

# ROMANS

*A Daily Devotional  
Study Guide*



LAKESHORE

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**WEEK 14**

*Romans 9:1-33*

## *Monday*

**Study:** Romans 9:1-5

**Reading:** Philippians 3:1-21, Romans 8

**Memory:** Matthew 5:19

**W**hen Adoniram Judson was dying, news came to him that some Jews in Turkey had been converted through reading the account of his sufferings in Burma. “This awes me,” said Judson to his wife. “This is good news. When I was a young man, I prayed for the Lord to send me to the Jews in Jerusalem as a missionary, but He sent me to Burma to preach and to suffer the tortures of imprisonment. Now, because of my sufferings, God had brought some Jews in Turkey to repentance!”

Today, we are going to see how Paul had a passion to see the Jews come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior. We will also see how we can have a passion for souls.

### What Does the Bible Say?

Paul’s heart was broken for his own people, the Jews. He, at one time, had been part of the “in crowd” of Jews who had a form of religion, but didn’t understand the power of Christ. He wrote about this in Philippians 3:4-7, “Though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.”

In fact, Paul had such a desire to see the Jews come to know Jesus that he said he was willing to become unsaved so that they could be saved. Paul didn’t say this because he didn’t highly respect and love the life he had in Christ, but he said it out of a burden to see the Jewish people, the children of Israel, come to know the truth (vs 1-3).

The Jews had such a great advantage over the Gentiles when it came to the opportunities to accept God’s way of salvation. They were the ones who God chose and who God called His children from the time of Abraham. They were the ones who God established covenants with and

they were the ones who built the temple in which the glory of God would dwell. The Jews were the ones to whom the Messiah was promised and the Messiah was given. All these things were special privileges the Jews received from God, which should have helped draw them closer to Him. Instead, their hearts became hard and they rejected Christ and God's plan of salvation (vs 4-5)

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

Have you let religion stand in the way of true godliness in your life? Has your spiritual life become full of religious acts as you take for granted what Christ has done for you? The problem that the Jews experienced in the days of Paul is the same problem which many people have today. The Word of God is prevalent and easily accessible by many, and millions of people attend church every Sunday morning, with many of them hearing biblical sermons. Yet, people choose to walk out of the church services and live for themselves rather than yielding to the Holy Spirit. This causes churches to be filled with thousands of people who "profess that they know God; but in works they deny him." (Titus 1:16) One of your desires should be to see men and women come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior and to help them develop an intimate relationship with Christ. Before you can do this, it has to be true of your own life. A true love for God and others is often passed down through someone who displays it in their own life. Paul displayed this love to others and many people were affected for Christ by Paul's passion and commitment to Christ.

## **Suggestions for Prayer**

- \* *Thank God for the precious gift of salvation.*
- \* *Ask God to give you a burden to see lives transformed.*
- \* *Praise God because He wants men to be saved.*

## **Thought for the day**

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# *Tuesday*

**Study:** Romans 9:6-13

**Reading:** Isaiah 24:24-27, John 9:1-7

**Memory:** Matthew 5:19

## **What Does the Bible Say?**

Because the Jews were descendants of Abraham and were promised many things by God, they assumed that their heritage made them children of God. Paul combated this type of thinking by declaring that not all who claim to be Israel (children of God) are really Israel (vs 6). Just because a person was a physical descendant of Abraham didn't mean they were a spiritual child of God. Paul referenced the fact that Ishmael and Isaac were both descendants of Abraham, but the descendants of Isaac were the ones who received the special promises and blessings that God had promised to Abraham. The promise that God gave wasn't to Abraham and Haagar (Ishmael's mother) but to Abraham and Sarah. In the same way, the promise of eternal life doesn't apply to all those who are physical descendants of Abraham (Jews), but only to those who believe (vs 7-9).

