

ROMANS 9:24-29

The "vessels of mercy" are those among Jewish and Gentile people who have accepted the Lord by faith, not by works.

"Let us explain and give the application of the vessels of wrath and mercy. In chapter 9 is a passage, from verse 22 to the end of the chapter, about the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy....He shows that God is no respecter of persons in selecting the Jewish nation. But why did he select that nation?...The election of the Jewish nation looked to the salvation of Jews and Gentiles that received the message of God...That election looked through them to others and, so far as salvation in heaven is concerned, the Jews that believed were saved, and so far as other nations were concerned he quotes certain parts in Hosea and the Old Testament, the paragraph referring to the ingathering of the Gentiles... 'I will call them my people which were not my people.'" B.H. Carroll, Romans, page 115-16

The focus in front of us in verses 24-29 is that both individual Jews and individual Gentiles will and can be saved. God sovereignly chose the nation of Israel through whom the Messiah would come to bring redemption to both Jew and Gentile who accepted Him.

The choosing of Israel (personified in Moses) and the rejection of Egypt (personified in Pharaoh) is not meant to be understood that only Jews will be saved and Gentiles will not be saved. Not at all! The purpose in these following verses is to show that God's intended purpose was always that people from all nations, Jews and Gentiles, would come to the Lord, with Israel as God's elect channel (nation) bringing Jesus into the world.

24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

"Even us" refers to the "vessels of mercy" mentioned in verse 23.

"Whom he hath called" references the body of Christ, Jews and Gentiles, "even us." William Klein comments on the "called."

"Since people individually respond to the gospel to become Christians, is God's 'call' therefore an action performed upon individuals? No, the evidence of the NT suggests that calling, like election, is primarily corporate in its orientation. The 'call of God' brings into existence a people who have an obligation to exhibit God's character in their actions." The New Chosen People: A Corporate View of Election, page 255

Paul Marston and Roger Forster:

"Romans 9:24-26 makes it clear that in Paul a divine 'calling' is a naming - whether a naming 'Israel' or 'apostle' or 'saint' or 'my people' or 'sons of a living God.' This name/calling is to a post or office or lifestyle which we are free to choose to try to fulfill and live up to or not." God's Strategy in Human History, page 163

God's plan from the beginning was that through the chosen nation of Israel "shall all families of the earth be blessed," Genesis 12:3. Paul is now showing that God is doing exactly what He promised - that is, both Jew and Gentile are being saved through the promised Messiah, Jesus. That salvation was always meant for both Jews and Gentiles is shown oftentimes in the Old Testament.

Isaiah 42:6 I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

Isaiah 49:6 And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

Isaiah 60:1-3 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

Paul selectively uses passages (Hosea and Isaiah) in the next few verses to affirm that God's intention was always that both Jew and Gentile would be saved in the next few verses.

25 As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.

26 And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

Paul now quotes from Hosea 2:23 and 1:10.

"...and I will say to them **which were not my people, Thou art my people**; and they shall say, Thou art my God."

"Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, **Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.**"

The context of the Hosea verses is speaking of the nation of Israel. And it is **in the place** (i.e the land of Israel) where Israel will be called "the children of the living God." The phrase "you shall be my people, and I will be your God" is used eschatologically at least 16 times in the O.T. - Exodus 6:7; Lev. 26:12; Jer. 7:23, 11:4, 24:7, 30:22, 31:1, 31:33, 32:38; Ezekiel 11:20, 36:28, 37:23, 37:27, Zech. 8:8, 13:9, Hosea 1:9-10.

Jeremiah 31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

This phrase is used once in the N.T.: "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people," 2 Corinthians 6:14.

The Winter 2019 issue of Israel's Messenger, Dan Bergman wrote concerning Jewish methods of interpretation:

"Most, if not all of these "contradictions" are solved by simply following the historical Jewish hermeneutic (method of interpretation). This is a four-fold process of interpretation: "P'Shat" – plain literal meaning, "Remez" – allegorical meaning (typological), "D'rash" – practical meaning (application), and "Sod" – meaning in summation (which teaches about the nature of God)."

Dan Bergman, *Israel's Messenger*, "The New Testament is Full of Contradictions," page 13.

Here we have "D'rash" – practical meaning (application). Paul applies the truth about Israel to Gentiles.

Paul Marston and Roger Forster (*God's Strategy in Human History*, pg 78) comment:

"One must realize the great significance of names to the Hebrew mind; to rename a person or a group had great significance. The principle in Hosea, therefore, is this. God might, should he consider it necessary remove or bestow a privileged name and position as he thought fit. Paul thought the same principle to be involved in God's actions in his own age. Those who have been 'named' include some who - as Gentiles! - formerly did not have a name as the people of God. What (through Hosea) God said he could do for rejected Israel, so the time of Paul he has done for repentant Gentiles."

In other words, God always intended for Gentiles to be His children, through faith in Christ, and His sovereign election of the nation of Israel was for the purpose of bringing the Redeemer into the world so not only Jews, but Gentiles could become His children, when they accepted Jesus as their Redeemer.

27 Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:

28 For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.

In these verses, Paul is establishing that the election of the nation of Israel doesn't mean all Jewish people are saved as a result of being part of Israel. As he established earlier in Romans 2:28-29 and 9:5, the only Jews who are "the called," are those who by faith accept Jesus.

Verse 28 is most likely speaking of the Tribulation period. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened," Matthew 24:21-22. Both the Hosea passages above are fulfilled in Israel at the end of the Tribulation (but applied to repentant Gentiles here).

29 And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.

This quote from Isaiah 1:9 emphasizes that there is always a remnant of Jews who respond in faith to God. This remnant today is Jewish believers in Jesus. In Romans 11, Paul elaborates on the remnant of Israel.