

## Unveiling of God no 71

### *The Sovereignty of God in reprobation pt2*

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**Rom. 9:21-23.** "*Hath not the potter **power** over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? 22 What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his **power** known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And what if he did so that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.*"

So you see in these three verse that God's purpose and plan has two sides to it, vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor. The vessel of dishonor is there only to show the glory in the vessel of honor in much the same way the ugliness of evil is allowed to show forth the beauty of holiness.

We can see the same thing in the darkness and uncertainty that the darkness of night presents compared to or in contrast with the certainty that the light brings as the morning light breaks forth from the darkness.

In these verses the apostle Paul furnishes a full and final reply to the objections raised in **Romans 9:19**. First, he asks, "*Hath not the potter **power** (**exousia**) over the clay?*" etc. It should be noted that the word translated here as "**power**" which is (**exousia**) is a different Greek word translated as power "**power**" (**Dunatos**) from the root word (**dunamis**) used in **Romans 9:22** where it signifies God's **might**; but here in verse **21**, the **power** spoken of refers to God's right, or His Choice, as the sovereign creator; and we can prove that from the fact that the same Greek word (**exousia**) is used in **John 1:12** *As many as received him, to them gave He **power** to become the sons of God*". Now this does not say they are given miracle working power to go from one specie to another, but it says that they are give the ability to make the right decision to become what they were ordained to become. Which is the right or privilege to make their decision to become or come into their role as sons of God. Therefore **John 1:12** suggests it is *an ability to make the right decision or choice*.

And that only makes sense since not all sons will come into their full role as sons, ready for adoption. Some sons will although sons, they will never mature into full sonship and thus will not be conformed to the image of the first born son.

Therefore, when we read in **Romans 9:21**. "*Hath not the potter **power** over the clay of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*" we understand the "**potter**" that Paul speaks of here is God himself, Because the apostle Paul adds "*Who art thou that repliest against God?*" and then, speaking in the terms of the figure he was about to use, Paul continues, "*Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it*" etc.

There are people who would try to destroy the force of these words by arguing that while the human potter makes certain vessels to be used for less honorable purposes than others, nevertheless, they're designed to fill some useful place, as though God makes all vessels unto honor and it's the vessel that chooses itself to be used in a dishonorable way.

But the apostle Paul doesn't say, "*Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump, to make one vessel unto an honorable use and another to a less honorable use*". That is not what he said. The Apostle Paul is not speaking of the use, but rather he is speaking of the vessel itself.

Notice the Apostle Paul speaks of some "*vessels*" being made "*unto dishonour*." And you will notice that God's wisdom will be fully vindicated as the destruction of the reprobate will actually promote His glory in what way verse **23** surely tells us.

Before moving on from this verse lets summarize the teaching of this and the two previous ones.

In **Romans 9:19** two questions are asked. Notice the question Paul lays out here... "*Thou wilt say then unto me, (1) Why doth he yet find fault? (2) For who hath resisted his will?*" To those two questions we will give a threefold answer. **First**, in **Romans 9:20** the apostle Paul denies the right of the creature to sit in judgment upon the ways of the omniscient and sovereign God "*Nay, but, O man who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus?*"

The apostle Paul insists that *the Rightness of God's will* must not be questioned. **Whatever he does must be right.**

**Second.** We see In **Romans 9:21** the apostle Paul declares that the Creator God has the right to dispose of His creatures as he sees fit. As Brother Branham said, "*If it pleased God that you go to hell, would you say, **Be it done unto me according to your Will Oh God?***"

And the apostle Paul said, "*Hath not the potter **power** over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honour, and another vessel unto dishonour?*"

Now we have already noted here that the word for "*power*" used here is *exousia* and it is totally different in nature than the word "*power*" that was used in the verse that says, ("*to make known his power*"). The making known His power is "*dunamis*" which is miracle working power. But When he said "*Hath not the potter power* (or "*exousia*" he is speaking of the "*ability, authority, and freedom to choose what do with the clay?*"

One word speaks of power or might while the other word speaks of authority and ability to make the decision for himself what to do with the clay. And this power or authority does not speak of power as though He can throw that clay up against the wall or beat it into something. It not power over something but power to decide what to do with it.

