

## Romans Part 23 (9:1 - 9:5)

### I. INTRO:

--after capping off his detailed explanation of salvation and sanctification with the triumphal and joyous *Hymn of Security* at the end of chapter 8, Paul now shifts gears and begins a new section that spans chapters 9 - 11 where he addresses a subject that causes him profound grief – Israel's unbelief.

--chapters 9-11 are like a high altitude flight, viewing dynamics of world history from God's perspective... the Bible takes us on a journey of discovery through a vast landscape of spiritual truths; normally we see those truths from vantage points on the ground with occasional vista points, but in Romans 9-11 it's like a plane flight at 30,000 feet, seeing dynamics of world history from God's perspective high above and trying to understand them in light of His omnipotence and omniscience...

--this naturally leads to passages that are hard to understand on a human level... Therefore, in Romans 11:33-36 Paul concludes this section by writing, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! 34 "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?" 35 'Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?' 36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen."

### II. "I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh." (9:1-3)

--this passage bears witness to two important marks of authenticity in Paul's ministry that set him apart from false teachers...

**--supernatural love...** "...I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ." (9:2-3a)

--as a Pharisee, before Paul was saved he found satisfaction in the death of those who opposed his beliefs...

--"I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women..." (Acts 22:4)

--"And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities." (Acts 26:11)

--after Paul was saved, rather than being filled with hate and rage his heart is filled with a supernatural love and compassion towards those who hate him as he once hated Christians...

--as Paul explained in chapters 3-8 in great detail, it is impossible to lose our salvation, but now, as an expression of his Spirit-filled love for the lost, he states that if it were possible he would even give up his own salvation in order for his Jewish brethren ("my countrymen according to the flesh") to be saved.

--Stephen was another example of someone who was filled with supernatural love towards his enemies (including Saul) in the face of deadly persecution: "And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' 60 Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not charge them with this sin.' And when he had said this, he fell asleep." (Acts 7:58-60)

--as they walked in the Spirit of Christ their words echoed the words of Christ... "And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. 34 Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.'" (Luke 23:33-34)

**--confirmation from God's Word...** "I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit" (9:1)

--if our conscience is not properly informed by the Word of God then it is not totally reliable. Paul's conscience bearing witness "in the Holy Spirit" signifies that His conscience was informed by the Word of God – "words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words."  
(1 Corinthians 2:13b)

--the Jewish leaders accused Paul of being a leader of a new sect... "For we have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes." (Acts 24:5)

--but Paul always pointed back to God's Word to justify his teaching... "But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, **believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.**" (Acts 24:13-14)

--Paul believed "all things" in God's Word... many false teachers used God's Word to justify their teachings but they only used part of it – they "twist [it] to their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:16)

--we must "rightly divide the word of truth" as Paul said in 2 Timothy 2:15.

**III. "...who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; 5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen." (9:4-5)**

--here Paul gives an overview of key points in God's revelation to Israel throughout their history that should have led them to faith in Christ.

--"the adoption, the glory..." (9:4a)

--most commentaries state that Paul is here referring to God's adoption of Israel as a nation and the glory of His various manifestation to them (Mt Sinai, the pillar of fire that guided them through the desert, His glory that filled Solomon's temple when it was completed).

--however, technically speaking, if Paul is referring to the "adoption" of the nation of Israel, then this is the only place in the entire Bible that Israel is said to have been adopted; in all other places Scripture speaks of Israel being "born" of God:

--God commanded Moses to "say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, "Israel is My son, My first-born"' (Exodus 4:22)

--Isaiah 46:3: "Listen to Me, O house of Jacob, And all the remnant of the house of Israel, Who have been upheld by Me from birth, Who have been carried from the womb..."

--every other passage in the Bible that uses the term adoption refers to our spiritual adoption as God's children (Romans 8:15, Romans 8:23, Galatians 4:5, Ephesians 1:5)

--therefore Paul may be speaking of the spiritual adoption and future glory in heaven that awaits God's children.

--"...the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; 5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came..." (9:4b-5a)

--"the covenants... the promises"

--"the promises" refers to the promises that resulted from the official covenants that God made with Israel.

--"promises" spoken of throughout the New Testament by the apostles included the promise of eternal life, the promise of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33), the promise of Christ's second coming (2 Peter 3:4).

--Before Israel even existed God made an official covenant with Abraham that through his descendants *"all the nations on the earth will be blessed."* (Genesis 22:18)

--As Paul wrote Romans, over 2000 years after God made this covenant to Abraham, it began to be fulfilled as the gospel began to spread to "all the nations on the earth".

--Acts 13:32-40: "And we declare to you glad tidings — that promise which was made to the fathers. ... 38 Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; 39 and **by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.**"

--Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek [*the non-Jew*]..."

--"the giving of the law"

--the law was meant "to lead us to Christ". (Galatians 3:24)

--most Jewish leaders tried to establish their own righteousness by following the law to perfection while ignoring the foundational truth that salvation is based on the righteousness of God being "credited" (Romans 5:24) to our account through our faith, as the life of Abraham demonstrated before the law even existed.

--Genesis 15:6: "And he believed in the LORD [*Abraham had faith in the covenants God made with him*], and He accounted it to him for righteousness."

--Romans 4:3: "For what does the Scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.'"

--Hebrews 3:12-19 compares Israel's rejection of Christ to their rejection of the promise land after being delivered from Egypt .

--in both instances faith in God is replaced by faith in self... the Jewish leaders had faith in their own good works rather than Christ, and at the promise land Israel was afraid to enter because they placed their faith in themselves rather than God.

--Numbers 13:30-14:4: "Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, 'We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.' 31 But the men who had gone up with him said, 'We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are.' ... 14:1 That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. 2 All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, 'If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! 3 Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?' 4 And they said to each other, 'We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.'"

--"the service of God" (the NIV states "the temple worship")

--this refers to the sacrificial system that was designed to point us to Christ.

--Christ was crucified at the time of the Passover when families from all around Israel brought an animal sacrifice to the temple in Jerusalem to symbolically bear their sins and die in their place.

--in light of this, John the Baptist's introduction of Christ was loaded with symbolism: "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!" (John 1:29)

--"[*Christ*] who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen." (9:5b)

--another of many references to the deity of Christ – "the eternally blessed God"