

GraceLife Church Presents . . .

Soteriology

The Purpose,
Accomplishment, Plan, and
Application of Redemption

The Plan of Redemption

The Plan of Redemption

Excursus: The Doctrine of Reprobation

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

- ❖ Theologians usually put reprobation and election together under *predestination*.
- ❖ Scripture reveals that God has destined the future of men in such a way that he is not the author of sin, nor the chargeable cause of sin.
- ❖ God is the ultimate cause of all things and yet, he never the efficient cause of evil.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

- ❖ Scripture reveals that God's sovereign decree is compatible with man 'free' will.
- ❖ God is the ultimate cause of all things and yet he never causes sin as sin but in order to bring forth some good through the evil that men do.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

- ❖ God punishes men for their sinful actions which they commit with sinful intent, which at the same time he decreed to bring about for his good and holy purposes.
- ❖ These things are somewhat of a mystery to us.
- ❖ Scripture teaches that God is sovereign and that man is responsible.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

- ❖ Election is God's work before creation to choose some people to be saved out of his sovereign good pleasure alone and not on account of any foreseen merit in them.
- ❖ Reprobation is the opposite side of election.
- ❖ Reprobation is God's choice to pass by certain individuals so that he refrains from saving them. This too is based on his sovereign good pleasure alone and not on any foreseen merit on their part.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“The decree of reprobation is the free and sovereign choice of God, made in eternity past, to pass over certain individuals, choosing not to set his saving love on them but instead determining to punish them for their sins unto the magnification of his justice.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 504.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“Reprobation may be defined as that eternal decree of God whereby He has determined to pass some men by with the operations of His special grace, and to punish them for their sins, to the manifestation of his justice.”

Lewis Berkof, *Systematic Theology*, 116.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

- ❖ The doctrine of reprobation can be shown from Scripture in two primary ways.
 - ❖ First, it is the logical result of the Scriptural teaching of election.
 - ❖ Second, reprobation is explicitly taught in Scripture.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

- ❖ Last week, we talked about the logic of reprobation as the corollary to the doctrine of election.
- ❖ If God chose only to save some, it follows that he did not chose all.
- ❖ We also began to present the Scriptural teaching on reprobation. Scripture explicitly says that certain false teachers and unsaved individuals were marked out for that fate before the foundation of the world.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

