



Portion:

Title:

SCRIPTURES

- Romans 9:1-18
- John 8:31-36

LET'S GET HISTORICAL

- Revising Revisionist History
- God's Sovereignty on Trial

SEED:

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, **you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**" They answered Him, "**We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone.** How can You say, 'You will be made free'?"
John 8:31-33 NKJV

FRUIT:

"But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. **For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham;** but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called." **That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God;** but the children of the promise are counted as the seed." Romans 9:6-8 NKJV

NARRATIVE FOR TODAY'S SCRIPTURES: ROMANS

Paul begins this section of the letter with a prayer that reveals the beauty in his heart. He knows something and it changed the entire course of his life. "I was racing to destroy them, those heretics who believed Y'shua was the long-awaited Messiah, when a voice from heaven and a blinding light altered the reason I was alive." Paul had encountered the risen Lord, the truth and the light, and he is now desperate for every fellow Israelite to share his experience.

"I tell the truth in Christ... nothing can match Christ's love; it is through Him you have the victory you so desire as God's people. His love is real, even when you feel that you are the one being offered on the altar as a living sacrifice." Paul testifies with the Spirit of God as his witness—he would surrender his own eternal salvation if it would mean his people would know the truth! Do you have that much love in your heart for others? Paul is in agony knowing how blinded his fellow countrymen have become—in so many ways living in complete denial about their history. They had become so disconnected from reality that during one encounter with Y'shua He said to them, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." They responded to Christ with unimaginable pride.

“We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, ‘You will be made free?’” Can you imagine the depth of their deception; “We have never been in bondage to anyone?”

One of the greatest moments in Israel’s recorded history is the first Passover, and the command to remember each year how they were delivered from slavery by the mighty hand of God. And maybe even more shocking is from what position they were speaking in that moment, living in present bondage to the oppressive Roman Empire. Y’shua addressed their sinful self-deception with a sharp repudiation; “I assure you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”

Paul understands this better than anyone, as recently in this very letter, he alluded to the Passover, relating the death and burial of our old man, and our resurrection into newness of life with Christ, to Passover imagery—captivity, wilderness, and the promised land. “In Christ, your old sin nature must be crucified daily, as you are no longer a slave to sin. This is the most critical revelation of your new life in Christ because you are literally a slave to whatever you obey. If it is sin that rules you, captivity is where you remain and death is your reward. If it is radical obedience to God that rules

you, righteousness is your name and the promised land awaits! And the wilderness is the testing ground between the two.” I guess these blind religious Jews did not get the message.

Then Paul accesses his world of knowledge of the Torah to drive home his point. Those who forget their history, or incorrectly interpret its meaning, or misunderstand its lessons—will repeat its mistakes, most notably, “We have never been in bondage to anyone.” He creates the backdrop for the proper understanding of what is coming in this chapter and the few following. It will take a sober view of history or national Israel is bound to repeat it. We might see it like going around the mountain for an additional thirty-nine years, instead of choosing the promised land at their first opportunity to enter. Paul ends his prayer by highlighting nine identifiers, any of which should shake the cobwebs from the brain of the denier—a perfectly crafted historical reminder for his fellow Israelites.

Your name is no longer Jacob, but Israel! You have striven with God and prevailed as Jacob did when he was called to wrestle with the pre-incarnate Christ, until he received his blessing. He was left with a limp as a permanent reminder. You have been adopted into the family of God as His children. To the Pharaoh of Egypt Moses declared, “Thus says the Lord: Israel has been chosen as My son, My firstborn.” Please remember you were justified by the the Lord

your God when He chose you to be a people for Himself. To you God has revealed His glory. Moses requested of the Lord, “May I find grace in Your sight, and will You consider that this nation is Your people.” And the Lord promised, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” Moses interceded, “Will you separate us from all the people in the earth?” And God affirmed, “I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight.” Finally, Moses begged, “Please, show me Your glory.” And Yahweh accommodated, “I will make all My goodness pass before you.” It certainly seems like these first three identifiers perfectly align in order with Paul’s revelation in the previous chapter:

“Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”

You are my covenanted people. Through you and for you I have sealed my covenants with Abraham, Moses, David and the Messiah. Through you I codified the law in the earth at Mount Sinai; I organized the earthly priesthood through the tribe of Levi; and I made promises to keep you and blessed you throughout your generations. It is from your people that the fathers of the faith came: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And it is through the tribe of Judah and the line of David that Y’shua the Messiah was born. And he closes out his argument by again tying in a previous thought: “What then

shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”

Yet, to those who forget their history, or incorrectly interpret its meaning, or misunderstand its lessons—it is those who will repeat its mistakes! And even so, can mankind thwart the plans of God? Of course not! But listen carefully, as if your life depends on it. If you are counting on your blood lineage from Abraham as your ultimate salvation, you are headed down the wrong path. Sure, God has created and called the nation of Israel and that will never change. But national heritage is not that to which you want to yoke your identity. Yes, it looks the same on paper, Israel vs. Israel. But to one their is only earthly promises and earthly citizenship; to the other heavenly promises and heavenly citizenship awaits.

Abraham’s life is the perfect picture of this duality. To him were born two primary sons, Ishmael and Isaac. But in only one of them is the seed of the heavenly call, and that is Isaac, the second born who, from a spiritual perspective takes on firstborn status. The point here is that bloodline is secondary to faith. Technically, the firstborn Ishmael carried the bloodline and Isaac the seed of promise. Remember, Abraham believed God and it was accounted to Him as righteousness. And isn’t it interesting that after his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, his son of promise, Abraham was

guaranteed descendants as numerous as the stars of the heavens (heavenly citizenship) and the sand of the seashore (earthly citizenship)? These two places of permanent citizenship are also reflected perfectly in the original Passover story when God revealed those who were designated as true firstborn sons (the Isaacs & Jacobs) and separated them from all others: true sons who were designated as non-firstborns (the Ishmaels & Esaus), and those who were not sons of God at all (the Egyptians).

Again, to those who forget their history, or incorrectly interpret its meaning, or misunderstand its lessons—it is those who will repeat its mistakes! The lesson here is critical and one that has eternal consequences. Sarah had been barren into her old age and yet the promise remained. She certainly lost faith years earlier when she convinced her husband to abandon any thought that she might give him a son, and Abraham acquiesced and fathered Ishmael through Sarah's servant Hagar, and as such Ishmael was not the son that came by faith. But the promise remained—the lesson of faith remained. Man's actions cannot thwart God's plans. Isaac is the promised son and it is in Isaac that the seed of life resides, the seed of faith that would one day birth the Messiah.

And here we are yet again with the same declaration, maybe more appropriate here than previously stated. Those who forget their history, or incorrectly interpret its meaning, or misunderstand

its lessons—are bound to repeat its mistakes! We fast-forward into Isaac's life and recall again how he was the second born who ultimately inherited firstborn status. This is a generational thing that would continue down the line, for in Rebecca's womb were twins, and Esau would arrive first. But, it was his younger brother Jacob born minutes later who would inherit firstborn status. And this, God knew all along, as we witness the foreknowledge of God on full display.

If you can abandon the idea that what is in question here is that God is predetermining man's personal eternal salvation, and focus instead on God's sovereignty, and the diverse cast of characters who fill the earth and make history, then you will see through the clouds of smoke created by the controversy over election and predestination. Maybe it would be easier to comprehend if we remove the charged emotions associated with how the human will interacts with the will of an eternal God, and how that might yield life or death in perpetuity. And we should insert here again the idea that both sons inherit life, one a permanent heavenly existence—heavenly citizenship, as stars in the heavens, the other a permanent earthly existence—earthly citizenship, as sand on the seashore.

