

## 9:6-33 GOD'S SOVEREIGN RIGHT TO EXTEND MERCY: IS IT CONSISTENT IN BOTH THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE NEW TESTAMENT? PART I

Context: God is now calling Gentiles into fellowship with himself apart from any national or religious identity with Israel. To be consistent with his inherent righteousness, He must do this on the same basis as in Old Testament times — a grace-promise-calling consistent with divine essence. Romans 9:6-33 seeks to prove from the Old Testament that such is the case.

### 9:6-13 True "Israel" in Old Testament Times

v. 6 Principle of Old Testament: \_\_\_\_\_ birth did not determine if one were a true Israelite. To be part of God's people in the Old Testament one had to be \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ (just as today). See Rom. 2:28, 29; John 3:1-10 (especially v. 10).

v. 7 Second Principle of the Old Testament: Not all the \_\_\_\_\_ seed of Abraham are God's children (strict sense of Abraham's seed); but God's sovereign choice was through \_\_\_\_\_.

Point: True Israel is called by God through \_\_\_\_\_; that is, on the basis of \_\_\_\_\_, NOT ON THE BASIS OF NATURAL BIRTH.

### v. 8-13 Explanation Of Verses 6, 7

1. v. 8a \_\_\_\_\_ birth never made anyone a child of God.

2. v. 8b God's sovereign choice relative to the seed and identity of God's people has always been on the basis of \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_. This verse has nothing to do with personal salvation: God's sovereign choice here relates to the people through whom \_\_\_\_\_ would come. HE MADE THE CHOICE SOVEREIGNLY.

3. v. 9 An illustration of God's sovereign choice of the seed of Abraham: \_\_\_\_\_'s son, \_\_\_\_\_. What other sons had Abraham?

4. v. 10-13 Another illustration of God's sovereign choice of the seed of Abraham: Rebecca/Isaac → \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 11 Sovereign choice:  
a. not based upon their works, good or bad;  
b. was in accord with God's calling

v. 12 Sovereign choice was \_\_\_\_\_ (stated before birth).

v. 13 Sovereign choice was confirmed \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 13 is a quote from Malachi 1:2, 3 looking back on Jacob's and Esau's lives).

Remember: national election & blessing is in view, NOT individual election or salvation. Sovereign choice determined through whom the promise-blessing would come. Sovereignty chose to bless non-meritorious faith-response to promise-blessing. Sovereignty chose to hate rejection of promise-blessing. Jacob represents the former, Esau the latter. Esau had every opportunity as Jacob to be saved.

Point in Context: if God chose to bless in Old Testament times on the basis of sovereign-grace-promise, could he not now so choose to bless the Gentiles apart from Israel? Of course He could.

(OVER)

## 9:14-23 Does God's Sovereign Choices Make Him Unrighteous?

Answer: Impossible, Proven from the Old Testament

**Overriding Principle for this entire section – 11:32** “For God hath concluded \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, that He might have mercy upon \_\_\_\_\_.”

v. 14 Paul anticipates an objection by Jewish readers: he expresses it, then answers it. Is such action of God consistent with His righteousness and His bestowal of mercy? Of course — proof:

v. 15-18 Two Old Testament Illustrations

1. v. 15 Illustration of mercy (quotes Ex. 33:19)

Israel after the golden calf incident: deserved wrath, got mercy: see Ex. 32, 33 for context.	<u>Issue:</u> Israel was in the plan of God via faith response: deserved wrath, got mercy.
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Does this mean that God arbitrarily picks and chooses in His extension of mercy? Is God capricious in His extension of mercy like the pagan deities were? No: He extends basic mercy to all members of the human race (Rom. 11:32) but maximum mercy to believers.

2. v. 17 Illustration of hardening unto wrath

Pharaoh	<u>Issue:</u> Pharaoh was outside the plan due to obstinence: deserved wrath, got wrath
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“Raised up” in v. 17 means elevated to authority: to the Pharaohship.

v. 16 Conclusion #1: Neither man's \_\_\_\_\_ nor man's \_\_\_\_\_ can determine how God should bestow blessing or mercy: this is left to sovereign grace. Men will never be able to boast that they influenced the divine plan by their wills or by their works.

v. 18 Conclusion #2: God wills mercy on all in unbelief (Rom. 11:32), meaning, the gospel is for all members of the human race: He eventually hardens all who persistently reject grace-promise-blessing.

v. 19-22 Paul anticipates another objection. If man's hardness (as with Pharaoh) subserves God's purpose, how can God still fault them?

**Answer implied:** He could not if they had no means of properly responding!!! God supplies the means of response via strivings of the Holy Spirit and provision of common grace, Gen. 6:3, John 16:8; Acts 7:51; Rom. 2:4. Man left on his own would not respond to God due to the power of the sin nature, but man is not left alone: God the Holy Spirit brings His influence upon all (John 16:8); He actually “strives” with men (Gen. 6:3). See also Acts 7:51.

**Answer in context:**

1. v. 20, 21 This response reveals ignorance of God's right as creator: God can make and does. Man does the willing, but God does the making; meaning with positive response to grace provision he makes a vessel of mercy as Israel in v. 15; with negative response to grace provision He makes a vessel of wrath as with Pharaoh in v. 17.

2. v. 22 This objection reveals ignorance of man's sinfulness and God's longsuffering (sovereignty manifesting itself in a merciful way). Longsuffering means that God has restrained merited wrath that men might volitionally repent, II Pet. 3:9.

v. 23, 24 **Brings this special argument to an end** — the Gentiles are included among the vessels of mercy as well as the Jews: All of this has been accomplished by God in a plan compatible with His sovereignty, righteousness, and grace as well as with human responsibility and volition capacity.

Conclusion: The spiritual incapacity of the unbeliever is not to be equated with irresponsibility and moral incapacity. The Bible holds sinners accountable for their resistance and hardness to the gospel: God is just in this, meaning, He is fair. God has concluded all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all: that mercy is shown maximally to all through the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.