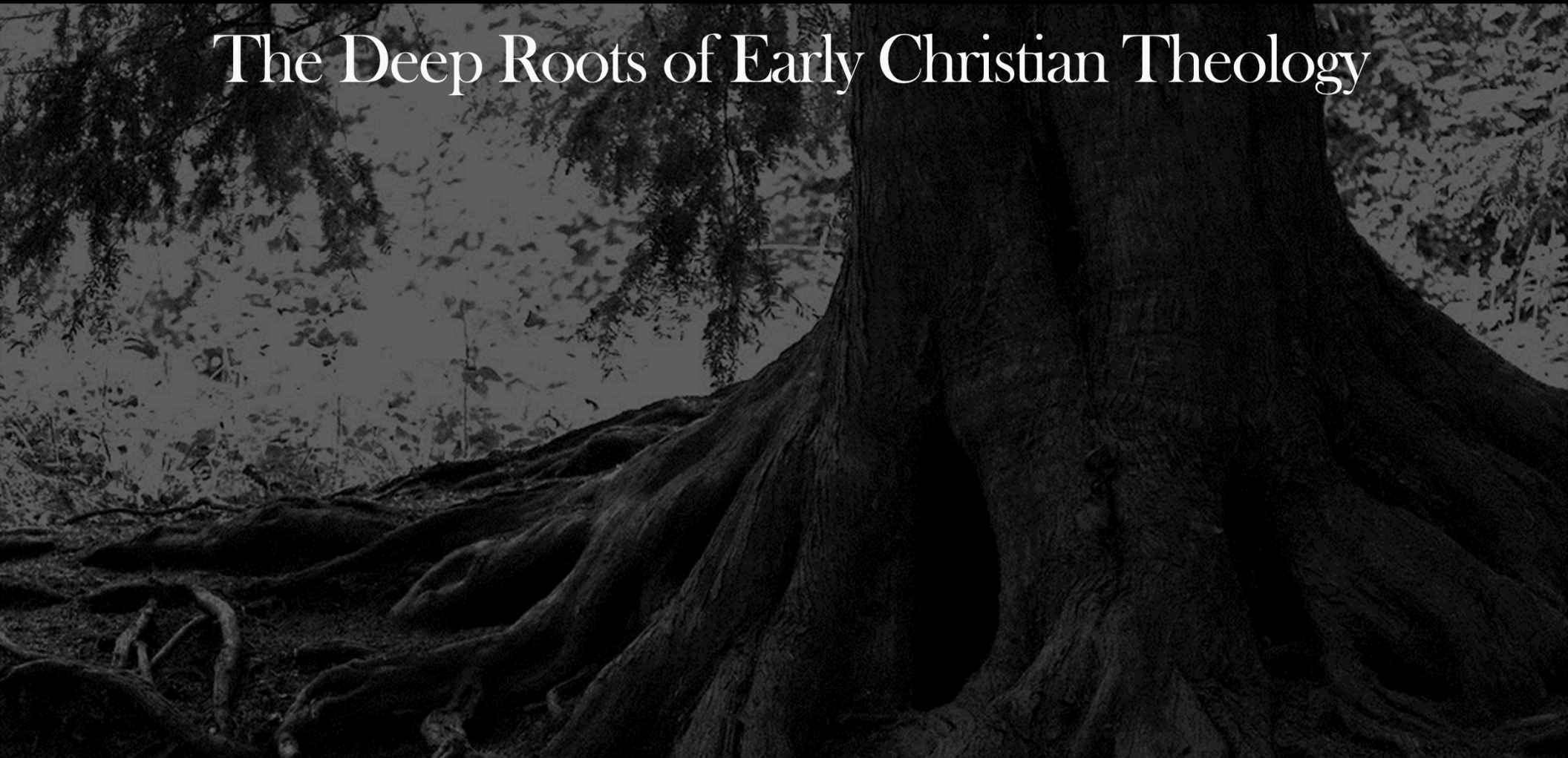




THE ANÁSTASIS CENTER
FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & MINISTRY

Reconstruction

The Deep Roots of Early Christian Theology





Reconstruction

The Deep Roots of Early Christian Theology

- 10/2 Slavery: How the Early Church Got It Right
- 10/9 Women in the Early Church
- 10/16 Children in the Early Church
- 10/23 The Canonization of the New Testament:
Why Not the Gospels of Thomas and Judas?
- 10/30 The Nicene Creed, the Trinity, and the Limitations of Human Language
- 11/6 The Goodness of God and the Healing of Creation
According to Athanasius of Alexandria
- 11/13 Hell as the Love of God
- 11/20 Christian Mysticism and the Shaping of Desire:
Gregory of Nyssa and the Vision of Ecstasy
- 12/4 Qumran: A Proto-Christian Sect and What It Means for
Jewish-Christian Relations Today
- 12/11 Romans 9 – 11, Predestination and Free Will, the Hardening of Hearts, and
Ongoing Outreach to the Jewish Community



THE ANÁSTASIS CENTER
FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & MINISTRY

Romans 9 – 11, Predestination and Free Will, the Hardening of Hearts, and Ongoing Outreach to the Jewish Community

Mako A. Nagasawa

The Anástasis Center for Christian Education and Ministry

Outline

- Paul's Puzzling Language
- Romans 9 – 11 in Outline
 - Paul's Mission
 - Israel: An Ethnicity or a Faith?
 - Hardness of Heart
 - Did God's Word Fail?
 - Christ is the Telos of the Covenant
- “Double Predestination”
- Revisiting What's at Stake
- Appendix A: Ephesians 1:3 – 14; John 6:37 – 44; Romans 8:28 – 30

Outline

- Paul's Puzzling Language
- Romans 9 – 11 in Outline
 - Paul's Mission
 - Israel: An Ethnicity or a Faith?
 - Hardness of Heart
 - Did God's Word Fail?
 - Christ is the Telos of the Covenant
- “Double Predestination”
- Revisiting What's at Stake
- Appendix A: Ephesians 1:3 – 14; John 6:37 – 44; Romans 8:28 – 30

Paul's Puzzling Language

- In Romans 9 – 11:
 - The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart
 - The Hardening of Israel's Heart

Paul's Puzzling Language

- 9:17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, 'For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and that My Name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth.' ¹⁸ So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He **hardens** whom He desires. ¹⁹ You will say to me then, 'Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?' ²⁰ On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God?

Paul's Puzzling Language

- ^{11:7} What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were **hardened**; ⁸ just as it is written, 'God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes to see not and ears to hear not, down to this very day'... ²⁵ For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery – so that you will not be wise in your own estimation – that a **partial hardening** has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in...

Paul's Puzzling Language: What's At Stake

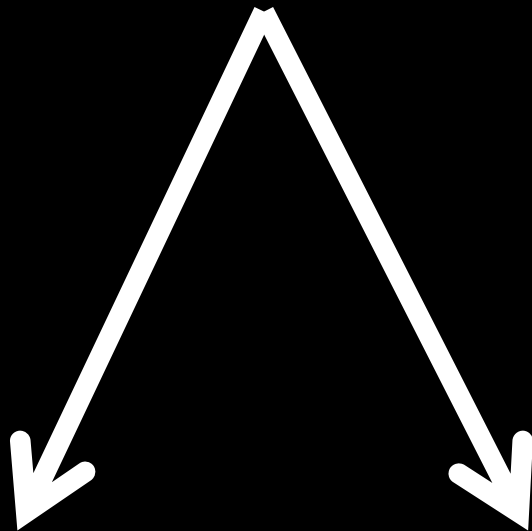
- How to understand God's character? Does God cause unbelief? Is God partly evil? Arbitrary?
- How to read Romans?
- Whether to trust Paul's use of the Hebrew Scriptures?
- How to explain Jewish unbelief?
- Did God just use Israel and trick them?
- How to interpret unbelief in general?
- How to read Scripture? In what sense can we trust it?

Discussion Question (choose one)

- How to understand God's character? Does God cause unbelief? Is God partly evil? Arbitrary?
- How to read Romans?
- Whether to trust Paul's use of the Hebrew Scriptures?
- How to explain Jewish unbelief?
- Did God just use Israel and trick them?
- How to interpret unbelief in general?
- How to read Scripture? In what sense can we trust it?

Paul's Puzzling Language: Hardened Hearts and God's Character

Romans 1 – 11



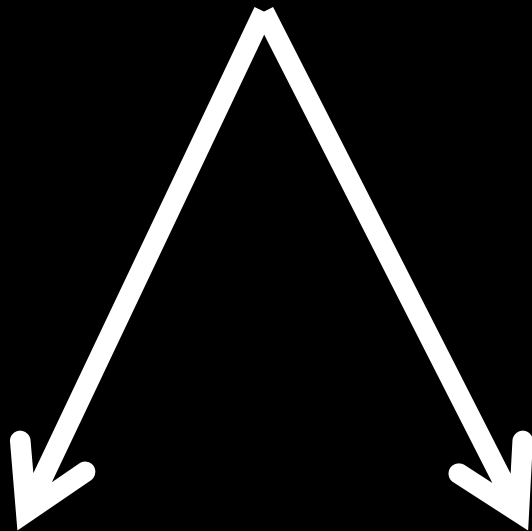
God saves
some
(mercy):
Romans 1 – 8

God damns
others
(retributive
justice):
Romans 9 – 11

Paul's Puzzling Language: Hardened Hearts and God's Character

God is arbitrary:

Romans 1 – 11



God saves
some
(mercy):

Romans 1 – 8

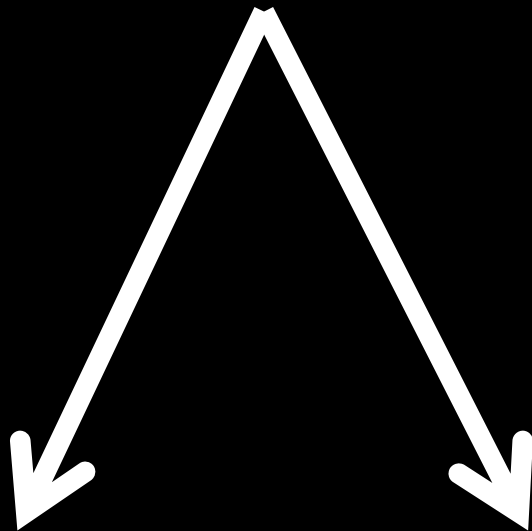
God damns
others
(retributive
justice):

