

The Purpose of God to Make Known the Riches of his Glory. Romans 9:18-23

Romans 9:11–23 (NKJV)

¹¹ (for *the children* not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), ¹² it was said to her, “*The older shall serve the younger.*” ¹³ As it is written, “*Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.*”

¹⁴ What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! ¹⁵ For He says to Moses, “*I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.*” ¹⁶ So then *it is* not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. ¹⁷ For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, “*For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.*” ¹⁸ Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

¹⁹ You will say to me then, “Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?” ²⁰ But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the

thing formed say to him who formed *it*, “Why have you made me like this?” ²¹ Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

²² What if God, wanting to show *His* wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³ and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,

Introduction

There is nothing as great as the God we worship and nothing so amazing as the Salvation He secures for His elect.

So awful are His judgements, yet so marvelous is His grace.

No mind can fathom the infinite God of the universe who created all things and purposed all that exist.

Nothing is outside his purpose and nothing is outside His control.

The worst of sinners can experience the Grace of God and be delivered from the wrath to come and the best of man can receive the full justice of God

and be punished forever and God would have done no wrong.

From eternity past, as far as eternity could span in the past, God purposed to put Himself on display and to declare His name in all the earth.

All that He created and ordained in His universe from the smallest molecule to the greatest star had been predestined to fulfill plan so grand and purpose so infinite that only a God who is all wise and absolutely Holy could perform it.

We are a small but very significant part of an eternal plan to Glorify God.

Our very existence has this as its meaning. We are created by God to fulfill His purpose and enjoy Him forever.

And this plan is not flawed in any manner, even from the entrance of sin and evil. The death and destruction and carnage the evil leaves in its path is not a secondary thought to God or an accidental participant.

No, it is as much a part of the plan of God as all the Good and all the beauty.

The Blackness and darkness of the worst of evil is the context by which the Holiness and the Mercy of God shines the most.

God has never seconded guessed his plan or thought of another way He could bring the most Glory to His name.

Because God is infinite in wisdom and knowledge and infinite in power. This plan with the inclusion of evil and sin is the most perfect plan possible.... And we are privileged to be witness to it.

Romans 9 digs deeper than any other passage in all of the Bible to declare emphatically that God is God in fact, and that He will do with His creation as He wills for the entire purpose of His Glory.

Lesson.

The Declaration

The Objection

The Clarification

- 1.Sovereignty of His Creation
- 2.Sovereignty of His Glorification

I. The Declaration

18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

Therefore — this statement is the conclusion of what he has stated in v.14-17

¹⁴ What shall we say then? *Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not!* ¹

¹⁵ For He says to Moses, *“I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.”*

¹⁶ So then *it is not of him who wills*, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

¹⁷ For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, *“For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.”*

18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He **wills**, and whom He **wills** He hardens

wills —-theló: to will, wish

Original Word: θέλω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: theló

Phonetic Spelling: (eth-el'-o,)

Definition: to will, wish

Usage: I will, wish, desire, am willing, intend, design.

Cognate: 2309 thélō (a primitive verb, NAS dictionary) – to desire (wish, will), wanting what is best (optimal) because someone is ready and willing to act.

It is totally dependent on the desire of God, as to who receives mercy and who receives Hardening.

It has nothing to do with the will of man or the desire of man, or planning of man or the want of man.

This is God's _ Purpose according to election being fulfilled. v. 11

Ephesians 1:5 (NKJV)

⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Ephesians 1:9 (NKJV)

⁹ having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,

Daniel 4:35 (NKJV)

³⁵ All the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing;
He does according to His will in the army of heaven

And *among* the inhabitants of the earth.
 No one can restrain His hand
 Or say to Him, “What have You done?”

1. The Declaration

2. The Objection

As a result of the absolute statement Paul has just made, proven by the earlier arguments of v.14-17, he anticipates a second objection to his conclusion

_____ **19** You will say to me then, “Why does He still find **fault**? For who has resisted His will?”

fault

memphomai: to blame, find fault

Original Word: μέμφομαι

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: memphomai

Phonetic Spelling: (mem'-fom-ahee)

Definition: to blame, find fault

Usage: I blame, censure, find fault.

3201 mémphomai (from mempteos, "rejected because condemned") – find fault, see as fully blameworthy (disgraceful, condemnable); hence, rejected because deep wrongs by omission or commission. The objection is,

If God is sovereign and gives mercy to who He wants to and Hardens who He wants to and it is not dependent on the will of man or the effort of man but the will and purpose of God. How can God hold man responsible.

