

**Monday, October 16, 2023 • Read Romans 9:1–5**

*Questions from the Scripture text: What four ways does v1 affirm what Paul is saying (v1)? What level of grief was so hard to believe (v2–3a)? For what could he wish to be accursed from Christ? Which brethren? What are they called (v4)? What six great things pertained to them? Who was from them (v5)? And Who else came from them, according to the flesh? Over whom is Christ? Who does this make Him?*

**If the love of God is irreversible, then what about Israel?** Romans 9:1–5 looks forward to the midweek sermon. In these five verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **Israel are the people from whom Christ came, and therefore for whom we should agonize over each one of them that does not have Him.**

**An amazing work of grace.** v1 is rather unusual. By four types of vow or oath statements, the apostle verifies what he is saying. This is not because his yes and no are sometimes no and yes, but simply because of how wonderful is the work of grace that God has done in his heart to give him such love for the Jews. Becoming forgiving like this is a great work of great grace. Each of us should look to God to do it in our hearts, and conform us to Christ (cf. Lk 23:34), as He has done for Stephen (cf. Ac 7:60), Paul, and other believers for two millennia.

**An agonizing grief.** If v2 is what it looks like when grace has laid hold of our hearts, then many of us should be crying out for more grace. The apostle by whom the Spirit commands us to “rejoice in the Lord always” (cf. Php 4:4) continually grieves with great sorrow for the lost. The greatest joy and the greatest sorrow ought to dwell together continually in our hearts.

**An astonishing generosity.** The apostle has just finished describing how salvation is determined in eternity and invincibly carried out in time (cf. 8:27–39). But now he declares his hypothetical (“I could wish,” v3) desire to give up his own salvation (“accursed for Christ”) for his relatives according to the flesh. This is, of course, something that is impossible for us to do. But it is also exactly what Christ has done for us. He was cursed for us (cf. Gal 3:13)!

This self-sacrificial love puts to shame our prayerlessness for the lost. Christ was accursed for us, the apostle was willing to be accursed for others’ salvation, but we find ourselves too unwilling even to be inconvenienced to pray for it. Or to be thought fanatical or impolite to speak for it.

**Two categories of those whom we should especially love this way.** Paul describes the Jews two ways. First, they are his relatives according to the flesh. We have a special obligation to those to whom God’s providence connects us.

Second, the Jews are Israelites (v4). And this he means primarily covenantally. “To whom pertain the adoption” (cf. Ex 4:22–23; Hos 11:1; Jer 31:9). “The glory” (cf. Ex 24:9–11, 16–18). “The covenants.” Notice the plural here; this is not only the Sinaitic covenant, but a recognition of the progression from Gen 3 through Gen 9, Gen 12, Sinai, 2Sam 7, even unto Christ. God’s law, worship, and promises (v4b) at Sinai all looked forward to Christ covenantally.

The Jews are also ethnically precious because of the eminent saints at the root of their tree (“the fathers,” v5) and the infinitely glorious Branch Who grew from the stump of their tree (“from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came.”) We ought to love Abraham as a father in the faith (cf. 4:11–12, 16), and his descendants for his sake (this works for Jews and Arabs alike!). But how much more ought we to love the earthly family of those from whom the Ever-Blessed God was born according to the flesh (cf. 1:3–4; 1:25b)! Indeed, though some point out that it is possible to translate the end of v5 differently, it is impossible to do so honestly, as it follows hard upon the heels of 8:35–39.

We should care for the salvation of all who are perishing. But the Lord has placed upon us a special obligation to grieve over the perishing of our near relatives and of the Jews.

For whom, among your relatives, should you be looking for more grace in the heart to grieve over them continually? If you had this grace, for whom else would you especially be grieving (both covenantally and ethnically)?

*Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for Your great mercy toward us. In that mercy, make us merciful to those who are perishing. Break our hearts for their salvation—especially for our family according to the flesh and for Christ’s family according to the flesh, we ask in His Name, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs:** ARP126 “What Blessedness” or TPH405 “I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))

Romance chapter 9, our portion is verses 1 through 5. These are god's words I tell the truth in christ. I am not lying. My conscience also bury me witness. In the holy spirit. That. I have great sorrow and continual grief. In my heart. 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 overall? The eternally blessed god.

