

**Sunday Morning  
11th October 2015**

## **God's Mercy**

### **Romans Chapter 9 Verse 13**

*As the Scriptures say, "I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau."*

I have been preaching from **Romans**. It is a letter. Paul wrote it, and sent it to the Christians in Rome.

In this chapter, Paul wrote about his great wish: he wanted all the Jewish people to find God and become saved. But many Jewish people did not know God. They had God's laws and promises, but they had never met Him.

**Verse 6-7:** *I don't mean that God failed to keep his promise to the Jewish people. But only some of the people of Israel are really God's people. And only some of Abraham's descendants are true children of Abraham.*

God chose the Jews and blessed them. The Jews were God's people. But they were not His true people - they were not in God's spiritual family; they were not God's true children. Why not? Because they did not have faith. They did not believe in God and trust in Him.

**Verse 13:** *As the Scriptures say, "I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau."*

Remember Jacob and Esau in the Old Testament:

**1. Esau.** He rejected God, and did not obey God. He married women from Canaan (a country where people did not love God). He could not control himself. So God judged Him.

**2. Jacob.** He had a lot of sin also. He lied and cheated. But God wanted to save him. God met Jacob in a place called Bethel. God gave Jacob a special dream, and showed him that God wants to communicate with people.

Esau and Jacob were similar - they both had sin. But God chose Jacob, and rejected Esau.

**Verse 14:** *So what does this mean? That God is not fair?*

God chose Jacob and rejected Esau. Is this fair? Yes! Why? Because God punished Jacob and Esau, both. God punished their sin fully. But how did God punish Jacob's sin? Through Jesus Christ, on the cross.

Some people say, "God chooses some people, and punishes other people. God is not fair!" These people are wrong. God is always perfect and fair.

God blesses everyone - the people who love Him and the people who hate Him, both. How does God bless everyone?

1. He gives us life.
2. He gives us skills.
3. He gives us minds to think - we are not like the animals.
4. He gives us love - He loves us, and we can love each other.
5. He gives us family and friends.
6. He gives us the skill to make beautiful things.
7. He answers our prayers. Maybe I do not believe in God, but I am in trouble and I pray, and God answers me. This can happen. Sometimes God answers prayers from people who do not believe. Why? To encourage them.

Many people reject God and ignore Him - but God is patient and kind. He gives many blessings.

**Verse 15:** *God said to Moses, "I will show mercy to anyone I want to show mercy to. I will show pity to anyone I choose."*

Remember: all people have rejected God. All people have sin. All people ignore Him and hate Him. God should punish all people. All people should go to hell forever. That is right and fair. But God decides to save some people! Is this fair? What is God's answer?

God says, "I will show mercy to anyone I want to show mercy to." What does this mean? It means we must accept what God has said. God is high and holy. God is not the same as us. God is perfect. Whatever God says or does is right and fair.

We cannot judge God. We cannot say, "God is not fair." We have no right. God made everything. God can do whatever He wants. He can judge, and He can save.

**Verse 16:** *So God will choose anyone he decides to show mercy to, and his choice does not depend on what people want or try to do.*

Maybe I feel I want to seek and find God. Where is my feeling from? Do I decide to seek God? No! God touches my heart. God helps me feel bad for my sin. God helps me want to seek Him. God does all the work in my heart.

**Verse 17:** *In the Scriptures God says to Pharaoh: "I made you king so that you could do this for me. I wanted to show my power through you. I wanted my name to be announced throughout the world."*

Remember when the Jews were slaves in Egypt. God sent Moses to talk to the Egyptian King, Pharaoh. God told Pharaoh to let the Jews go free. What did Pharaoh do? He ignored God. God punished Egypt 10 times, but Pharaoh still refused to obey God.

**Question:** Why did God allow Pharaoh to continue? God could kill Pharaoh quickly, right? So why did God wait?

**Answer:** God allowed Pharaoh to continue so all the people could see that God was saving the Jews. It was clear to see. All the people around Egypt thought, "No-one can beat Pharaoh. Pharaoh is a god." But God punished Pharaoh again and again. Everyone saw that God was punishing Pharaoh. Everyone saw that God beat Pharaoh.

**Verse 18:** *So God shows mercy to those he wants to show mercy to and makes stubborn those he wants to make stubborn.*

Pharaoh hated God, and he wanted to keep God's people as slaves. That was his attitude. Then God started to punish Pharaoh. Pharaoh's people started to suffer. Maybe I think, "After 4 or 5 punishments, maybe Pharaoh would have changed his mind. Pharaoh did not care about the Jews, but he cared about his own people, and he did not want them to suffer."

But God did not allow Pharaoh to change his mind. God made Pharaoh stubborn and hard.

**Question:** Why did God make Pharaoh stubborn? Was that fair?

**Answer:** Yes, it was fair. Pharaoh hated God and hated the Jews. God did not make Pharaoh hate the Jews - but God did not allow

Pharaoh to change. God wanted everyone to see that Pharaoh was full of sin.

**Example:** Maybe Pharaoh changed his mind quickly, and allowed the Jews to go free. Then people could say, "Pharaoh was not so bad. God did not beat Pharaoh. Pharaoh changed his mind. He was a good man."

But Pharaoh did not change his mind. God made him stubborn, so everyone could see that Pharaoh was not a good man. Everyone could see that Pharaoh would not change his mind.

