

## Romans Part 29 – Chapter 8:28-30

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With input from <https://www.bibleref.com/Romans/8>, gotquestions.org, RC Sproul, Thomas Ice of Liberty University

We've been starting with Romans 8:28 for the last three studies. One additional point on that verse is that when Paul states "*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*" a few other truths are revealed:

1. It is also true that for those who do not love God and are not called according to His purpose, there are things that do not work out for good.

A. **Proverbs 16:4** *The LORD has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble.*

B. **Psalm 37:13** *but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he knows their day is coming.*

2. Included in the list of "all things" that work out for good is betrayal, death, terrible loss and interaction with evil people. It also includes our reaction to these maladies and requires us to take corrective action, such as forgiveness.

We even see this principle evident in the Old Testament. **Exodus 3:21-22:** "*And I will make the Egyptians favorably disposed toward this people, so that when you leave you will not go empty-handed. <sup>22</sup> Every woman is to ask her neighbor and any woman living in her house for articles of silver and gold and for clothing, which you will put on your sons and daughters. And so you will plunder the Egyptians.*"

We then arrived at Romans 9 where Todd Potter covered election as Paul discusses that not all Jews are God's offspring:

### **Romans 9:1-13:**

*I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. 4 They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. 5 To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.*

*6 But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, 7 and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." 8 This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. 9 For this is what the promise said: "About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son." 10 And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, 11 though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— 12 she was told, "The older will serve the younger." 13 As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."*

*14 What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! 15 For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." 16 So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. 17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." 18 So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.*

The word testament is another word for covenant, so in one sense the question could be “What is the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament?” The terms Old Testament and New Testament are often used as titles of two halves of the Bible. But the terms books of the Old Testament and books of the New Testament get us closer to the meaning. If we said “books of the Old Covenant” and “books of the New Covenant,” we would be closer still. The literary work known as the Old Testament is actually made up of 39 individual documents that give us the details of the Old Covenant. The literary work known as the New Testament is actually made up of 27 individual documents that give us the details of the New Covenant.

The Old Covenant is the “working arrangement” that God had with Israel. He had chosen them for a special relationship that He did not have with any other group of people on earth. He took just a few patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) and grew their descendants into a great nation and gave them a land (Canaan) and His law to live by (see Exodus 20 and following). The Israelites were to remain loyal to God, obeying Him and worshipping Him alone. If they did, He promised to bless them, and if they did not, He promised they would be chastened (see Deuteronomy 27—28). God established a sacrificial system that would allow them to be cleansed (temporarily) from their sins—but these sacrifices had to be repeated over and over. He ordained priests to represent the people before Him, as the people could never come directly into the presence of God. And even with all these accommodations, the nation as a whole was unfaithful and eventually fell under the judgment of God.

Jeremiah prophesied that judgment was coming upon the nation of Israel, but he also told the nation that something better was coming, **Jeremiah 31: 31–34:**

*“‘The days are coming,’ declares the Lord,  
‘when I will make a new covenant  
with the people of Israel  
and with the people of Judah.  
It will not be like the covenant  
I made with their ancestors  
when I took them by the hand  
to lead them out of Egypt,  
because they broke my covenant,  
though I was a husband to them,’  
declares the Lord.  
‘This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel  
after that time,’ declares the Lord.  
‘I will put my law in their minds  
and write it on their hearts.  
I will be their God,  
and they will be my people.*

*No longer will they teach their neighbor,  
or say to one another, "Know the Lord,"  
because they will all know me,  
from the least of them to the greatest,'  
declares the Lord.*

*'For I will forgive their wickedness  
and will remember their sins no more''*

In this new covenant, God said, Israel will be restored, sins will be finally forgiven, people will know God directly, and they will have His law written on their hearts so that they will want to obey Him.

The law under the Old Covenant was never a means to salvation; rather, it led to condemnation as people repeatedly broke the law and violated the covenant.

