

God Is Government

Isaiah 33:22

*“For the LORD is our judge, the
LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD
is our king; he will save us.”*



THE SOVEREIGNTY OF MANKIND

PART NINE

Parts 1 – 8 focused on the Sovereignty of God that was visible in Scripture to mankind and made known to us through the Scriptures. However, there are actions of God’s Sovereignty that are hidden from our eyes. Acts of God written in Scriptures that were not visible to mankind that are contained within Scripture that influence our lives today.

Jesus says, *“but now they are hid from thine eyes,”* regarding the things that would bring Jerusalem peace.



Wait a minute. This suddenly sounds like God is responsible for Israel’s blindness. Paul brings it up in the Romans, agreeing that there is a period of time as a nation in which they are blinded. When the time of the Gentiles is over (The Church), the people of Israel will come to know their Messiah:

“25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:”

- Romans 11:25-26

If God has given Israel partial blindness, then how is it their fault? He made them blind. Right? Then why should He blame them for not seeing?

In Romans 9, Paul reminds his readers of Pharaoh, whose heart God hardened.

“15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. 17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee

up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. 19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"

- Romans 9:15-21

There it is then. That sounds like we do not actually have any real personal will. God forms us out of clay, and we are whatever He molds us to be. Right? It sounds like Pharaoh had no choice. God hardened his heart so that He would have the opportunity to send the ten plagues and free the children of Israel from Egypt on the first Passover. Paul says it very plainly. God makes some lumps of clay into vessels for honor and others as vessels for dishonor..

Does that mean we have no part in the matter?

This is why it is so important to consider the entire counsel of God when trying to come to grips on these types of issues. It is easy to focus on Romans 9:15-21 and think, "Well, then it is not my fault that I am selfish and rude, God made me that way." No, that is not what Paul means, and we need to balance this passage with other passages that deal with the problem of human sin.

Let us look at Paul's letter to the Romans beginning a few chapters earlier. In Romans 1, Paul described the downfall of those who turn away from God. This is interesting because it gives us additional principles to work from:

"21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,"

- Romans 1:21-22

First, we see those who knew God have their hearts darkened because they were not devoted to God. They were not thankful. They did not glorify Him. They had the opportunity to delight in Him, and be close to Him, but they did not want it.

“24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.”

- Romans 1:24-25

They chose to turn away from God, and He gave them over to it (their reprobate mind). He allowed them to have what they wanted. They wanted to walk in their own lusts and to worship idols, so He abandoned them to the uncleanness they desired.

“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;”

- Romans 1:28

We see here a pattern. They did not want God, so He let them go. God is good and righteous and pure. God is love. They did not want Him, which means they did not want goodness and righteousness and purity. They did not want His love. They wanted to do whatever they wanted to do, and so He let them loose to be the carnally minded people they wanted to be. Paul lists a multitude of things they turned to, things “which are not convenient,” because they did not want to continue knowing God.

“29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, 30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: 32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”

- Romans 1:29-32

These are people who enjoyed sin, and who chose their fleshly desires over God even though they knew they were doing wrong. Lest we get the incorrect idea about where sin originates, James quickly come to set some things straight:

“13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: 14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”

- James 1:13-15

God is not taking people with no will of their own and making them evil. He did not take a Pharaoh who was tenderhearted and willing to love Him and then harden him for the purpose of sending the ten plagues. No, God raised up that particular proud, stubborn young man as Pharaoh, and He made him ultimately a vessel for dishonor. He could have wooed the Pharaoh and spoken kindly to him and done everything He could to tenderize the Pharaoh's heart, but that was not the purpose He chose for this arrogant young ruler of Egypt. He did not have mercy on Pharaoh.

What about Israel's blindness? Let us go back a minute to the parable of the wicked tenants in Matthew 21. Remember, the lord of the vineyard sent his servants repeatedly to collect the fruits of the vineyard. Finally, after they had killed and beaten and stoned his servants, he sent his son. The wicked tenants killed him too. So, what did Jesus say would be done to the tenants?

The people said, *“They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.”* Matthew 21:41

Jesus agreed. He tells them in Matthew 21:43, *“Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”* The chief priests and Pharisees knew He was talking about them.

In Romans 11, Paul says that Israel will be blind for a time. This was not the result of capriciousness on God's part, but a result of the constant turning from God among the Israelite leadership. They had rejected

God's ways, preferring their own. They rejected God's Messiah, preferring to fight the Romans rather than humble themselves before God – and Jerusalem was destroyed as a result.

Even then, God is full of love for His people. In Romans 11:1, Paul declares that God did not wholly cast away Israel, for Paul himself was an Israelite from the tribe of Benjamin. As God had promised repeatedly in the prophets, He kept a righteous remnant among the Israelites. Paul was part of that Remnant, as were Peter and all the other apostles. God sent these beloved men and women out to be a light to the world, spreading the Gospel as was His original purpose for the children of Abraham. Paul reminds us of the days of Elijah, when God had kept protected seven thousand men for Himself who had not bowed their knee to Baal.

Now look at the sovereignty you seek. Do you wish to control it or allow God to? This decision could be one of the major decisions you ever make in your walk with Christ. Go your own way or allow God to provide the way? You need to make the right choice!