The second illustration that Paul referred back to was the story of Rebekah and Isaac. The promise that God made to Abraham, the promise that the Messiah would be one of his descendants and through him all nations would be blessed (Genesis 26:4), was passed down from Abraham to Isaac. Isaac then married Rebekah and they had twins which they named, Jacob and Esau. Esau was the firstborn and it was normally through the firstborn that the family blessing would be passed down. Esau naturally assumed this promise would be passed down through him, but even before he was born, God had chosen Jacob as the one who would receive the promise. God told Rebekah that "the older would serve the younger." (Gen 25:23)

Verses 11 & 13 describe something that our finite minds can't fully understand, as it relates to the sovereignty of God. Even before Jacob and Esau were born, God chose Jacob to be the one to carry the promise. Jacob did nothing to deserve this promise and Esau did nothing to negate the promise, yet that is what God chose to do before they were born (vs 10-12). Paul then quoted a passage from Malachi 1 in which God declared, "Jacob

I have loved, but Esau have I hated.”

Much study has gone into these verses by theologians over the centuries and many different opinions have been presented on the issue. Passages like this are not going to be fully understood while we are on this earth, but the point being made by Paul will become clear in the next few verses. Tomorrow, we will continue to look at verse 13 and will understand it in light of the context of the passage.

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

Do you think that your actions will win favor with God? Do you think that God loves you more when you do what is right? Many people have the idea that when they do what is right, God will be happy with them and love them more. They find themselves in a vicious cycle of having to please God and do what is right in order for Him to be happy with them. This often leads to discouragement and unfaithfulness because those who feel this way get to a point where their Christian life is too hard. To avoid this, you need to realize that God chose you to be His child before you were born. Though you do receive the gift by faith, God called you before you even had the chance to sin. He knew all about you before He chose you, yet He chose you. You don't have to earn His love because He already loves you. You don't have to live in guilt and shame because He offered you forgiveness for all the sins He knew you would commit. Understanding this concept will help your Christian life to be filled with the joy that God wants you to have.

## **Suggestions for Prayer**

- \* *Thank God for choosing to love you.*
- \* *Ask God to help you realize what you have in Him.*
- \* *Praise God because He is sovereign.*

## **Thought for the day**

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# ***Wednesday***

**Study:** Romans 9:14-18

**Reading:** Exodus 9:13-17, 33:1-23

**Memory:** Matthew 5:19

## **What Does the Bible Say?**

The first several verses of chapter nine describe how God chose certain individuals to carry on the promise, but He didn't choose others. Paul knew the teaching about election and how God makes choices not based on merit, but on His will, would not settle right in the minds of many. He knew that many would declare that God was unjust because of the choices that He makes. To this Paul declared “By no means!” The phrase is used several times in the book of Romans as Paul dispels false ideas that his opposition might present (vs 14).

To illustrate the justice of God, Paul directed his readers towards an Old Testament passage found in Exodus 33 as he quoted part of verse 19 where God declared how He will choose who to show compassion towards. In the events of that passage, Israel had made the golden calf and God was going to destroy the nation for their rebellion. Moses pleaded on their behalf and God showed them mercy. The nation deserved to be destroyed, but God chose not to destroy it (vs 15).

The same principle transfers over to those who are children of God. God is not unjust because all men deserve eternity apart from Him because of their sin, but He is merciful because He shows mercy on some and made a way of escape from this judgment. The point that is being made is that salvation never begins with man's choice to seek after God, but always begins with God's choice to seek after man. It is the mercy of God that is responsible for salvation and not any effort on the part of men. God chooses who He will call to be His own, but those who He calls must yield to the call and place their faith in Him (vs 16).

Paul continued to illustrate his thought by using the example of the pharaoh who chose not to let the Israelites go free. The Bible declares that God hardened pharaoh's heart so that the power of God could be seen. Though the pharaoh thought he was in control and had ultimate power, it was actually God who chose to use him to accomplish His great plan here

on earth. This wasn't something that God hid from pharaoh, but He told Moses to tell pharaoh how God was using him as a part of His plan (Ex 9:13). In fact, it was through this pharaoh that God helped establish the Passover feast to direct attention to God's deliverance from sin. This act displayed the sovereignty and careful planning of God that not only covers the immediate, but lasts for time and eternity (vs 17). All this was proof that God is in control of the universe and man is not. To think that man by his efforts can control God and make himself acceptable before God is nonsense in light of these verses (vs 18).

