

Romans 9:14~18, Pharaoh

In verse 14, Paul asks, *Is there unrighteousness with God?* Is God Unjust? Is there any unfairness in Him? This question comes as a result what Paul said in the preceding verses concerning Jacob and Esau. The fact that God chose Jacob and rejected Esau, and did so before they were even born. The question is that of the “*fairness*” of it. It is a question that “*questions*” the “*rightness*” of God’s actions. Esau got the short end of the stick, for no other reason than simply that God said so. That is made abundantly clear by the fact that he made this decision while the two were still in the womb. God simply chose to bless Jacob, while at the same time, chose not to bless Esau, for no other reason than that’s the way he wanted it. That naturally seems so unfair. But according to Paul, it’s not. Paul emphatically denies any hint of unrighteousness in God. That God is completely righteous in doing so, that there’s not even the “*hint*” of unrighteousness in the act. The word he uses declares that there’s not even a trace of yes in the answer.

Here in this section, Paul is speaking to the “*Will of God*,” the “*Sovereignty*” of God over everything and every one. He is referring to, what is known in the “*Theological Realm*” as the “*Doctrine of Election*.” Derived from what Paul says in verse 11...¹¹(For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calls;)

Paul declares that the choosing of Jacob over Esau, reveals to us that God “*Divinely Chooses*” and “*Divinely Orchestrates*” every aspect of life. That every facet of life, every event, every person, is under the sovereign control of God, that everything that transpires, does so according to His Will.

The very fact that “*God Chooses*”...is what makes him God! Declaring that God has complete control over ALL HIS CREATION should be expected, right? I admit, the choosing of Jacob over Esau bothers me...but it would bother me more to think that God is not in control of everything.

God “*Divinely Chooses and Orchestrates*” the events of life according to His Purposes... To support his claims, Paul points to scripture, to the account of *Moses and Pharaoh* to show this truth.

Paul begins by pointing out that God “*Chose*” to have mercy on Moses and the nation Israel. God had not “*Chosen the nation Israel*” and showed mercy on Israel, because they deserved it, or were “*better*” than the other nations, God simply chose Israel to be the “*instrument*” in which he would bring about His purposes, and His plan of salvation.

Throughout the O.T, the Hebrews, the Jews were known as “*God’s chosen people*.” Which came about by God’s watch care and protection and provision over Israel. But over time, God’s favor on Israel resulted in their feeling superior over the other nations, taking on an attitude that they were better than the other people. When the truth was, they were “*no better*” in the least. In Romans 3, Paul has declared “*All Men*” are under sin, and as far as righteousness goes, none are righteous, all men are totally depraved, and stand in need of God’s mercy. The nations attitude of superiority over the Gentiles around them, was attacked by Paul, when he declared in Romans 3:22~23, that the Jews are no different than the Gentiles. That all men, whether Jew or Gentile, stand in need of the Mercy & Grace of God which is found in Christ Jesus.

When you look at verses 15~18 as one unit (*which seems to be the case*), we see another illustration of God’s divine election at work.

God “*CHOSE*” Moses, and the nation Israel, and *rejected* Pharaoh and the nation Egypt.

Moses have I loved...Pharaoh have I hated... Moses was not “*Chosen*” of God because he was special, or because he was such a “*Godly man*.” Moses didn’t “*earn*” his position, but his life too, like Jacob, was a result of “*God’s Divine Election*.”

Through God's Mercy, Moses heart was softened and turned towards God... While through the withholding of His Mercy from Pharaoh, his heart was *hardened* towards God, resulting in opposing God.

The thing we MUST SEE here, is that **both men** were serving the WILL of God. Both men...in fulfilling the "Will of God" in each man's life, would be *working together* to accomplish the purpose of God! What purpose?

¹⁷For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for **this same purpose** have I raised thee up...
... **that I might show my power in thee, that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.**

God chose **Moses** to serve as God's man, for no other reason than God simply chose him...
God chose **Pharaoh** to serve as God's enemy, for no other reason than He simply chose him...

Then, as a result of "each man" fulfilling the purposes of God" for each man's life, together they both would fulfill the "Purpose of God."

Which was to declare that the "God of Moses," the "God of the Hebrews," **He alone is Lord!**

God **fashioned** each man... according to His Will, according to His purpose...

