

Bible Study of Romans
Romans 9:19-39

vs. 19-21

This verse states the second leading objection to the apostle's doctrine. If it be true, as he had just taught, that the destiny of men is in the hands of God and, if it is not of him who wills or runs but of God who shows mercy, what can we do? How can we be blamed if we remain lost, since it is ultimately a fruit of God's choosing to leave us lost in our fallen condition?

Obviously, this objection will never be raised if God had revealed that His election would be based on foreseen repentance and faith. But in teaching the sovereignty of God in the selection of the subjects of His grace and of the objects of His wrath, the objection (How can He yet find fault?) is to be expected for fallen human nature will object.

Paul's answer is two-fold. He points out in vs. 20-21 that this objections springs from ignorance of the true relationship between the Creator and the creature. In vs. 22-24 he argued that this doctrine is not inconsistent with the divine perfections

1. What is wrong with the spirit behind the question 'Why doth He yet find fault?'

2. Why are Paul's counter questions in vs. 20-24 so fitting?

3. How do we define mankind as pictured in the 'same lump?' Do we need to consider them as 'creatures' or as 'rebels?'

Hodge commented on vs. 21 with these concluding words, "In the sovereignty here asserted, it is God as moral governor, and not God as creator, Who is brought to view. It is not the right of God to create sinful beings in order to punish them, but His right to deal with sinful beings according to His good pleasure, that is here, and elsewhere asserted. He pardons or punishes sinners as He sees fit."

Vs. 22-24

These verses are Paul's second answer on the objection in vs. 19. He shows now that in God's exercise of this right to do with the 'clay as He desires' there is nothing unjust or unreasonable, nothing of which any of His creatures have the least right to complain. To understand vs. 22 well, let's begin with the final phrase.

4. Paul wrote about the 'vessels fitted to destruction.'" How are we to understand this 'being fitted? Consider in your study the phrase in the next verse 'which he afore prepared unto glory.'

5. What is the purpose of the wicked in the scope of God's decrees?

6. What is His purpose with regard to the elect?

7. Why are the elect saved according to vs. 24?

8. Verses 25-29 are a series of quotes Paul gathered in connection with his answers to the previous questions.

a. What is the meaning of each of the quoted Scriptures?

b. Next, what are the reasons Paul collected these Old Testaments quotes? In other words, how do they support or what do they contribute to his previous answers on the question of vs. 19?