Romans 9 – 11

Paul's Puzzling Language: Hardened Hearts and God's Character

God is arbitrary:

Romans 1 – 11



God saves
some
(mercy):

Romans 1 – 8

God damns
others
(retributive
justice):

Romans 9 – 11

God is loving
and missional:

Romans 1 – 11



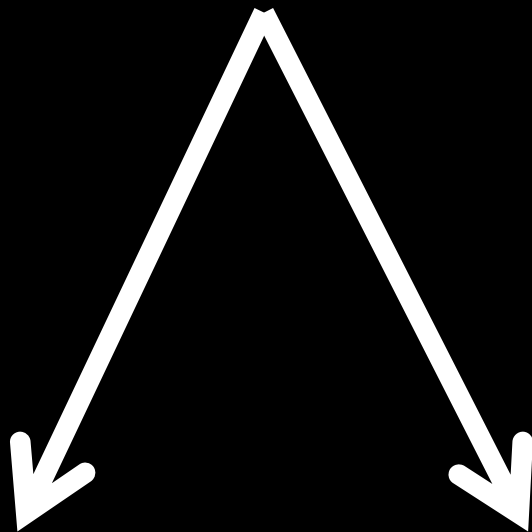
God offers
Jesus' new
humanity to
all:

Romans 1 – 11

Paul's Puzzling Language: Hardened Hearts and God's Character

God is arbitrary:

Romans 1 – 11



God saves
some
(mercy):

Romans 1 – 8

God damns
others
(retributive
justice):

Romans 9 – 11

God is loving
and missional:

Romans 1 – 11



God offers
Jesus' new
humanity to
all:

Romans 1 – 11

God's wrath is
an activity of
God's love, and
serves God's
love

God
condemned sin
in the flesh of
Jesus:

Romans 8:3; 6:6

Paul's Puzzling Language: Hardened Hearts and God's Character

- Who is hardened? Most people
- Who hardens: God alone chooses
- Duration: lasts forever
- Consequences: eternal
- Purpose: eternal sorting
 - God saves: some
 - God damns: some
- God is arbitrary
- God's justice: retributive

Paul's Puzzling Language: Hardened Hearts and God's Character

- Who is hardened? Most people
- Who hardens: God alone chooses
- Duration: lasts forever
- Consequences: eternal
- Purpose: eternal sorting
 - God saves: some
 - God damns: some
- God is arbitrary
- God's justice: retributive
- Who is hardened? **Only Pharaoh and some Jews**
- Who hardens: **human beings; God reinforced**
- Duration: **momentary**
- Consequences: **historical**
- Purpose: **show more mercy**
 - God saves: intends all
 - God damns: intends none
- God is **loving & missional**
- God's justice: **restorative**

Outline

- Paul's Puzzling Language
- **Romans 9 – 11 in Outline**
 - Paul's Mission
 - Israel: An Ethnicity or a Faith?
 - Hardness of Heart
 - Did God's Word Fail?
 - Christ is the Telos of the Covenant
- "Double Predestination"
- Revisiting What's at Stake
- Appendix A: Ephesians 1:3 – 14; John 6:37 – 44; Romans 8:28 – 30

Romans 9 – 11 in Outline

A. **Mission:** Paul wants more Jews to know Jesus (9:1 – 6)

How to understand what comes here in between?

How does his section support Paul's mission?

A'. **Mission:** Paul more motivated to share Jesus with both Gentiles and Jews; God desires to show mercy to all. (11:28 – 36)

Romans 9 – 11 in Outline

- A. **Mission**: Paul wants more Jews to know Jesus (9:1 – 6)
 - B. **'Israel' is not ethnic or genetic**; God pruned down (9:6 – 13)
 - C. **God hardened hearts** of Pharaoh and Israelites (9:14 – 24)
 - D. **God's Word did not fail**: Israel's remnant (9:25 – 33)
 - E. Christ is the *telos* of the covenant (10:1 – 13)
 - D'. **God's Word did not fail**: Gentiles (10:14 – 11:6)
 - C'. **God hardened hearts** of Israelites (11:7 – 12)
 - B'. **'Israel' is not ethnic or genetic**; God grafting in (11:13 – 27)
 - A'. **Mission**: Paul more motivated to share Jesus with both Gentiles and Jews; God desires to show mercy to all. (11:28 – 36)

Mission: For Jews and Gentiles

- A. **Mission:** Paul wants more Jews to know Jesus (9:1 – 6)
 - B. 'Israel' is not ethnic or genetic; God pruned down (9:6 – 13)
 - C. God hardened hearts of Pharaoh and Israelites (9:14 – 24)
 - D. God's Word did not fail: Israel's remnant (9:25 – 33)
 - E. Christ is the *telos* of the covenant (10:1 – 13)
 - D'. God's Word did not fail: Gentiles (10:14 – 11:6)
 - C'. God hardened hearts of Israelites (11:7 – 12)
 - B'. 'Israel' is not ethnic or genetic; God grafting in (11:13 – 27)
- A'. **Mission:** Paul more motivated to share Jesus with both Gentiles and Jews; God desires to show mercy to all. (11:28 – 36)

Mission: For Jews

- 9:1 I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, ² that **I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart.** ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of **my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh,** ⁴**who are Israelites,** to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, ⁵ whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

Mission: For Jews and Gentiles

- ^{11:13} But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow **I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen** and save some of **them**... ³⁰ For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of **their** disobedience, ³¹ so **these** also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you **they also may now be shown mercy**. ³² For God has shut up (i.e. verbally silenced, cf. Rom.3:20) **all** in disobedience so that He may show mercy to **all**. ³³ Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!... ³⁶ For from Him and through Him and to Him are **all things**. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Israel: An Ethnicity or a Faith?

- A. Mission: Paul wants more Jews to know Jesus (9:1 – 6)
 - B. **'Israel' is not ethnic or genetic**; God pruned down (9:6 – 13)
 - C. God hardened hearts of Pharaoh and Israelites (9:14 – 24)
 - D. God's Word did not fail: Israel's remnant (9:25 – 33)
 - E. Christ is the *telos* of the covenant (10:1 – 13)
 - D'. God's Word did not fail: Gentiles (10:14 – 11:6)
 - C'. God hardened hearts of Israelites (11:7 – 12)
 - B'. **'Israel' is not ethnic or genetic**; God grafting in (11:13 – 27)
- A'. Mission: Paul more motivated to share Jesus with both Gentiles and Jews; God desires to show mercy to all. (11:28 – 36)

Israel: An Ethnicity or a Faith?

- “Jacob have I loved; Esau I hated”
 - Paul quotes Malachi 1:2 – 3 in Romans 9:13
 - A demonstration of God’s arbitrary will to choose who belongs to Him or not?
 - Or something else?

Israel: An Ethnicity or a Faith?

- Esau and God (Gen.32 – 33)
 - Esau's generosity and eagerness to reconcile with Jacob
 - Jacob says the "face of Esau" is like the "face of God" (Gen.32:30; 33:10) God's blessing of fertility and prosperity also fell on Esau and his family (Gen.36)
- "Jacob have I loved, Esau I hated"
 - God narrowed the covenant people according to Jacob's faith, for others including Esau
 - Not God's emotions towards Jacob and Esau
 - Unique, not generalizable

Israel: An Ethnicity or a Faith?

- People not descended from Abraham and Sarah who joined Israel
 - Shua's daughter (Genesis 38:2): Canaanite woman, married Judah
 - Tamar (Genesis 38:6): Canaanite woman, married Judah's son
 - The "mixed multitude" from Egypt (Exodus 12:38 – 49): became part of Israel during the Exodus and was probably circumcised (see Origen, et.al.)
 - Caleb (Numbers 32:12; Genesis 15:19): the son of Jephunneh, who was identified with the tribe of Judah but was ethnically a Kenizzite, a Canaanite
 - Rahab and household (Joshua 6:17 – 25): a Canaanite family who joined Israel during the conquest of Canaan; Rahab married Salmon – of the tribe of Judah – and became an ancestor of King David
 - The Gibeonites (Joshua 9 – 11): a Canaanite tribe
 - Ruth (Ruth 4:13): a Moabitess who married Boaz – who was of the tribe of Judah and became an ancestor of King David
 - Bathsheba the Hittite (2 Samuel 11 – 12): became a wife of King David
- Warnings against marrying outsiders (e.g. Neh.13) are an inter-faith issue, not an inter-ethnic issue

Israel: An Ethnicity or a Faith?

- Believers who remained outside the Jewish covenant
 - Melchizedek in Gen.14
 - Abimelech in Gen.20
 - Esau in Gen.33 and 36
 - Balaam in Num.22 – 24 (?)
 - Naaman the Syrian in 2 Ki.5
 - Ninevites in Jonah
 - Nebuchadnezzar in Dan.2 – 4
- Belief in God and participation in the Sinai covenant were not absolutely synonymous
 - For more explanation of the Jewish covenant, see *Why Choose a Chosen People?*
 - <https://www.anastasiscenter.org/gods-goodness-israel-why>
- In light of Jesus, the question is, what and who is “Israel”?