(Vs 19~24) Paul uses the analogy of a potter and the vessels he creates to help explain...

¹⁹Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? ²⁰Nay but, O man, who art thou that replies against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? ²¹Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? ²²What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: ²³And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

This morning I simply want to declare the point Paul is making here.

God **had fashioned** each man...according to His Will.

Moses was the man he was, because God made him that way...
Pharaoh was the man he was, because God made him that way...
Moses was given a God seeking, a God serving heart...
While Pharaoh was given a God opposing, God rejecting heart.

Election is the teaching that God fashions men after His Will, after His own choosing!

Each one of us are the "Creation" of God. We are the works of His hands. Using the analogy of the potter, God is the potter, and men are the vessels. The point is, the potter, makes what He wants to with the clay. He makes whatsoever he WILLS. The Point Paul is making here is, God makes some men to be "Vessels of Honor" and some to be "Vessels of Dishonor."

God CHOSE to make Jacob a "Vessel of Honor," He CHOSE to make Esau a "Vessel of Dishonor"
God CHOSE to make Moses a "Vessel of Honor," He CHOSE to make Pharaoh a "Vessel of Dishonor"

Upon hearing that, *once again* we may entertain the thought, "***that's just not fair...***" But I want to suggest to you, that it's not only fair, if we understand what Paul is teaching here, it's amazing. The truth that Paul is teaching here is one that absolutely "*blows*" the human mind.

God "ELECTED"...meaning, God "CHOSE" to "**make a King**" out of Pharaoh.

The Potter took the clay, and molded it with all the characteristics that make up a king. He crafted it with "wisdom," with *leadership skills, courage, etc, all the necessary things* to make it a king. And in the fullness of time, the potter's creation carried out its intended purpose to which it was created for.

Listen very closely... **Pharaoh's life, was lived according to God's Will.** Even though we may read that story and think of Pharaoh as an evil, wicked tyrant, who opposed God, that's not the case at all.

Rather than oppose God... Pharaoh served the "Will of God" for his life to the letter!

God "*Divinely Elected*" to make Pharaoh a king in order to serve his ultimate purpose... Every act Pharaoh did was done to serve purpose of God, to declare HIS NAME throughout all the earth.

(Vs 17) ¹⁷*For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose **have I raised thee up**...that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*

John MacArthur Jr... **Undoubtedly, Pharaoh thought his position and actions were of his own free choice to accomplish his own purposes, but in reality, he was there to serve God's purpose.**

We see the fruits of "*Election*" woven throughout the N.T. also. John the Baptist, Judas Iscariot, Pilate, etc, the list goes on and on. The Pharisees, the nation of Israel as a whole...all examples of God's divine election, for the purpose of carrying out his plan.

Remember, Paul is explaining "ELECTION," to declare the fact that it was God's Will for the nation of Israel to reject Jesus as Messiah! It was God's plan for this to happen.

God "**fashioned Israel**" according to His Will, to bring about the fulfillment of His Plan.

Paul goes on to reveal that God Elected for Israel to "*Reject Jesus*", and he did so by "*Blinding them.*" Just as He said it would happen as spoken by the Prophets. In rejecting Christ, and Crucifying him on the cross, Israel was actually right in the center of God's will. One day, Israel will be "*restored.*" God will save Israel. In doing so, it becomes the greatest illustration ever, confirming the fact that Salvation is by Grace and Grace alone! By the Mercy of God.

(Vs 15~18) ¹⁵*For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.* ¹⁶*So then it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.* ¹⁷*For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose **have I raised thee up**...that I might show my power in thee, and **that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.** ¹⁸**Therefore** *hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens.**

Therefore... Given the account of Moses and Pharaoh, we learn that God is in control of everything. Nothing is done outside of His Will.

P. Point being... **God created both vessels, he formed both Wills... And used BOTH vessels to work together to serve the WILL of God, to accomplish the PURPOSES of God.**

Think about it... Is there anywhere in the world that this story is not known?

People all over the world know this story, the story that exalts the God of Moses! This was especially true in Moses' day, for it resulted in a "*great fear*" among all the nations of the earth concerning the nation Israel, and their God! Just as God intended.