

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church

Wednesday Sermon

Date: April 7, 2021

Text: Romans 9:10-14

Scripture Reading: Romans 9:10-14

Subject: Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

In verses 1 through 9 of this ninth chapter, we considered these things:

1. Discussion about Paul's statement and about conscience in general.
2. How that Paul, in his heaviness for Israel could wish himself accursed from Christ for his kinsmen.
3. We considered the advantages given Israel which were never shared with the Gentiles at all; the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the services of God, and the promises. Whose are the fathers and of whom concerning the flesh Christ came.
4. We saw that the word of God did in fact take effect in Israel. We considered the remnant of Israel and the fact that the rest were blinded.
5. We saw that Isaac, the promised son of Abraham, is the one through whom Messiah would come – the seed, (not seeds), which is Christ. We also saw that we, brethren, are children of promise as Isaac was and also that as him who was born of the flesh persecuted the son of promise; so it is now.
6. The last verse we considered last time was this one.

***Romans 9:9 (KJV) For this is the word of promise,
At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a
son.***

Now, we come to chapter 9, verses 10 through 20.

Romans 9:10-12 (KJV) *And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; 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 calleth;) 12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.*

Let's read the account of this from Genesis 25 –

Genesis 25:19-23 (KJV) *And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac: 20 And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian. 21 And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. 22 And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the LORD. 23 And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.*

Now, let us consider what is said in verse 11 of our text for this evening:

(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 calleth;) –

Let's consider carefully what is said. The children being not yet born, they could not and did not anything either good or evil – no works to commend them to God or to be condemned of God. This leads us to the next statement – ***That the purpose of God according to election might stand,*** -- The sense of this statement well agrees with the scope of the apostle Paul, which is

to prove, that all were not Israel which were of Israel, and that all Abraham's natural seed were not the children of God. What better persons could he have used to illustrate that fact of God's election of grace than the persons of Jacob and Esau? As we shall see from the scriptural account of the personal characters of Jacob and Esau; that election unto eternal life or unto eternal death is a personal thing. It concerns individuals as illustrated by Jacob and Esau who are particular persons. It does not and cannot concern, as some contend, nations or collective bodies of men who are the descendants of Jacob and Esau.

Question: Does God or did God choose nations? Yes, he chose the nation of Israel while passing by every other nation on the face of the earth. God dealt with none other nations except to use them as a nation to judge his people Israel – such as Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon. If a gentile was to be blessed of God during the Old Testament era, he must have become an Israelite through the rite of circumcision.

Deuteronomy 7:6-8 (KJV) [Moses' words to the children of Israel on the plains of Moab before crossing the Jordan into the land of promise] *For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. 7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: 8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

Consider this: When the one was chosen and the other rejected; neither of them was as yet born; had they been born, their birth and ancestry could have been no reason why one was chosen and the other not. Nor had the one performed a good action or the other an evil one. So what does that tell us? It says that Jacob was not loved for his good works nor Esau hated for his evil ones. All of this confirms the truth of the doctrine of God's election of grace in that the objects of election, whether to life or death are alike are in the same situation and condition. So it follows that works neither good nor evil are the reasons which cause God to choose some to life and to pass by others. Good works are not the cause of election to eternal life because this act of distinguishing grace occurred before any good works were done. Consider it: All of us sitting here this evening our election unto salvation happened long before we were born – yea, even before the foundation of the world. What it does show is that good works or evil works are fruits, effects, and the consequence of God's election; therefore, they cannot be the causes of it.

To be clear about this - neither are evil works the cause of the decree of rejection for this also was done before the foundation of the world, consequently, it took place before any evil works were done. Sin is not the cause of God's decree otherwise every single person in the world being equally in sin must have been rejected. What is the conclusion then? It is that not any works of men, good or bad, are the cause of election or reprobation, but is because of the sovereign will and secret counsel of God which he purposed in himself. As the scriptures says of God's purpose in election, this:

Ephesians 1:3-9 (KJV) *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4 According as he hath*

*chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: **5** Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, **6** To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. **7** In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; **8** Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; **9** Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, **according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:***

We shall see this further as we proceed to consider verse 12 which reads:

It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. – We read that from the account from Genesis 25:23 which verse says: *“And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.”*

The question is: “Did Esau ever temporally become subservient to Jacob? I deny that Jacob ever ruled over Esau in a temporal way, that is, while they lived on earth. Far from it! As soon as Jacob had got the birthright and blessing, he fled from the face and fury of Esau to Padan-Aram. Why was that? Because Esau had purposed to kill him. Also, upon Jacob’s return from Padan-Aram after all those years, Jacob heard that Esau was coming to meet him. Jacob sent messengers to Esau and he did it in a submissive manner. He charged his family in this way: “thus shall ye shall say to my lord Esau, thy servant Jacob saith thus”, etc. Let’s read the account from Genesis 32.