The Hardening of Hearts

- A. Mission: Paul wants more Jews to know Jesus (9:1 – 6)
 - B. 'Israel' is not ethnic or genetic; God pruned down (9:6 – 13)
 - C. **God hardened hearts** of Pharaoh and Israelites (9:14 – 24)
 - D. God's Word did not fail: Israel's remnant (9:25 – 33)
 - E. Christ is the *telos* of the covenant (10:1 – 13)
 - D'. God's Word did not fail: Gentiles (10:14 – 11:6)
 - C'. **God hardened hearts** of Israelites (11:7 – 12)
 - B'. 'Israel' is not ethnic or genetic; God grafting in (11:13 – 27)
- A'. Mission: Paul more motivated to share Jesus with both Gentiles and Jews; God desires to show mercy to all. (11:28 – 36)

The Hardening of Hearts: Pharaoh

Plague	Exodus Text	Type	Warning?	Time of Warning	Instruction Formula	Who Speaks?	Who Hardens Pharaoh's Heart?
1	7:14 – 24	Blood	Yes	In the morning	Station yourself	Aaron	Pharaoh
2	7:15 – 8:11	Frogs	Yes	None	Go to Pharaoh	Aaron	Pharaoh
3	8:12 – 15	Lice	None	None	None	Aaron	Pharaoh
4	8:16 – 32	Flies	Yes	In the morning	Station yourself	God	Pharaoh
5	9:1 – 7	Pestilence	Yes	None	Go to Pharaoh	God	Pharaoh
6	9:8 – 12	Boils	None	None	None	Moses	God
7	9:13 – 35	Hail	Yes	In the morning	Station yourself	Moses	Pharaoh
8	10:1 – 20	Locust	Yes	None	Go to Pharaoh	Moses	God
9	10:21 – 29	Darkness	None	None	None	Moses	God
10	11:4 – 7 & 12:29 – 30	Death of Firstborn	Yes	None	None	God	God

Sources: Nahum Sarna, *Exploring Exodus* (New York: Schocken, 1996), p.76; cf. Umberto Cassuto, *Exodus* (Chicago: Publisher's Row, 2005), p.92 – 93; James K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p.144 – 155

The Hardening of Hearts: Pharaoh

- The Significance of the Exodus Narrative
 - Likely a critique of the Egyptian pantheon of gods
 - God relaxed boundaries established in creation: water/land; etc.
 - Lesson: Attacking Israel brings about an undoing of creation
 - Clearly one story woven tightly together using literary patterns
 - The number 10 is associated with a foundation on which more is built
 - Ten utterances of God in Genesis 1:1 – 2:3
 - Ten people listed between Adam and Noah in Genesis 5
 - Ten generations listed between Shem and Abraham in Genesis 11
 - Ten genealogies before the nation Israel in Genesis 2 – 50
 - Ten plagues on Egypt in Exodus 7 – 12
 - Ten commandments for Israel in Exodus 19
 - Ten healings by Jesus in Matthew 8 – 9, which is Matthew's compressed summary
- Was Paul pulling one part of it out of context?

The Hardening of Hearts: Pharaoh

- Evidence that Pharaoh was First to Harden His Heart:
 - God predicts it
 - “But I know that the king of Egypt will not permit you to go, except under compulsion. So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My miracles which I shall do in the midst of it; and after that he will let you go. 21 I will grant this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be that when you go, you will not go empty-handed.” (Ex.3:19 – 20)
 - God says He will further harden Pharaoh’s heart, to make 10 numerical signs
 - “The LORD said to Moses, ‘When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh **all the wonders which I have put in your power**; but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go.’ (Ex.4:21)
 - “But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart **that I may multiply My signs and My wonders** in the land of Egypt.” (Ex.7:3)

The Hardening of Hearts: Pharaoh

- Pharaoh's Agency and Personal Responsibility (Plagues 1 – 4)
 - (PASSIVE VOICE, ASCRIBED TO PHARAOH) 7:13 Yet **Pharaoh's heart was hardened**, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said. 14 Then the LORD said to Moses, '**Pharaoh's heart is stubborn; he refuses to let the people go...**
 - (PASSIVE VOICE) 7:22 But the magicians of Egypt did the same with their secret arts; and **Pharaoh's heart was hardened**, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said. 23 Then Pharaoh turned and went into his house with no concern even for this.
 - (ACTIVE VOICE) 8:15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, **he hardened his heart** and did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.
 - (PASSIVE VOICE) 8:19 Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, 'This is the finger of God.' But **Pharaoh's heart was hardened**, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said. (ACTIVE VOICE) 8:32 But **Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also**, and he did not let the people go (connects 4th occasion to previous)
 - '...as the Lord had said' (Ex.8:19): God foresaw Pharaoh's choices (Ex.3:19 – 21)

The Hardening of Hearts: Pharaoh

- Pharaoh's Agency and God's Agency (Plagues 5 – 7)
 - (**PASSIVE VOICE**) 9:7 Pharaoh sent, and behold, there was not even one of the livestock of Israel dead. But **the heart of Pharaoh was hardened**, and he did not let the people go.
 - (**ACTIVE VOICE**) 9:12 And **the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart**, and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses.
 - (**PASSIVE VOICE**) 9:34 But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, **he sinned again and hardened his heart**, he and his servants. ³⁵ **Pharaoh's heart was hardened**, and he did not let the sons of Israel go, just as the LORD had spoken through Moses.

The Hardening of Hearts: Pharaoh

- Pharaoh's Agency and God's Agency (Plagues 8 – 10)
 - (ACTIVE VOICE) ^{10:1} Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may perform these signs of Mine among them, ² and that you may tell in the hearing of your son, and of your grandson, how I made a mockery of the Egyptians and how I performed My signs among them, that you may know that I am the LORD'... ^{10:20} But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go.
 - (ACTIVE VOICE) ^{10:27} But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he was not willing to let them go.
 - (ACTIVE VOICE) ^{11:10} Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh; yet the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go out of his land.

The Hardening of Hearts

- “Hardness of Heart”: Literary roots
 - “Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” (Genesis 2:7)
 - “Formed”: יָצַר (yatsar); can be applied to humans and God making both physical things and also plans
 - A human potter who forms out of clay a vessel: Isa.29:16; 41:25; Jer.18:4 (2x); 18:6 (2x); 1 Chr.4:23; Lam.4:2; Zech.11:13 (2x)
 - A human carver of wood, graven images: Isa.44:9,10,12; Hab.2:18 (2x)
 - A human person/ruler who devises mischief: Ps.94:20
 - God formed: Adam (Gen.2:7,8), beasts and birds (Gen.2:19), Israel as a people (Isa.27:11; 43:1,21; 44:21; 45:9 (2x); 45:11; 64:7); even from the womb (Isa.44:2,24); the servant of Yahweh from the womb (Isa.49:5); the individual person (Isa.43:7); Jeremiah in the womb (Jer.1:5); the eye of man (Ps.94:9); the locust (Am.7:1); Leviathan (Ps.104:26); the dry land (Ps.95:5); the earth (Isa.45:18 (2x)); the mountains (Am.4:13; Jer.10:16; 51:19); light (Isa.45:7); summer and winter (Ps.74:17); the spirit of a person (Zech.12:1), and the hearts of people (Ps.33:15).
 - God formed: plans (Isaiah 22:11); an occurrence (Isa.37:26 = 2 Ki.19:25; 2Ki 46:11; Jer.18:11; 33:2)

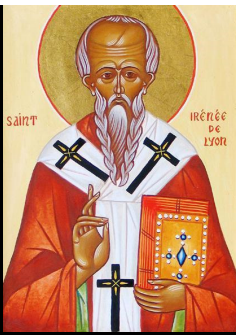
The Hardening of Hearts

- “Hardness of Heart”: Jeremiah’s potter-clay image
 - ^{18:1} The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD saying, ² “Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will announce My words to you.”
³ Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something on the wheel. ⁴ But the vessel that he was making of clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter; so he remade it into another vessel, as it pleased the potter to make. ⁵ Then the word of the LORD came to me saying, ⁶ “Can I not, O house of Israel, deal with you as this potter does?” declares the LORD. “Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel.” (Jeremiah 18:1 – 6)
 - Jeremiah refers to the reshaping of Israel in Babylon (where Abraham and Sarah came from)
 - Prior to the Babylonian exile, Israel made choices to obey or disobey God, showing at least some genuine human agency

The Hardening of Hearts

- “Hardness of Heart”: Moses on human being – becoming
 - ^{15:7} If there is a poor man with you, one of your brothers, in any of your towns in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, **you shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand from your poor brother;** ⁸ but you shall freely open your hand to him, and shall generously lend him sufficient for his need in whatever he lacks. (Deuteronomy 15:7 – 8)
 - God desires softness of heart, and we have choice in the matter

The Hardening of Hearts



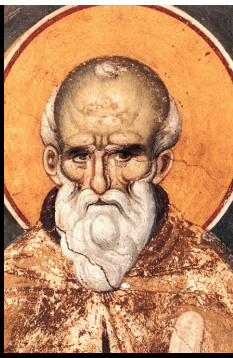
- “If, then, thou art God's workmanship, await the hand of thy Maker which creates everything in due time; in due time as far as thou art concerned, whose creation is being carried out. **Offer to Him thy heart in a soft and tractable state**, and preserve the form in which the Creator has fashioned thee, having moisture in thyself, lest, by **becoming hardened**, thou lose the impressions of His fingers. But by preserving the framework thou shalt ascend to that which is perfect, for the **moist clay** which is in thee is hidden [there] by the workmanship of God. His hand fashioned thy substance; He will cover thee over within and without with pure gold and silver, and He will adorn thee to such a degree, that even ‘the King Himself shall have pleasure in thy beauty.’ [Ps.45:11] But if thou, **being obstinately hardened**, dost reject the operation of His skill, and show thyself ungrateful towards Him, because thou wert created a [mere] man, by becoming thus ungrateful to God, thou hast at once lost both His workmanship and life. For creation is an attribute of the goodness of God but to be created is that of human nature. If then, thou shalt deliver up to Him what is thine, that is, faith towards Him and subjection, thou shalt receive His handiwork, and shall be a perfect work of God.”
 - Irenaeus of Lyons (130 – 202), *Against Heresies* 4.39.2

The Hardening of Hearts



- “But, to establish the point more clearly, it will not be superfluous to employ another illustration, as if, e.g., one were to say that it is **the sun which hardens and liquefies, although liquefying and hardening are things of an opposite nature**. Now it is not incorrect to say that the sun, by one and the same power of its heat, melts wax indeed, but dries up and hardens mud not that its power operates one way upon mud, and in another way upon wax; but that **the qualities of mud and wax are different, although according to nature they are one thing, both being from the earth**. In this way, then, one and the same working upon the part of God, which was administered by Moses in signs and wonders, **made manifest the hardness of Pharaoh, which he had conceived in the intensity of his wickedness but exhibited the obedience of those other Egyptians** who were intermingled with the Israelites, and who are recorded to have quitted Egypt at the same time with the Hebrews.”
 - Origen of Alexandria (184 – 254), *De Principiis*, book 3, chapter 1 “On the Freedom of the Will,” paragraph 11), probably drawing the image of wax-mud from Jewish commentator Philo of Alexandria (*Quis rer.div.her.*181:3, 41).