It speaks of *the ability and freedom to make the decision of what it wants to make out of that clay*. It is God's power that is justly exercised, which is the exercise of God's rights that are consistent with his mercy and justice.

**Third**, in **Romans 9:22-23**, the apostle Paul gives the reasons why God acts differently towards one of his creatures from another: On the one hand, it is to "*shew his wrath*" that he "*makes his power known*"; on the other hand, it is to "*make known the riches of his glory*."

*"Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"* Certainly God has the right to do this because he is the Creator.

Does he exercise this right? **Yes**, as we see **Romans 9:13** and **9:17** which clearly show us *"For this same purpose have I raised thee up,* when he was speaking of pharaoh."

Notice in **Romans 9:22**. *"What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction"*. Here the apostle Paul tells us in the second place why that God acts differently with different ones, having mercy on some while hardening others; making one vessel unto honour while making another vessel unto dishonour.

If you will observe that in **Romans 9:22** the apostle Paul first mentions *"vessels of wrath"*, before he refers in **Romans 9:23** to the *"vessels of mercy"*. Why is this? The answer to this question is of very importance. Because it is the *"vessels of wrath" who are the subjects in view* of the one who is objecting in **Romans 9:19**.

**Two reasons** are given to us why that God makes some *"vessels unto dishonour"*: **First**, to *"show his wrath"*, and **Second** *"to make his power known"* both of which were exemplified in the case of Pharaoh.

Now, there is one last point I want to make concerning what the Apostle Paul said here, *"Vessels of wrath fitted to destruction."*

The usual explanation which is given of these words is that the vessels of wrath fit themselves to destruction, that is, **fit themselves by virtue of their wickedness**; and it is argued that there is no need for God to *"fit them to destruction"*, because **they are already fitted by their own depravity**, and it is their own actions that fit themselves to the judgment of destruction. But this is not what the apostle Paul says here at all. As logical as that may sound it is not what the Apostle Paul is telling us here.

Now if by *"destruction"* we understand punishment, it is perfectly true that the non-elect do *"fit themselves"*, for everyone will be judged *"according to his works"*; and further, we further can note that the non-elect do in a way fit themselves for destruction. However, the focus of what the Apostle Paul is telling us is not that they fit themselves but rather they are fitted to destruction.

So what is the apostle Paul referring to here? In **Romans 9:11-13**: it is not Esau fitting himself to be an object of God's hatred, because he was already an object of God's hatred before he was even born? And did not Esau weep bitterly trying to find repentance?

Again; it was not Pharaoh fitting himself for destruction, for God told Moses before he even sent Moses on his mission that **He** (God) *would harden Pharaoh's heart* before the plagues were ever sent upon Egypt? In fact before Moses even headed down to Egypt God told him what would happen and how He would harden Pharaoh's heart.

We can see this in **Exodus 4:21** *And the LORD said unto Moses, (speaking of in the future, he said,) When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.*

Notice then that it is God who promised Moses that He (God) would harden Pharaoh's heart before He even sent Moses with His Message to Pharaoh. God says to Moses, "***I will harden his heart*** and it will produce this result." And notice what would do the hardening? It would be the wonders that God would do before Pharaoh.

Therefore **Romans 9:22** is clearly a continuation in thought of **Romans 9:21** and **Romans 9:21** is part of the apostle Paul's reply to the questions raised in **Romans 9:20**: therefore to follow this thought, it must be God himself who "***fits***" ***unto destruction the vessels of wrath***.

Should it be asked how God does this, we can simply answer, "**He fits the non-elect unto destruction by his fore-ordination**". Should it be asked why God does this, the answer must be, **to promote his own glory**. which is the glory of his justice, power and wrath. The sum of the apostle Paul's answer then can be seen as "***the grand object of God's sovereignty both in the election and reprobation, is that which is chief importance to all things namely, his own glory.***"

Now, the unregenerate person who know not God because he is not born of God, might think this to be vein of God. But God cannot be vein, because his glory is His doxa and His doxa is his opinions, values, and judgments. And since God is not only sovereign, but omniscient and omnipotent, then His doxa is based on Omniscience and Omnipotence. And that is why the Doxa of God is the chief objective of God as a Father to bring to His children. For if you think His thoughts, then your thoughts are life giving and life sustaining, and they are right and correct.