Genesis 32:1-8 (KJV) *And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. 2 And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim. 3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. 4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now: 5 And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight. 6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. 7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; 8 And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.*

When Jacob found that his brother, Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men, that fact threw Jacob into a fearful panic, lest Esau should "smite *him*, and the mother with the children", [Ge 32:11](#). What did Jacob do? He prepared presents for Esau. When Esau came to him, Jacob bowed himself seven times before his brother, Esau; and his wives and children bowed likewise. We cannot help but consider Jacob's language in addressing his brother Esau, all the while they were together. What did he say to Esau? He kept on saying "my lord" when speaking to Esau. Therefore if this verse was to be understood of the elder serving the younger temporally, while they were alive on the earth, we never see that in scripture. If we suppose this to occur in their children and grandchildren, it certainly is not very evident in their offspring. It is certain concerning Esau's descendants that there was a long train of dukes

and kings in Esau's family, before there was any king in Israel. The posterity of Esau showed themselves in lordly grandeur and splendour, even when the children of Israel were grievously oppressed with hard bondage in Egypt. The single instance usually referred to, when the Edomites became tributaries to David, was nearly a thousand years after the time of this verse; and this show of servitude did not last long, for in Joram's time they revolted, and so continued; and it is evident, that at the time of the Babylonish captivity, the children of Edom were prosperous and triumphant, and said concerning Jerusalem, "Raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof", [Ps 137:7](#). So what is our conclusion?

Is not this servitude because of what the scripture records to be understood in a spiritual sense? What do we mean? Consider Esau's exclusion from the favor of God, and blessings of grace, signified by his being rejected from inheriting the blessing, which was given to Jacob. Indeed it appeared that he was not a son, but a servant, by his departure from his family and pitching his dwelling elsewhere. This showed he had no interest in spiritual adoption, no right to the covenant of grace, nor was he an heir of heaven, all which were peculiar to Jacob. Esau was a servant of sin, under the dominion of it, and in bondage to it; while Jacob was the Lord's freeman, and, as a prince, had power with God and with men, and prevailed. Consider that Jacob's being obliged to flee from his brother, was for his good; by this means he received wonderful and fruitful wives, and large substance. His brother's meeting him on his return, which gave him so much pain and uneasiness, turned out to his spiritual good. Esau's coming sent Jacob to the throne of grace, to humble himself before God, acknowledge his mercies, and his dependence on him, to implore his help, and plead his promises.

Romans 9:13 (KJV) *As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*

As it is written, -- This refers to Malachi 1:2-3. Let's read that:
Malachi 1:2-3 (KJV) *I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, 3 And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.*

Jacob have I loved, -- That is, God loved Jacob. The Greek word which is translated as love is: "αγαπαω agapao ag-ap-ah'-o" which word is found one hundred and forty-two times in the New Testament. It is translated with two English words only: love-135 times and beloved 7 times. So what do we conclude? We conclude that God loved Jacob – that is, the person Jacob.

But Esau have I hated. – Let's now consider that God hated Esau. The English word "hated" comes from the Greek word: "μισεω miseo mis-eh'-o" This word appears 42 times in the New Testament and is translated into two English words: hate – 41 times and hateful 1 time. Some have said that God loved Esau less. I deny this. He did not love Esau at all. He hated Esau. Our translators chose the word hate from this Greek word. How does the dictionary define the English word "hate?" The OED defines the transitive verb "hate" as: "To hold in very strong dislike; to detest; to bear malice to. The opposite of "to love." Somebody says, "Consider it in context!" OK, what is the context? It is that before these two boys were born, before either of them did good or evil, God said to Rebekah, their mother, "The elder shall serve the younger." The context goes on to say this:

Romans 9:14-21 (KJV) *What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. 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 willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. 17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew 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 hardeneth. 19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? 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 honour, and another unto dishonour?