To help you understand how human choice is at play, think of the nature of a cat. God installs that nature and a cat acts like a cat.

Yes, God is orchestrating things for His purposes, but He need not choose for you how you will act. He installed your particular human nature, for instance, the impetuous nature of Esau, and then that nature interacts with the sinful fallen world, and that yields a result, "that the purpose of God according to election might stand." Sin infects personality. God does not predetermine the specific interaction of your nature with sin; but He does allow it. And He knows in advance precisely what you will choose. God is not bound to linear time, so He has the foreknowledge before you are even born. And thus before these twins were born and could do a single thing good or bad, God loved that Jacob would choose heavenly citizenship and detested that Esau would choose earthly citizenship! God is omniscient, not omni-deterministic. He is all knowing; but He does not decide things for you!

Love and hate are strong words but let's keep this comparison in context. Y'shua said "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." And Paul said of his former life in Judaism after he proverbially "changed citizenship", "But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I

may gain Christ“ When you compare what God foreknew of Jacob’s choice in comparison to Esau’s, He loved one and hated the other!

Let us recall what we just learned at the end of the previous chapter in this letter. God creates all things: the weapon against you, the enemy to use it, and your ability to defeat it. However, you are the one who must add to the faith you were gifted. God sets the stage for both your trouble and your solution. Nevertheless, you must be the one to pick up the shield of faith and swing the sword of the Spirit—the Word of God. As such, you cannot indict God over man’s choices. Esau made his own choice and it is not wrong for God to judge Esau for that choice, nor is it wrong for God to reward Jacob for his—“I will not let go until you bless me!”

Y’shua shared a parable that should enhance your understanding of God’s sovereignty. A man hires laborers at all different times of the day and yet pays them all the same wage at the end of the day, the wage he promised. It seems unfair to those who worked longer hours, but is it? The man justly paid each as promised. How is that unjust? The injustice rises only in the evil heart of man, who would rather usurp God’s sovereignty and pervert God’s justice. God is the one who hired you and if you receive your fair wage, about what is there to complain? And be careful because the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is

eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. And one more thing, God is consistent; He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Earlier in this chapter we learned how God revealed His glory. Moses begged, “Please, show me Your glory.” And Yahweh accommodated, “I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you.” It’s there for the taking, but you must take it. His compassion, mercy and graciousness are on full display—you need not do anything to deserve them, nor can you work to earn them. By grace through faith you are saved, not of works lest anyone should boast. God’s grace and lovingkindness are floating in the air for all to bask in—take a breath; His goodness and His good name are there to taste and see. Will you choose to eat from this tree of life?

And if you have any doubt about Yahweh’s mercy and compassion, please note that His very words spoken to Moses, “I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion,” followed an egregious choice on so many levels, one of the most despicable acts imaginable—witnessed in the Golden Calf incident. Aaron, a man of weak character, accommodated the sinful desires of a rebellious people, and then he blamed it on the people and lied about how it happened, and God still spared many. If that is not compassion, mercy and graciousness, then what is?

God owes us nothing, including an explanation; and He is always just. And how thoughtful that He would reveal His heart to us, His rationale. He displays His intent; gives us His perspective—insight into how He operates. Pharaoh, a man with a specific personality infected with sin, is permitted to rise to the pinnacle of power in the most powerful nation in the earth. He allows Pharaoh to come to prominence and then God reveals Himself to us by how He interacts with Pharaoh's sinful nature. It begins innocently enough, as Pharaoh truly does not know of Yahweh, this God of Israel. But soon after, he repents and openly acknowledges that Yahweh is the one true God, and yet... his sinful heart is so dark that he ultimately chooses to resist Yahweh, and not only resist, but to declare war against Him. Pharaoh is God in his own mind, and there will be no other.

It might appear that Yahweh has hardened Pharaoh's heart, so He could destroy him. But, what really happened is that the idea of Yahweh, a God not of his own making, has exposed the darkness already lurking in Pharaoh's heart. The plague of darkness, demonstrative of the condition of Pharaoh's heart, arrives immediately before the angel of death would kill all the firstborn sons of Egypt, and spares all the firstborn sons of Israel. Under this shroud of darkness, Pharaoh makes no further attempt to repent. Sin has fatally infected Pharaoh's character beyond repair. He has

crossed over into the sin that leads to death, the unpardonable sin—a seared conscience—a darkened heart. All he can do at that moment is threaten the life of Moses, a death sentence that will soon take the life of his very own son and ultimately destroy all of Egypt. There is no sin too egregious for God to forgive; but there comes a time when man will no longer repent!

And it is interesting that Pharaoh himself survived the plague of the death of the firstborn, revealing that he too was not a firstborn son. This demonstrates that God sovereignly dealt with Egypt fairly, just as He had with Israel, through Isaac and Jacob, also not-firstborn sons, who stepped into the firstborn position—the seed of promise. What this declared to the whole world was to beware of your dependance on bloodline. Bloodline might identify you as a citizen of the nation of Israel, a grain of sand on the seashore, but that is not the citizenship you desire. The Israel with which you want your citizenship identified is heavenly, and that comes through the Messiah, born of the seed of Isaac—the seed of promise—a star in the heavens. And because bloodline does not determine your final citizenship, everyone has the same opportunity, Egyptians and Israelites alike. And now a fitting twist on a famous passage: By grace you can be saved by faith in the seed of promise, not your bloodline, lest anyone should boast. Don't believe me? Just ask Ishmael, Esau, and Pharaoh!

“Think in Bible.” DJH

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S MESSAGE:

The entirety of the contradiction and denial can be summed up with this one ridiculous statement, indicative of the disease of historical blindness. "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone." Can you imagine the depth of their deception? The Nile River has a wide expanse in some places, but the River of Denial is too wide to cross everywhere, impossible to survive without a floatation device. Paul seems to be addressing a people hysterical over historical truth—a wave of deception that prevents them from latching onto the buoyancy of Christ. As such, Paul seems intent on revising revisionist history. Facts matter, although if you watch the news today you'd conclude otherwise.

They suffered historical amnesia. Those who forget their history are bound to repeat its mistakes! "We have never been in bondage to anyone although we emerged from bondage to Egypt and landed in bondage to Rome." They inherited historical misinterpretations. Those who incorrectly interpret the meaning of history are bound to repeat its mistakes! Israel may not mean what you think—you must expand your mind or you will miss something eternal. They invited historical misconceptions. Those who misunderstand the lessons of history are bound to repeat its mistakes! The children of the promise, in what seems to be a reference to the physical line of

Isaac, was not so at all. Issac was conceived to bring forth the Messiah, not just a nation.

And maybe the most egregious error you might make is to indict God's character, as if God's sovereignty is on trial. Rather we ought to defend God's character. How gracious is He who guides us with historical precedent; judges us with historical justice; comforts us with historical predictability; and reasons with us with historical rationale. But, if you forget your history, or incorrectly interpret its meaning, or misunderstand its lessons—you are bound to repeat its mistakes! The Nile River has a wide expanse in some places, but the River of Denial is too wide to cross everywhere, impossible to survive without a floatation device, and the only thing offering you buoyancy is Christ.

REVISING REVISIONIST HISTORY

1. **Historical Blindness**

A. **Hysterical or Historical**

(1) Facts Matter

(a) If you do not learn from your history, you are bound to repeat it.