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

The truths that are presented in this passage aren't always easy to swallow and are often hard to understand. Though this is the case, one thing is clear — WE SERVE A SOVEREIGN GOD WHO IS IN ULTIMATE CONTROL OF THIS WORLD. When this concept starts to sink in, it should cause you to realize the importance of following God and yielding to His will. You need to realize that you aren't in control of your life. You need to remember that you aren't in control of the events that happen to you. You must choose to remember that it is God who reigns over all and is in control of the events of this world. This thought should motivate you to serve Him with greater vigor and excitement because God has been merciful to you and has chosen you to be a part of a plan that is far greater than yourself. Ask God today to reveal to you what part He wants you to play in His plan. Seek God's direction and leading for your life and do what He wants you to do.

## **Suggestions for Prayer**

- \* *Thank God for showing mercy towards you.*
- \* *Ask God to help you yield yourself to Him each day.*
- \* *Praise God because He is ruler over all.*

## **Thought for the day**

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# ***Thursday***

**Study:** Romans 9:19-24

**Reading:** Jeremiah 18:1-10, Romans 9

**Memory:** Matthew 5:19

**W**hen my oldest daughter turned three, one of the gifts that she was given was the ability to pick out her own teddy bear at Build a Bear. Her aunts, uncles, Grandma, Grandpa, mother and I all went to the store with her to watch her pick out this bear (she was the only grandchild at the time). As she looked around, she picked out a bear that no one else thought was real cute. Everyone took their turn trying to talk her into getting a different bear, but she wouldn't change her mind. We then took the bear to get a speaker put in it so that when you would squeeze a part of the bear it would say a phrase. We went through the same process once again because everybody had their own opinion about what phrase the bear should say. My daughter knew what she wanted and she got what she wanted, even though everyone else had a different opinion.

As you read today's passage, you will be reminded how God chose to make us the way He wanted to make us. He wasn't influenced by anyone else except Himself. He is the Creator and it is His choice to create as He sees fit.

## **What Does the Bible Say?**

If God chooses those who will follow Him and chooses those whose hearts will be hardened, then why are individuals going to be responsible for their actions? Paul knew that questions like this would come into the mind of his readers, so he answered their questions by continuing to promote and talk about the sovereignty of God (vs 19). He responded by telling his readers that it would be foolish for them to question why God does what He does. He introduced his readers to an illustration that was used elsewhere in the Scripture as he describes humans as clay and God as the potter. The clay doesn't talk to the potter and tell him that he wants to be made into a fancy dish instead of an ordinary cup (vs 20). It is the master potter who decides how each item should be made. If He wants to make one item fit for kings to use and make another item to be used for every day

eating, it is his choice (vs 21).

One of the questions that inevitably comes up when discussing this subject is the question of why God allowed sin to come into the world. Though Paul didn't give a full answer to this question, he did give some reasons why God allowed sin into the world. God allowed sin so that He could display His attributes of wrath and His power over sin. God also chose to withhold judgement upon sin in order that those who have received mercy from Him can behold His wonderful glory. The character of God is made even greater in the eyes of those who believe as we understand the opposites in His character. For instance, the judgement of God makes His mercy so much greater. The hatred of God makes His love much more glorious. The wrath of God makes His grace incredibly amazing. Though we can't fully understand the complete character of God, we can see His magnificent greatness as we look at His various attributes (vs 22-23).

### **How Does this Apply to Me?**

Do you sometimes question God? Do you tend to get frustrated or angry with the way that He has made you or the situations He has placed in your life? When you start to feel this way, remember that He is the potter and you are the clay. He has a master plan for your life and has given you what you have and has placed you in the position you are in for a reason. God wants you to trust in Him and His perfect plan for your life. When you begin to question God, it often leads to doubt and discontentment about who you are and your place in life. You need to realize that God has a unique plan for you and He wants to see His will and way accomplished through you.

### **Suggestions for Prayer**

- \* *Thank God for the way He made you.*
- \* *Ask God to help you trust in His plan.*
- \* *Praise God because He knows what is best.*

### **Thought for the day**

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## ***Friday***

**Study:** Romans 9:25-33

**Reading:** Galatians 3:1-29

**Memory:** Matthew 5:19

I have lived most of my adult life in regions where there are many deer. It is very common to be driving down the road and to see deer out in the the fields or woods. When my children were young, I would try to slow down when I noticed a deer and point it out to them. Though I could plainly see the deer, they were not often always easily seen by my young children. There were times when my children just couldn't see them, and before long, the deer were spooked and ran into the woods.