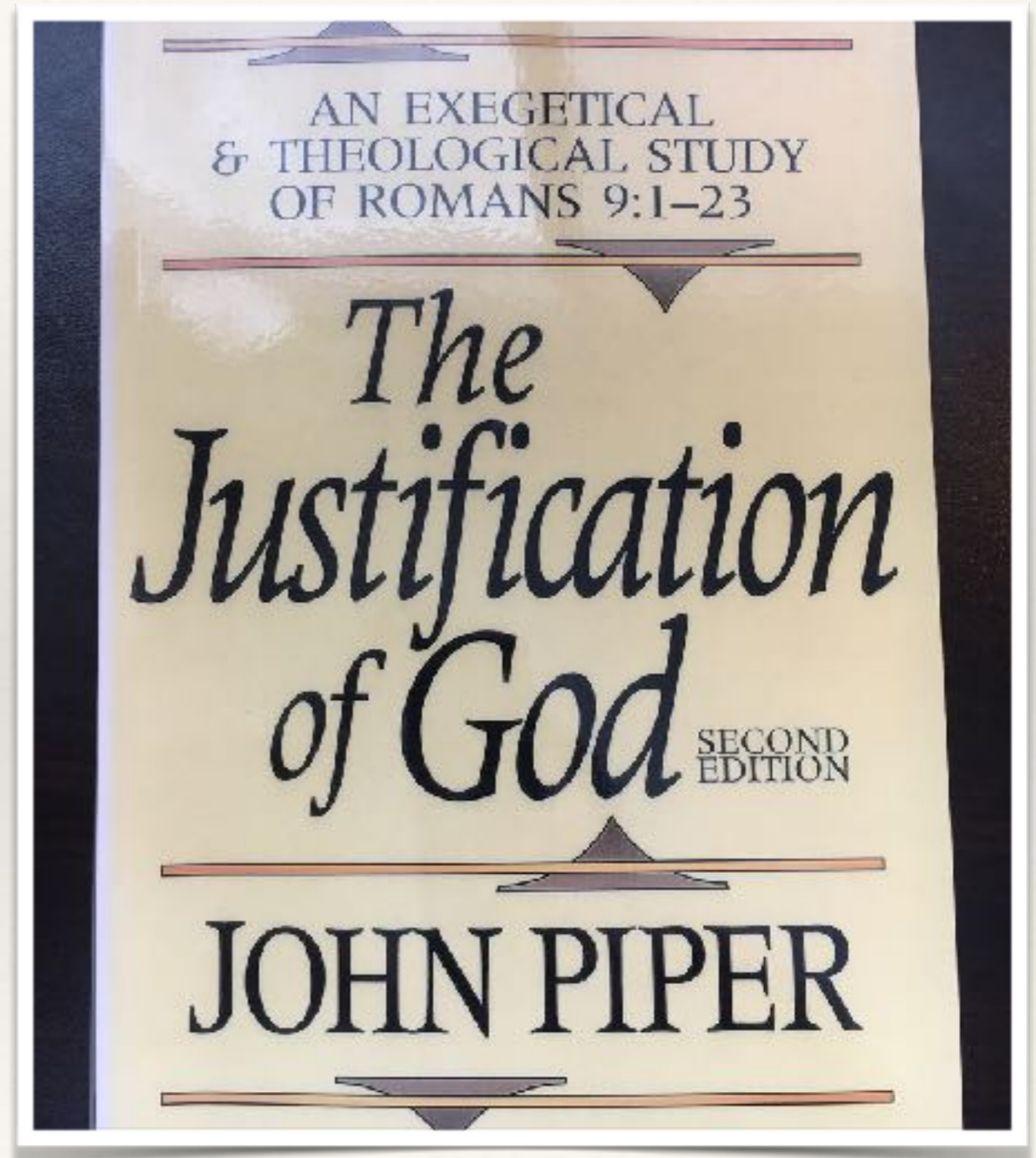
Introduction

- ❖ Romans 9 addresses this issue of God's sovereignty in election and reprobation in more detail than anywhere else in Scripture.
- ❖ Last week we looked at Rom 9:1–15, today we will look at it again.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Last week we began our look at Rom 9:1–23 following John Piper in . . .
- ❖ *The Justification of God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 9:1–23.*



The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ We began in Rom 9:1–6a where Paul tells us of his "great sorrow" and "unceasing grief" in his heart "for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites" (Rom 9:2–4).
- ❖ Paul said, "For I could wish myself accursed, *separated* from Christ" for their sake.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ The reason Paul felt so strongly was because his brethren were themselves separated from Christ and accursed.
- ❖ This created a problem, because Israel was God's covenant people. God had chosen his people but they were not being saved. The question then becomes, "has the word of God failed?"

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Rom 9:6 But *it is* not as though the word of God has failed.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ God's covenant people are missing the covenant promises.
- ❖ Has the word of God failed?
- ❖ Has God failed?
 - ❖ Paul says, "No."
 - ❖ Why?

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Because God covenant with Israel was always according to or subject to God's electing purpose.
- ❖ From Abraham's seed God chose Isaac and not Ishmael.
- ❖ From Isaac's seed God chose Jacob and not Esau.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Rom 9:10 And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived *twins* by one man, our father Isaac; **11** for though *the twins* were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to *His* choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls, **12** it was said to her, "THE OLDER WILL SERVE THE YOUNGER."

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Paul is showing through this section (Rom 9:6b–13) that “they are not all Israel who are from Israel” (Rom 9:6b).
- ❖ Not every individual Israelite was promised salvation. Rather, “through Isaac your descendants will be named [lit. called]” (Rom 9:7; Gen 21:12).

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ God's purpose in predicting that "the older will serve the younger" was "*so that* God's purpose according to his choice (election) would stand" (Rom 9:11)
- ❖ This choice of Jacob over Esau was "not because of works but because of Him who calls."

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Piper argues that it doesn't even really matter *how* you understand the distinction God makes between the children, whatever that is, God is going to act to make sure that the distinction definitely comes to pass.
- ❖ God's determination is not only prior to their birth (9:11a) but also it is not based on their deeds (negatively stated in 9:11b), but is in fact based on God's call (positively stated in 9:11c). See similarly Rom 9:16.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Even if we grant that the unconditional election of Jacob and Esau is *only* an election to national blessings and has nothing to do with their salvation the context of Romans 9 demands that Paul is applying the *principle* of their unconditional election to eternal salvation.
- ❖ How could 'all Israel' not be 'Israel' if we are only talking about election to national blessings?

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Why would Paul (almost) wish to be accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of his brethren's national privileges as Israel?

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Why would an objection be brought up in Roman 9:14 that unconditional election would be unrighteous [ἀδικία; NASB 'injustice'] of God if all Paul was talking about was national blessings?
- ❖ Besides that, the unconditional election of Israel over Edom surely led to the salvation of many Israelites and the damnation of many Edomites throughout history.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ This teaching of unconditional election to salvation brings up a problem. If God does not choose based on merit or a person's actions does that mean there is unrighteousness in God?

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Rom 9:14 What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be!

