
 Speaker: 汪科傳道

 Focus Passage: Romans 9:1–18

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## Overview

This Bible study session explores **Romans 9:1–18**, kicking off a deep dive into chapters 9–11 of Romans — a critical theological section in Paul’s letter. The speaker, Pastor 汪科, unpacks Paul’s teachings on **God’s sovereign choice, the identity of true Israel, and God’s mercy and justice.**

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## Key Themes and Structure

### 1. Introduction to Romans 9–11 (Contextual Overview)

- Chapters 9–11 address the apparent disconnect between Israel’s election and their rejection of the gospel.
- Paul responds to **misunderstandings of salvation** among both **Jews and Gentiles**, some of which are extreme and theologically incorrect.

### 2. Paul’s Heart for His People (vv.1–5)

- Paul expresses profound sorrow over Israel’s rejection of Christ.
- Uses the term “**骨肉之親**” (flesh and blood) to describe his deep emotional connection to fellow Jews.
- Lists Israel’s privileges: adoption, glory, covenants, law, worship, promises, patriarchs, and the Messiah coming from them.

### 3. Not All Israel Is Israel (vv.6–13)

- Paul distinguishes “**ethnic Israel**” from “**spiritual Israel.**”
  - Not all descendants of Abraham are children of promise.
  - Uses the examples of **Ishmael vs. Isaac** and **Esau vs. Jacob** to demonstrate that **God's election is based on His sovereign will**, not lineage or human effort.
  - Before birth, **God chose Jacob** over Esau — demonstrating that divine election is **not based on works or merit**, but **on God's calling.**

### 4. God’s Sovereign Mercy (vv.14–18)

- Anticipates objections to God’s justice.
- Quotes **Exodus 33:19**: “*I will have mercy on whom I have mercy.*”
- Highlights **two examples**:
  - **Moses**: an example of mercy and God’s continued presence despite Israel’s sin (golden calf).
  - **Pharaoh**: an example of God’s purpose through opposition, to display His

power and proclaim His name.

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#### Four Key Questions Explored

1. **What is Paul's emotional and theological posture toward his people?**
  2. **What defines the "spiritual Israel"?**
  3. **Why does God choose Israel (or anyone)?**
  4. **What is Paul emphasizing in citing God's words to Moses and Pharaoh?**
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#### Theological Insights

- **God's promises never fail.** The seeming failure (Israel's unbelief) actually reveals the deeper truth of God's sovereign grace.
  - **Election is rooted in God's will**, not human effort or heritage.
  - **God's mercy is free and sovereign**, and He is just in both mercy and judgment.
  - **Human response is important**, but it's God who initiates and empowers salvation.
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#### Pastoral Applications

- Encourage **trust in God's sovereignty**: He is just, merciful, and faithful to His promises.
  - Inspire **intercessory prayer for loved ones and communities**, following Paul's example of passionate concern for others' salvation.
  - Call believers to **humility and awe** before God's mysterious but perfect will.
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#### Summary in a Nutshell

Romans 9:1–18 presents a powerful case for **God's sovereign choice** in salvation history. Paul affirms that God's plan hasn't failed just because many Jews rejected the Messiah — instead, salvation is extended **not by ethnicity**, but through **God's merciful calling**. Using OT references and theological reasoning, Paul shows that **God's mercy is not earned but granted**, and His purposes are always fulfilled — whether through Moses' restoration or Pharaoh's resistance.