1. "I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that **I have great sorrow and continual grief in**

my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ **for my brethren, my countrymen** according to the flesh, **who are Israelites, to whom** pertain the **adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises;** of **whom are the fathers** and **from whom**, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.”

Romans 9:1-5 NKJV

2. Paul begins with a prayer that reveals the beauty in his heart.

a) He knows something and it changed the entire course of his life.

1) *“I was racing to destroy them, those heretics who believed Y’shua was the long-awaited Messiah, when a voice from heaven and a blinding light altered the reason I was alive.”*

2) *“As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly **a light shone** around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground, and **heard a voice saying** to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?””* Acts 9:3-4 NKJV

3) Paul had encountered the risen Lord, the truth and the light, and he is now desperate for every fellow Israelite to share his experience.

4) *"I tell the truth in Christ... nothing can match Christ's love; it is through Him you have the victory you so desire as God's people. His love is real, even when you feel that you are the one being offered on the altar as a living sacrifice."*

b) Paul testifies with the Spirit of God as his witness—he would surrender his own eternal salvation if it would mean his people would know the truth! Do you have that much love in your heart for others?

1) *"Greater love has no one than this, than to **lay down one's life for his friends.**"* John 15:13

NKJV

3. Don't Get Hysterical over the Historical!

a) Paul is in agony knowing how blinded his fellow countrymen have become—in so many ways living in complete denial about their history.

b) They had become so disconnected from reality that during one encounter with Y'shua He said to them...

- 1) *“If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”* John 8:31-32 NKJV
- c) They responded to Christ with unimaginable pride.
 - 1) *“We are Abraham’s descendants, and **have never been in bondage to anyone.** How can You say, ‘You will be made free?’”* John 8:33 NKJV
 - 2) Can you imagine the depth of their deception; *“We have never been in bondage to anyone?”*
4. NEVER been in bondage?
 - a) One of the greatest moments in Israel’s recorded history is the first Passover, and the command to remember each year how they were delivered from slavery by the mighty hand of God.
 - 1) *“Therefore say to the children of Israel: ‘I am the Lord; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, **I will rescue you from their bondage,** and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.”*
Exodus 6:6 NKJV
 - b) And maybe even more shocking is from what position they were speaking in that moment, living in bondage to the oppressive Roman Empire.

- 1) From 63 BC until the Jewish War of 66, Israel was under Rome's control.
- c) Y'shua addressed their sinful self-deception with a sharp repudiation.
 - a) *“Most assuredly, I say to you, **whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.** And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”* John 8:34-36 NKJV
- d) Paul understands this better than anyone, as recently in this very letter, he alluded to the Passover, relating the death and burial of our old man, and our resurrection into newness of life with Christ, to Passover imagery—captivity, wilderness, and the promised land.
- e) “In Christ, your old sin nature must be crucified daily, as you are no longer a slave to sin. This is the most critical revelation of your new life in Christ because you are literally a slave to whatever you obey. If it is sin that rules you, captivity is where you remain and death is your reward. If it is radical obedience to God that rules you, righteousness is

your name and the promised land awaits! And the wilderness is the testing ground between the two.”

a) *“knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, **that we should no longer be slaves of sin.** [16] Do you not know that to whom **you present yourselves slaves to obey**, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?”* Romans 6:6, 16 NKJV

f) I guess these blind religious Jews did not get the message.

(2) **Historical Amnesia**: Those who forget their history, or incorrectly interpret its meaning, or misunderstand its lessons—will repeat its mistakes, most notably, *“We have never been in bondage to anyone!”*

(a) Then Paul accesses his world of knowledge of the Torah to drive home his point. These are *“**my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, who are Israelites”***

1. **He was one of them...** *“circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee;”* Philippians 3:5 NKJV

- a) It will take a sober view of history or national Israel is bound to repeat it... **like going around the mountain for an additional thirty-nine years**, instead of choosing the promised land at their first opportunity to enter.
- (3) Paul ends his prayer by highlighting **nine identifiers**, any of which should shake the cobwebs from the brain of the denier—a perfectly crafted historical reminder for his fellow Israelites.
- (a) It seems like the first three identifiers perfectly align in order with Paul’s revelation in the previous chapter:
*“Moreover whom He predestined, these He also **called**; whom He called, these He also **justified**; and whom He justified, these He also **glorified**.”Romans 8:30 NKJV*
1. **Your name is no longer Jacob, but Israel!** You have striven with God and prevailed as Jacob did when he was **called** to wrestle with the pre-incarnate Christ, until he received his blessing. He was left with a limp as a permanent reminder.
- a) *“Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, **He touched the socket of his hip**; and the socket of*

*Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "**I will not let You go unless You bless me!**" So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." And He said, "**Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel;** for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.""* Genesis 32:24-28 NKJV

2. **You have been adopted** into the family of God as His children. To the Pharaoh of Egypt Moses declared, "Thus says the Lord: Israel has been chosen as My son, My firstborn." Please remember you were **justified** by the the Lord your God when He chose you to be a people for Himself.

a) *"And the Lord said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in your hand. But I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go. **Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord: "Israel is My son, My firstborn."**" Exodus 4:21-22 NKJV*

b) *"For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; **the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people***

for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.” Deuteronomy 7:6NKJV

c) See also [Hand Picked Orphans](#) (Romans 8:1-17)

3. **To you God has reveled His glory.** Moses requested of the Lord, “May I find grace in Your sight, and will You consider that this nation is Your people.” And the Lord promised, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” Moses interceded, “Will you separate us from all the people in the earth?” And God affirmed, “I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight.” Finally, Moses begged, “Please, show me Your glory.” And Yahweh accommodated, “I will make all My goodness pass before you.”

a) *“Then Moses said to the Lord, “See, You say to me, ‘Bring up this people.’ But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.’ **Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation***

*is Your people.” And He said, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” Then he said to Him, “If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. **For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight**, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.” So the Lord said to Moses, “**I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight**, and I know you by name.” And he said, “**Please, show me Your glory.**” Then He said, “**I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.**”“ Exodus 33:12-19 NKJV*

4. **You are my covenanted people.** Through you and for you I have sealed my covenants with Abraham, Moses, David and the Messiah.
 - a) **Abrahamic Covenant:** (Genesis 12 and 15). God promises Abraham a land, descendants and

- blessing. This blessing promised to Abraham would extend through him to all the peoples of the earth.
- b) **Mosaic Covenant:** (Exodus 19 and 24). This is the covenant God establishes with the people of Israel at Mt. Sinai after he led them out of Egyptian slavery. With it, God supplies the Law that is meant to govern and shape the people of Israel in the Promised Land. This covenant was conditional and defined blessings and curses based on obedience or disobedience (see Deuteronomy 28-29).
 - c) **Davidic Covenant:** (2 Samuel 7). This is the covenant where God promises a descendant of David to reign on the throne over the people of God.
 - d) **Messianic Covenant:** (Luke 22:14-23). On the night He was betrayed, Y'shua takes the cup and declares that his death would be the inauguration of this new covenant.
 - e) **God keeps His Covenants:** *“Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful **God who keeps covenant and mercy** for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; [12] “Then it shall come to pass,*

*because you listen to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the Lord your **God will keep with you the covenant** and the mercy which He swore to your fathers.” Deuteronomy 7:9, 12 NKJV*

5. Through you I **codified the law** in the earth at Mount Sinai.

a) *“You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself. Now therefore, **if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant**, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ **These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.**” So Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which the Lord commanded him. Then all the people answered together and said, **“All that the Lord has spoken we will do.”** So Moses brought back **the words** of the people to the Lord. And the Lord said to Moses, **“Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever.”** So*

Moses told **the words** of the people to the Lord.”