Amen. Oh man, so far the reading. Of god's inspired and inherent work. What the apostle is describing here, is truly an amazing grace. He has not speaking like a pagan speaks. Whose yes, is not. Yes. And whose no is not. No. And so when he uses four different sorts, Of oath statements in the first verse.

He's doing so not because there's any question. As to whether or not what he's saying is true. Here speaking as an apostle and he's writing under the inspiration of the holy spirit. And he knows it's true and he knows, we know it's true. And that he uses these four oath type statements.

To communicate the greatness. The amazingness of the grace that god has worked in his heart. You remember what he was like when he was on the other side? When he opposed the name of the lord jesus christ. When he was outside of christ although a member of the visible church and how he was full of hatred and murder.

Now he is the object of that hatred and his many times been the attempted object of that murder. And yet he does not reciprocate in kind. He loves them with profound. Great love you. Even desires their salvation so much that if it were possible he would be willing to give up his own.

And so he gives us these four statements, i tell the truth. In christ. Number one. I am not lying. Number two, my conscience, bears. Me witness number three, in the holy spirit. Number four and we could even add make in Christ. A fifth component, stacking up. These statements that this is an actual reality of what God has worked in his art.

And it's a reality that has been produced by. The holy spirit through. Union with jesus christ, which means It's a reality that is available to us as well. That the god who worked such grace in the heart of the chief of sinners. Will work by the same grace. In the hearts of all of us, great.

Sinners. So the first thing to see here is that it is an amazing grace. The second thing to see is what that grace produces. Because in an age, when there are those who are perishing In an age, when there are those who are opposing to christ and denying the glory of god, And an age when these are found, not only Outside the church.

But even in the church, And in particular, at this time in the church, That is the visible church, constituted sinai. Israel. And that is not only covenantally israel. But also

ethnically israel. The israel that is according to the flesh, the israel that is biologically. Um, Inclusive of the fathers.

Especially abraham, Isaac and jacob but not just abraham, Isaac and jacob. Those. Those other fathers who came from them. And we're descended from them, according to the flesh and then from whom even the lord, jesus descent is descended, according to the flesh. Even among these. There are those who are perishing in their sins who are currently a cursed apart from christ.

This is an age in which grace produces, not only joy. But also, sorrow. Where the spirit produces in us, not only joy. In the lord rejoice in the lord always, but also sorrow. Mourn with those who mourn and look at the type of sorrow. Not just sorrow verse 2 but great sorrow.

Not just grief verse 2, but continual grief. And not just great sorrow and continual grief, that is superficially displayed. But that is from the heart and felt Deeply in the heart. If we are looking for an experience of god that does not include great grief and continual sorrow in the heart than we are looking for a different experience of god.

Then the holy spirit produced from christ, in the heart of the apostle. Paul. But it's important that we see what this grief is over. Because a man who continued who continually goes around grieved. Because the Creation that has broken is not. Serving his appetites and his whims. Like, he wished does not have the grief and sorrow here.

The grief and sorrow here is, especially over. The perishing souls. Of sinners. And particularly perishing souls of centers. From either a Covenantal israel, divisible church or be Ethnic israel. Which is no longer. Now, the visible church But continues to be. Precious. Because of what God has done through them and who belongs.

To them. So the first thing we see in verse 1 is the greatness. The greatness of this gracious work, and Uh, verse 2. The second thing we see is the grief. That is. Um, of this gracious work. In verse 3, which we already began to cover. The cause, or Uh, the extent of this grief.

Even for i could wish that i myself were a cursed from christ anathema, from christ under The wrath of god and separated from christ. My brethren my countrymen, according to the flesh who are israelites. Now, we're going to get to. Uh we're going to get to those for whom he is thus grieved, but you hear what he's saying?

He says, i wish i could be damned After having been saved. I wish i could be separated from christ. And, of course, or i could wish not. I do wish the intensity of his desire is that if it were possible he would be willing to give up his salvation.

He would be willing to be separated from christ in order for all of the Israel, the israelites to be saved. Which is amazing thing for him to say. Because he knows that this isn't God's intention. He can't be separated from christ. Nothing can separate us. From the love of god, which is in christ jesus.