**Verse 19:** *So one of you will ask me, "If God controls what we do, why does he blame us for our sins?"*

Is this right? Does God make people sin? Is my sin God's fault? No! We all have sin, and we all reject God. God calls some people, and changes them - but God does not have to call anyone.

God leaves some people in their sin. That is His choice. God calls some people out of their sin, and saves them. That is His choice.

**Verse 20-21:** *Don't ask that. You are only human and have no right to question God. A clay jar does not question the one who made it. It does not say, "Why did you make me like this?" The one who makes the jar can make anything he wants. He uses the same clay to make different things. He might make one thing for special purposes and another for daily use.*

Remember: God is perfect. God made everyone. Now everyone has sin. God chooses to call some people, and save them from their sin. God does not have to save everyone. God can save whoever He chooses.

**Verse 22-24:** *It is the same way with what God has done. He wanted to show his anger and to let people see his power. But he patiently endured those he was angry with—people who were ready to be destroyed. He waited with patience so that he could make known the riches of his glory to the people he has chosen to receive his mercy. God has already prepared them to share his glory. We are those people, the ones God chose not only from the Jews but also from those who are not Jews.*

These verses teach me about God's aims, and God's great plans. These are deep verses. I must remember: God is perfect. He can do

whatever He wants. He can save whoever He wants, and He can judge whoever He wants.

What does God want to do?

### 1. God wants to show His justice.

**Verse 22:** *It is the same way with what God has done. He wanted to show his anger and to let people see his power. But he patiently endured those he was angry with—people who were ready to be destroyed.*

The **Easy-Read Bible** has a bad translation in this verse. The word 'but' should not be in the middle of this verse. I will take out the word 'but' and read the verse again:

**Verse 22:** *It is the same way with what God has done. He wanted to show his anger and to let people see his power. So he patiently endured those he was angry with—people who were ready to be destroyed.*

God wants to show His power and His justice. That's why He is patient with people who are sinful, who are ready to be destroyed. He wants everyone to see that He is right.

**Example:** Some leaders in some countries are very cruel. Sometimes they live for a long time. They kill many people, and hurt many people. Maybe I think, "*Why does God allow that person to continue living?*"

I must remember: God is in control. This is God's world. He can do whatever He wants. So why does God allow evil people to continue living? To show that He is right to punish them. On the Last Day no-one will have an excuse.

Sometimes God does control evil people. Sometimes God stops a very sinful person, or a very sinful country. Everyone can see that the person or the country is very sinful, then God stops them.

Maybe God will judge sinful people in this country. We do not know. Maybe there will be a new disease similar to AIDS, to challenge the gay and lesbian community. We do not know. Maybe God will leave this country to continue in sin until Jesus comes again. We do not know.

### 2. God wants to show His mercy.

**Verse 23:** *He waited with patience so that he could make known the riches of his glory to*

*the people he has chosen to receive his mercy. God has already prepared them to share his glory.*

God wants to show that He is right to punish people. That is His first aim. He also wants to show His mercy. He wants people to see that He loves to save and forgive people.

This world is full of sin, but God wants to show His love and goodness.

### 3. God wants to show that He loves everyone.

**Verse 24:** *We are those people, the ones God chose not only from the Jews but also from those who are not Jews.*

God saves whoever He wants. God will save people from every country and every culture. God will save Jewish people and not-Jewish people.

These are God's aims, and God's plans. This is what God wants:

1. God wants to show His justice.
2. God wants to show His mercy.
3. God wants to show that He loves everyone.

What else can I learn from these verses:

#### 1. The Jews are not special people.

Some Christians think, "*The Jews are special. One day God will save all the Jews.*" This is wrong. The Jews are not special. Paul showed that the Jews must be saved by grace, same as not-Jews.

**Question:** Did Christian people replace the Jews?

**Answer:** No. God always planned to save all His people by grace - Jews or not-Jews. There is one true church, all God's people. We are all saved through Jesus Christ, and we are all in one family. Please read **Ephesians chapter 2 verse 13**, and through to the end of that chapter.

#### 2. I must pray and ask God to save people.

Some people say, "*You believe that God has a plan. You believe that God is in control. Why do you pray and ask God to save people? God has already decided who He will save. You can't make God change His mind.*"

But remember **Romans chapter 10 verse 1**. Paul talked about his great wish. Paul prayed for the Jewish people. Paul wanted God to save them. Means I should pray also.

In **1 Timothy chapter 2** God commands us to pray for all people. So I must pray. I must ask God to save people.

Also, remember that God is not inside time with us. God is outside time. He does not have to follow seconds, minutes, hours, days. God is there in Heaven. God can see everything: past, present and future.

I pray, and ask God to save my friend. When does God hear my prayer? Now? No. God hears my prayer in Heaven, before He made the world, before He chose who to save. God hears my prayer, and decides to choose my friend.

This is wonderful! I just pray and ask God to save people, because God will hear my prayer and choose people to save.

I want to challenge you. How are you living? Maybe God chose you before He made the world - God is in full control. God decides who to save and who to punish. But He chose you, and saved you.

Do you pray? Do you tell people about the Gospel? Do you thank God every day, and praise Him?

Remember, you did not choose Jesus Christ - Jesus chose you, a long time ago. You owe everything to Jesus. You owe your whole life to Jesus. You must serve Him, pray for people, and spread the Gospel.

May the Lord help us all to pray and preach the Gospel.

Amen.