

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church

Wednesday Sermon

Date: May 5, 2021

Text: Romans 9:22-33

Scripture Reading: Romans 9:1-33

Subject: Vessels of mercy and vessels of wrath

In verses 15 through 21 of this ninth chapter, we considered these things:

1. God declared that he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy and compassion on whom he will have compassion.
2. God's election is not of him that wills or of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.
3. God raised up Pharaoh, the great king of Egypt to show his power in him so that God's name would be declared throughout all the earth. For the same reason God sets up kings and puts down kings.
 - a. **Proverbs 21:1 (KJV)** *The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.*
4. No man can every rightly say to God "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" Who is a man that he replies against God? Shall the things formed say to him that formed it, why has thou made me thus?
5. Does not the potter have power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor? How much more does God have power over the clay which he created!

Now, we come to chapter 9, verses 22 through 33. Let us read again, verse 21 to better see the context of verse 22.

Romans 9:21 (KJV) *Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*

The answer is a resounding yes. Yes, the potter has power over the lump of clay – to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. He does as he pleases with his clay and none of us would say he could not. How much more God who made the clay from nothing then formed from the same lump vessels unto honor and vessels unto dishonor.

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Romans 9:22 (KJV) *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:*

What if God, -- Does not God have the right to do as he pleases with his creatures? Your and I both know that natural man does not like this. "The very idea," say some, "that I could be called a creature? That God made me as the Bible says!"

Here is the second point in the answer to the objection in [Ro 9:19](#).

Romans 9:19 (KJV) *Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?*

The answer has respect to --the righteous and the wicked. And the question is, whether in regard to these two classes God does in fact do wrong? If he does not, then the doctrine of God's election as the apostle describes in this chapter is established, and the objection is not valid. The world is divided into two classes of people--saints and sinners. We see that, do we not? The apostle considers the case of sinners in this verse – the vessels of wrath.

willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, -- To show his wrath? If it is right *to do* a thing, it is right to purpose or intend to do it. Consider "shew his wrath." The words "his

wrath” comes from the Greek word “3709 οργη orge *or-gay*’. This word appears 36 times in the NT and is translated as: “wrath 31 times, anger 3 times, vengeance 1 time, and indignation 1 time.” The words “his wrath” shows us God’s *displeasure against sin*. It is absolutely right that God should *always* be willing to show his displeasure for sin and pour out his wrath upon it! It would not be right for God who is holy and just and who cannot look upon sin to not show his wrath it. Why is that? Because that would be the same thing as to be indifferent to sin, or to approve it. For God to be just, he must punish sin.

And to make his power known – As he did with Pharaoh in Egypt. The case of Pharaoh was *one instance* of how God deals with men whose hearts are hardened in sin and who die in sin not submitting themselves to God.

Endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: -- God endured with the vessels of wrath much patience; He allowed them to live, while they deserved to die. Though they are fitted for destruction, yet God prolongs their lives, sending his rain on both the just and the unjust, thereby showing them his general love for all creatures. Notice the phrase “fitted to destruction.” The word “fitted” comes from the Greek word “2675 καταρτιζω *katartizo kat-ar-tid’-zo*” which is found 13 times in the New Testament. It is translated as: “perfect 2 times, make perfect 2 times, mend 2 times, be perfect 2 times, fit 1 time, frame 1 time, prepare 1 time, restore 1 time, perfectly joined together 1 time.” Let’s substitute a phrase or two from this list and read it: “perfectly joined together to destruction;” or “made perfect to destruction.” I am sure you understand what is being said.

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

Hear the words of the four and twenty elders around the throne of Almighty God – words which the Apostle John heard and wrote for our learning: **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.*

Romans 9:23 (KJV) *And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,*

And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, -- To make known is that God might manifest the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy. The term “vessels of mercy” stands in marked contrast to the “vessels of wrath.” One is a vessel belonging to mercy while the other is a vessel belonging to wrath. As with the vessels of wrath, the Apostle proves that for God to show the riches of his glory towards those whom he has prepared for it cannot be regarded as unjust. The vessels of mercy are those upon whom God chose to have mercy and upon whom he chose to have compassion. None of it was deserved.

Which he had afore prepared unto glory, -- he had done it by election from eternity, and by quickening and sanctification of the Spirit in time. He speaks here of two sorts of *vessels*, some of *wrath*, and some of *mercy*, as he had before spoken of *vessels of honour*, and of *dishonour*. “Unto glory” speaks of these vessels of mercy being glorified with the Son and unto eternal life with unspeakable blessing and honor. And who are those vessels of glory – vessels of honor?

Romans 9:24 (KJV) *Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?*

Even us, whom he hath called, -- This explains exactly who the vessels of mercy are. Even us, whom he hath called. The pronoun "Us" and "the called" are the same ones. These are the same ones he hath afore prepared unto glory.