The love of christ. What can separate us from the love of christ, answer. Nothing. Because he's god, And nothing can separate us from the love of god, which is in christ jesus. And yet he speaks in this way. So, great is his earnestness. That they would be saved that.

They would not perish. And i wonder how far we Could possibly have made it in grace, how far along? We possibly could be in grace and maturing and conformity to christ. If that which was in christ desiring, The salvation father forgive them for they know not what they do that which was in steven as he was conformed to christ the the last verse there.

In. Acts chapter 7. Uh, where Steven prays for his murderers, as he dies and now one of those murderers. Praying with this intensity. And wishing that, even he could be accursed for the sake of those who hate him.

How affected how afflicted are we? By the lost condition. Of many in the churches. The lost condition. Of those whom God has providentially assigned a closeness. Uh, to us in the flesh are relatives, who are lost. The lost condition of israel. And large measure now, not all israel. Praise god.

Just as Paul is going to say in a moment, i too and an israelite. There are Uh, some few who are converted. And yet so many. So many, who are Ethnically related to abraham and Isaac and jacob, and even jesus. And yet, they are perishing in their sin. They're apart from christ, they're going to hell.

Paul says, he wished that he could be a cursed for their sake. We can hardly remember to pray for them. Let alone making any effort or contributing. In some way to an attempt to gather them to send someone as an ambassador on behalf of christ. Announcing pleading with them.

To be reconciled to god. Through the lord jesus christ.

So, there is The great intensity here that challenges us, and Should drive us to look to god the holy spirit to provide in us. Uh, the same. Earnestness the same zeal. For the salvation of lost centers and particularly The salvation of israelites. On two counts, one covenantal. What you see in verse 4 and the other one.

Ethnic which you see in verse 5? And so you don't get out of viewing, israel. A special Just because the natural branches have been cut off from the tree. You don't get out of having a special love for and interest in and desire for the salvation of the jews.

Just because they have rejected the lord jesus, the lord, jesus himself, didn't set us, that example on the cross. But now, the double logic of verse 4 and verse 5, Also, do not let us get away with that, so, He is referring to his countrymen, according to the flesh, my brethren, my countrymen, according to the flesh, he's not talking about brothers in christ.

He's describing the jews. This is what he means when he says my countrymen. According to the flesh. He means the jews. But they are. Up until this point. The 7AD has not come yet. They are still. Uh the visible church as it were and there's this transition that's taking place of course, Because, The great prophet and the great high priest and the forever king has come.

And if And if messiah comes, and They reject him. And there are many Jews spread throughout the world who are being given at the time that paul writes this, the opportunity to To acknowledge the anointed, the messiah, and the Messiah, the christ. And some Many.

Uh, receiving him. And many others, of course are rejecting him. And so it's still the the church. It's still a covenant as entity. And you see that here who are israelites Verse 4 to whom pertain the adoption. And this especially is referring to Exodus chapter 4. And jeremiah 31 and hosea 11.

In which god refers to israel as his son. And so the first time we heard of god as father, It was not. With christ as the sun and whom we know him, supremely as father but it was with israel as an adopted son. So to whom pertain the adoption the glory, they are the ones who saw his glory at sinai.

And then also that special display of his glory. In Exodus 24, where the glory of god appeared on the mountain and the elders went up and they ate, they saw the lord. And they ate and drank in his presence and they didn't die. The to whom pertain the adoption the glory, the covenant.

Plural. Recognizing that the covenant that was made with Moses or with Israel under Moses at Sinai? And the implied covenant, which is later. Uh, referred to definitely as a covenant with David in Second Samuel 7. Our multiple administrations of a single covenant of grace. And so, the covenant. Um that was implied in the covenant of grace, even in Genesis 3 and the wake of the fall.

The covenant with Noah in Genesis 9, the covenant with Abraham in Genesis 12 and 15-17. And, Um, And later with Isaac and with Jacob. That all of these. Administrations of the covenant of grace, come down to us now. In the covenant under the Lord Jesus. Through Cyani through Jerusalem.