Exodus 19:4-9 NKJV

- b) See the giving of the 10 Commandments in Exodus 20:1-17
- c) Also see Deuteronomy 5 where Moses recounts the giving of the law.
- d) *“What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.”* Romans 3:1-2 NKJV

6. I **organized the earthly priesthood** through the tribe of Levi.

- a) *““Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, **that he may minister to Me as priest**, Aaron and Aaron’s sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.”* Exodus 28:1 NKJV
- b) *“And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: “Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may serve him. And they shall attend to his needs and the needs of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of meeting, to*

*do the work of the tabernacle.” Numbers 3:5-7
NKJV*

7. **I made promises** to keep you and blessed you throughout your generations.
 - a) *“And **I will establish My covenant** between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for **an everlasting covenant**, to be God to you and your descendants after you. Also I give **to you and your descendants after you the land** in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”” Genesis 17:7-8 NKJV*
8. It is from your people that **the fathers of the faith** came: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
 - a) **Abraham Called to be the father of nations:** *““As for Me, behold, **My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations.** No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. And **I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after***

you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.” Genesis 17:4-7 NKJV

- b) **Isaac called (2nd born):** *“Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. And I will bless her and **also give you a son by her**; then I will bless her, and **she shall be a mother of nations**; kings of peoples shall be from her.” Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?” And Abraham said to God, “**Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!**” Then God said: “**No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.**”*

Genesis 17:15-19 NKJV

- c) **Jacob called (2nd born):** After Rebekah schemed with Jacob to steal Esau’s blessing (Genesis 27:5-10) *“**Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him**, and charged him, and said to him: “You shall*

not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother. "May God Almighty bless you, And make you fruitful and multiply you, That you may be an assembly of peoples; And give you the blessing of Abraham, To you and your descendants with you, That you may inherit the land In which you are a stranger, Which God gave to Abraham."" The Genesis 28:1-4 NKJV

9. And it is through the tribe of Judah and the line of David **that Y'shua the Messiah was born.**
 - a) *"The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, **Until Shiloh comes**; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people."* Genesis 49:10 NKJV
 - b) *"There shall come forth a Rod **from the stem of Jesse** [David's father], And a Branch shall grow out of his roots."* Isaiah 11:1 NKJV
 - c) *"And your house [David's] and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. **Your throne shall be established forever.**"* II Samuel 7:16 NKJV

d) *“But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, **the Lion of the tribe of Judah**, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.””* Revelation 5:5 NKJV

(b) And he closes out his argument by again tying in a previous thought:

1. *“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? **He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all**, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”*

Romans 8:31-32 NKJV

B. Historical Misinterpretation

(1) Those who forget their history, **or incorrectly interpret its meaning**, or misunderstand its lessons—will repeat its mistakes!

(a) Can mankind thwart the plans of God? Of course not!

1. *“But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For **they are not all Israel who are of Israel**, nor are they all children **because they are the seed of Abraham**; but, **“In Isaac your seed shall be called.”**”*

Romans 9:6-7 NKJV

2. If you are counting on your blood lineage from Abraham as your ultimate salvation, you are headed down the wrong path.
 - a) God has created and called the nation of Israel and that will never change.
 - b) But national heritage is not that to which you want to yoke your identity.
 - c) It can be confusing because it looks the same on paper, **Israel vs. Israel**.
 - d) But to one their is only earthly promises and **earthly citizenship**; to the other heavenly promises and **heavenly citizenship** awaits.
3. Abraham's life is the perfect picture of this duality. To him were born two primary sons, Ishmael and Isaac.
 - a) But in only one of them is the seed of the heavenly call, and that is Isaac, the second born who, from a spiritual perspective takes on firstborn status.
 - b) **Key point:** bloodline is secondary to faith.
 - c) Technically, the firstborn Ishmael carried the bloodline and Isaac the seed of promise.
4. Remember, Abraham believed God and it was accounted to Him as righteousness. (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3)

a) **Interesting Prophetic Point:** After his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, his son of promise, Abraham was guaranteed descendants as numerous as the stars of the heavens (heavenly citizenship) and the sand of the seashore (earthly citizenship)?

1) *“Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: “By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— blessing I will bless you, and multiplying **I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore;** and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.””* Genesis 22:15-18 NKJV

2) *“By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, **were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—***

innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.“ Hebrews 11:11-12 NKJV

b) These two places of permanent citizenship are also reflected perfectly in the original Passover story when God revealed those who were designated as true firstborn sons (the Isaacs & Jacobs) and separated them from all others: true sons who were designated as non-firstborns (the Ishmaels & Esaus), and those who were not sons of God at all (the Egyptians).

1) *“Therefore **it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (as it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations”)*** in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, “So

shall your descendants be.”” Romans 4:16-18

NKJV

2) See [The Empty Womb](#)

3) See [Passover](#) teaching

C. Historical Misconception

(1) Those who forget their history, or incorrectly interpret its meaning, or **misunderstand its lessons**—will repeat its mistakes!

(a) The lesson here is critical and one that has eternal consequences.

1. “That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; **but the children of the promise are counted as the seed**. For this is the word of promise: **“At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son.””** Romans 9:8-9 NKJV

2. Sarah had been barren into her old age and yet the promise remained.

a) She certainly lost faith years earlier when she convinced her husband to abandon any thought that she might give him a son, and Abraham acquiesced and fathered Ishmael through Sarah’s servant Hagar, and **as such Ishmael was not the son that came by faith.**

- b) But the promise remained—the lesson of faith remained. Man’s actions cannot thwart God’s plans. Isaac is the promised son and it is in Isaac that the seed of life resides, the seed of faith that would one day birth the Messiah.
- 1) “Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that **Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.** But he who was of the **bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise**, which things are **symbolic**. For these are the **two covenants**: the one from **Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar**— for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and **corresponds to Jerusalem which now is**, and is **in bondage with her children**— but **the Jerusalem above is free**, which is the mother of us all. For it is written: “Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children Than she who has a husband.” Now we, brethren, as

Isaac was, are children of promise. But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." **So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free."**
Galatians 4:21-31 NKJV

(b) Critical Explanation of Galatians 4:21-31

1. Set the stage...

- a) **Abraham had two sons:** one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.
- b) The one from the bondwoman (Ishmael) was born according to the flesh (the bloodline).
- c) The one from the freewoman (Isaac) was born according to through promise (faith).

2. **This is a symbolic explanation!**

- a) These are the **two covenants...**
- b) One from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar and her son Ishmael and corresponds to present day Jerusalem (first

century), and is in bondage (to Rome) with her children.

- c) One is the heavenly Jerusalem and that is where free citizens live, children of Christ who come from Isaac, the seed of promise.
- d) He who was born according to the flesh (Ishmael) persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit (Isaac), and it is still going on now! Why?
- e) *"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. **For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.**" Galatians 5:16-17 NKJV*

3. Conclusion

- a) We are not children of the bondwoman (bloodline) but of the freewoman (faith).

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY ON TRIAL

2. A Critical Lesson!

A. Historical Precedent

- (1) And here we are yet again with the same declaration, maybe more appropriate here than previously stated.

