

BRIEFLY CORRECTING ERRANT VIEWS ON DIVINE ELECTION

V. Biblically Explaining Romans 9:6-33

I. Introduction

- A. Many believers struggle to understand and/or to accept the teachings they hear or read about divine election.
- B. Actually, much error exists on the doctrine, so it needs to be explained in a brief but thorough, Biblical way.
- C. We thus offer a seven-lesson series on election, and in this fifth lesson, we Biblically explain Romans 9:6-33:

II. Biblically Explaining Romans 9:6-33.

- A. John Calvin and his followers have used passages in Romans 9:6-33 to claim that God elects some to receive His gift of faith to be justified while the rest go hell (John Calvin, *Insts. of the Christ. Rel.*, trans. by Henry Beveridge, 1972, Bk. II, Ch. V., Secs. 4, 17 and Bk. III, Ch. II, Sec. 25; Ch. XXI, Sec. 7; Ch. XXII, Secs. 4, 6, 11; Ch. XXIII, Secs. 1, 4; Ch. XXIV, Secs. 1, 14, 17 as cited in Beveridge, vol. I, p. 276, 289, 491 and vol. II, p. 210, 216-217, 223-224, 226, 229, 241, 253, 258). We state Calvinists' views on these passages (as follows):
 1. Calvinists claim that Romans 9:10-13 teaches that before Jacob and Esau were born and had done good or evil, God predestined Jacob to believe and be blessed and Esau not to believe and be without His blessing.
 2. Calvinists claim that Romans 9:14-16 teaches that God decides who will be shown mercy by receiving God's gift of faith to believe unto justification and who will not be shown mercy and not be given faith.
 3. Calvinists claim that Romans 9:17-18 teaches that God raised up the Pharaoh of the Exodus to be an unbeliever to show His power and magnify His name by hardening Pharaoh against God's will.
 4. Calvinists claim that Romans 9:19-26 teaches that if people object to God's choice to give faith to one person to believe unto justification and to choose to harden another in his unbelief, they do not respect God's sovereignty and righteousness in making these choices.
 5. Calvinists claim that Romans 9:27-29 teaches that God chose only a remnant to receive His gift of faith to be justified while not electing the rest to receive His gift of faith so that they will not be justified.
- B. Yet, (1) we before learned that the Calvinist view that election results in justification makes faith logically unnecessary in conflict with the Bible's inerrancy. (2) Also, though Romans 9:30-33 sums Paul's Romans 9:6-29 instruction (*B. K. C., N. T.*, p. 479), Paul *in that summary* claimed **only** that Gentiles were justified by faith where Israel failed to be justified by seeking it by works, *giving no hint of a divine election of some to believe to be justified!* (3) We conclude that Romans 9:6-39 does **not** teach divine election unto justification!
- C. We thus *reinterpret* the passages in section II, A, 1-5 above **for the truths that they present** (as follows):
 - a. Romans 9:10-13 reveals that before Esau and Jacob were born, God **foreknew** the choices they would make of their own wills, so God told their mother Rebecca that the older twin would serve the younger!
 - b. Romans 9:14-16 reveals that God has sovereignly determined to show mercy on those who believe in Christ and not to show mercy on those who do not trust in Him but who seek to be justified by works!
 - c. As for Romans 9:17-18 regarding Pharaoh, Exodus 3:18-20 reports that God first told Moses to ask Pharaoh to let His people leave Egypt, adding that He was sure Pharaoh would not let them go! When Moses asked Pharaoh to let Israel go, he refused like God had said, Exodus 5:1-2. Moses then complained of Pharaoh's added oppression, so God told Moses that he would **next** see what God would do to make Pharaoh let Israel go, Exodus 5:22-6:2. Later, in Exodus 9:16, God said He had raised Pharaoh up and hardened him to reveal God's power delivering Israel from Egypt. If we then examine Exodus 6:3 to 9:11 where this hardening **must** have occurred, we see that God **achieved** the **hardening** by letting Pharaoh of his **own will** resist Moses' **initial** request to let Israel go (Exodus 3:18-20; 5:1-2), foreknowing Pharaoh would do this, and then God let Pharaoh's **magicians duplicate** Moses' miracles **up to a point to give** Pharaoh **room** to **strengthen** his **own initial rebellion against God!** (Exodus 7:9-13, 14-22; 8:1-15, 16-19) Thus, Pharaoh made his own decision to rebel against the Lord, and God merely opened the door for him to augment his own rebellion due to his own sinful heart by giving room for Pharaoh to sink deep into sin!
 - d. In Romans 9:19-26, Paul supported God's sovereign right to decide to do whatever He wants to do, and the Romans 9:30-33 summary shows God has sovereignly decided to justify people by faith and not by works.
 - e. Romans 9:27-29 merely teaches that God will deliver the remnant because the remnant believes in Him.

Lesson: John Calvin and his followers have read into Romans 9:6-31 their errant view that God sovereignly elects who will receive His gift of faith to believe and be justified and who will not receive that gift and go to hell! To the contrary, Paul here taught that God has the sovereign right to do whatever He wants to do, and He has sovereignly decided to justify those who trust in Christ and not justify those who rely on their works to be justified.