If this is already determined before anyone has even existed or actually done any good or evil. How can God hold me accountable.

Isaac is chosen not Ishmael

Jacob is chosen not Esau

Jacob is loved and Esau is hated

Pharaoh is hardened by God so that He will not let the people go. So that He will not give in the pressure God is putting on him to release the People of Israel.

He was raised up specifically for the very purpose of being hardened so that the power of God would be displayed and the Name of God would be known in all the earth.

If all this is true, and it is, How can God hold the sinner responsibly and find fault.

The objection was not a humble “How can these things be?” (cf Lk 1:34), but an indignant declaration that these things ought not to be.

The next statement Paul makes drives it in even deeper by asking

19 You will say to me then, “Why does

He still find fault? **For who has resisted**

His will?

For— —γὰρ. because

anthístēmi: to set against, i.e. withstand

Original Word: ἀντίστημι

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: anthístēmi

Phonetic Spelling: (anth-is'-tay-mee)

Definition: to set against, withstand

Usage: I set against; I withstand, resist, oppose.

HELPS Word-studies

436 anthístēmi (from 473 /antí, "opposite/against" and 2476 /hístēmi, "to stand") – properly, take a complete stand against, i.e. a "180 degree, contrary position"; (figuratively) to establish one's position publicly by conspicuously "holding one's ground," i.e. refusing to be moved ("pushed back").

436 /anthístēmi ("oppose fully") means to forcefully declare one's personal conviction (where they unswervingly stand); to keep one's possession; ardently withstand, without giving up (letting go).

[436 (anthístēmi) was a military term in classical Greek (used by Thucydides, etc.) meaning "to strongly resist an opponent" ("take a firm stand against").]

will?

bouléma: purpose, will

Original Word: βούλημα, ατος, τό

Part of Speech: Noun, Neuter

Transliteration: bouléma

Phonetic Spelling: (boo'-lay-mah)

Definition: purpose, will

Usage: will, counsel, purpose.

Cognate: 1013 bouléma (a neuter noun) – a pre-set, fully-resolved plan. 1013 (bouléma) only occurs three times (critical text, Ac 27:43; Ro 9:19; 1 Pet 4:3). See 1012 (boulē).

resisted anthistēmi: to set against, i.e. withstand

Original Word: ἀνθίστημι

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: anthistēmi

Phonetic Spelling: (anth-is'-tay-mee)

Definition: to set against, withstand

Usage: I set against; I withstand, resist, oppose.

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one's possession; ardently withstand, without giving up (letting go).

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The obvious anticipated answer to this is that no one has been able to resist the ordained will of God. The Preceptive Will or Permissive will yes. but the Ordain plan and purpose of God.

Theologians have made the distinction between the

Decretive Will of God

Preceptive Will of God

Permissive Will of God

(1) The Decretive Will of God

This is sometimes described as the sovereign efficacious will, by which God brings to pass whatever He pleases by His divine decree.

2) The Preceptive Will of God

The preceptive will of God relates to the revealed commandments of God's published law. When God

commands us not to steal, this “decree” does not carry with it the immediate necessity of consequence. Where it was not possible for the light to refuse to shine in creation, it is possible for us to refuse to obey this command. In a word, we steal.

(3) The Permissive Will of God

What is usually meant by divine permission is that God simply lets it happen. That is, He does not directly intervene to prevent its happening.

What must be carefully contained here is that what ever He permits, he wills

The Decretive or ordained purpose of God is what Paul has in mind here.

No man woman or child can stop, change or alter the preplanned purpose and plan of God. These were settled long ago in eternity past

The Declaration

The Objection

The Clarification — answer

- 1.Sovereignty of His Creation
- 2.Sovereignty of His Glorification

- 1.Sovereignty of His Creation
- 2.Sovereignty of His Glorification

20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed *it*, “Why have you made me like this?”

²¹ Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God?

Who are you O human to contend with God, to argue with God.

Job 33:13 (NKJV)

¹³ Why do you contend with Him?

For He does not give an accounting of any of His words.

There is a lot that can be inferred from this text. One of the most obvious is the comparison of God as a potter and us as clay.

There is an infinite distance in power, ability, intellect and nature between a potter and the clay.

pēlós [clay, mud]

pēlós, denoting a mixture of moisture and dust, has such senses as “morass”, “muck,” “loam,” “clay.” The LXX uses it for “mire” in Ps. 69:14 and “clay” in Jer. 18:6. The use is the same in Philo and Josephus. In Rom. 9:21, adopting a common OT image, Paul stresses God’s sovereignty by comparing God to the potter and us to the clay

Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). In [Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One Volume](#) (p. 838). W.B. Eerdmans.

