The Book of Romans

Part Four: God’s righteousness is revealed in in His Sovereign Plan for Israel.

(Romans 9-11)

***The Nation Israel and Man’s Rebellion***

***Or, How do you respond to God?***

***Romans 9:19-29***

Last we saw that in spite of God’s blessings of Israel, they still had not believed and embraced Messiah. Does that put God’s character in question? No, because He keeps His promises and shows favor as He sees fit. But does that mean that God is a bully? Does He indiscriminately act on His whims? Of course not, and so the Apostle Paul delves deeper into God’s sovereignty and grace to His rebellious creatures.

***Question: How can God judge me if He made me?*** v.19

Fallen humans are great at shifting blame, especially to God (for example, Adam, Abel, Saul, and even Jonah). After all, He created all things and so He is responsible for the death and destruction around us, and for our own flaws as well, right? No. In fact, such a question comes usually from insolent creatures seeking to avoid responsibility. God always deals gently with sincere humble questions but this question is adversarial, and implies injustice and “poor design” by our Creator.

***Principle: Fallen creatures cannot challenge God because it is His right to order Creation.*** vv. 20, 21

Can the pot hold the potter accountable? Recall that we all are sinners under God’s wrath because we *willfully* have *chosen* and *preferred* lies over truth, idols over God, and our ways of sin over His commandments. Suppressing truth, our judgments are corrupted, and apart from grace, our “reason” can lead us morally astray. Rom. 1:18-32

***Explanation: God’s sovereign choices (from among both Jews and Gentiles) bring glory to Himself in both mercy and judgment.*** vv. 22-29

Given that all are lost and none deserves mercy, God’s glory is displayed in both mercy (upon His own) and judgment (upon those left in their rebellion). As it turns out, that means that some from both Jews and Gentiles are called in His sovereign mercy, as the prophets foretold, and just as God planned. Hosea 1:10; 2:23; Isaiah 1:9; 10:22, 23

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*Why and how do we stumble at the doctrine of God’s absolute sovereignty?*

***First, as fallen creatures we follow Satan in rebelling against God’s authority.*** Ezek. 28:11-19; Jn. 8:44-47

***Second, we deny God’s creation of the world and seek ways to explain away His existence.*** Psalm 14:1-4

***Third, we invent gods like us, or attribute to God our qualities, turning from His grace.*** Is 55:1-13; Ps. 50:7-23

*And so, here are Seven Ground Rules for Questioning the God of the Bible about anything He says in His Word or does in our lives. While we are alive, we are still soft clay on the Potter’s wheel (Jeremiah 18:1-17).*

*So remember:*

***Our role is creature; God is Creator. Be humble.***

***Our knowledge is limited; God’s is infinite. Be observant.***

***Our reason is imperfect; God is all-wise. Be teachable.***

***Our perspective is temporal; God’s is eternal. Be patient.***

***Our motives are tainted; God is love. Be honest.***

***Our wills are proscribed; God is sovereign. Be worshipful.***

***Our lives are tragically flawed; God is perfect. Be joyful.***