Today, we are going to see how many people are like my children. The Bible is obvious as it declares that salvation is not by works but only by faith. The problem is that many people fail to see the obvious.

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

Not only did God call Jews to be His spiritual children, but He also called Gentiles to carry the name of Christ. The idea that Gentiles could be children of God repulsed many Jews, but that idea wasn't first introduced by Paul. It was spoken of many places in the Old Testament and Paul used some verses from Hosea (2:23, 1:10) which predicted that the Gentiles would be called to be children of God. Hosea not only declared that Gentiles would be children of God, but He also stated that some Jews wouldn't be called children of God (vs 25-26).

Isaiah also spoke about this same thing in Isaiah 10:22-23 when he told the Israelites that even though the number of people who were physical descendants of Abraham would be too great to number, only a few of them would be saved. This was a short term prophecy that predicted the swift destruction of Judah by invading forces (which was fulfilled), but the point was that God didn't spare all those who were physical descendants of Abraham. Throughout many of the prophets, God declared that the remnant of Israel that would be spared from destruction were those who believed (vs 27-28). Paul used another prophecy of Isaiah (1:9, 13:19) which stated that the mercy of God was the only thing that kept the Israelite

nation from being completely destroyed. They could have become just like Sodom and Gomorrah, which were wiped off the face of the earth, but God chose to show mercy upon Israel and decided not to destroy all the people (vs 29).

What conclusion did Paul reach as he summed up chapter 9? Paul concluded that the Gentiles didn't seek after God by doing good works, but by faith trusted in the work of Christ. Because of their faith, they were declared righteous (vs 30). On the other hand, the Jews tried to seek after righteousness by doing works, but their works couldn't attain the righteousness of God. They stumbled over the Law that had been given and tried to obtain God's favor by the works that they did. This self-righteousness blinded them from seeing the fact that God only declares a person righteous as they express faith in Him (vs 31-33).

### **How Does this Apply to Me?**

If anyone thinks that their works will get them to heaven, they haven't read the book of Romans thoroughly. Chapter by chapter, Paul logically proved through Old Testament prophecy and New Testament revelation that the only way to God is through faith in Jesus Christ. The works that men do can do nothing to earn them favor with God. It is only faith and trust in Jesus Christ which will allow a person to be declared righteous. This concept doesn't stop at salvation. God is not impressed by the works that you do. He wants you to simply have faith in Him. This faith is simple trust in Him and His way, and is applied in your life through obedience. Many people make the Christian life extremely complex as they fill it with rules and man's opinions in an attempt to make God happy with them. God doesn't want your works or attempts to be good in and of yourself, but He wants your trust and your obedience.

### **Suggestions for Prayer**

- \* Thank God because you don't have to earn His favor.
- \* Ask God to help you simply trust and obey.

### **Thought for the day**

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## ***Saturday***

**Study:** Romans 9:1-33

**Reading:** Romans 10

**Memory:** James 2:13

### **Romans 9:1-5**

How is it easy to let religion stand in the way of true godliness?

Why do you think there is such little interest in the Word of God in many churches?

How would you rate your interest in the Word of God? Explain.

### **Romans 9:6-13**

Why do you think many people find themselves trying to please God but come up feeling empty?

How can this rob believers of real joy?

### **Romans 9:14-18**

What does it mean that God is sovereign?

Why do people often think they are in control?

What difference should God's sovereignty make in your life?

### **Romans 9:19-24**

Why is it easy to get frustrated at some of the choices God makes?

Why is it hard to trust His master plan?

What do you think will be the result when you fully trust God?

### **Romans 9:25-33**

Why is the Christian life often much simpler than people make it?

What relationship do good works play in the Christian life?

### **Romans 10:1-4**

Why is it easy to work for yourself rather than for the Lord?

How have you wasted your effort because you were serving for yourself?

How can you avoid this?

### **SUMMARY**

What is the main point that Paul was trying to make in chapter 9?

How does this fit into the context of what he had been talking about in chapter 8?

# Sunday

## **Reading: Romans 9:1-33**

(Take time to read this passage again, letting the truths you have studied this week sink into your mind. You are encouraged to go online and read it through a few times in different versions.)

[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)

## **Bible Memory**

*Matthew 5:1 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. 7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. 8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. 9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. 13 “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet. 14 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. 17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*