

Romans 9:19~29

The story of the Exodus... Undoubtedly one of the most interesting and fascinating stories in the bible, and certainly one of the most well known. The ultimate story of the triumph of good over evil. The ultimate *Cinderella story*, a story of the “*underdog*.” The story is about a single man, who stood against an entire empire, (*the most powerful and prosperous empire in the entire world*), and won!

The stars of the story are a man by the name of Moses, and another man whom we only know by the title Pharaoh, which means King. We learn from scripture, that each man was hand chosen by God, to perform a specific part in this story. God chose Moses, to use him as a deliverer, while Pharaoh was chosen by God to be the enemy. Pharaoh & Egypt would represent the kingdom of Satan, the *kingdom of Darkness*,” while Moses & Israel represented the “*Kingdom of God*.” The stage was set for the ultimate battle between “*good and evil*.” With the end result of Good triumphing over Evil, and the nation Israel being set free from the bondage of the Egyptians.

What a wonderful story, with a wonderful ending... But there’s more to the story than meets the eye...

Scripture tells us that Pharaoh was *hand chosen by God*, and that he *acquired his position as King* over Egypt, by the “*Divine Will*” of God. *Unknown* to Pharaoh, God had “*Sovereignly orchestrated*” the events of Pharaoh’s life to this end, that he would be King over Egypt.

(Vs 17) ¹⁷For 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.

God “*Sovereignly orchestrated*” the events in Pharaohs life, resulting in him acquiring the throne of Egypt, to be the one that would oppose Moses, to fulfill the ultimate purpose of God.

Having knowledge of that, when you think about it...

In “*Opposing*” Moses and his God, Pharaoh was actually fulfilling God’s will for his life! Pharaoh’s actions were not contrary to God’s will, but rather, he was doing exactly what God had “*raised him up*” to do. Which resulted in accomplishing what God had purposed, that “*his name would be declared throughout all the earth*.” The God of Moses, the God of the Hebrews... ***He alone is Lord!***

And if that be the case, **is it fair for God to judge a man who’s only doing what God willed him to do?**

That is the very essence of the question Paul poses here in verse 19...

(Vs 19) ¹⁹Thou wilt say then unto me, *Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?*

If God chooses to harden someone, (*as was the case with Pharaoh*)...

How is it fair to hold them accountable for what He willed them to do?

How is it fair that God Judges a man, that’s simply fulfilling the will of God for his life?

Notice why Paul asked this question.... ¹⁹***Thou wilt say then unto me...***

Paul knew that men would question this truth of election. Knowing what was in the heart of man, knowing what he’d say to it, Paul asks the question for him. Which I think is amazing, for it reveals that God knows what man is thinking before he even ask it.

(Vs 20) Paul’s answers the man who questions the “*Election*” of God... ***with a question***.

²⁰*Nay 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?*

...*who art thou that **replies** against God?* That word carries the meaning of disputing, reply against, to answer back or according to the context, the best definition would be, to *talk back too*. Paul never answers the question directly, but rather deals with the *attitude of the heart* that produced the question. This word is well illustrated in that of a small child questioning the choices of a parent. It's like the parent telling the child something, and the child "*answering back*," rather than accepting what was said.

A heart that poses such a question is one that questions the "*righteousness of God*." Knowing that God Judges the wicked, such a question, questions the "*integrity*" of God, the "*justness*" of God's decisions! In a very real sense, the heart, which harbors such a question, manifest a rebellious, arrogant heart. Such a question implies a total forgetfulness of the relationship between the "*created*" and the "*Creator*," the relationship between man to God.

Paul answers by saying, "Who are you to question God?"

^{20b}...*Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?* ²¹*Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?*

P: The point of the analogy is to illustrate man's *proper relationship* to his Creator.

Paul says, "*I don't know who you think you are...but I'm here to remind you, that you and I are NOTHING!*" We're like a *piece of clay*...that the "*Almighty Potter*" has chosen to pick up, and shape into whatever he so desires.

What right does the clay have in questioning the potter in how he shapes it?