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Rom 9:15 For He says to Moses, “I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION.”

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Rom 9:15 is a quote from Exodus 33:19.
- ❖ Some commentators understand this, not as a defence of God's righteousness in unconditional election but as simply a restatement of the above (Rom 9:6b–13).
- ❖ In other words, is God unrighteous (Rom 9:14)?
 - ❖ No. He told Moses he would have mercy on whom he would have mercy.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ If that is really what Paul is doing it would be fine.
- ❖ But every other time in Romans that Paul asks a hypothetical question like this and answers μὴ γένοιτο! He follows up with reasons why that thing should 'never be.'
- ❖ Also, a simple restatement of his proposition (that God unconditionally elects) doesn't do justice to the explanatory γὰρ 'for' (Rom 9:15).

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ So, what is Paul's justification of God?
- ❖ This question is the reason why Piper wrote his book. He wanted to understand this section of Scripture better.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ The difficulty begins as we look at the relationship between Rom 9:14 and 9:15.
- ❖ The English word 'for' represents the Greek work 'γὰρ.'
- ❖ γὰρ is a preposition that marks the cause or reason of something. It is often used to show what is coming is an explanation of what came before.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Why is there no injustice, or unrighteousness with God?
- ❖ The reason is (γαρ) . . .
Because (γαρ) . . .
The explanation is (γαρ) . . .

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Romans 9:2 and 3 use the same format.
- ❖ Why does Paul have sorrow, etc. (Rom 9:2)?
- ❖ The explanation is (γαρ) Romans 9:3.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Rom 9:15 For He says to Moses, “I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION.”

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ The question is, how does this quote from Exodus 33:19 explain how there is no unrighteousness in God even though he determines eternal destinies unconditionally?

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ To answer this we need to go back to Exodus 32–34 and see the context.
- ❖ Exodus 32:1–10: Israel makes the molten calf while Moses ‘delays’ on mount Sinai.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 32:4 . . .“This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.”

Exod 32:6 So the next day they rose early and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 32:9 The LORD said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and behold, they are an obstinate people. **10** “Now then let Me alone, that My anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation.”

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 32:9 The LORD said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and behold, they are an obstinate people. **10** “Now then let Me alone, that My anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation.”

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Exodus 32:11–14: Moses prays for Israel reminding God. . .
 - ❖ 1. that Israel is his people (32:11)
 - ❖ 2. that the Egyptians would think God was evil if he destroyed his people that he brought out (32:12).
 - ❖ 3. of the Abrahamic covenant (in which God swore by himself to give Israel the promised land forever (33:13)).

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 32:14 So the LORD changed His mind about the harm which He said He would do to His people.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Exodus 32:15–29: Moses goes down, sees the calf, burns it, and brings judgment on the people.
- ❖ Exodus 32:30–35: Moses prays for the people again, asking God to forgive their sin.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 32:31 Then Moses returned to the LORD, and said, “Alas, this people has committed a great sin, and they have made a god of gold for themselves. **32** “But now, if You will, forgive their sin — and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written!”

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 33:1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, “Depart, go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up from the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘To your descendants I will give it.’ **2** “I will send an angel before you and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 33:1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, “Depart, go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up from the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘To your descendants I will give it.’ **2** “I will send an angel before you and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 33:5 For the LORD had said to Moses, “Say to the sons of Israel, ‘You are an obstinate people; should I go up in your midst for one moment, I would destroy you. . . .’”

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Exodus 33:7–11: God spoke with Moses face to face at the tent of meeting.
- ❖ Exodus 33:12–16: Moses prays for the people again,.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 33:12 Then Moses said to the LORD, “See, You say to me, ‘Bring up this people!’ But You Yourself have not let me know whom You will send with me. . . . **13** “Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight. Consider too, that this nation is Your people.”

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 33:14 And He said, “My presence shall go *with you*, and I will give you rest.” **15** Then he said to Him, “If Your presence does not go *with us*, do not lead us up from here.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 33:18 Then Moses said, “I pray You, show me Your glory!” **19** And He said, “I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion.”

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Exodus 34:1–7: God appears to Moses and proclaimed the name of the LORD. Moses again asks the LORD to go with the people, to forgive their iniquity and sin, and to take them as his own possession.
- ❖ Exodus 34:8–28: The renewal of the covenant.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“It is impossible to construe Moses’ request in 33:18 as an expression of a desire mystically to enjoy God’s essence. Rather the request to see God’s glory should be understood in this context as a desire to have God confirm his astonishing willingness to show his favour to a still-necked, idolatrous people.”

John Piper, *The Justification of God*, 80.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“Moses’ anxiety, therefore, about the future of Israel is resolved through a personal revelation of God as a God who is merciful and gracious.”