Paul, citing many passages from the books of the Old Covenant, explains in **Romans 3:10-20**:

*"As it is written:*

*'There is no one righteous, not even one;*

*there is no one who understands;*

*there is no one who seeks God.*

*All have turned away,*

*they have together become worthless;*

*there is no one who does good,*

*not even one.'*

*'Their throats are open graves;*

*their tongues practice deceit.'*

*'The poison of vipers is on their lips.'*

*'Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.'*

*'Their feet are swift to shed blood;*

*ruin and misery mark their ways,*

*and the way of peace they do not know.'*

*'There is no fear of God before their eyes.'*

*Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin"*

**R.C. Sproul:** One of chief metaphors for salvation in Scripture is deliverance from an enemy. This is especially true of the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, that act of divine redemption whereby God rescued His people out of slavery.

Israel's salvation from the pharaoh and his army was finally accomplished at the crossing of the Red Sea, an event described in Exodus 14. Within this account we learn several things about the way the Lord works. First is the fact that God is pleased to do things that we might not expect in order to advance His purposes.

In verses 1–4, the Lord instructs Moses to have His people make a “wrong turn” and confuse the Egyptians into thinking the Israelites are lost and confused. Instead of having Israel take the most direct path out of Egypt, He had the people go another way, which certainly would have been hard for the Israelites to understand. But as we see in verse 4, God’s purpose in saving people is not only for their benefit but for His glory, and in the case of the exodus, having the people turn and go another way was the means through which he would get the greatest glory over pharaoh. When things happen that we do not understand or God calls us to do what is perplexing to us, we can be sure that it is for His glory.

As we would expect, the Lord’s plan works perfectly and Pharaoh misinterprets Israel’s wrong turn as a sign he can reclaim the slaves that have just escaped his grasp (vv. 5–9). This puts the Israelites in a precarious position. With the Egyptian army pursuing and overtaking them, they are now faced with certain death. So they cry out to God, which is always the right decision in times of trouble (vv. 10–14; Jonah 2). Caught between the sea and the mightiest empire on the planet (Ex. 14:9), Israel has no one else on whom to rely save the Creator Himself.

This is precisely the way God wanted it so that His people could learn a vital lesson — that salvation is from Him alone. Under His direction, Moses lifts his staff, the sea is parted throughout the long night, the Israelites go through it safely, and the Egyptians are drowned (vv. 15–31), illustrating the two sides of the Lord’s redemption: the salvation of His people and judgment on His enemies. On our own we cannot defeat the cruel masters of sin, Satan, and his minions. Only God can save us.

The transition from the patriarchal period to the period of the exodus is made with two of the most remarkable biographies in Scripture.

The first is the story of a shepherd who became a prince, and the second is the story of a prince who became a shepherd.

The first biography is that of Joseph, the son of Jacob.

- a) He is betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery.
- b) He is falsely accused and languishes in prison for years until God intervenes and elevates him to the position of prime minister of Egypt.
- c) He devises a wise plan to rescue Egypt from a severe famine, and many surrounding peoples come to Egypt for food.
- d) His brothers come to Egypt for food and are terrified when they realize the brother they betrayed has become Egypt’s prime minister.
- e) Joseph forgives them and invites Jacob and all his descendants to come to live in Egypt, in the land of Goshen.
- f) The book of Genesis closes with Jacob blessing his sons.
- g) Judah is given the scepter, forecasting that from his tribe kings will come.
- h) Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah and inherits an everlasting throne.

The book of Genesis closes with the Israelites in a state of prosperity. The book of Exodus opens with the Israelites in a state of slavery.

The new Pharaoh who did not know Joseph's story begins a systematic plan to oppress the Israelites.

- A. Taskmasters are appointed to "police" or enslave the Israelites.
- B. The Israelites are forced to gather their own straw for bricks without reducing their daily building quota.
- C. The Hebrew midwives are ordered to murder the Hebrew male babies, but they disobey the Pharaoh's orders.
- D. The Egyptians are commanded to murder the Hebrew male babies.