That is powerful, is it not? God willed to have mercy on Jacob, but not on Esau. It had nothing to do with the will of either of these boys because they were still in their mother's womb. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Let's continue to study these verses which we have just read together.

Romans 9:14 (KJV) *What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.*

What shall we say then? – Here is another anticipation of objection. Someone might object and say: If God elected some, and rejected others, their case being the same, or their persons being in themselves equal and alike, then he is unjust and partial. Let's consider that. Is that true! Does this objection have any merit scripturally?

Is there unrighteousness with God? – This is not an objection of which Paul has written, but a supposed objection by the foes of the sovereign will of God. The Holy Spirit's agent, the Holy man

Paul, the apostle to the gentiles, considers the objection and answers it. Paul makes the sense clear. It could not be that election and rejection of men is based on their merits; or that God chooses some for their good works, and rejects others for their wicked works, because no man could ever pretend to charge God with unrighteousness on this account. Nor can it be that God chose and rejected men because he did foresee their good and evil works.

We are considering two persons Jacob and Esau. What is said of them is true of all mankind in an exact way. Let's make it personal – that you and I not being yet born, nor having done either good or evil, a difference is made between us, by God himself; the one is chosen, the other passed by. So, how does the apostle answer it this supposed objection?

God forbid. -- *God forbid.* Greek, Let not this be. The sense is, *Let not this by any means be supposed.* God is absolutely righteous in all that he does or does not do. God has the right to do as he wills according to the counsel of His own will. God is most certainly not unrighteous in choosing some and rejecting others. There is no unrighteousness with God in the election of some to salvation. This is neither an act of justice, nor injustice, but an act of grace and mercy. God was not obliged to do this. Consider it? For God to choose some and not others, is no act of injustice; for injustice is a violation of justice, which has no place in this whatsoever. If it were an act of injustice, it must be either to them that are chosen, or to them that are not, It is not injustice to them who are chosen because to them it is an act of favor and good will, they are chosen to grace and glory, to holiness here, and happiness hereafter. It is not injustice to them that are passed by, because they had no right nor claim to the grace and glory and therefore no injustice is done them.

Every king, prince or governor may choose his own ministers and favorites, and who he will have of his privy council, without doing any injustice to those he takes no notice of. Every person may choose his own company who he will converse with, without doing any wrong to such he does not think fit to admit to an intimacy with him; and yet men are not willing to allow the Most-High that same liberty, which every man daily takes, and may lawfully make use of. Nor is there any unrighteousness with God in reprobation whether negative or positive. Negative reprobation is the act of God's passing by, leaving, taking no notice of some, while he chose others.

Since God was not obliged to save any of the sinful race of men, whose destruction was of themselves, it could be no injustice to pass by some of them in this condition, when he chose others; for if it would have been no injustice to have condemned all, as he did the angels that sinned, whom he spared not, it can be no act of injustice in him, to leave some of them in that condition, which sin had brought them into, whilst he has mercy on others.

What unrighteousness can there be in election of some and reprobation of some, any more than in drowning the world of the ungodly, whilst Noah and his family were saved in the ark? or in raining showers of fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities of the plain, whilst Lot, his wife, and two daughters, were delivered from the same? Positive reprobation is the decree, or appointment to damnation: now as God damns no man but for sin, so he has decreed to damn no man but for sin; and if it is no unrighteousness in him to damn men for sin, the objection is to be treated with abhorrence and indignation.

Let me show you what I see the Holy Scriptures to teach about positive reprobation:

Revelation 4:11 (KJV) *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

Job 21:30 (KJV) *That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.*

Proverbs 16:4 (KJV) *The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.*

Romans 9:21-22 (KJV) *Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? 22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, **endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:***

1 Peter 2:7-8 (KJV) *Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, **even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.***

2 Peter 2:12 (KJV) *But these, as natural brute beasts, **made to be taken and destroyed**, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;*

Jude 4 (KJV) *For there are certain men crept in unawares, **who were before of old ordained to this condemnation**, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Revelation 13:8 (KJV) *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, **whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.***

Revelation 17:8 (KJV) *The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, **whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world,** when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

Brothers and sisters, suffer the word of exhortation. The sovereignty of God in salvation is a wonderful and marvelous tribute to God and his mercy shown to his elect. It is manifestly true that our God has chosen to elect some to salvation through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; and to call them through the declaration of gospel of the kingdom.