- (a) Those who **forget their history**, or **incorrectly interpret its meaning**, or **misunderstand its lessons**—will repeat its mistakes!
1. "And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac (**for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls**), it was said to her, "The older **shall serve** the younger." As it is written, "**Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.**"" Romans 9:10-13 NKJV
 2. We fast-forward into Isaac's life and recall again how he was the second born who ultimately inherited firstborn status.
 - a) This is a generational thing that would continue down the line, for in Rebecca's womb were twins, and Esau would arrive first.
 - b) But, it was his younger brother Jacob born minutes later who would inherit firstborn status. And this, God knew all along, as we witnesses the foreknowledge of God on full display.
 - c) If you can abandon the idea that what is in question here is that God is predetermining man's

personal eternal salvation, and focus instead on God's sovereignty, and the diverse cast of characters who fill the earth and make history, then you will see through the clouds of smoke created by the controversy over election and predestination.

- d) Maybe it would be easier to comprehend if we remove the charged emotions associated with how the human will interacts with the will of an eternal God, and how that might yield life or death in perpetuity.
 - e) And we should insert here again the idea that both sons inherit life, one a permanent heavenly existence—heavenly citizenship, as stars in the heavens, the other a permanent earthly existence—earthly citizenship, as sand on the seashore.
3. To help you understand how human choice is at play, think of the nature of a cat.
- a) God installs that nature and a cat acts like a cat. Yes, God is orchestrating things for His purposes, but He need not choose for you how you will act.
 - b) He installed your particular human nature, for instance, the impetuous nature of Esau, and then

that nature interacts with the sinful fallen world, and that yields a result, *“that the purpose of God according to election might stand.”*

- c) Sin infects personality. God does not predetermine the specific interaction of your nature with sin; but He does allow it.
4. And He knows in advance precisely what you will choose.
- a) God is not bound to linear time, so He has the foreknowledge before you are even born.
 - b) And thus before these twins were born and could do a single thing good or bad, God loved that Jacob would choose heavenly citizenship and detested that Esau would choose earthly citizenship!
 - c) God is omniscient, not omni-deterministic. He is all knowing; but He does not decide things for you!
5. Love and hate are strong words, but let's keep this comparison in context.
- a) Y'shua said...
 - 1) *“If anyone comes to Me **and does not hate** his father and mother, wife and children, brothers*

and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.” Luke 14:26 NKJV

b) And Paul said of his former life in Judaism after he proverbially “changed citizenship” ...

1) *“But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, **and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.**”*

Philippians 3:7-8 NKJV

c) When you compare what God foreknew of Jacob’s choice in comparison to Esau’s, He loved one and hated the other!

B. Historical Justice

(1) God’s Character on Trial

(a) You cannot indite God over this (it was Esau’s choice)!

1. “What shall we say then? **Is there unrighteousness with God?** Certainly not!” Romans 9:14 NKJV

2. Defending God’s Character

a) Let us recall what we just learned at the end of the previous chapter in this letter. (See [No Weapon Shall Prosper](#))

- b) God creates all things: the weapon against you, the enemy to use it, and your ability to defeat it. (Isaiah 54:15-17)
- c) However, you are the one who must add to the faith you were gifted. (II Peter 1:5)
- d) God sets the stage for both your trouble and your solution.
- e) Nevertheless, you must be the one to pick up the shield of faith and swing the sword of the Spirit—the Word of God. (Ephesians 6:10-18)
- f) As such, you cannot indict God over man's choices. *Esau made his own choice and it is not wrong for God to judge Esau for that choice, nor is it wrong for God to reward Jacob for his—"I will not let go until you bless me!" (Genesis 32:24-28)
 - a) *Esau sold his birthright for a pot of stew (Genesis 25:29-34)

3. Y'shua shared the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard, which should enhance your understanding of God's sovereignty. (Matthew 20:1-16)

- a) A man hires laborers at all different times of the day and yet pays them all the same wage at the end of the day, the wage he promised.

- b) It seems unfair to those who worked longer hours, but is it? The man justly paid each as promised. How is that unjust?
- c) The injustice rises only in the evil heart of man, who would rather usurp God's sovereignty and pervert God's justice.
 - 1) *"Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?"* Matthew 20:15 NKJV
- d) God is the one who hired you and if you receive your fair wage, about what is there to complain?
- e) Be careful because: *"For **the wages of sin is death**, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* Romans 6:23 NKJV
- f) One more thing: God is consistent; He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

C. Historical Predictability

- (1) He is a God of Consistency...
 - (a) God does not owe us an explanation.
 - 1. **"For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."**
So then **it is not of him who wills, nor of him who**

runs, but of God who shows mercy.” Romans
9:15-16 NKJV

2. Earlier in this chapter we learned how God revealed His glory.
 - a) Moses begged, “Please, show me Your glory.” And Yahweh accommodated, “I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you.”
 - b) It’s there for the taking, but you must take it.
 - c) His compassion, mercy and graciousness are on full display—you need not do anything to deserve them, nor can you work to earn them.
 - d) By grace through faith you are saved, not of works lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-10)
 - e) God’s grace and lovingkindness are floating in the air for all to bask in—take a breath; His goodness and His good name are there to taste and see. Will you choose to eat from this tree of life?
3. If you have any doubt about Yahweh’s mercy and compassion, please note that these very words spoken to Moses...
 - a) *“I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will*

have compassion,” (Exodus 33:19) followed an egregious choice on so many levels, one of the most despicable acts imaginable—witnessed in the Golden Calf incident (Exodus 32).

- 1) Aaron, a man of weak character, accommodated the sinful desires of a rebellious people, and then he blamed it on the people and lied about how it happened, and God still spared many.
- 2) If that is not compassion, mercy and graciousness, then what is?

D. Historical Rationale

- (1) God is ALWAYS just!
 - (a) God owes us nothing, including an explanation.
 1. “For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, **“For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you,** and that My name may be declared in all the earth.”” Romans 9:17 NKJV
 2. But how thoughtful that He would reveal His heart to us, His rationale.
 - a) He displays His intent; gives us His perspective—insight into how He operates.

- b) Pharaoh, a man with a specific personality infected with sin, is permitted to rise to the pinnacle of power in the most powerful nation in the earth.
- c) He allows Pharaoh to come to prominence and then God reveals Himself to us by how He interacts with Pharaoh's sinful nature.
- d) It begins innocently enough, as Pharaoh truly does not know of Yahweh, this God of Israel.
 - 1) *"Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.' "* **And Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go."** Exodus 5:1-2 NKJV
- e) But soon after, he repents and openly acknowledges that Yahweh is the one true God, and yet... his sinful heart is so dark that he ultimately chooses to resist Yahweh, and not only resist, but to declare war against Him. Pharaoh is God in his own mind, and there will be no other.

- 1) 4th Plague Flies (He acknowledges that Yahweh is a god, but the god of the hebrews): *"Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Go, sacrifice **to your God** in the land."* Exodus 8:25 NKJV
- 2) 7th Plague Hail (He acknowledges he has sinned and Yahweh is the Lord): *"And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "**I have sinned this time. The Lord is righteous**, and my people and I are wicked."* Exodus 9:27 NKJV
- 3) 8th Plague Locusts (He acknowledges he has sinned and Yahweh is the Lord and asks for forgiveness ONE TIME): *"Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste, and said, "**I have sinned against the Lord your God and against you. Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once**, and entreat the Lord your God, that He may take away from me this death only."* Exodus 10:16-17 NKJV

E. Historical Sovereignty

- (1) Light Exposes Darkness
 - (a) What is really going on here?