The Hardening of Hearts



- “God is the sun of justice, as it is written, who shines rays of goodness on simply everyone. The soul develops according to its free will into either wax because of its love for God or into mud because of its love for matter. Thus just as by nature the mud is **dried out** by the sun and the wax is automatically **softened**, so also every soul which loves matter and the world and has fixed its mind far from God is **hardened** as mud according to its free will and by itself advances to its perdition, as did Pharaoh. However, every soul which loves God is **softened** as wax, and receiving divine impressions and characters it becomes the dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”
 - Maximus the Confessor (580 – 662), *Selected Writings*, Chapters on Knowledge, paragraph 12 (Mahweh, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), p.130

The Hardening of Hearts

- In Exodus 7 – 11 and Romans 9 – 11, God either:
 - Knew a few cases (plagues 6, 8, 9, 10) when His word would push Pharaoh into resistance (sequential)
 - Pharaoh's disposition anyway
 - Did God send Pharaoh a vision of Israel flourishing in the garden land?
 - Did God send King Saul a vision of David on the throne? (1 Sam.18:10)
- Philo, Irenaeus, Origen, and Maximus:
 - View “hardening” as simultaneous, due to both Pharaoh and God
 - Deny divine determinism
 - Demonstrate strong traditions of Jewish and early Christian belief in human free will regarding creation and redemption

Discussion Question

1. God hardened Pharaoh's heart: sequential or simultaneous? Your thoughts?

The Hardening of Hearts

- Every Christian theologian and commentator prior to Augustine strongly believed in human free will
 - Catholics take Augustine as still affirming human free will
 - See “Human Free Will in the Early Church Fathers”
 - <https://www.anastasiscenter.org/gods-goodness-creation>

The Hardening of Hearts

- The Gospel of Mark: “Hardness of heart” comes up for each person, eventually, at variable times
 - “After looking around at them [the Pharisees] with anger, grieved at their **hardness of heart**, [Jesus] said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’” (Mk.3:5)
 - “Then he got into the boat with them [the disciples], and the wind stopped; and they were utterly astonished, for they had not gained any insight from the incident of the loaves, but their **heart was hardened**.” (Mk.6:51 – 52; passive voice and their responsibility)
 - “Jesus said to them, ‘Because of your **hardness of heart** he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation...’” (Mk.10:2 – 6)

The Hardening of Hearts

- The Gospel of Mark: Human “hearts” are corrupted from the fall and further corruptible by choices
 - “And He was saying, ‘That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.’” (Mk.7:20 – 23)

The Hardening of Hearts

- The Pentateuch of Moses in Romans 9 – 11
- A. God's Spirit "hovers" as God creates heaven and earth; God places humanity in a garden land, but they leave in exile and with a corruption/corruptibility in human "hearts" (Gen.3:7; 4:11; 6:5 – 6; 8:21); origin of all nations (Gen.1 – 11).

[...]

See my paper, "The Chiastic Structure of the Pentateuch," found here:
<https://www.anastasiscenter.org/bible-torah>

[...]

- A.' God must circumcise human "hearts" after Israel's exile (30:6); "heaven and earth" (32:1) witness destiny of Israel and nations; God's Spirit "hovers" (32:11) over Israel as they enter garden land (Dt.30:1 – 34:12).

The Hardening of Hearts

- Pentateuch of Moses: Corrupted and further corruptible
 - Genealogy of heaven and earth (Gen.2:4 – 4:26)
 - “She saw... took... ate... and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened” (Gen.3:6 – 7) “Now you are cursed from the ground” (Gen.4:11)
 - Genealogy of Adam (Gen.5:1 – 6:8)
 - “Then the LORD saw... that every intent of the thoughts of his **heart** was only evil continually.” (Gen.6:5 – 6)
 - Genealogy of Noah (Gen.6:9 – 9:29)
 - “the LORD said to Himself, ‘...the intent of man’s **heart** is evil from his youth...’ (Gen.8:21)
- Finale:
 - “Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your **heart** and the **heart** of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your **heart** and with all your soul, so that you may live.” (Dt.30:1 – 6; cf.Lev.26:49)

The Hardening of Hearts

- Jeremiah: Corrupted and further corruptible
 - “Break up your fallow ground, and do not sow among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the LORD and remove the foreskins of your **heart**...” (Jer.4:3; cf. Jesus’ parable of soils)
 - “...all the nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised of **heart**.” (Jer.9:26)
 - “The sin of Judah is written down with an iron stylus; with a diamond point it is engraved upon the tablet of their **heart** and on the horns of their altars...The **heart** is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it? I, the LORD, search the **heart**, I test the mind...” (Jer.17:1 – 10)
 - “I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah... I will put My law within them and on their **heart** I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” (Jer.31:31 – 34)

The Hardening of Hearts

- Romans: Corrupted, further corruptible, healing in Jesus
 - “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the **heart**, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.” (Rom.2:28 – 29)
 - “the faithfulness of Christ Jesus” (Rom.3:22; Gal.2:20)
 - “For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection, knowing this, that our **old self** was crucified with him, in order that our **body of sin** might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin.” (Rom.6:5 – 7)
 - “For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in **the likeness of sinful flesh** and as an offering for sin, **He condemned sin in the flesh.**” (Rom.8:3)

Christian Views of Hardened Hearts

- “Hardness of heart” can refer to the general condition of corruption from the fall, and also the effect of further personal choices
- God only hardened hearts on two occasions
- Who is hardened? **Only Pharaoh and some Jews**
- Who hardens: **human beings; God reinforced**
- Duration: **momentary**
- Consequences: **historical**
- Purpose: **show more mercy**
 - God saves: intends all
 - God damns: intends none
- God is **loving & missional**
- God’s justice: **restorative**

Christian Views of Hardened Hearts

- First Exodus
 - Israel out of Pharaoh's rule and into the garden land (also Dt.3:30)
- Second Exodus
 - Jesus out of fallen human nature and into a fixed and fulfilled human nature (cf. his "exodon" in Lk.9:31)
- Who is hardened? **Only Pharaoh and some Jews**
- Who hardens: **human beings; God reinforced**
- Duration: **momentary**
- Consequences: **historical**
- Purpose: **show more mercy**
 - God saves: intends all
 - God damns: intends none
- God is **loving & missional**
- God's justice: **restorative**

Christian Views of Hardened Hearts

- Notice the symmetry
 - Gentile ruler and court
 - Jewish rulers
- Hardness of heart comes about when God's love for others pushes too far
 - Pharaoh feared loss of Jewish slaves
 - Jewish rulers feared their loss of temple-centric power, inclusion of the Gentiles
- Who is hardened? **Only Pharaoh and some Jews**
- Who hardens: **human beings; God reinforced**
- Duration: **momentary**
- Consequences: **historical**
- Purpose: **show more mercy**
 - God saves: intends all
 - God damns: intends none
- God is **loving & missional**
- God's justice: **restorative**

Christian Views of Hardened Hearts

- Not apart from human choice (Rom.11:7 – 8)
- Paul believed that the “hardening” of Israel was “partial”
 - Perhaps not as intense
 - Perhaps leaders only
 - Perhaps especially for Jesus’ death
- Not “total,” because he continued reaching out to them
- Who is hardened? **Only Pharaoh and some Jews**
- Who hardens: **human beings; God reinforced**
- Duration: **momentary**
- Consequences: **historical**
- Purpose: **show more mercy**
 - God saves: intends all
 - God damns: intends none
- God is **loving & missional**
- God’s justice: **restorative**

Christian Views of Hardened Hearts

- We should never, ever say *God* hardened a person's heart outside of these two occasions
- Once God achieves His historical purpose (Exodus), does the hardening continue? Scripture is silent, but possibly not.
- Recall Paul's love and hope for both Jew and Gentile
- Who is hardened? **Only Pharaoh and some Jews**
- Who hardens: **human beings; God reinforced**
- Duration: **momentary**
- Consequences: **historical**
- Purpose: **show more mercy**
 - God saves: intends all
 - God damns: intends none
- God is **loving & missional**
- God's justice: **restorative**

Christian Views of Hardened Hearts

- Paul was referring to the Exodus narrative with literary integrity
- Paul was aware of the interplay of Pharaoh's hardening of his own heart and God's hardening of his heart, to achieve a historical purpose
- Who is hardened? **Only Pharaoh and some Jews**
- Who hardens: **human beings; God reinforced**
- Duration: **momentary**
- Consequences: **historical**
- Purpose: **show more mercy**
 - God saves: intends all
 - God damns: intends none
- **God is loving & missional**
- God's justice: **restorative**

The Hardening of Hearts

- All early Christians (save the later Augustine), because they were strong Trinitarians
 - See “Human Free Will and God’s Grace in the Patristics”
 - <https://www.anastasiscenter.org/gods-goodness-creation>
 - See Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100 – 600 AD)*, ch.6
- Eastern Orthodox: 100%
 - See church historian Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600 – 1700 AD)*, ch.5
- Roman Catholics: 100% on paper
 - Interpret Augustine as supporting free will, including Aquinas
- Protestants: systematic Trinitarian theologians
 - Donald Bloesch, *God the Almighty*, p.142
 - N.T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology*, p.231 – 257

God's Word Did Not Fail

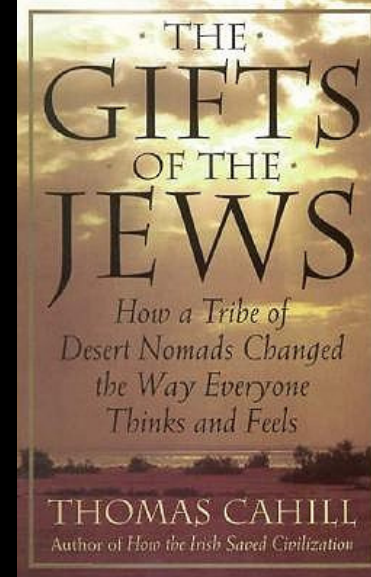
- A. Mission: Paul wants more Jews to know Jesus (9:1 – 6)
 - B. 'Israel' is not ethnic or genetic; God pruned down (9:6 – 13)
 - C. God hardened hearts of Pharaoh and Israelites (9:14 – 24)
 - D. **God's Word did not fail**: Israel's remnant (9:25 – 33)
 - E. Christ is the *telos* of the covenant (10:1 – 13)
 - D'. **God's Word did not fail**: Gentiles (10:14 – 11:6)
 - C'. God hardened hearts of Israelites (11:7 – 12)
 - B'. 'Israel' is not ethnic or genetic; God grafting in (11:13 – 27)
- A'. Mission: Paul more motivated to share Jesus with both Gentiles and Jews; God desires to show mercy to all. (11:28 – 36)

Why God's Word Cannot Fail

- Pattern of Speech – Act, Promise – Fulfillment
 - To Himself: ‘Let there be light’; and there was light (Gen.1:3); ten times in Genesis 1
 - To Abram: ‘I will redeem your descendants from bondage’ (Gen.15:13 – 15)
 - To Abram and Sarai: ‘You will have a son’ (Gen.17:15 – 19)
 - To Samuel: ‘David will be king of Israel’ (1 Sam.16:1 – 13)
 - Etc. etc.