**Romans 9:23.** "***And that he might make known the riches of his glory*** (His Doxa) ***on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore*** (beforehand) ***prepared unto glory.***"

Notice the first six words in verse **23** ***And that he might make known***" tell us the reasoning behind his words in verse **22** ***God's willingness to show his wrath upon the vessels of wrath...*** and so we see the very purpose of God showing his wrath on the one set of vessels is to show forth the beauty on the other set of vessels ordained to be filled with his Doxa. That is why Romans 8 is so very important to understand Romans 9.

And to me this is very important for us to understand. We the elect of God were predestined to receive His glory and reflect it in our own **zoe**, in our own lives.

But with the **non elect**, those ***vessels of wrath*** were not made to reflect God's glory. So they can only reflect their own. And thus they were vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

Therefore the fact that the "***vessels of mercy***" are here said to be "***afore prepared unto glory***" is **the key**. Many have pointed out that the previous verse does not say the vessels of wrath were afore prepared unto destruction, and from this omission they have concluded that we must understand the reference there to the non-elect fitting themselves in time, rather than God ordaining them for destruction from all eternity. But this conclusion by no means follows what the Scriptures teach.

We need to look back to **Romans 9:21** and note the figurative employed the apostle Paul using the descriptive word "**Clay**" as an inanimate matter, corrupt, decomposed, and therefore a fit substance to represent fallen humanity.

Therefore as the apostle Paul contemplates God's sovereign dealings with humanity in view of the Fall, he does not say the vessels of wrath were "*afore*" *prepared unto destruction*, for the obvious and sufficient reason that, it was not until after the Fall that they became (in themselves) what is here symbolized by the "*clay*". All that is necessary to refute the erroneous conclusion referred to above, is to point out that what is said of the vessels of wrath is **not that they are fit for destruction** (which is the word that would have been used if the reference had been to them fitting themselves by their own wickedness), but it says of them that they are "*fitted to destruction*"; which in light of the entire context means God as the sovereign Creator through fore-ordination predestined their destruction.

Calvin said of this passage "*There are vessels prepared for destruction, that is, given up and appointed to destruction; they are also *vessels of wrath*, that is, made and formed for this end, that they may be examples of God's vengeance and displeasure. Though in the second clause the apostle asserts more expressly, that it is God who prepared the elect for glory, as he had simply said before that the reprobate are vessels prepared for destruction, there is yet no doubt but that the preparation of both is connected with the secret counsel of God. Paul might have otherwise said, that the reprobate gave up or cast themselves into destruction, but he intimates here, that before they are born they are destined to their lot".*

**Romans 9:29** does not say *the vessels of wrath fitted themselves*, nor does it say *they are fit for destruction*, instead, it declares "*they are fitted to destruction*", and the context shows plainly it is God who thus "*fits*" them by His eternal foreordination.

Throughout **Romans 9:1-33** we see that it contains the fullest and most complete disclosure of the doctrine of Reprobation, yet there are still other passages which refer to it, one or two more of which we will now briefly notice:

In **Romans 11:7** "*What then? That which Israel seeketh for, that he obtained not, but the election obtained it, and the rest were hardened*". Notice he says they sought for it but did not obtain it, but the elect obtain it, and the others are hardened.

Here we have **two distinct** and clearly defined **classes** which are set in sharp antithesis: the "*election*" and "*the rest*"; the one "*obtained*", the other is "*hardened*".

Concerning this verse let me quote from the comments of **John Bunyan**: "*These are solemn words: they sever between men and me. The election and the rest, the chosen and the left, the embraced and they refused. By '*rest*' here must needs be understood those not elect, because set the one in opposition to the other, and if not elect, whom then but reprobate?"*

Brother Branham said in his sermon **Divine healing 54-1219M 148** *We've seen people shout and live all kinds of life. We've seen people speak in tongues and do the same. We've seen people go out and pray for the sick to be healed, and do, **live any kind of a life**. Jesus said, "*Many will come to Me and say, 'Lord, have not I prophesied in Your Name, preached? Have not I cast out devils in Your Name?'*" "*Yes.*" "*Have not I done these mighty works?*" "*Yes.*" He'd say, '*Well, then, depart from Me, you workers of iniquity. I didn't even know you.*'" "*It ain't him that willeth or him that runneth; it's the**