1. "Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and **whom He wills He hardens.**" Romans 9:18 NKJV
2. It might appear that Yahweh has hardened Pharaoh's heart, so He could destroy him.
 - a) But, what really happened is that the idea of Yahweh, a God not of his own making, has exposed the darkness already lurking in Pharaoh's heart.
 - b) The plague of darkness, demonstrative of the condition of Pharaoh's heart, arrives immediately before the angel of death would kill all the firstborn sons of Egypt, and spares all the firstborn sons of Israel.
 - c) Under this shroud of darkness, Pharaoh makes no further attempt to repent. Sin has fatally infected Pharaoh's character beyond repair. He has crossed over into the sin that leads to death, the unpardonable sin—a seared conscience—a darkened heart.
 - d) All he can do at that moment is threaten the life of Moses, a death sentence that will soon take the life of his very own son and ultimately destroy all of Egypt.

1) 9th Plague Darkness (Pharaoh does not repent this time; but he does pronounce a death sentence. It just won't turn out the way he planned): *"But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! **Take heed to yourself and see my face no more! For in the day you see my face you shall die!**""*

Exodus 10:27-28 NKJV

e) There is no sin too egregious for God to forgive; but there comes a time when man will no longer repent! (See [The Sin that Leads to Death](#) and the resource [Understanding the Sin that Leads to Death](#))

3. It is fascinating that Pharaoh himself survived the plague of the death of the firstborn, revealing that he too was not a firstborn son.

a) This demonstrates that God sovereignly dealt with Egypt fairly, just as He had with Israel, through Isaac and Jacob, also not-firstborn sons, who stepped into the firstborn position—the seed of promise.

- b) What this declared to the whole world was to beware of your dependance on bloodline. Bloodline might identify you as a citizen of the nation of Israel, a grain of sand on the seashore, but that is not the citizenship you desire.
- 1) *“**For our citizenship is in heaven**, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”*
- Philippians 3:20-21 NKJV
- c) The Israel with which you want your citizenship identified is heavenly, and that comes through the Messiah, born of the seed of Isaac—the seed of promise—a star in the heavens.
- d) And because bloodline does not determine your final citizenship, everyone has the same opportunity, Egyptians and Israelites alike.
- e) And now a fitting twist on a famous passage (Ephesians 2:8-9): By grace you can be saved by faith in the seed of promise, not your bloodline, lest anyone should boast.

f) Don't believe me? Just ask Ishmael, Esau, and Pharaoh!

(2) Bonus Reading Assignment

(a) John 8 (Abraham's and Satan's Seed)

1. "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father." They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. [41] **You do the deeds of your father.**" Then they said to Him, **"We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God."** Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. [44] **You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth,**

because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God. Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?" Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. **And I do not seek My own glory;** there is One who seeks and judges. Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death." Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.' [53]**Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Who do You make Yourself out to be?"** Jesus answered, "If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not

know Him,' I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word. [56]**Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.**" Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" [58]**Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."** Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by." John 8:37-59 NKJV

(b) Galatians (Abraham's Seed)

1. "Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. **Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.** And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; **but God gave it to Abraham by promise.**" Galatians 3:15-18 NKJV

2. "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, **then you are Abraham's seed**, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians 3:26-29 NKJV
3. "Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. **Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.** And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Galatians 4:1-7 NKJV

4. "Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? **For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.** But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar—for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children—but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children Than she who has a husband." Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." So then, brethren, we are not children

of the bondwoman but of the free.” Galatians
4:21-31 NKJV

Summary: REVISING REVISIONIST HISTORY

1. Historical Blindness

A. Hysterical or Historical

(1) Facts Matter

(a) If you do not learn from your history, you are bound to repeat it.

1. Paul begins with a prayer that reveals the beauty in his heart.

a) He knows something and it changed the entire course of his life.

1) *“I was racing to destroy them, those heretics who believed Y’shua was the long-awaited Messiah, when a voice from heaven and a blinding light altered the reason I was alive.”*

2) Paul had encountered the risen Lord, the truth and the light, and he is now desperate for every fellow Israelite to share his experience.

3) *“I tell the truth in Christ... nothing can match Christ’s love; it is through Him you have the victory you so desire as God’s people. His love*

is real, even when you feel that you are the one being offered on the altar as a living sacrifice.”

b) Paul testifies with the Spirit of God as his witness—he would surrender his own eternal salvation if it would mean his people would know the truth! Do you have that much love in your heart for others?

2. Don't Get Hysterical over the Historical!

a) Paul is in agony knowing how blinded his fellow countrymen have become—in so many ways living in complete denial about their history.

b) They had become so disconnected from reality that during one encounter with Y'shua He said to them...

c) They responded to Christ with unimaginable pride.

3. NEVER been in bondage?

a) One of the greatest moments in Israel's recorded history is the first Passover, and the command to remember each year how they were delivered from slavery by the mighty hand of God.

b) And maybe even more shocking is from what position they were speaking in that moment, living in bondage to the oppressive Roman Empire.

- 1) From 63 BC until the Jewish War of 66, Israel was under Rome's control.
- c) Y'shua addressed their sinful self-deception with a sharp repudiation.
- d) Paul understands this better than anyone, as recently in this very letter, he alluded to the Passover, relating the death and burial of our old man, and our resurrection into newness of life with Christ, to Passover imagery—captivity, wilderness, and the promised land.
- e) “In Christ, your old sin nature must be crucified daily, as you are no longer a slave to sin. This is the most critical revelation of your new life in Christ because you are literally a slave to whatever you obey. If it is sin that rules you, captivity is where you remain and death is your reward. If it is radical obedience to God that rules you, righteousness is your name and the promised land awaits! And the wilderness is the testing ground between the two.”
- f) I guess these blind religious Jews did not get the message.

(2) **Historical Amnesia**: Those who forget their **history**, or incorrectly interpret its meaning, or misunderstand its

lessons—will repeat its mistakes, most notably, “*We have never been in bondage to anyone!*”

(a) Then Paul accesses his world of knowledge of the Torah to drive home his point. These are “***my brethren, my countrymen** according to the flesh, **who are Israelites***”

1. **He was one of them...** It will take a sober view of history or national Israel is bound to repeat it... **like going around the mountain for an additional thirty-nine years**, instead of choosing the promised land at their first opportunity to enter.

(3) Paul ends his prayer by highlighting **nine identifiers**, any of which should shake the cobwebs from the brain of the denier—a perfectly crafted historical reminder for his fellow Israelites.

(a) It seems like the first three identifiers perfectly align in order with Paul’s revelation in the previous chapter: ***called; justified; glorified.***

1. **Your name is no longer Jacob, but Israel!** You have striven with God and prevailed as Jacob did when he was **called** to wrestle with the pre-incarnate Christ, until he received his blessing. He was left with a limp as a permanent reminder.

2. **You have been adopted** into the family of God as His children. To the Pharaoh of Egypt Moses declared, “Thus says the Lord: Israel has been chosen as My son, My firstborn.” Please remember you were **justified** by the the Lord your God when He chose you to be a people for Himself.
3. **To you God has reveled His glory.** Moses requested of the Lord, “May I find grace in Your sight, and will You consider that this nation is Your people.” And the Lord promised, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” Moses interceded, “Will you separate us from all the people in the earth?” And God affirmed, “I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight.” Finally, Moses begged, “Please, show me Your glory.” And Yahweh accommodated, “I will make all My goodness pass before you.”
4. **You are my covenanted people.** Through you and for you I have sealed my covenants with Abraham, Moses, David and the Messiah.
 - a) **Abrahamic Covenant:**
 - b) **Mosaic Covenant:**
 - c) **Davidic Covenant:**

d) **Messianic Covenant:**

e) **God keeps His Covenants:**

5. Through you I **codified the law** in the earth at Mount Sinai.

6. I **organized the earthly priesthood** through the tribe of Levi.

7. **I made promises** to keep you and blessed you throughout your generations.