Clay has not power, no ability, no rights, not life. It can only be what the potter decides to make it. The potter can leave it alone and not use it, or it can mold it into something useful or it can make something and discard it or it can make it for something dishonorable.

The Clay has nothing to say in the matter. It can't will itself to be a pot and it can't demand or dictate to the potter.

As lifeless clay is an infinite distance and difference from the Potter so the God who created man a infinite distance and difference form God.

v.20. Will the thing formed say to him who formed *it*, "Why have you made me like this?"

For man to advise God about how he ought to act is as out of place as for a statue to advise a sculptor how to chisel.

Piper, John. *The Justification of God* (p. 186). Baker Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

James White,

For a pot to question the Potter is absurd: for man to answer back to God is equally absurd. These words cannot be understood separately from the fundamental understanding of the freedom of the Sovereign Creator and the ontological creatureliness of man that removes from him any ground of complaint against God.

James White. *The Potter's Freedom: A Defense of the Reformation and a Rebuttal To Norman Geisler's Chosen But Free* (p. 213). BookMasters. Kindle Edition.

21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

power—right or authority

Original Word: ἐξουσία, ας, ἡ

Part of Speech: Noun, Feminine

Transliteration: exousia

Phonetic Spelling: (ex-oo-see'-ah)

Definition: power to act, authority

Usage: (a) power, authority, weight, especially: moral authority, influence, (b) in a quasi-personal sense, derived from later Judaism, of a spiritual power, and hence of an earthly power.

1849 eksousía (from **1537** /ek, "out from," which intensifies **1510** /eimí, "to be, being as **a right** or privilege") – **authority**, conferred power; delegated empowerment ("authorization"), operating in a designated jurisdiction.

The obvious thing is that in a relationship between potter and vessel, that is, between creator and creature, the sole authority for determining what sorts of vessels it is right to make belongs to the potter-creator.

Isaiah 45:9–14 (NKJV)

- 9 “Woe to him who strives with his Maker!
Let the potsherd *strive* with the potsherds of the earth!
 Shall the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What are you making?’
 Or shall your handiwork say, ‘He has no hands’?
- 10 Woe to him who says to *his* father, ‘What are you begetting?’
 Or to the woman, ‘What have you brought forth?’ ”
- 11 Thus says the Lord,
 The Holy One of Israel, and his Maker:
 “Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons;
 And concerning the work of My hands, you command Me.
- 12 I have made the earth,
 And created man on it.
 I—My hands—stretched out the heavens,
 And all their host I have commanded.
- 13 I have raised him up in righteousness,
 And I will direct all his ways;
 He shall build My city
 And let My exiles go free,
 Not for price nor reward,”
 Says the Lord of hosts.

Jeremiah 18:1–8 (NKJV)

18 The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: ²“Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.” ³ Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. ⁴ And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.

⁵ Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: ⁶ “O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?” says the Lord. “Look, as the clay *is* in the potter’s hand, so *are* you in My hand, O house of Israel! ⁷ The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy *it*, ⁸ if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it.

21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from **the same lump** to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

I have heard even those who do not believe in Divine Sovereignty and Election and are antagonist

to Reformed doctrine to say that All deserve hell and God would not be wrong in sending all to hell. and I should be there. But where the train goes off the rails and ship sinks is when they say God has a right to determine who is saved and who is not. We are alright with God sending people to Hell, but we are not alright with giving him the absolute authority to do so and to determine this before time.

the same lump.

of the same — the same lump of mud of humanity. He has mercy on some of the lump and the other he hardens

But entire lump is deserving of destruction it is dirty mud.

antapokrinomai: to answer again

Original Word: ἀνταποκρίνομαι

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: antapokrinomai

Phonetic Spelling: (an-tap-ok-ree'-nom-ahee)

Definition: to answer again

Usage: I contradict, reply against, give a hostile answer.

The Clarification — answer

1. Sovereignty of His Creation
 2. Sovereignty of His Glorification

²² What if God, wanting to show *His* wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³ and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,

²² What if God, wanting to show *His* wrath and to make His power known,

What if God, —-First class conditional since The statement is assumed to be true.

wanting **to show** *His* wrath and to make His power known,

—- a reflection back to pharaoh. God desires to bring his wrath thru the plagues on Egypt and declare is Power and make is name known by destroying the pharaoh and his army.

to show endeiknumi: to indicate (by word or act), to prove

Original Word: ἐνδείκνυμι

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: endeiknumi

Phonetic Spelling: (en-dike'-noo-mee)

Definition: to indicate (by word or act), to prove

Usage: I show forth, prove.