John Piper, *The Justification of God*, 81.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 33:19 And He said, “I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious [וְחַנּוּתִי אֶת-אֲשֶׁר אֶחְוֶן], and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion [וְרַחֲמֹתַי אֶת-אֲשֶׁר אֲרַחֵם].”

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“... is an example of the Hebrew formula called *idem per idem*. By leaving the action unspecified the force of this idiom is to preserve the freedom of the subject to perform the action in whatever way he pleases. By simply repeating the action without adding any stipulations the *idem per idem* formula makes clear that the way the action is executed is determined by the will of the subject.”

John Piper, *The Justification of God*, 82.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“Therefore both the grammar (*idem per idem*) and the vocabulary (grace and mercy) of Ex 33:19 cohere to stress that in dispensing mercy and grace God is dependent on nothing but his own free and sovereign choice.”

John Piper, *The Justification of God*, 83.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Moses asks God to show him his glory (33:18). Notice that God responds by saying, “I will make all my goodness pass before you *and* I will proclaim the name of the LORD.
- ❖ The fulfillment of this promise is in Exodus 34:6–7 where God proclaims his name to Moses.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 34:6 Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; **7** who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.”

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Exod 34:6 Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate [רַחֻם] and gracious [חַנּוּן], slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; 7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.”

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Notice that the passing by of God's glory is not a visible manifestation of God but a proclamation of his character.
- ❖ This is what Moses needs to have assurance that God will accompany them to the promised land.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ God's glory, goodness, and name are basically synonyms throughout Scripture.
- ❖ God's self revelation then, the essence of who God is, is that he is the One who is free to show grace and compassion to whom he wills.
- ❖ The glory of God is (chiefly) his compassionate and gracious nature but it also includes his determination to reveal his justice.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“These three realities overlap in the present context so that we can say God’s glory and his name consist fundamentally in his propensity to show mercy and his sovereign freedom in its distribution. Or to put it more precisely, *it is the glory of God and his essential nature mainly to distribute mercy (but also wrath, Ex 34:7) on whomever he pleases apart from any constraint outside his own will. This is the essence of what it means to be God. This is his name.*”

John Piper, *The Justification of God*, 88–9.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Piper is saying this is who God is.
- ❖ The reason Paul uses this verse, or the reason this quotation demonstrates that God is not unrighteous can be seen in the fact that this verse declares who Yahweh is.
- ❖ In Romans 9:17 Paul quotes another OT passage that speaks of Yahweh's name.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Rom 9:16 So then it *does not depend* on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. **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.”

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Romans 9:17 is a quotation of Exodus 9:16.
- ❖ Once again, scholars are divided on why Paul chose this text. Note the inference he draws from Exodus 9:16 in Romans 9:18

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

Rom 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.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“The inference Paul draws from this text is, ‘Whom God wills he hardens’ (Rom 9:18). Why did he not cite one of the numerous text from Exodus in which it is actually said that God ‘hardened’ Pharoah’s heart? Why chose a text in which the very word ‘hardening’ is missing?”

John Piper, *The Justification of God*, 100.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“The answer seems to be that Paul chose this text from Exodus because his chief interest lay in the purpose clauses: ‘to demonstrate my power and proclaim my name.’”

John Piper, *The Justification of God*, 100.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“It is no accident that the key word ὄνομα [name] appears also in verse 17. It is no accident because in both Ex 33:19 and Ex 9:16 Paul has found Old Testament texts in which the exercise of God’s sovereign freedom in mercy and in hardening, is the means by which he preserves and displays the glory of his *name*.”

John Piper, *The Justification of God*, 100.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“Paul is defending the righteousness of God in predestination by referring to two Old Testament texts which reveal that God proclaims his name (i.e. his character) and demonstrates his glorious power in the world by exercising his sovereign freedom to show mercy and to harden.”

John Piper, *The Justification of God*, 100.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“God’s righteousness consists in his unswerving commitment always to act for the glory of his name—a name which according to Ex 33:19 implies a propensity to show mercy and a freedom from all human distinctive in determining its distribution.”

John Piper, *The Justification of God*, 100.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Scripturally Presented

- ❖ Piper then works through the OT and in Romans to demonstrate that this understanding of God's righteousness is correct.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

Introduction

“Since God’s *righteousness* consists basically in his acting unswervingly for his own glory, and since his glory consists basically in his *sovereign freedom* in the bestowal and withholding of mercy, there is no unrighteousness with God. On the contrary, he must pursue his ‘electing purpose’ apart from man’s willing and running,’ for only in his sovereign, free bestowal of mercy on whomever he wills is God action out of a full allegiance to his name and esteem for his glory.”

John Piper, *The Justification of God*, 122.