8. It is from your people that **the fathers of the faith** came: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

a) **Abraham Called to be the father of nations:**

b) **Isaac called (2nd born):**

c) **Jacob called (2nd born):**

9. And it is through the tribe of Judah and the line of David **that Y'shua the Messiah was born.**

(b) And he closes out his argument by again tying in a previous thought: *If God is for us, who can be against us? **He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all...***

B. Historical Misinterpretation

(1) Those who forget their history, **or incorrectly interpret its meaning**, or misunderstand its lessons—will repeat its mistakes!

- (a) Can mankind thwart the plans of God? Of course not!
1. If you are counting on your blood lineage from Abraham as your ultimate salvation, you are headed down the wrong path.
 - a) God has created and called the nation of Israel and that will never change.
 - b) But national heritage is not that to which you want to yoke your identity.
 - c) It can be confusing because it looks the same on paper, **Israel vs. Israel**.
 - d) But to one their is only earthly promises and **earthly citizenship**; to the other heavenly promises and **heavenly citizenship** awaits.
 2. Abraham's life is the perfect picture of this duality. To him were born two primary sons, Ishmael and Isaac.
 - a) But in only one of them is the seed of the heavenly call, and that is Isaac, the second born who, from a spiritual perspective takes on firstborn status.
 - b) **Key point:** bloodline is secondary to faith.
 - c) Technically, the firstborn Ishmael carried the bloodline and Isaac the seed of promise.

3. Remember, Abraham believed God and it was accounted to Him as righteousness. (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3)
 - a) **Interesting Prophetic Point:** After his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, his son of promise, Abraham was guaranteed descendants as numerous as the stars of the heavens (heavenly citizenship) and the sand of the seashore (earthly citizenship)?
 - b) These two places of permanent citizenship are also reflected perfectly in the original Passover story when God revealed those who were designated as true firstborn sons (the Isaacs & Jacobs) and separated them from all others: true sons who were designated as non-firstborns (the Ishmaels & Esaus), and those who were not sons of God at all (the Egyptians).

C. **Historical Misconception**

- (1) Those who forget their history, or incorrectly interpret its meaning, or **misunderstand its lessons**—will repeat its mistakes!
 - (a) The lesson here is critical and one that has eternal consequences.

1. Sarah had been barren into her old age and yet the promise remained.
 - a) She certainly lost faith years earlier when she convinced her husband to abandon any thought that she might give him a son, and Abraham acquiesced and fathered Ishmael through Sarah's servant Hagar, and **as such Ishmael was not the son that came by faith.**
 - b) But the promise remained—the lesson of faith remained. Man's actions cannot thwart God's plans. Isaac is the promised son and it is in Isaac that the seed of life resides, the seed of faith that would one day birth the Messiah.
- (b) Critical Explanation of Galatians 4:21-31
 1. Set the stage...
 - a) **Abraham had two sons:** one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.
 - b) The one from the bondwoman (Ishmael) was born according to the flesh (the bloodline).
 - c) The one from the freewoman (Isaac) was born according to through promise (faith).
 2. **This is a symbolic explanation!**
 - a) These are the **two covenants...**

- b) One from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar and her son Ishmael and corresponds to present day Jerusalem (first century), and is in bondage (to Rome) with her children.
- c) One is the heavenly Jerusalem and that is where free citizens live, children of Christ who come from Isaac, the seed of promise.
- d) He who was born according to the flesh (Ishmael) persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit (Isaac), and it is still going on now! Why?

3. Conclusion

- a) We are not children of the bondwoman (bloodline) but of the freewoman (faith).

Summary: GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY ON TRIAL

2. A Critical Lesson!

A. Historical Precedent

(1) And here we are yet again with the same declaration, maybe more appropriate here than previously stated.

- (a) Those who **forget their history**, or **incorrectly interpret its meaning**, or **misunderstand its lessons**—will repeat its mistakes!

1. We fast-forward into Isaac's life and recall again how he was the second born who ultimately inherited firstborn status.
 - a) This is a generational thing that would continue down the line, for in Rebecca's womb were twins, and Esau would arrive first.
 - b) But, it was his younger brother Jacob born minutes later who would inherit firstborn status. And this, God knew all along, as we witness the foreknowledge of God on full display.
 - c) If you can abandon the idea that what is in question here is that God is predetermining man's personal eternal salvation, and focus instead on God's sovereignty, and the diverse cast of characters who fill the earth and make history, then you will see through the clouds of smoke created by the controversy over election and predestination.
 - d) Maybe it would be easier to comprehend if we remove the charged emotions associated with how the human will interacts with the will of an eternal God, and how that might yield life or death in perpetuity.

- e) And we should insert here again the idea that both sons inherit life, one a permanent heavenly existence—heavenly citizenship, as stars in the heavens, the other a permanent earthly existence—earthly citizenship, as sand on the seashore.
2. To help you understand how human choice is at play, think of the nature of a cat.
- a) God installs that nature and a cat acts like a cat. Yes, God is orchestrating things for His purposes, but He need not choose for you how you will act.
 - b) He installed your particular human nature, for instance, the impetuous nature of Esau, and then that nature interacts with the sinful fallen world, and that yields a result, *“that the purpose of God according to election might stand.”*
 - c) Sin infects personality. God does not predetermine the specific interaction of your nature with sin; but He does allow it.
3. And He knows in advance precisely what you will choose.
- a) God is not bound to linear time, so He has the foreknowledge before you are even born.

- b) And thus before these twins were born and could do a single thing good or bad, God loved that Jacob would choose heavenly citizenship and detested that Esau would choose earthly citizenship!
 - c) God is omniscient, not omni-deterministic. He is all knowing; but He does not decide things for you!
4. Love and hate are strong words, but let's keep this comparison in context.
- a) Y'shua said... *"If anyone comes to Me **and does not hate...***
 - b) And Paul said of his former life in Judaism after he proverbially "changed citizenship"... ***count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.***
 - c) When you compare what God foreknew of Jacob's choice in comparison to Esau's, He loved one and hated the other!

B. Historical Justice

(1) God's Character on Trial

- (a) You cannot indite God over this (it was Esau's choice)!

1. Defending God's Character

- a) Let us recall what we just learned at the end of the previous chapter in this letter. (See [No Weapon Shall Prosper](#))
 - b) God creates all things: the weapon against you, the enemy to use it, and your ability to defeat it. (Isaiah 54:15-17)
 - c) However, you are the one who must add to the faith you were gifted. (II Peter 1:5)
 - d) God sets the stage for both your trouble and your solution.
 - e) Nevertheless, you must be the one to pick up the shield of faith and swing the sword of the Spirit—the Word of God. (Ephesians 6:10-18)
 - f) As such, you cannot indict God over man's choices. *Esau made his own choice and it is not wrong for God to judge Esau for that choice, nor is it wrong for God to reward Jacob for his—"I will not let go until you bless me!" (Genesis 32:24-28)
 - a) *Esau sold his birthright for a pot of stew (Genesis 25:29-34)
2. Y'shua shared the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard, which should enhance your understanding of God's sovereignty. (Matthew 20:1-16)

- a) A man hires laborers at all different times of the day and yet pays them all the same wage at the end of the day, the wage he promised.
- b) It seems unfair to those who worked longer hours, but is it? The man justly paid each as promised. How is that unjust?
- c) The injustice rises only in the evil heart of man, who would rather usurp God's sovereignty and pervert God's justice.
- d) God is the one who hired you and if you receive your fair wage, about what is there to complain?
- e) Be careful because: *For **the wages of sin is death...***
- f) One more thing: God is consistent; He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

C. Historical Predictability

(1) He is a God of Consistency...