One baby escapes this genocide by being placed in a reed basket and floated down the Nile River.

- A. The baby is drawn out of the river by the daughter of Pharaoh.
- B. The baby is named "Moses" meaning "drawn out" and is raised as a prince in Pharaoh's palace.
- C. Moses later murders an Egyptian guard for beating a Hebrew. To preserve his life, he flees to Midian when the deed is discovered.
- D. Moses is probably the most significant figure in Old Testament history.
  1. He is eventually the mediator of the old covenant.
  2. He is the liberator of Israel from Egypt.
  3. He is the giver of the Law.
  4. He is the leader of the theocratic state and church of the Old Testament.

E. Moses foreshadows the person and work of Christ.

1. "The new is in the old concealed, and the old is in the new revealed" - Augustine
2. God calls His son Israel out of Egypt in the Old Testament and calls His greater son Jesus out of Egypt in the New Testament.
3. Moses is the leader of the first exodus and Christ is the leader of the second and greater exodus.
4. Moses is the mediator of the first covenant and Christ is the mediator of the second covenant.

God calls Moses from the burning bush in the Midian wilderness because He has heard the cry of his people amidst their oppression.

1. Moses goes before Pharaoh demanding the release of the people so that they may go and serve the Lord their God: **Exodus 4:22-23**: *Then say to Pharaoh, 'This is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son,<sup>23</sup> and I told you, "Let my son go, so he may worship me." But you refused to let him go; so I will kill your firstborn son.'*
2. The great contest of the book of Exodus centers on who the people of Israel will serve, Pharaoh or God?
3. God brings ten plagues against Pharaoh and Egypt to prove His power and to demand the release of His people.
4. There is no period in redemptive history with such an abundance of miracles as the time of the exodus, other than during the ministry of Jesus.
5. God demands the release of His people so that they may serve and worship Him only.
6. Exodus, law, and tabernacle are the three primary themes of the book of Exodus.

### **Hebrews 10:1–4, 11–18:**

*“The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins.*

*“But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins. It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. . . . Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.*

*“The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says: ‘This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.’ Then he adds: ‘Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.’ And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary”*

Revelation 12 is a whole chapter that deals with national Israel during a future time.

#### **THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON**

Who does the woman of Revelation 12 symbolize? “And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars” (Rev. 12:1). Catholics and many replacement theologians believe that the woman in this passage is the Church, but the biblical symbolism of Genesis 37:9–11 demands that it refer to Israel. The sun refers to Jacob, the moon Rachel, Jacob’s wife and the 12 stars the sons of Jacob and the 12 tribes of Israel.

Verse 2 says, “and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth.” We see here the picture of Israel as a woman experiencing labor pains during the time of the birth of the Messiah at Christ’s first coming. Such a picture of Israel was quite common in the Old Testament.

Robert Thomas tells us: “The reference is to the birth of Jesus at His first coming, but technically speaking this historical event had already occurred when John wrote. So this is a heavenly enactment of that past historical event just as other parts of this vision are enactments of events yet to occur.”

The next verse says, “And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems.”

The fact that verse 3 speaks of heaven (as does verse 1) indicates that we are seeing in this vision the angelic conflict that is being played out throughout history and its relationship and impact upon Israel, especially during the tribulation. The past conflicts set the stage and demonstrates a trend, which is the basis for understanding the future conflict noted in verses 6 through 17. The red dragon is unmistakably Satan himself (see Rev. 12:9; 20:2). The seven heads represent “seven consecutive world empires which oppressed Israel, indicating that they are in the process of running their course as John writes.” The ten horns and seven diadems speak of the anti-Christ’s kingdom during the tribulation as indicated in Daniel 7:7–24 and Revelation 13 and 17.