

# The Letter of St. Paul to the ROMANS



## OPENING WORSHIP

To begin your Bible study, read together **Romans 11:33-36**. God's ways are inscrutable and his judgments unsearchable. We cannot begin to fathom or comprehend the mind of God. We must let God be God and submit humbly to his will.

## INTRODUCTION

In many ways chapters 9 through 11 of Romans raise more questions than they answer. The Apostle Paul explores the mystery of God's divine election, but after probing the depths of things unknown, he concedes that his own reason and understanding are insufficient to grasp the sublime things of God.

We would like to have answers. Our reason insists that our questions must have answers. Our intellect demands that key concepts fit together logically.

However in the things of God, there are frequently times when we must say, "I don't know. I cannot understand." This isn't a problem when we are willing simply to submit our reason to the word of God.

## GOD'S ELECTION TO SALVATION

**Read Romans 9:1-18.**

Why was Paul so troubled?

Verse 6 is a key verse to understand. What does Paul mean by, "Not all who are descended from Israel are Israel"?

What caused God to lay his choice upon the descendants of Abraham? Israel? All believers?

Jacob Arminius (1559-1609) taught that salvation depends upon man making a right choice in the exercise of his own free will. (Many modern evangelicals hold to Arminian theology on conversion.) What does verse 16 say?

In Exodus 7-11 we see the plagues which the Lord laid upon Egypt. Consider briefly **Exodus 7:13; 7:22; 8:15; 8:32; 9:7; 9:12; 9:35; 10:20; etc.** What caused the Lord to harden Pharaoh's heart?

*Discuss:* Can a person return to repentance and be saved once the Lord has hardened a person's heart?

How might **Romans 9:18** appear to support the false teaching of double-predestination (the teaching that God predestined some to heaven and predestined others to hell)?

## WHAT IF?

**Read Romans 9:19-29.** In these verses, what characteristic of God is Paul emphasizing? What point does Paul want to press home (go back and tie in Romans 3:9-20)?

Paul's emphasis on God's \_\_\_\_\_ highlights all the more God's \_\_\_\_\_.  
Where do you see examples of this in these verses?

## BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH ALONE

### Read Romans 9:30-10:4.

What is the “stumbling stone” referred to in verses 32 and 33?

Where did the people of Israel go wrong in their understanding of salvation?

There are two kinds of righteousness which a sinner can present before God. What are they?

Explain the meaning of Romans 10:4.

### Read Romans 10:5-21.

Describe the difference between salvation by grace and salvation by works.

Explain God’s simple formula for salvation.

How do you decide with whom you will share Jesus? Do racial, economic or social considerations ever come into play?

Verses 14-15 describe the importance of mission work. How do you respond to a person who says, “God is unfair in condemning people in the far corners of the world who have never heard of Jesus”?

What is God’s instrument for creating and sustaining faith? (v. 17)

Whose fault was it that many of the Israelites – who heard the message and were the people of the covenant – were not saved?

In matters of election and salvation we conclude:

*If a person is saved, it is because* \_\_\_\_\_.

*If a person is lost, it is because* \_\_\_\_\_.

**Read Romans chapter 11** on your own, and consider the following questions.

What is the relationship between salvation by grace and salvation by works (see vs. 5-6)?

What does Paul mean when he says, “All Israel will be saved”? (v. 26) How do many modern evangelical fundamentalists misinterpret this passage?

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## VERSE TO REMEMBER

**Romans 10:17** *Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.*

**For next time read again Romans chapters 9 through 11.**

You can read this section several times, and you will still not find answers to the mystery of election. Notice, as you read, how Paul explores so many facets of the issue, but in the end he subordinates his own thinking to the wisdom of God.