**God that haveth mercy,"** the Bible said. He said, "Didn't I say to Moses, **'I'll have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I'll harden who I will harden'?**" Paul said, "No man..." Well, you say then, "How can He find fault? If He predestinated you to eternal destruction, how can He find fault?" Said, "Oh man, can the thing that's made say to Him that maketh him thus? Can't do it." 150 So you see people that you can't talk to, and just won't listen, and won't listen to the Scriptures, and believing half of It's right and half of It's wrong, and yet they do this. You say, "Could that be ministers?" The Bible said so. Said, "**Men of old was foreordained to this condemnation to take the grace of God and turn it to lasciviousness**" What is "lasciviousness?" "**Knowing truth and won't walk in it.**" It said, "**When the Truth has been presented to somebody, he willfully turns away from It, he ignores It, there's no more sacrifice for sin left for that person.**" Why? There's nothing in him to believe. Do you get what I mean? 153 Looky here. How could you feed a lamb, slop? He wouldn't eat it. That's right. He wouldn't eat it because he's a lamb. But a pig will eat it (See what I mean?) because he's a pig by nature. And all that's ordained to Everlasting Life will hear the Truth, and believe the Truth, and come to the Truth. But those who'll go to church and be just as pious as the rest of them, yet won't receive the Truth, because there's nothing in them to blend with It. They can't believe the supernatural, for there's no supernatural in here to blend with the supernatural. There you are. See what I mean? There's nothing supernatural...

And br. Branham also said in his sermon **Acts of the Holy Spirit 54-1219E 35** Now, in **Acts 2:38** Peter said, "Repent, every one of you, and be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." And I've wondered through the years, when I'd see that and read it. I thought, "Lord, here comes men and women." I've seen them come to the altar, kneel down and cry, and pray go and be baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and in a week later, be out with the world again. I thought, "O God, surely Your Word's not wrong. I just can't understand it. But You, Lord, if I'll continue with You, You said **Your Word would abide in me.**" So I continued with Him, until now I see what it is. He's made it known. See? And I never knew it until the Lord just opened it up one day, and there it was laying right before me. Then I seen them people wasn't what they was at the beginning (See?), that, "**No man can come to Me, except My Father draws him.**" It's not he that wants to be; it's God that elects it to be. It isn't whether you want It or not; you have nothing to do with it. It's God. He, "**He hardens whom He will harden. He has mercy on whom He will have mercy.**" That's right. And no matter who you are, what position you have, whether you're the president or whether you're a bum on the street, doesn't make a bit of difference. "**God has mercy on whom He will have mercy.**" And before the world began, He ordained that so many people, down through the ages, who they was, would be saved. And every one that He ordained will come to Him. That's right. Every one will come, and none of them will be lost. He's ordained, said there'd be a Church there; It would be without blemish; It would be without wrinkle.

Writing to the saints at Thessalonica The apostle Paul said in **1 Thessalonians 5:9** "**For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ**".

Now surely any impartial mind could see that this statement wouldn't make sense if God has not "**appointed**" any **to wrath**. To say that God "**hath not appointed us to wrath**", clearly implies that there are some that he has "**appointed to wrath**", and the reason so many cannot see this is because they've been blinded to what the Scriptures teach by the dogmas and creeds of their own denominations.

**1 Peter 2:8** tells us the Word of God is "**A Stone of stumbling, and a Rock or offence, even to them who stumble at the Word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed**".

The **whereunto** points back to **the stumbling at the Word**, and their **disobedience**. And we are also told this condition is what **they were appointed** too. Therefore we see that God declares in his Word that there are some who have been "**appointed**" **unto disobedience**.

Therefore our business is not to reason how can this be? But rather, our business is to say what the Scripture says. **Our duty is not to understand, Our duty it to believe God,** and what His word teaches.