Why God's Word Cannot Fail

- Pattern of Promise – Fulfillment
 - God speaks to act, and acts as He speaks
 - God says what He does, and does what He says
 - “Surely the LORD God will do nothing except that which He reveals to His servants the prophets.” (Amos 3:7)
 - “Prophets” are those to whom God speaks first
 - God does not cause the behavior of all people; He only causes what He has spoken
 - Separates God's speech-acts from the rest of history, including human choices
 - Notice that a doctrine of God's omnicausality would contradict Amos 3:7 and the biblical pattern to which Amos was referring



Why God's Word Cannot Fail

- Pattern of Promise – Fulfillment
 - The Jews contributed the world's first linear sense of history, and the “happy ending”
- God's speech-acts
 - Leave room for genuine human free will, and real interaction between God and us
 - Are events in our time and history – very significant epistemologically
 - Allow God to be 100% good, not partly evil
 - Give rise to the “happy ending”
- Paul has to explain why not all Jews have come to Jesus
 - A failure of God's word?

Why God's Word Cannot Fail

- Augustine's monergism ('one will'; God is omnicausal) is problematic and incorrect
 - If you believe in monergism, then you must attribute all human sinfulness back to God, including the fall, subsequent sins, unbelief, evil, injustice, and perdition
 - All earlier theologians believed in human free will as the only way God can be 100% good
 - Again, see "Human Free Will and God's Grace in the Patristics"
 - <https://www.anastasiscenter.org/gods-goodness-creation>
- Augustine himself, in his early years, believed in free will
- John Cassian, another leading theologian (the 'Eastern Orthodox spokesman'), wrote a sensitive, critical response to Augustine
 - Owen Chadwick, *John Cassian*, ch.4



Paul's Understanding of God's Word, Israel, and the Nations

^{9:25} As He says also in **Hosea [2:23; 1:10]**, 'I will call those who were not My people, 'My people,' and her who was not beloved, 'Beloved.'" ²⁶ And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' there they shall be called sons of the living God.' ²⁷ **Isaiah [10:22 – 23]** cries out concerning Israel, 'Though the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved; ²⁸ for the Lord will execute His word on the earth, thoroughly and quickly.' ²⁹ And just as **Isaiah [1:9]** foretold, 'Unless the Lord of Sabaoth left to us a posterity, we would have become like Sodom, and would have resembled Gomorrah.' ³⁰ What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; ³¹ but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. ³² Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, ³³ just as it is written **[Isaiah 8:14; 28:16; cf. Ps.118:22]**, 'Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and he who believes in him will not be disturbed. (Rom.9:25 – 33)

Paul's Understanding of God's Word, Israel, and the Nations

^{10:14} How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written [Isaiah 52:7], 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good tidings!' ¹⁶ However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah [53:1] says, 'Lord, who has believed our report?' ¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. ¹⁸ But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Indeed they have [Ps.19:4]; 'Their voice has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.' ¹⁹ But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses [Dt.32:21] says, 'I will make you jealous by that which is not a nation, by a nation without understanding I will anger you.' ²⁰ And Isaiah [65:1] is very bold and says, 'I was found by those who did not seek Me, I became manifest to those who did not ask for Me.' ²¹ But as for Israel He says [Isa.65:2], 'All the day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.'

(Rom.10:14 – 21)

Paul's Understanding of God's Word, Israel, and the Nations

- The Prophecy of Isaiah in Romans 9 – 11

<i>Romans</i>	<i>Isaiah</i>	<i>LXX/MT</i>
Romans 9:27 – 28	Isaiah 10:22 – 23	LXX
Romans 9:29	Isaiah 1:9	LXX
Romans 9:32 – 33	Isaiah 8:14; 28:16	LXX/MT
Romans 10:11	Isaiah 28:16	LXX
Romans 10:15	Isaiah 52:7	LXX/MT
Romans 10:16	Isaiah 53:1	LXX
Romans 10:20 – 21	Isaiah 65:1 – 2	LXX
Romans 11:8	Isaiah 6:9 – 10; 29:10	LXX/MT
Romans 11:26 – 27	Isaiah 59:20 – 21	LXX
Romans 11:27	Isaiah 27:9	LXX
Romans 11:33 – 34	Isaiah 40:13	LXX

Paul's Understanding of God's Word, Israel, and the Nations

- The Pentateuch of Moses in Romans 9 – 11
- A. God's Spirit "hovers" as God creates heaven and earth; God places humanity in a garden land, but they leave in exile and with a corruption/corruptibility in human "hearts" (Gen.3:7; 4:11; 6:5 – 6; 8:21); origin of all nations (Gen.1 – 11).

[...]

See my paper, "The Chiastic Structure of the Pentateuch," found here:
<https://www.anastasiscenter.org/bible-torah>

[...]

- A.' God must circumcise human "hearts" after Israel's exile (30:6); "heaven and earth" (32:1) witness destiny of Israel and nations; God's Spirit "hovers" (32:11) over Israel as they enter garden land (Dt.30:1 – 34:12). **Paul's quotation of Moses comes from here (Dt.32:21)**

Paul's Understanding of God's Word, Israel, and the Nations

- Paul is following Moses and Isaiah
 - In diagnosing the human heart and human choices
 - In expecting that Israel's hearts will be hardened (Dt.32:21; Isa.6:9 – 10) when Messiah comes (Isa.53)
 - In saying God will speak truth to Israel through Gentiles

But Jeshurun [Israel] grew fat and kicked—

You are grown fat, thick, and sleek—

Then he forsook God who made him,

And scorned the Rock of his salvation... (Dt.32:15)

They have made Me jealous with what is not God;

They have provoked Me to anger with their idols.

So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people;

I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation (Dt.32:21)

Paul's Understanding of God's Word, Israel, and the Nations

- Paul is following Moses and Isaiah
 - In diagnosing the human heart and human choices
 - In expecting that Israel's hearts will be hardened (Dt.32:21; Isa.6:9 – 10) when Messiah comes (Isa.53)
 - In saying God will speak truth to Israel through Gentiles
 - The tabernacle was God's Plan B next to meeting God face to face on Mt. Sinai
 - Moses saw Israel fail repeatedly, became the mediator, but failed himself
 - Sinai Laws were intended to be temporary (diminished version of the creation order)
 - The 'chosen people' is vital for self-diagnosis but relativized; they were expected to partially resist God

Christ is the *Telos* of the Covenant

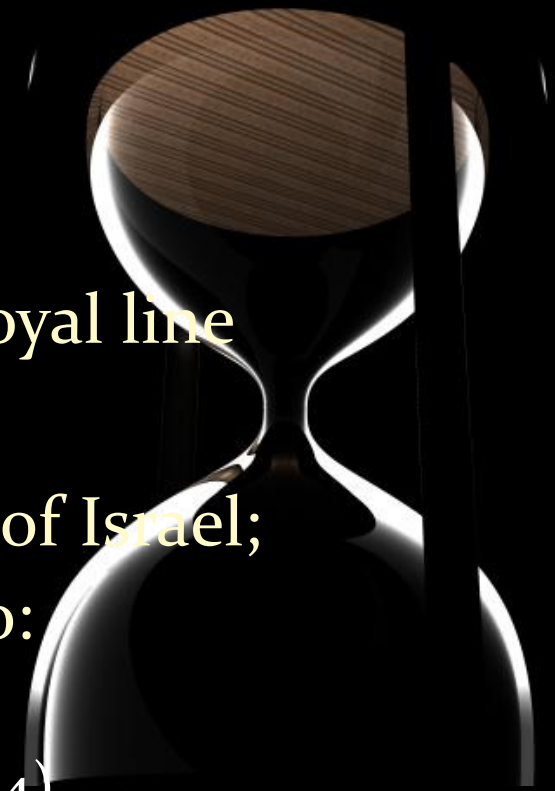
- A. Mission: Paul wants more Jews to know Jesus (9:1 – 6)
 - B. ‘Israel’ is not ethnic or genetic; God pruned down (9:6 – 13)
 - C. God hardened hearts of Pharaoh and Israelites (9:14 – 24)
 - D. God’s Word did not fail: Israel’s remnant (9:25 – 33)
 - E. Christ is the *telos* of the covenant (10:1 – 13)
 - D’. God’s Word did not fail: Gentiles (10:14 – 11:6)
 - C’. God hardened hearts of Israelites (11:7 – 12)
 - B’. ‘Israel’ is not ethnic or genetic; God grafting in (11:13 – 27)
- A’. Mission: Paul more motivated to share Jesus with both Gentiles and Jews; God desires to show mercy to all. (11:28 – 36)

Why a Chosen People At All?

- Example of receiving God's retributive justice?
- The foil for Jesus and the church?

Why a Chosen People At All?

