

Romans 9

1. (9:1–5) No Greater Sorrow

“my brothers and sisters, my kinspeople according to the flesh” = ethnic Israel

Theirs is the adoption | the glory | the covenants | the giving of the law | the worship | the promises | the patriarchs | the Christ from their descent (*“the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.”*)

2. (9:6–10:4) No Greater Solace

RESOLUTION (9:6a): **God’s word has not failed.**

a. **RECIPIENTS of the Promise** (9:6b–13): A remnant chosen by grace, not human effort

“For not all who are from Israel are Israel” (9:6) | (compare with Romans 2:28–3:4)

Ethnic Israel: received God’s special-but-only-outward calling

Elect Israel: received Holy Spirit’s inward calling that produces faith, as a gift of grace

“God’s purpose of election” ——— *“not because of works but because of him who calls”* (9:11)

b. **ROOT of Election** (9:14–21): God’s will, not yours

“Is there injustice on God’s part? By no means!” (9:14)

Example: exodus generation and Pharaoh (9:14–18)

*God’s sovereign freedom in election: *“So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who has mercy. ... [God] has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills”* (9:16, 18).

*The problem with “foreknowledge” as “knowing about beforehand” (as in “foreseen faith”) rather than “fore-love/foreordain”: in that case, God’s election depends on human action

“Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?” (9:19)

Analogy: potter and clay (9:19–21) | Who God is relative to who you are (ontology)

*Compatibility of (a) God’s sovereign election and (b) human beings’ moral agency/responsibility

Example: God hardened Pharaoh’s heart AND Pharaoh hardened his own heart

See also: Acts 2:23; Philippians 2:12–13; Ephesians 2:8–10; Acts 27:22–32

How do you reconcile “the will of God” as it is described in these two passages?

1. *“... [God] hardens whomever he wills”* (Romans 9:18)
2. *“[God] ... desires/wills all people to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth”* (1 Timothy 4:2)

God’s “will of decree” = what God sovereignly ordains to happen (“secret” will); cannot be broken

God’s “moral will” = what pleases God in conformity to Scripture’s instruction (“revealed” will); can be broken

EXAMPLE: Peter at Pentecost: *“... this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.”*

Will of Decree; Moral Will |||| God’s Sovereignty; Human Agency/Responsibility

*So, if God desires/wills all people to be saved, why aren’t all people saved?

- Into which category of “God’s will” does *the doctrine of election* fit?
- Into which category of “God’s will” does a person’s *initial repentance* fit?

c. **REASON for Election across Redemptive History** (9:22–29):

To publish God’s wrath and power in judgment, and especially to publish the riches of his glory upon the predestined, multinational remnant in salvation through judgment (*compare Romans 4:11–14*)

d. **RIGHTEOUSNESS of God** (9:30–10:4): Attained by faith, not works of the law

Why did ethnic Israel not succeed in reaching the law they pursued to attain righteousness? “Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. . . . seeking to establish their own [righteousness], they did not submit to God’s righteousness” (9:32, 10:3b)

Salvation in Christ fulfills the law—it is the goal to which the Old Testament has always pointed and, in its inauguration of the new-covenant age, concludes the old-covenant age.

3. (10:5–11:36) No Greater Strategy

a. Our Strategy (10:5–15)

- i. Receive the gospel (10:5–13): *simply presented, simply received, simply for all*
- ii. Retell the gospel (10:14–15): *sending—preaching—hearing—believing—calling—saved*

b. God’s Strategy (10:16–11:32)

- i. Prophesied Rejection (10:16–21)
- ii. Prophesied Remnant (11:1–10)
- iii. Prophesied Reconciliation (11:11–24)
- iv. Prophesied Resolution (11:25–32)

God’s word has not failed!

4. (11:33–36) No Greater Savior

- a. Incomprehensible Wisdom (11:33)
- b. Unaided, Infinite Sovereignty (11:34–36a)
- c. Everlasting Glory (11:36b)

*Romans 8 leads us up the mountain to marvel at so great a salvation. Romans 9–11 leads us higher up to keep marveling even more at **so great a Savior**.*

Some Resolutions for Your 2026

How could you plan to make progress this coming year in:

(1) Partnering with your local-church family in the mission of **praise** (*worship*)

(2) Partnering with your local-church in the mission of **proclamation** (*evangelism and disciple-making*)