Again we see in **2 Peter 2:12**. "**But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption**". Here we are told "**brute beasts**" are "**made to be taken and destroyed**". But when Paul uses the word, "**these as brute beast**", he is not calling them brute beasts, but just as the brute beast is made to be destroyed these are also in the same way. The word "**as**" means "**in the same manner**" or "**in the same way as brute beasts are taken and destroyed**".

Notice the force of "**as**" here, "**these as brute beasts**"? Clearly, it is that "**these men as brute beasts**, are **the ones who**, like animals, are "**made to be taken and destroyed**": the closing words confirm this by repeating the same sentiment "**and shall utterly perish in their own corruption**."

We also read in **Jude 1:4** "**For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ**".

Notice they were ordained beforehand to this condemnation.

Again we see in **Revelations 13:8** "**And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him (the Antichrist), every one whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the Book of Life of the Lamb that hath been slain**",

So we see that in God's Book if your name was not there, you won't be there at the end either. We also see this in **Revelations 17:8** "**The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.**

Here, then, is a positive statement again affirming that there are those whose names were not written in the Book of Life before the foundations of the earth. Because of this they shall render allegiance and bow down to the Antichrist.

Here now, we've shown you no less than ten scriptures which plainly imply or expressly teach the fact of *reprobation*. These Scriptures affirm that *the wicked are made for the Day of Evil*; that *God fashions some vessels unto dishonour*; and by his eternal judgment God fits them for destruction; that they are *like brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, being of old ordained unto this condemnation*.

Therefore if Paul was pointing out that *God did not appoint us to wrath but to salvation*, then he also implied that God did appoint some to wrath. Therefore God's word unquestionably teaches both *Predestination and Reprobation*, or to use the words of Calvin, "*Eternal Election is God's predestination of some to salvation, and others to destruction*".

Having thus stated the doctrine of *Reprobation*, as it is presented in the Scriptures, I would like to mention one or two important considerations to guard against abuse and prevent us from making any unwarranted deductions:

**First**, the doctrine of *Reprobation* does not mean that God purposed to take innocent creatures, make them wicked, and then damn them. The Scripture says in **Ecclesiastes 7:29**, "*God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions*". God has not created sinful creatures in order to destroy them, for God is not to be charged with the sin of his creatures. The responsibility and criminality is all man's.

**God's** decree of *Reprobation* contemplated Adam's race as fallen, sinful, corrupt, guilty. Therefore from that, God purposed to save a few as the monuments of his sovereign grace; the others He determined to destroy **as the exemplification of his justice and severity**. In determining to destroy these others, **God did them no wrong**. They had already fallen in Adam, their legal representative; **they are therefore born with a sinful nature**, and **in their sins he leaves them** as we saw in **Psalm 1:6**, they are left to their own selves. Nor should they complain. **This is just as they wish**; they have no desire for holiness; *they love darkness rather than light*. Where then is there any injustice if God according to **Psalm 81:12** "*gives them up to their own hearts' lusts*"!

**Second**, the doctrine of *Reprobation* does not mean God refuses to save those **who earnestly seek salvation**. **The fact is that the reprobate have no longing for the Saviour**: they see in him *no beauty that they should desire him*. They will not come to Christ, "*they will not come to the light*". Why then should God force them to? **He turns away none who do come**. Where then is the injustice of God beforehand-determining their just doom? None will be punished but for their iniquities; where then, is the supposed tyrannical cruelty of God's purpose and plan? Remember that **God is the Creator of the wicked, not of their wickedness; He is the Author of their being, but not the Infuser of their sin**.

**God does not compel the wicked to sin**, as the rider spurs on an unwilling horse. God only says in effect that awful word as we see in **Matthew 15:14** "*Let them alone*". He needs only to slacken the reins of providential restraint, and *withhold the influence of saving grace*, and apostate men will only too soon and too surely, of his own accord, fall by his own iniquities. Thus the decree of *reprobation* neither interferes with the bent of man's own fallen nature, nor serves to render him the less inexcusable.

**Third**, God's doctrine of **Reprobation** in no wise conflicts with His goodness. Though the non-elect are not the objects of his goodness in the same way or to the same extent as the elect are, yet they are not entirely excluded from a participation of it. They enjoy the good things of God's blessings in common with God's own children, and very often even to a higher degree. The Scriptures tells us that "*the rain falls on the just as well as the unjust*". And also, **Psalm 68:18** tells us **God gives gifts unto men, the rebellious also**.