- The Chosen People (Narrowing and Widening):
 - Abraham & Sarah
 - Isaac, not Ishmael
 - Jacob, not Esau
 - Judah, not the other eleven brothers
 - David as king, then Solomon and the royal line
- The Chosen One: (Mt.12:18; Lk.9:35)
 - Jesus, the embodiment and fulfillment of Israel;
 - Jesus alone did what Israel could not do:
 - Defeat the flesh, change the heart,
 - Restore human nature to God (Rom.8:1 – 4)
- The Widening: the world



Why a Chosen People At All? Clinic

- To voluntarily be God's covenant human partner
- To be a microcosm of humanity (multi-ethnic)
- To live by God's Word and hope for a happy ending
- To diagnose the corruption of human nature
- To document the diagnosis
- To anticipate God's cure and His dwelling within people
- To oppose pagan systems and glimpse the Trinity (Temple)

Why a Chosen One? Cure

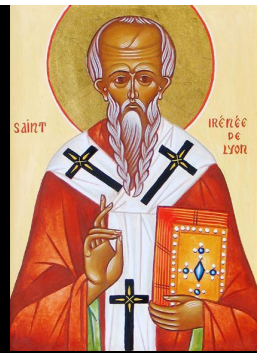
- To voluntarily be God's covenant human partner
- To be God's new humanity
- To be/live by God's Word and embody/hope for a happy ending
- To reverse the corruption of human nature in his own body
- To validate the diagnosis
- To be God's cure and be His dwelling in human personhood
- To explain the Trinity and share his Spirit

Why a Chosen One? Cure

- 8:3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh [of Israel], God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ so that the requirement of the Law (Torah) might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Romans 8:3 - 4)



Why a Chosen One? Cure



- “Therefore, as I have already said, He caused man (human nature) to cleave to and to become, one with God... **But the law coming, which was given by Moses...** laid, however, a weighty burden upon man, **who had sin in himself**, showing that he was liable to death. For as the law was spiritual, it merely made sin to stand out in relief, but did not destroy it. For sin had no dominion over the spirit, but over man. For it behooved Him who was **to destroy sin**, and redeem man under the power of death, that He should Himself be made that very same thing which he was, that is, **man**; who had been drawn by sin into bondage, but was held by death, so **that sin should be destroyed by man**, and man should go forth from death. For as by the disobedience of the one man who was originally moulded from virgin soil, the many were made sinners, and forfeited life; so was it necessary that, by the obedience of one man, who was originally born from a virgin, many should be justified and receive salvation. Thus, then, **was the Word of God made man**, as also Moses says: ‘God, true are His works.’ But if, not having been made flesh, He did appear as if flesh, His work was not a true one. But **what He did appear, that He also was**: God recapitulated **in Himself** the ancient formation of man, that He might **kill sin**, deprive death of its power, and vivify man; and therefore His works are true.”
 - Irenaeus of Lyons (130 – 202), *Against Heresies* 3.18.7

Why a Chosen One? Cure

- “Had it been a case of a trespass only, and not of a subsequent **corruption**, repentance would have been well enough; but when once transgression had begun men came under the **power of the corruption** proper to their nature and were bereft of the grace which belonged to them as creatures in the Image of God. No, repentance could not meet the case. What – or rather Who – was it that was needed for such grace and such recall as we required? Who, save the Word of God Himself, Who also in the beginning had made all things out of nothing? Thus, taking a body like our own, because all our bodies were liable to the **corruption** of death, He surrendered His body to death instead of all, and offered it to the Father...This He did that He might turn again to incorruption men who had turned to **corruption**, and make them alive through death by the appropriation of His body and by the grace of His resurrection. Thus He would make death to disappear from them as utterly as straw from fire.”
 - Athanasius of Alexandria (298 – 373), *On the Incarnation* 2.8 – 9

Why a Chosen One? Cure

- “When it is asked how, after abolishing sins, Christ removed the discord between us and God and acquired a righteousness, it may be replied generally that he provided us with this **by the whole course of his obedience... From the moment he put on the person of a servant, he began to pay the price of liberation for our redemption...** In order, however, to define the manner of salvation more surely, scripture ascribes it to Christ’s death as its property and attribute. Yet there is no exclusion of **the rest of the obedience which he performed in his life; as Paul comprehends the whole of it, from the beginning to the end**, when he says, ‘he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross’...Nor was this without **inward conflict, because he had taken our infirmities**, and it was necessary to give this proof of his obedience to his Father. And it was no mean specimen of his incomparable love to us, to contend with **horrible fear**, and amid those dreadful torments to neglect all care of himself, that he might promote our benefit.”
 - John Calvin, *Institutes* 2.16.5

Why a Chosen One? Cure

- To see a Catholic affirming the idea that Jesus was incarnate in sinful, not instantly sinless, human flesh, see e.g. Thomas Weinandy, O.F.M., *In the Likeness of Sinful Flesh* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993)
 - “sin-scarred humanity”

Why a New Chosen People?

- Those “in Christ” (“predestined” as “chosen people” in Eph.1) are:
 - To voluntarily be God’s covenant human partners in mission
 - To be God’s new humanity in Jesus (multi-ethnic)
 - To live by God’s Word and hope for a happy ending
 - To receive Jesus’ new humanity in our own bodies
 - To document the use of the cure
 - To receive God’s cure and be His dwelling in human persons
 - To proclaim the Trinity and manifest God

Why a New Chosen People?

- What it means to be “predestined” in the Son:
 - Being:
 - God already upholds us “in the Son”: “In him all things hold together” (Col.1:16; cf. Acts 17:26; Heb.1:2) is probably a reflection on God’s Word from creation continuing to resonate and uphold all things
 - Becoming:
 - Our *destination* has always been deeper sharing in the life of God through the Word-Son of God
 - “All things are from him and through him and to him” (Rom.11:36; 1 Cor.8:6; Eph.1:9 – 10; Col.1:16)
 - Christians are those who are willingly being conformed to the image of Christ in his humanity (Rom.8:28 – 30)
 - Because the Father does not coerce the Son, God does not coerce us: “Just as the Father has loved me, I have also loved you” (Jn.15:8)

Why a New Chosen People?

- What it means to be “predestined” in the Son yet resist:
 - “I forgive you” to someone who believes she has not done anything wrong
 - “I love you” to someone who feels stalked and wants distance
 - “Let me kill the cancer” to someone who thinks his disease is normal
 - “I deny you the thing to which you’re addicted” to someone addicted to something else
 - “I judge to separate sinfulness from the person” to someone who wants to be the judge of other people

Why a New Chosen People?

- God does not “predestine” anyone to condemnation
 - “Condemnation” in Romans 5 – 8 is the mortality God imposed on Adam, to prevent eating from the tree of life while corrupted
 - “There is no [more] condemnation for those who are in Christ” because we have already died with him (Rom.6:1 – 11)
 - Even hell is God’s love, since His wrath serves His love, and fire represents God’s call to participate in His purification
 - See “Hell as the Love of God”
 - <https://www.anastasiscenter.org/gods-goodness-fire>
- Our mission is an expression of Jesus’ life and God’s character
 - To be missional, inviting others to respond to God’s “predestination” of all humanity in Christ

Outline

- Paul's Puzzling Language
- Romans 9 – 11 in Outline
 - Paul's Mission
 - Israel: An Ethnicity or a Faith?
 - Hardness of Heart
 - Did God's Word Fail?
 - Christ is the Telos of the Covenant
- **“Double Predestination”**
- Revisiting What's at Stake
- Appendix A: Ephesians 1:3 – 14; John 6:37 – 44; Romans 8:28 – 30

“Double Predestination”

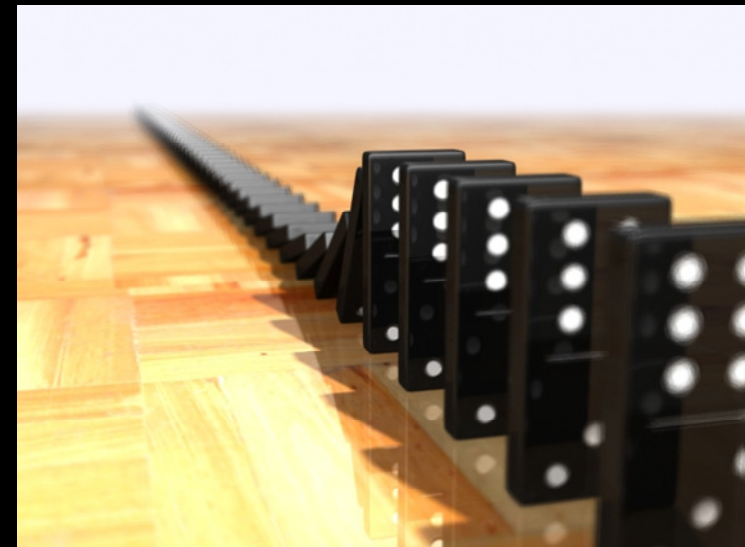
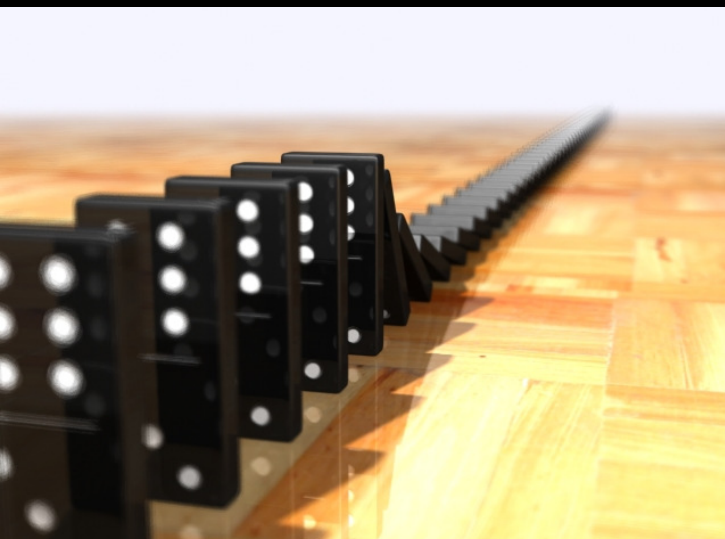
- “Such was the force of St. Augustine’s intellect that some of his ideas entered permanently into Western theology. The most obvious, perhaps, is that of ‘predestination,’ the idea that God from eternity elects some to save, while ‘reprobating’ the rest to damnation, which Augustine believed to be the teaching of St. Paul. Such an idea never really arose in the Eastern Christian world. The Latin word ‘praedestinare’ is a far stronger verb than the original Greek ‘proorizein,’ which really means little more than to ‘mark out in advance.’ [Augustine did not learn enough Greek] More importantly, Augustine’s interpretations of certain passages in Paul were quite novel... All Christians believe that we are born in sin – that is, enslaved to death, suffering corruption in our bodies, minds and desires, alienated from God – but only in the West did the idea arise that a newborn infant is somehow already guilty of transgression in God’s eyes. In part, this is because the Latin text of Romans 5:12 with which Augustine was familiar contained a mistranslation of the final clause of the verse, one that seemed to suggest that ‘in’ Adam ‘all sinned’. The actual Greek text, however, says nothing of the sort; it says either that as a result of death all sinned, or that because sin is general all things die; but it does not impute guilt to those who have not yet committed any evil.’
 - David Bentley Hart, *The Story of Christianity: An Illustrated History of 2000 Years of the Christian Faith* (London: Quercus, 2012), p.77; also Hart, “Traditio Deformis,” *First Things*, May 2015