Romans 8:29-30 (KJV) *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, **them he also called:** and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

1 Corinthians 1:23-24 (KJV) *But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24 But unto **them which are called,** both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*

Not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? – The gospel was preached to the Jews first. They were the first believers and the first beneficiaries of the New Covenant. Then came the Samaritans, then the Gentiles beginning at the house of Cornelius in Acts 10 – thence to the uttermost parts of the earth. The LORD is still calling out his elect through the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom. Those vessels of mercy whom he hath afore prepared – those given the Son by the Father shall hear the call and be saved.

John 6:37-39 (KJV) *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath*

given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

In verses 25 through 33, we see proof that the prophets of the Old Testament foretold the blinding of Israel and the extending or showing of God's mercy on the Gentiles.

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Romans 9:25-26 (KJV) *As he saith also in Osee, 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.*

Osee is Hosea. This quote comes from Hosea. This shows us that it is the purpose of God to save the gentiles also – you and I who were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus, we who were sometimes far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. In this we can see the election and calling of God to Judah and Israel when they are brought into the bond of the covenant in the Kingdom.

Hosea 2:14-23 (KJV) *Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. 15 And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. 16 And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD, that thou shalt call me Ishi; and shalt call me no more Baali. 17 For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name. 18 And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of*

heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely. **19** And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. **20** I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD. **21** And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the LORD, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; **22** And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel. **23** **And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.**

Romans 9:27-28 (KJV) *Esaias also crieth 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.*

This quote is from Esaias (Isaiah). ***Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: Isaiah 10:22-23 (KJV) For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness. 23 For the Lord GOD of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.***

For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. –

This is also a quote from Isaiah (Esias) – from the Septuagint which

says: “**23** *He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because the Lord will make a short work in all the world.*” This speaks of God’s judgment on Israel for their disobedience.

Romans 9:29 (KJV) *And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.*

This is a quote from Isaiah 1:9 concerning God’s leaving but a small remnant in Israel. Had He not done so, there would have been none of them remaining like there were not remained of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Isaiah 1:9 (KJV) *Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.*

Romans 9:30 (KJV) *What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.*

What shall we say then? -- To God's calling of a large number of the Gentiles, and only a very few of the Jews, according to his eternal purposes and decrees; what can be objected to it? is God chargeable with any unrighteousness? must it not be admitted that it was of his sovereign will and pleasure? is it not an instance of his grace and goodness, that he calls and saves some, when they were all so wicked, that he might in justice have destroyed every individual of them? or what is further to be said, concerning both Jews and Gentiles?

Paul places the gentiles in contrast with the Jew. The gentiles had not made it their main object to justify themselves. The Jews supposed that they *had* complied with the law and felt no need of

any other justification. Concerning the Gentiles -- they had no other law than that which God had put into their conscience. They were sinners, and they felt it. It was true that they were excessively wicked and did not follow after righteousness. Let us remember that those who found righteousness, whether Jew or Gentile found it in Christ and are among the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory.

Romans 9:31 (KJV) *But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.*

But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, -- The Israelites, the far greater part of the Jews, who were not called by the grace of God, were all very zealous of the law, called "the law of righteousness." The words of the law covenant were righteous, holy and good. The law demanded perfect obedience for righteousness, but none could do it perfectly because of the weakness of the flesh. The Jews violently and eagerly pursued after it, they tugged and toiled, and labored with all their might, as persons in running a race to attain to the righteousness of it; and yet Israel, with all the pains and labor taken,

Hath not attained to the law of righteousness. -- some of them were deluded into thinking they had because they had kept an external conformity to the Ten Commandments to be all that it required. But they knew nothing of the spirituality of it, that it required truth and holiness in the inward parts; and that he that offended in one point of it, was guilty of all, and therefore could not be justified by it.

Romans 9:32 (KJV) *Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;*

Wherefore? – The question is asked, why they did not attain to the righteousness demanded of the law, which with so much diligence they pressed after? The answer is, because, as they did not seek for righteousness in a right place, or object, they sought for it in the law, and the works of it. They did not seek righteousness in Christ, in whom only are righteousness and strength; so they did not seek for it in a right way, by faith in Christ, without which it is impossible to please God, and by which only true righteousness is discerned and received.

Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. – Israel expected their justification before God was to be by works of righteousness done by them; or as if it was partly by their own works, and partly by the goodness of God.

For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; -- meaning the word of the Gospel. Paul says they stumbled, and particularly the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:23-24 (KJV) *But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*

Romans 9:33 (KJV) *As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*

As it is written, -- Isaiah 28:16 (KJV) *Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.*

Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: --

Literally in Judea or Jerusalem, where the Messiah was to appear and did appear, whither he came, and from whence his Gospel went forth.

Isaiah 8:14 (KJV) *And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.*

And whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. --

The person who believes shall not be agitated, or thrown into commotion, by fear of lack of success; shall not be disappointed in his hopes; and: of course, he shall never be ashamed that he became a Christian. They who do *not* believe in Christ shall be agitated, fall, and sink into eternal shame and contempt. They who *do* believe shall be confident; shall not be deceived, but presently have forgiveness of all sin and everlasting life. Their rock, which is Christ, shall never falter until He brings them to glory with himself.