Like the clay, who are we to question God in the way he works? Who are we to suggest to Him what he should do and shouldn't do? Like the clay, who are we to question his abilities to carry out his work, by questioning what he does.

T: Listen, the reason we have trouble with "*election*", and struggle with it so, and question some of the things that **God Elects** to do, stems from the fact that *we've forgotten who we are!* We think we have a "*voice*" in the matter! But we don't!

(Vs 21) ²¹*Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?*

Can He not do with it what He wills? ... Can't he make anything he wants?

What if he took part of the clay, and made a "*beautiful vase*"... Then took the other part and made a "*dung pot*." Because they didn't have toilets as we do, back in biblical days, they made large, clay pots to hold human waste, until it could properly be disposed of. They were called dung pots, simple clay pots, not designed for beauty, but rather function. If the potter took part of a lump of clay and made a "*beautiful vase*," then out of the same lump, make a "*dung pot*," would he be wrong to do so? Absolutely not...

He can do what he wills! The clay has *no say* in the matter; it is literally all in the hands of the potter! Whatever he chooses to make, whatever need he has, he creates a vessel for, and is completely just in it.

A: Having made his point clear through the *analogy* of "*The Potter*" and the "*Clay*," Paul now moves to the application of that point...concerning the *Will of God* for Israel

(Vs 22~24) ²²**What if** *God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:* ²³*And that he might make known the riches of his*

glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, ²⁴Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

“**What if...**” At first it seems like he is speculating, but it soon becomes apparent that he’s not, he’s right on the mark. Its really like, “*What if this is what God was doing...*” **smart guy!** Those of you who question what he does, those who obviously know more than God...

What if God... -Willing to show His Wrath...

-Willing to make His Power know...by Judging the sin and rebellion of men...

What if...*He DECIDED* to show MERCY instead on those worthy of Wrath?

What if...instead of sending Judgment & Wrath, He chose to show Mercy and Patience on the vessels “*fitted for destruction.*”

What if...He did that in order that He might make know the “*Riches of His Glory?*”

What if...He did that to show “*His Goodness and Love*” towards undeserving sinners?

Notice, he reefer’s to them as “*vessels of mercy...*” which he had before prepared for glory...

Illustration: Unfit Vase... What if this one...which is really “*fit*” for nothing, other than to be destroyed, thrown away... What if the potter, the one who created it, unable to bear the thought of destroying it, simply chose to keep it. In doing so, this piece of pottery becomes a “*vessel of mercy.*” The only reason that its not cast aside and destroyed is by the mercy of its creator. If mercy were not shown this vessel, it would certainly be destroyed.

(Vs 22~24) Paul says...**that’s what we he did with us!** ²²**What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:**

²³**And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,**

²⁴**Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?**

We are *vessels of mercy*... Not only myself and other Jews, but many of the Gentiles as well.

The point of all this is...That the nation Israel as a whole, rejected the Mercy of God manifested in Christ Jesus. Rather than placing their “*trust*” in Christ for their salvation, they “*trusted*” in themselves. They trusted in the fact that God would receive them because of their worthiness... But that’s just not the case. In doing so, Israel became the vessels of dishonor, vessels fit for destruction. The majority of the nation Israel rejected the salvation of God, while it was received by a small remnant of people, what is know today, as the church. That’s what Paul is saying in verses 25~29...

(Vs 25~29) ²⁵**As he saith also in Hosea, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.** ²⁶**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.** ²⁷**Isaiah also cries concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:** ²⁸**For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.** ²⁹**And as Isaiah said before, Except the Lord of Sabbath had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah.**

God “*Willed*” that the nation Israel would reject Christ, while a small remnant would accept him. Like Pharaoh, Israel had been given a place of prominence, and blessed by God to their position. But like

Moses, Christ, "*the chosen one*," had come to deliver his people from bondage...the bondage of the law. Like Pharaoh withstood Moses...Israel withstood Christ. But the end result was the same. Through Christ death on the cross, God's name has been declared throughout all the earth! With every facet, going exactly according to God's plan.