“Double Predestination”

- Definition: God makes choices to save and damn people prior to their own choice; implying that God willed and assured the Fall
- Considered hypothetically by many and rejected
 - e.g. Irenaeus of Lyons (130 – 202), “But if some had been made by nature bad, and others good...” (*Against Heresies* 4.37.1 – 2)
- First asserted by Lucidus of Verona (4th century)
 - The regional Council of Arle in 473 AD condemned it as a heresy
 - The second council of Orange in 529 AD condemned it as a heresy, and denied that Augustine’s theology taught it
- Gottsalk of Orbais (808 – 867 AD) taught this
 - Various councils condemned it as a heresy: Quierzy (853 AD), Valence (855 AD), Savonnieres (859 AD), Metz (863 AD, with Pope Nicholas I)
- Considered by the early church to not be consistent with the Trinity, since God’s love undergirded free will itself, and God is love
 - e.g. Athanasius of Alexandria (298 – 373), *On the Incarnation* 2.7; 7.44; not a bifurcation between “love vs. retributive-justice-wrath”

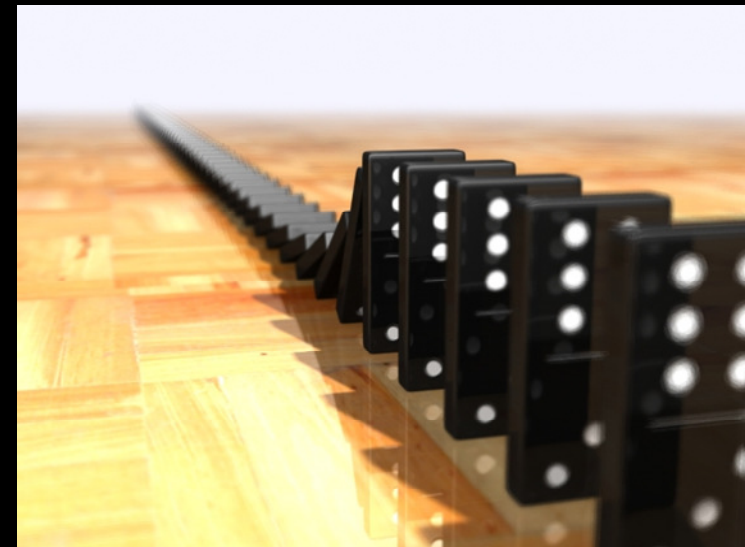
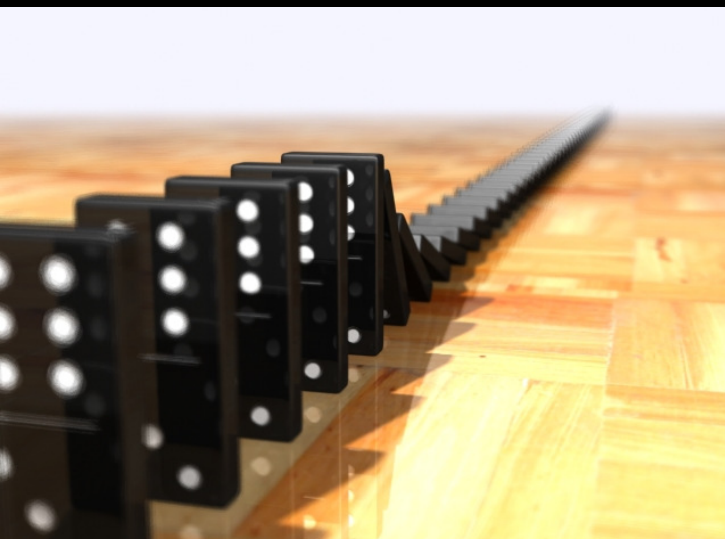
“Double Predestination”

- Taught by Muslim theologians
 - Influenced by Aristotle’s prime mover, focus on efficient, mechanical causation
 - A unitarian God has no constraints of nature/character (e.g. trinitarian love) upon his power (e.g. William of Ockham)
 - God is a “naked will” who can enact a predetermined narrative (e.g. the pre-existent Qur’an) with people predetermined to reject God
- See: Rodney Stark, *The Victory of Reason* (New York: Random House, 2006), p.20 – 21, and David Bentley Hart’s lecture “Nihilism and Freedom” at www.newhumanityinstitute.org/pdf-articles/david_bentley_hart_lecture.mp3



“Double Predestination”

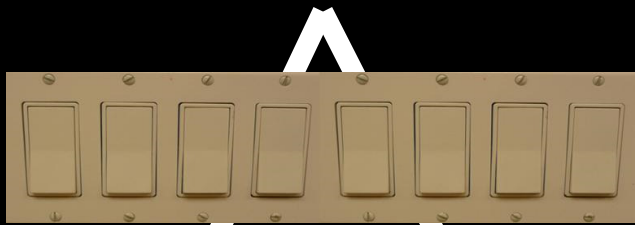
- “God as absolute, unconstrained power” taught by William of Ockham (1285 – 1347 AD)
- Taught by Domingo Banez (1528 – 1604 AD), a Spanish Dominican and Scholastic theologian who claimed to interpret Thomas Aquinas in this way (very disputed); especially under the influence of Aristotle and interest in mechanical causality (“voluntarism”)
- Taught by John Calvin (1509 – 1564 AD) and Theodore Beza (1519 – 1605 AD) in Geneva, Switzerland



“Double Predestination”

God is arbitrary:

Romans 1 – 11



Is God's character a bunch of light switches on a flat level?

God saves some (mercy):

Romans 1 – 8

God damns others (retributive justice):

Romans 9 – 11

God is loving and missional:

Romans 1 – 11



God offers Jesus' new humanity to all:

Romans 1 – 11

God's wrath is an activity of God's love, and serves God's love

God condemned sin in the flesh of Jesus:

Romans 8:3; 6:6

“Double Predestination”

- Is “double predestination” consistent with the nature of God as Trinity?
 - God’s actions are character attributes, which are like lightswitches on a flat and equal level?

“Double Predestination”

- Is “double predestination” doable in practical ministry?
 - Can you say to your non-Christian friend, “God loves you”? Do you want their salvation more than God?
 - Does God want to undo all human evil? Or does He require human evil to exist? Do you want social justice more than God?
 - Is God partly evil? Is God 100% good?
 - Does God value every person? Does He anchor universal human dignity?
 - Which justice is highest in God? Retributive vs. Restorative?

“Double Predestination”

- If “double predestination” is true, then how did the earliest Christians get it wrong...
 - So soon after having direct contact with the apostles?
 - A deep, widespread, and uniform mistake?
 - While being so concerned to work out Trinitarian theology?
 - This is the big theological consideration
 - Can a truly Trinitarian theology conclude anything different?

Outline

- Paul's Puzzling Language
- Romans 9 – 11 in Outline
 - Paul's Mission
 - Israel: An Ethnicity or a Faith?
 - Hardness of Heart
 - Did God's Word Fail?
 - Christ is the Telos of the Covenant
- "Double Predestination"
- **Revisiting What's at Stake**
- Appendix A: Ephesians 1:3 – 14; John 6:37 – 44; Romans 8:28 – 30

Revisiting What's At Stake

- How to understand God's character? Does God cause unbelief? Is God partly evil? Arbitrary?
- How to read Romans?
- Whether to trust Paul's use of the Hebrew Scriptures?
- How to explain Jewish unbelief?
- Did God just use Israel and trick them?
- How to interpret unbelief in general?
- How to read Scripture? In what sense can we trust it?

Revisiting What's At Stake

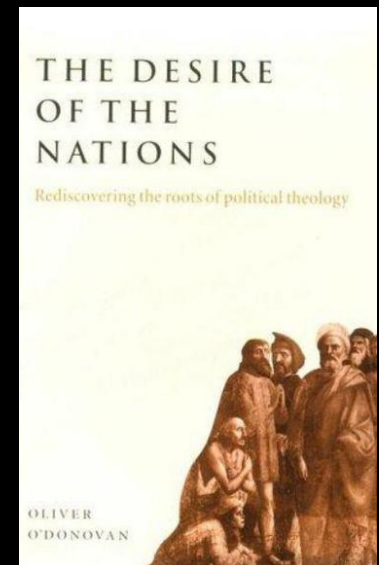
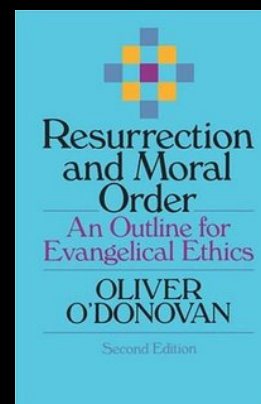
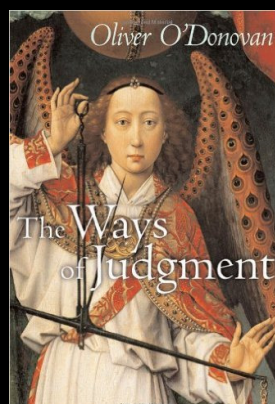
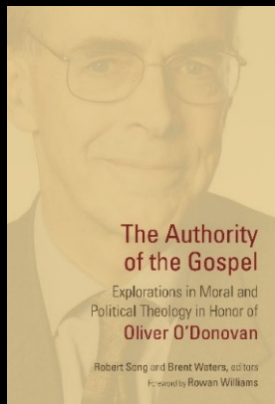
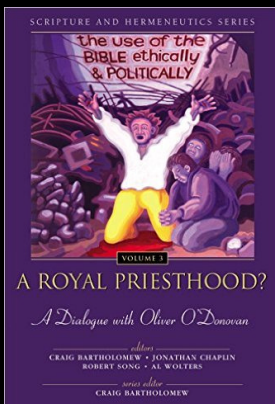
- How to understand God's character? Does God cause unbelief? Is God partly evil? Arbitrary?
 - God is Triune and therefore 100% good
 - His inner triune relations existed prior to creation and therefore condition everything about Him ('God is love')