(a) God does not owe us an explanation.

1. Earlier in this chapter we learned how God revealed His glory.

a) Moses begged, "Please, show me Your glory." And Yahweh accommodated, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you."

- b) It's there for the taking, but you must take it.
 - c) His compassion, mercy and graciousness are on full display—you need not do anything to deserve them, nor can you work to earn them.
 - d) By grace through faith you are saved, not of works lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-10)
 - e) God's grace and lovingkindness are floating in the air for all to bask in—take a breath; His goodness and His good name are there to taste and see. Will you choose to eat from this tree of life?
2. If you have any doubt about Yahweh's mercy and compassion, please note that these very words spoken to Moses...
- a) *"I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion,"* (Exodus 33:19) followed an egregious choice on so many levels, one of the most despicable acts imaginable—witnessed in the Golden Calf incident (Exodus 32).
 - 1) Aaron, a man of weak character, accommodated the sinful desires of a rebellious people, and then he blamed it on the people

and lied about how it happened, and God still spared many.

- 2) If that is not compassion, mercy and graciousness, then what is?

D. Historical Rationale

(1) God is ALWAYS just!

(a) God owes us nothing, including an explanation.

1. But how thoughtful that He would reveal His heart to us, His rationale.

a) He displays His intent; gives us His perspective—insight into how He operates.

b) Pharaoh, a man with a specific personality infected with sin, is permitted to rise to the pinnacle of power in the most powerful nation in the earth.

c) He allows Pharaoh to come to prominence and then God reveals Himself to us by how He interacts with Pharaoh's sinful nature.

d) It begins innocently enough, as Pharaoh truly does not know of Yahweh, this God of Israel.

e) But soon after, he repents and openly acknowledges that Yahweh is the one true God, and yet... his sinful heart is so dark that he

ultimately chooses to resist Yahweh, and not only resist, but to declare war against Him. Pharaoh is God in his own mind, and there will be no other.

- 1) 4th Plague Flies (He acknowledges that Yahweh is a god, but the god of the hebrews):
- 2) 7th Plague Hail (He acknowledges he has sinned and Yahweh is the Lord):
- 3) 8th Plague Locusts (He acknowledges he has sinned and Yahweh is the Lord and asks for forgiveness ONE TIME):

E. Historical Sovereignty

(1) Light Exposes Darkness

(a) What is really going on here?

1. It might appear that Yahweh has hardened Pharaoh's heart, so He could destroy him.

a) But, what really happened is that the idea of Yahweh, a God not of his own making, has exposed the darkness already lurking in Pharaoh's heart.

b) The plague of darkness, demonstrative of the condition of Pharaoh's heart, arrives immediately before the angel of death would kill all the

firstborn sons of Egypt, and spares all the firstborn sons of Israel.

- c) Under this shroud of darkness, Pharaoh makes no further attempt to repent. Sin has fatally infected Pharaoh's character beyond repair. He has crossed over into the sin that leads to death, the unpardonable sin—a seared conscience—a darkened heart.
- d) All he can do at that moment is threaten the life of Moses, a death sentence that will soon take the life of his very own son and ultimately destroy all of Egypt.
 - 1) 9th Plague Darkness (Pharaoh does not repent this time; but he does pronounce a death sentence. It just won't turn out the way he planned):
- e) There is no sin too egregious for God to forgive; but there comes a time when man will no longer repent! (See [The Sin that Leads to Death](#) and the resource [Understanding the Sin that Leads to Death](#))

2. It is fascinating that Pharaoh himself survived the plague of the death of the firstborn, revealing that he too was not a firstborn son.
 - a) This demonstrates that God sovereignly dealt with Egypt fairly, just as He had with Israel, through Isaac and Jacob, also not-firstborn sons, who stepped into the firstborn position—the seed of promise.
 - b) What this declared to the whole world was to beware of your dependance on bloodline. Bloodline might identify you as a citizen of the nation of Israel, a grain of sand on the seashore, but that is not the citizenship you desire.
 - c) The Israel with which you want your citizenship identified is heavenly, and that comes through the Messiah, born of the seed of Isaac—the seed of promise—a star in the heavens.
 - d) And because bloodline does not determine your final citizenship, everyone has the same opportunity, Egyptians and Israelites alike.
 - e) And now a fitting twist on a famous passage (Ephesians 2:8-9): By grace you can be saved by

faith in the seed of promise, not your bloodline,
lest anyone should boast.

- f) Don't believe me? Just ask Ishmael, Esau, and Pharaoh!

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

1. Name the nine historical identifiers that Paul uses in his prayer Romans 9:1-5.

- A. What in Romans 9:1-5 demonstrates that Paul is living out John 15:13?
- B. How does Paul's need to remind his Jewish brethren of their history connect with Y'shua's teachings in John 8:31-36?
- C. Why is the denial of the unbelieving Jews in John 8:31-36 so ridiculous considering Exodus 6:6, as well as their current circumstance under Roman rule.

2. Connect the nine historical identifiers in Romans 9:1-5 to the following:

- A. Genesis 32:24-28
- B. Exodus 4:21-22
- C. Exodus 33:12-19
- D. Genesis 12, 15; Exodus 19, 24; 2 Samuel 7; Luke 22:14-23
- E. Exodus 19:4-9
- F. Exodus 28:1; Numbers 3:5-7

G. Genesis 17:7-8

H. Genesis 17:4-7; 17:15-19; 28:1-4

I. Genesis 49:10; Isaiah 11:1; II Samuel 7:16; Revelation 5:5

3. Explain how not all who are Israel are Israel from Romans 9:6-7.

A. How is this related to Genesis 22:15-18?

B. How does it relate to earthly promises and earthly citizenship as opposed to heavenly promises and heavenly citizenship?

4. The two places of permanent citizenship are reflected perfectly in the original Passover story when God revealed those who were designated as true firstborn sons (the Isaacs & Jacobs) and separated them from all others: true sons who were designated as non-firstborns (the Ishmaels & Esaus), and those who were not sons of God at all (the Egyptians).

A. In light of this, explain Romans 9:8-9 and Galatians 4:21-31. (Use the sermon notes to help.)

B. In light of this, explain Romans 9:10-13. (Use the sermon notes to help.)

C. Explain Romans 9:13 in the context of Luke 14:26 and Philippians 3:7-8.

5. You cannot indite God over Esau's choice.

A. How does this help understand Romans 9:14?

- B. How can the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16) enhance your understanding of God's sovereignty and further explain Romans 9:14?
- 6. Romans 9:15-16 says "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion." (Quoted from Exodus 33:19)**
- A. How is this passage better understood in light of Exodus 32?
- 7. God owes us nothing, including an explanation, but how thoughtful that He would reveal His heart to us, His rationale.**
- A. Use this idea to explain Romans 9:17. (Use sermon notes to help).
- B. Write a narrative displaying how Pharaoh began innocently and progressed to the sin that lead to death. (Use Exodus 5:1-2; 8:25; 9:27; 10:16-17). And see sermon notes for help.
- 8. Romans 9:18 says God hardened Pharaoh's heart.**
- A. Explain considering that Pharaoh thought of himself as a god.
- 9. We know that all the firstborns who did not apply the blood to the doorposts of their homes died at the original Passover.**
- A. How is it that Pharaoh survived?
- B. How does this relate to Ishmael and Esau?
- C. What does it say about bloodlines and faith?
- D. What does it display about God's sovereignty and why we can say He dealt with Egypt fairly?