, they were led and protected by the presence of God. God made special covenants with Israel that were not made with any other nation. His covenants with them came down to them through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his twelve sons. God promised to bless them and make them a blessing.

**Deuteronomy 28 gives an example of God’s covenant with His people Israel.**

God blessed the work of their hands and they lacked nothing. He promised to bless them in the city and country. He blessed their crops, children, herds, and flocks. He blessed their harvest and bread. They were blessed everywhere they went and in all they did. God promised to conquer their enemies when they were attacked. He guaranteed a blessing on everything they did. God promised, “*If you obey My commands and walk in My ways, I will establish you as My holy people.*” They would be the head and not the tail, and would always be on top and never on the bottom.

**The ultimate blessing on the patriarchs of Israel was the promise of the Messiah. (Romans 9:5)**

God told Abraham, “*I will establish my covenant with Isaac and his descendants.*” (Genesis 17:21...) Throughout the Old Testament, God continued affirming His covenant and the promised Messiah, (Jeremiah 23:6; Genesis 5:1–32; 11:10–26; 1 Chronicles 1:1–4, 24–27, 34; 2:1–15; etc.)

**Now, Paul was considering the great privilege Israel was given through**

## **God's covenants.**

**Romans 9:6-7 ESV** **But it is not as though the word of God has failed.** For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but *“Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.”*

## **Being a physical descendant of Abraham did not guarantee God's blessing or promise.**

Look at Ishmael and Isaac or Esau and Jacob.

## **How could God bless one son and not the other?**

God made His covenant with Isaac and not Ishmael. Rebekah had two sons by Isaac and before either could do good or bad, God chose to bless Jacob.

**Romans 9:14-15 ESV** What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”

## **Is there injustice on God's part? How can He bless and choose one of Abraham's descendants over another?**

God's sovereignty is one of the most difficult things for us to understand. The basic concept of God's sovereignty is easy to understand.

## **God has the absolute right to do all things according to His own good pleasure without interference.**

From a practical point of view, it is encouraging to know that God has everything under His own control. In His infinite knowledge and wisdom, God knows everything that will happen and is prepared for anything. Absolutely nothing can surprise Him. We may not see how, but God can even bring good out of any evil situation.

## **One of the most difficult things to understand is the function of human free will and God's sovereignty.**

The doctrine of God's sovereignty and providence present some of the most challenging theological concepts.

## **Who can know the mind of God?**

The variation of teaching on the subject of God's sovereignty ranges from God controls everything to God controls nothing. The next three chapters of Romans addresses election and God's sovereignty.

## **Here are some fundamental facts about God that we must consider.**

### **God is the self-existent Creator of everything that exists outside Himself.**

In His triunity, He is the only uncreated and eternal God.

### **God is omniscient.**

He knows all things of all time at the same time. He has never had to learn

and He has never forgotten.

**God is eternal in His existence and in the nature of His being.**

He is not confined to time or space but is eternally the same and exists outside of creation.

**He is immutable (unchanging).**

He is the same yesterday, today and forever, never-ending, unceasing, consistent.

**God is omnipresent.**

He is present everywhere equally in the complete fullness of His glory and person.

**God is omnipotent.**

He possesses all power without limitation to space, time or circumstance. His almightiness is related to His person, will, and glory.

**He is sovereign over all of His creation.**

He can use and dispose of His creation as He wishes as determined by His wisdom, knowledge and power. Since all things are freely at His disposal, He has the unique ability to do whatever He chooses with everything that He has made. He is only constrained by His own sovereign will.

**The only thing God cannot do is lie, deny or contradict Himself.**

**Romans 9:15-23 ESV** For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that My name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” So then He has mercy on whomever He wills, and He hardens whomever He wills. You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?” But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? What if God, desiring to show His wrath and to make known His power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of His glory for vessels of mercy, which He has prepared beforehand for glory—

**This declares God’s sovereignty and election over Israel.**

In infinite wisdom and sovereign power, God chose the seed of Abraham above all people. Throughout scripture, God demonstrated His election or

choice.

**He demonstrated His sovereign choice in seven distinct privileges that were shown toward His chosen people.**

- They were adopted as sons, (Exodus 4:22).
- God's glory was uniquely resident among them, (Exodus 16:10; Exodus 24:17; 1 Kings 8:11).
- God made specific and detailed covenants with them, (Genesis 15:18; 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Jeremiah 31:31-34).
- God gave them His law, statutes, and judgments, (Deuteronomy 5:1-22).
- God provided a place where they could worship, first in the tabernacle and then in the temple.
- God gave precious promises to them, (Exodus 12:25; Deuteronomy 12:20; 28:1-14...)
- From the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob the Messiah would come, (Matthew 1:1-16; Romans 1:3).

**God sovereignly exercised control over Sarah and Abraham's life and offspring, (Romans 9:6-9).**

Sarah was childless until God gave her Isaac. At God's appointed time, the angel of the Lord returned and Sarah had a son, (Genesis 18:10).

**God told Rebecca, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated," (Romans 9:10-13).**

Before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad, God chose Jacob. God's choice was not by works but according to His own good pleasure.

**God's sovereignty was demonstrated by His power to free Israel from Pharaoh's hand, (Romans 9:15).**

Pharaoh was the most powerful ruler of the earth. Pharaoh could not withstand the power of God. When Israel went across the Jordan River, the people of Jericho feared because "the LORD their God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath." (Joshua 2:10-11)

**God works sovereignly, but does not remove our freedom of choice.**

Pharaoh was responsible for his actions. Before Moses returned to Egypt, God said He would harden Pharaoh's heart. With every plague, Pharaoh had the choice to do God's will. When he refused to listen to God, the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart fourteen times. (Exodus 4:21; 7:3; 7:13-14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 34-35; 9:12; 10:27; 14:4, 8; 14:17)

**Romans 9:15 NKJV** For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."



**Romans 9:19-20 ESV** You will say to Me then, “Why does He still find fault? For who can resist His will?” But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?”

**Anyone who questions God’s sovereignty asks these questions.**

If God does whatever He wants to do, how can He hold man responsible? Who can go against what God does? God is never unjust in dealing with people. As the sovereign Creator, God has the right to deal with people according to His own will. God can show compassion or exercise wrath. God exercises His sovereignty with mercy, not strict justice. God’s mercy and love is evident in all of His dealings with man.

**In response to all of these questions, Paul reaffirmed the reality of God’s sovereignty.**

“But who are you, O man, to talk back to God?”

**Paul asks the same questions that Isaiah asked.**

**Isaiah 45:9 ESV** Woe to him who strives with Him who formed him, a pot among earthen pots! Does the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What are you making?’ or ‘Your work has no handles’?

**Isaiah 29:16 ESV** You turn things upside down! Shall the potter be regarded as the clay, that the thing made should say of its maker, “He did not make me”; or the thing formed say of him who formed it, “He has no understanding”?

**Does the potter have the right to make what he desires?**

The thing made has no right to complain to the Maker! Almighty God has the same authority over all His creatures.

**Since God has ultimate and absolute authority and control, He calls us to have faith and trust in Him.**

You can trust the sovereign and almighty God. You can trust God with everything. He is a good, good God.