Revisiting What's At Stake

- How to understand God's character? Does God cause unbelief? Is God partly evil? Arbitrary?
- How to read Romans?
 - Not as an expansion of Galatians, but a *mirror image*
 - Power position: Jews (Galatians) then Gentiles (Romans)
 - Note: Emperor Claudius kicked out Jews from the city of Rome in 49 AD, which would have led to an all Gentile Christianity; Paul was writing in 57 AD to call for a reinvigoration of/reconnection to Jewish Christianity
 - Romans 1 – 8: A defense of the Sinai covenant and God's partnership with the Jewish chosen people, to prepare for Messiah
 - Romans 14 – 15: A defense of Jewish Christianity

Revisiting What's At Stake

- How to understand God's character? Does God cause unbelief? Is God partly evil? Arbitrary?
- How to read Romans?
 - Romans 9 – 11: Explanation for ongoing, loving Christian mission to Jews (mission and political theology)
 - Respect for Mosaic Israel →
 - Respect/tolerance for other faiths, too →
 - Christian political pluralism, not theocracy →
 - Might have saved Europe the “Wars of Religion”



Revisiting What's At Stake

- How to understand God's character? Does God cause unbelief? Is God partly evil? Arbitrary?
- How to read Romans?
- Whether to trust Paul's use of the Hebrew Scriptures?
 - Paul *does not* proof-text
 - Paul *respects* the literary and canonical qualities of Hebrew Scripture (see especially the Torah and Isaiah)
 - Paul *thinks as a Jewish theologian*
 - Jesus as "true Israelite," "true Israel," and "true David," reading Torah and Isaiah especially

Revisiting What's At Stake

- How to understand God's character? Does God cause unbelief? Is God partly evil? Arbitrary?
- How to read Romans?
- Whether to trust Paul's use of the Hebrew Scriptures?
- How to explain Jewish unbelief?
 - Free choice
 - But sin is addictive, we impact our own human nature
 - Rationale for unbelief: Jewish law-keeping as
 - identity markers and/or
 - ethnocentrism and/or
 - belief in genetic descent

Revisiting What's At Stake

- How to understand God's character? Does God cause unbelief? Is God partly evil? Arbitrary?
- How to read Romans?
- Whether to trust Paul's use of the Hebrew Scriptures?
- How to explain Jewish unbelief?
- Did God just use Israel and trick them?
 - No!
 - A voluntary chosen people was necessary to receive the treatment partially, document the diagnosis, prepare the way for the cure, receive it, and love their enemies

Revisiting What's At Stake

- How to understand God's character? Does God cause unbelief? Is God partly evil? Arbitrary?
- How to read Romans?
- Whether to trust Paul's use of the Hebrew Scriptures?
- How to explain Jewish unbelief?
- Did God just use Israel and trick them?
- How to interpret unbelief in general?
 - Human free choice
 - Not God's choice

Revisiting What's At Stake

- How to understand God's character? Does God cause unbelief? Is God partly evil? Arbitrary?
- How to read Romans?
- Whether to trust Paul's use of the Hebrew Scriptures?
- How to explain Jewish unbelief?
- Did God just use Israel and trick them?
- How to interpret unbelief in general?
- How to read Scripture? In what sense can we trust it?
 - God acts by speaking, calling forth genuine human choice and human becoming
 - Progressive self-revelation by God, climaxing in Jesus

Outline

- Paul's Puzzling Language
- Romans 9 – 11 in Outline
 - Paul's Mission
 - Israel: An Ethnicity or a Faith?
 - Hardness of Heart
 - Did God's Word Fail?
 - Christ is the Telos of the Covenant
- “Double Predestination”
- Revisiting What's at Stake
- Appendix A: Ephesians 1:3 – 14; John 6:37 – 44; Romans 8:28 – 30

Discussion Questions

1. Questions about the church's history on "double predestination"?
2. Questions about the Scriptures?

Outline

- Paul's Puzzling Language
- Romans 9 – 11 in Outline
 - Paul's Mission
 - Israel: An Ethnicity or a Faith?
 - Hardness of Heart
 - Did God's Word Fail?
 - Christ is the Telos of the Covenant
- “Double Predestination”
- Revisiting What's at Stake
- Appendix A: Ephesians 1:3 – 14; John 6:37 – 44; Romans 8:28 – 30

Ephesians 1:3 – 14

¹³ **Blessed** be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us with every **spiritual blessing** in the heavenly places in Christ,
⁴ just as **He chose us in him** before the foundation of the world,
that we would be holy and blameless before Him
in love ⁵ **He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ** to Himself,

according to the kind intention of His will ⁶ to the praise of the glory
of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the beloved
⁷ in him we have **redemption** through his blood,
the **forgiveness** of our trespasses, according to the riches
of His grace ⁸ **which He lavished on us** in all wisdom and insight
⁹ He made known to us the mystery of **His will, according to His kind intention**
which He purposed
in him ¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times,
that is, the summing up of **all things** in Christ,
things in the heavens and things on the earth
in him ¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance,

predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,
¹² to the end **that we** who were the first to hope in Christ **would be to the praise of His glory**
¹³ in him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation--**having also**
believed, you were sealed in him with the Holy Spirit of promise,
¹⁴ who is given as a pledge of our **inheritance** with a view to the redemption of God's own possession,
to the **praise of His glory**

Ephesians 1:3 – 14

- Center point: Interprets or explains the outside points, in chiastic structures. Implications:
 - God is summing up (“recapitulating,” cf. Irenaeus) “all things,” including all people, “in Christ” or “under” Christ (1:10)
 - The “us/we/you” is not meant to be permanently exclusive of others, or understood in such a way that the “all things” is qualified
 - God’s choice to bless all people revolves around and is carried out in Christ, *the chosen one* (“the beloved,” v.6), who shares his inheritance and blessing with us
 - To see Jesus identified as “the chosen one” see Lk.9:35, Mt.12:18, and implicitly Mt.3:13 – 17, Lk.3:21 – 22 where “beloved one” and “chosen one” are used interchangeably

Ephesians 1:3 – 14

- Outer points: Are mirrored or develop, in chiastic structures. Implications:
 - God's choice ("He chose us" in v.4) is symmetrically arranged with our choice to believe in Christ ("in him you also... believed" in v.13)
 - God's predestination of believers through adoption (v.5) is symmetrically arranged with the inheritance God bestows (v.11), not to any statement of exclusion of others
 - Hence, the term "predestination" here, as in Romans, refers to the destination of all things to be re-headed up under Jesus, and the inheritance of the new creation given first to Jesus
 - How we experience that is up to us

John 6:37 – 44

- ³⁷ All that the Father gives me will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will certainly not cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ This is the will of him who sent me, that of all that He has given me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in him will have eternal life, and I myself will raise him up on the last day.’ ⁴¹ Therefore the Jews were grumbling about him, because he said, ‘I am the bread that came down out of heaven.’ ⁴² They were saying, ‘Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down out of heaven?’’ ⁴³ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Do not grumble among yourselves. ⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.

John 6:37 – 44

- v. 37: *All that* the Father gives me will come to me (**all human nature**)
- v. 37: And *whoever* comes to me I will never drive away (**persons**)
- v. 39: This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of *all that* He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day (**all human nature**)
- v. 40: For this is the will of My Father, that *everyone* who beholds the Son and *believes in Him* will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise *him* up on the last day (**persons**)
- v.44: No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws *him*; and I will raise *him* up on the last day (**persons**)

John 6:37 – 44

- There is a back and forth between the neuter and the personal cases
- Everyone gets raised up on the last day by Christ by virtue of sharing human nature with him (Jn.5:29)
 - Christ is the source of life for everyone, even the wicked
 - If he wasn't raised up, then they would not be raised up
- But some will come to him in belief, and some not
 - “All that the Father gives to me” is not synonymous with “the elect” or “believers”; it simply means all human nature, which exists in all human persons

Romans 8:28 – 30

- ²⁸ And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. ²⁹ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; ³⁰ and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Romans 8:28 – 30

- For believers
 - There is a sequence
- For unbelievers
 - What is implied?
 - What can we say?
 - Did God “predestine” unbelievers to *not* be “called, justified, glorified”?
- One critical assumption is the theory of atonement at work
 - Penal Substitution logically favors double predestination
 - Medical Substitution does not

Romans 8:28 – 30

- Foreknowledge
 - God foreknows human beings
 - Every possible human being?
 - Every possible action taken by human beings?
- Predestination
 - God predestines every human being “to become conformed to the image of Christ,” in the Son
- Call
 - God calls every human being; some say yes, others no

Romans 8:28 – 30

- Justification

- Like a vaccination record: legal outside, medical inside
- God justifies Jesus as the new humanity (Rom.4:25; *Odes of Solomon* 17:2), which is rooted in heart-circumcision on the other side of Israel's exile (Dt.30:6; Rom.2:28 – 29; 6:6; 10:4 – 10)
- “No [more] condemnation” (i.e. justification) for those who have died in/with Christ by the Spirit (Rom.8:1; 6:1 – 11);
 - Condemnation is expressed via mortality (Rom.5:12 – 21)
 - Justification is not outside Christ somewhere “in the mind of God”

Romans 8:28 – 30

- Glorification:
 - “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Rom.5:2; Col.1:27) for every believer
- God still offers Jesus (and justification in him) to those who do not believe
 - God still resurrects unbelievers in and through Christ, so His image is still present in them but the likeness is warped
 - Akin to saying, “I can cut out the cancer!” to someone who believes he is healthy
 - Akin to saying, “I forgive you!” to someone who believes he has done nothing wrong
 - E.g. President Trump pardoning Sheriff Joe Arpaio
 - E.g. Jean Valjean pardoning Inspector Javert, in *Les Misérables*