But how can you reprove them? *Does the goodness of God lead them to repent?* No, for we read in **Romans 2:4-5** "*Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? 5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;*".

On what righteous ground then can they murmur against not being the objects of God's benevolence? Moreover, if it did not clash with God's mercy and kindness to leave the entire body of the fallen angels as we see in **2 Peter 2:4** under the guilt of their apostasy; still less can it clash with Gods perfect plan to leave some of fallen mankind in their sins and punish them for them.

**2 Peter 2:4** *For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; 5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; 6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; 7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) 9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: 10 *But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.**

Now, this word dignities is not dignitaries. It does not speak of people but is actually translated from the Greek word Doxa which is God's opinions, values, and judgments.

So these are people who speak against God's values, against God's opinions, etc. In fact that is what the word dignities means according to our dictionary.

Dignities: *bearing, conduct, or speech indicative of self-respect or appreciation of the formality or gravity of an occasion or situation. nobility or elevation of character; worthiness:* So these people speak evil against God's doxa.

**11** *Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. 12 But these, **as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;** 13 And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;*

**14** *Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; (unbelief) beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: **15** Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; **16** But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet. **17** These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. **18** For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. **19** While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. **20** For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. **21** For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, (right-wise-ness) than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. **22** But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.*

**Finally**, I would like to lay a caution to you: we must be very careful during our present life, to not make determination who among us are the reprobates. We must not judge any man, no matter how wicked they may appear to be. Just remember, even though Joseph's brothers tried to kill him and ended up selling him into slave labor, yet they will be in the New Jerusalem. Why? Because it is God who chooses to save and to condemn, not us. The vilest sinner, may, for all we know, be included in the election of grace and one day be quickened by the Spirit of grace. Jesus commanded us to not judge and woe be unto us if we disregard what He told us not to do. He said also to "*Preach the Gospel to every creature*". When we have done so we have fulfilled His desire for us and as Paul said, "*we are free from the blood of all men.*"

**But If men refuse to take heed, then their blood is on their own heads;** nevertheless Paul says in **2 Corinthians 2:15-16** and i would like to read it from the **Message** Version "*Through us, he brings knowledge of Christ. Everywhere we go, people breathe in the exquisite fragrance. Because of Christ, we give off a sweet scent rising to God, which is recognized by those on the way of salvation as an aroma redolent with life. But those on the way to destruction treat us more like the stench from a rotting corpse.*"

Now as we begin to wind down this sermon, let me read from **Matthew 25:41** which is often quoted to show that God has not fitted certain vessels to destruction. It reads, "*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels.*"

This is, in fact, one of the principal verses relied upon to disprove the doctrine of **Reprobation**. But the emphatic word here is not "*for*" but "*Devil*." This verse sets forth the **severity of the judgment** which awaits the lost. In other words, the above scripture expresses the awfulness of the everlasting fire rather than the subjects of it.

If the fire be "*prepared for the Devil and his angels*" then how intolerable it will be! If the place of eternal torment into which the damned shall be cast is the same as that in which God's arch enemy will suffer, how dreadful must that place be!

Again another Scripture used to try to disprove the doctrine of Reprobation we find in **Acts 17:3** They read this and then say, if God has chosen only certain ones to salvation, why are we told that God "*now commandeth all men everywhere to repent*"?

But That God commandeth "*all men*" to repent is but the enforcing of his righteous claims as the Righteous Judge of the whole earth. How could God do less, seeing that all men everywhere have sinned against him?

Furthermore; that *God commandeth all men everywhere to repent* argues the universality of man's responsibility. But this scripture does not declare that it is God's pleasure to "*give repentance*" to all men everywhere.

That the apostle Paul did not believe God gave repentance to every soul is clear from his words in **2 Timothy 2:25** "*In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.*"

Again, we are asked, if God has "**ordained**" only certain ones unto eternal life, then why do we read that he "*will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*" as we read in **1 Timothy 2:4**? The reply is, that the words "*all*" and "*all men*", like the term "*world*", are often used in a general and relative sense.