And so to them pertain the covenants, The giving of the law, the Uh, not only the terms of the, the covenant in each success of administration of the governance of grace, but particularly the expression of who God is, and what is God, is like and so the applications to us. Of the implications of who God is.

The service of God, the only right way to worship God and come near him. Which we've been hearing so much about on the second half of Exodus and the first half of Leviticus on the tabernacle. This was the one people among whom God made himself, redemptively known and gathered, people close to him to worship him.

And, of course, that way of coming to him, all pointed forward to Christ, And the promises. Uh, last thing in verse 4. So, all of those things that God had said, beginning with Moses and ending with you know from Genesis to Malachi. Those things that Jesus opened about himself.

Uh, to the people, to the two men on the road to Emmaus and Um, In Luke 24. Uh, the things that Paul showed and proved, from all the scriptures, Um, All of those promises of Christ. And so he lists all of these covenant advantages. They've had advantages that we now partake of. But they are rejecting these advantages.

And he's agonizing over them. As those who had belonged to God. Covenantally and through whom we now have all of these covenant benefits. But they are not just Israelites covenantally. Which they are at risk of losing and rejecting at this time. And when Romans 9 is written, and Which indeed would be completed.

But they may yet be grafted in and we are to desire and pray and labor that they would be grafted in because they are still precious to us even just ethnically. And that's where he goes in verse 5. Of whom are the fathers and from whom. According to the flesh.

Christ came. So, even apart from their covenantal standing. They're precious to us for their flesh connection. To the Lord, Jesus Christ for their flesh, connection to those believers that we have and that wonderful list and retelling in Hebrews chapter 11, You know, just like Uh, you and I when we hear about someone who's an unbeliever, we should always be grieved in our heart for them.

But when it's someone, that is a member of our church. Someone that That we love as our brother or sister and have a closeness to you. There's a greater grief and there's a greater sorrow. And a greater interest. Well, the Jews are descended from fathers in the faith, who are precious to us.

And so the Jews are precious to us for their sake. But there's one who is even more precious to us. And they are related to him. In. And that ethnic, and Uh, genetic. If we can speak that way, sort of way from whom according to the flesh Christ came. As we heard at the beginning of the, of the book of Romans, the son of God, the son of God, but also the son of David.

According to the flesh. And so they are precious to us for Jesus' sake, we have a Jewish redeemer. And so we ought to grieve over and desire. Grieve over their lost condition, desire, their salvation. Have a special love for them that continues. Even after they have been cut off.

You see Christ has always been the true Israel. He is. The true Israel from Genesis 3, even before there is a quote-unquote Israel. Uh, throughout the Old Testament. And, of course, now he has All the more plainly, so. And yet. There are many. Who have been cut off from him?

And for whom we should long that they be grafted back into him. This. Despising, or Hostility or animosity. That many believers indulge. Towards Jewish people. It does not come from Jesus. Does not come from the Jesus who has reproduced his heart and mind toward the Jesus and Stephen. That does not come from the Jesus.

He has reproduced his heart and mind in Paul. And, Um, Paul. Whom now by the Holy Spirit writes to us. Of how we should have great sorrow and continual grief in our heart. Those who are our kinsmen according to the flesh. Those who are in the covenant but not of it.

Gospel hypocrites, are false professors in the church. And still for, The Jews themselves. This part of what the Holy Spirit produces when he does an amazing work of grace. In the heart. Oh man, let's pray. Our Father in heaven. We thank you for This part of your instruction, we thank you for how it even.

Connect to current events. And we do, pray that That which is going on now. Would be means by which you alarm. Those Jews who are outside of Christ. We know Lord, that the way that You bring them to faith through the preaching of your word and even Through jealousy.

When? Those from other nations. Are brought to their great prophet and great high priest and forever king. And we do is pray, especially for the Christians who are persecuted from both sides in that conflict. But just now Lord, we pray that your Spirit would guard our hearts and minds.

And that he would produce in us the mind and heart of Christ that we see reflected in the apostle here. That we would so desire, their salvation. As. That we could wish to be accursed from Christ ourselves for their sake. Lord help us. For we are not so brokenhearted over the perishing from all the nations.

As we ought to be. And so we pray for your Spirit to apply this portion of your word to our hearts. We ask In Jesus name. Amen.