1731 endeíknymi (from 1722 /en "in," which intensifies 1166 /deiknýō, "show") – properly, to make fully evident, showing conspicuous proof which demonstrates something as undeniable

— — — — endured with **much longsuffering** the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction

much longsuffering

makrothymía (from 3117 /makrós, "long" and 2372 /thymós, "passion, anger") – properly, long-passion, i.e. waiting sufficient time before expressing anger. This avoids the premature use of force (retribution) that rises out of improper anger (a personal reaction

vessels of wrath prepared for
destruction

He has more in mind here than just Pharaoh.

Vessels is plural

Prepared is Perf Middle or Passive. Some believe it is middle

The prepared themselves,

Others believe the devil prepared them

But the context demands a passive.

the vessel is passive to the potters molding. The vessel does not mold itself.

1 Peter 2:7–10 (NKJV)

⁷ Therefore, to you who believe, *He is precious*; but to those who are disobedient,

*“The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone,”*

⁸ and

*“A stone of stumbling
And a rock of offense.”*

They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

⁹ But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of

God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

²² What if God, wanting to show *His* wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,

23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,

that -- hina. for the purpose or in order that.

here is lies the entire reason for Gods patience with evil and evil doers

endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath

_____ He might **make known** the riches of His glory

to make know, declare and make understandable the riches of all of his character.

ploutos: wealth

Original Word: πλοῦτος, ου, ό

Part of Speech: Noun, Masculine; Noun, Neuter

Transliteration: ploutos

Phonetic Spelling: (ploo'-tos)

Definition: wealth

Usage: riches, wealth, abundance, materially or spiritually.

Cognate: 4149 ploútos (from 4183 /polýs, "much in number, quantity") – properly, abundance, possessions of many kinds; riches.

on the vessels of mercy, which He
had prepared beforehand for glory,

He had prepared beforehand

proetoimazó: to prepare before

Original Word: προετοιμάζω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: proetoimazó

Phonetic Spelling: (pro-et-oy-mad'-zo)

Definition: to prepare before

Usage: I prepare or appoint beforehand, predestine.
4282 proetoimázō (from 4253 /pró, "beforehand"
and 2092 /hétimos, "ready because prepared") –
properly, made ready in advance; hence, "ready,

already prepared" (used only in Ro 9:23; Eph 2:10).

Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

He endures the evil, the sin, the rebellion of this creation, so that He can thru the centuries have mercy on the vessels He has prepared long before to save.

This is the reason for fallen man.

The mercy of God is the jewel in this text. All of this patience endurance of Evil so He could show all of Character not just to Jews but to the Gentiles also.

Romans 9:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ *even* us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

Jonathan Edwards wrote

Concerning the Divine Decrees,

It is a proper and excellent thing for infinite glory to shine forth; and for the same reason, it is proper that the shining forth of God's glory should be complete; that is, that all parts of his glory should shine forth, that every beauty should be proportionably effulgent [radiant], that the beholder may have a proper notion of God. It is not proper that one glory should be exceedingly manifested, and another not at all . . .

Thus it is necessary, that God's awful majesty, his authority and dreadful greatness, justice, and holiness, should be manifested. But this could not be, unless sin and punishment had been decreed; so that the shining forth of God's glory would be very imperfect, both because these parts of divine glory would not shine forth as the others do, and also the glory of his goodness, love, and holiness would be faint without them; nay, they could scarcely shine forth at all.

If it were not right that God should decree and permit and punish sin, there could be no manifestation of God's holiness in hatred of sin, or in showing any preference, in his providence, of godliness before it. There would be no manifestation of God's grace or true goodness, if there was no sin to be pardoned, no misery to be saved from.

How much happiness soever he bestowed, his goodness would not be so much prized and admired, and the sense of it not so great . . .

So evil is necessary, in order to the highest happiness of the creature, and the completeness of that communication of God, for which he made the world; because the creature's happiness consists in the knowledge of God, and the sense of his love. And if the knowledge of him be imperfect, the happiness of the creature must be **proportionably imperfect**. (Jonathan Edwards, "Concerning the Divine Decrees," in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, 528)<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/how-god-makes-known-the-riches-of-his-glory-to-the-vessels-of-mercy>