**1 Timothy 2:4** cannot teach that God wills the salvation of all mankind, or otherwise all mankind would be saved As we read in **Job 23:13!** "*What his soul desireth even that he doeth*"

Again; we are asked, Does not Scripture declare, again and again, that God is no "*respector of persons*"? We answer, **it certainly does**, and God's electing grace proves it. The seven sons of Jesse, though older and physically superior to David, are passed by, while the young shepherd boy is exalted to Israel's throne. The scribes and lawyers pass unnoticed, and ignorant fishermen are chosen to be the apostles of the Lord Jesus. Divine truth is hidden from *the wise and prudent and is revealed to babes* instead. The great majority of the wise and noble are ignored, while the weak, the base, the despised, are called and saved. Jesus compelled harlots and publicans to come in to the gospel feast, while self-righteous Pharisees are suffered to perish in their immaculate morality. Truly, God is "*no respector*" of persons or he would not have saved Paul who claimed to be chiefest of sinners.

That the Doctrine of **Reprobation** is a "*hard saying*" to the carnal mind is easily acknowledged, yet is it any "*harder*" to understand than that of *eternal punishment*? We have clearly shown that the scriptures teach the doctrine of **Reprobation**, and therefore it is not up to us to pick and choose from the truths revealed in God's Word. But just because the Bible teaches it, you cannot expect men to believe it. As we know men pick and choose what they want to believe and are thus rebuffed by the words of Jesus when he said, "*O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken*" **Luke 24:25**: fools because slow of heart; slow of heart, not dull of head!

**John Calvin** wrote "Predestination we call the decree of God, by which he has determined in himself, what he would have to become of every individual of mankind. For they are not all created with a similar destiny: but eternal life is foreordained for some, and eternal damnation for others. Every man, therefore, being created for one or the other of these ends, we say, he is predestinated either to life or to death" from

**Martin Luther** in his most excellent work "**De Servo Arbitrio**" (Free Will a Slave), wrote: "All things whatsoever arise from, and depend upon, the divine appointments, whereby it was preordained who should receive the Word of Life, and who should disbelieve it, who should be delivered from their sins, and who should be hardened in them, who should be justified and who should be condemned. This is the very truth which razes the doctrine of free will from its foundations, to wit, that God's eternal love of some men and hatred of others is immutable and cannot be reversed."

**Thirsting for life 57-0728 P:73** A man told me not long ago, he said, "Mr. Branham, I don't care what you would do or say, I don't believe It." I said, "**It wasn't given to unbelievers. It was only given to them that believe.**" **It's not for unbelievers.** They'll perish. I don't know... Of course, all of you know this, that **I'm strictly a Calvinist. I believe that men are ordained to Eternal Life, and some are ordained to condemnation according to God's Word.** The Bible said **men of old was predestinated to this condemnation, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness.** That's right. And if you... **God's not willing that any should perish** now. But to be God, **He knewed from the very beginning who would be saved and who wouldn't be saved.** If He didn't, He wasn't God. He's a infinite, eternal God.

And in Closing William Branham prophet of God said, **Hebrews Chapter 3 57-0901M P:69** Blessed Lord, only eternity will reveal the great things that we now share together. Little is **many who are ordained to condemnation.** As Thou hast said in the Book of **Jude**, that "**men of old, foreordained to condemnation, would take the grace of our God and turn it into lasciviousness.**" And many today, are preaching the Gospel (the grace of God), **turn it into a money making scheme, having a great big church and the most in Sunday school; taking the grace of God and turn it into lasciviousness.** And the world's blind, and going like blind pigs, they don't understand. O God, open to us understanding. ...

**Jehovah Jireh 57-0612 P:65** Why was it some of you kept your hands down? "**Though one would raise from the dead, yet would you not believe?**" That's what Jesus said, **Luke 16.** Yes, **no matter what would take place, there's people in the world that were born not to believe.** The Bible said, "**They were ordained or old to this condemnation.**" **Jude.** "**Men of old ordained to this condemnation not to believe.**" **No matter what you'd do, they wouldn't believe it any how.** **Pharaoh was raised up for this same purpose.** Aren't you happy tonight, that God's tendered your heart to look to Calvary and believe?

Let us pray...