

## Dr. Craig Keener, Romans, Session 11

### Romans 9:17-11:32

### Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

#### 1. Abstract of Keener, Romans, Session 11, Romans 9:17-11:32, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Craig Keener's lecture on Romans 9:17-11:32 explores Paul's teachings on **God's sovereignty and predestination**. Keener emphasizes that God's predestination is **an act of grace**, using Old Testament examples to illustrate God's actions with Pharaoh and Israel. He **addresses the relationship between God's sovereignty and human responsibility**, highlighting the importance of faith over works in salvation for both Jews and Gentiles. The lecture further discusses Paul's use of **intertextuality and midrash** in interpreting scripture and concludes with a discussion of the inclusion of Gentiles and the ultimate restoration of Israel.

2. 15 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Keener, Romans, Session 11 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → Pauline Epistles → Romans).



**Keener\_Romans\_Session11.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided lecture on Romans 9:17-11:32 by Dr. Craig Keener:

#### **Briefing Document: Romans 9:17-11:32 (Dr. Craig Keener)**

**Source:** Excerpts from "Keener\_Romans\_EN\_Lecture11.pdf"

#### **Main Themes:**

1. **God's Sovereignty and Predestination:** Keener emphasizes God's absolute sovereignty in choosing and acting, including the predestination of individuals for specific purposes. He clarifies this is not based on human merit, but solely on God's grace. As he says, "it's by grace. It's nothing we did to merit God's love in our lives. It's nothing we did to merit God turning us to himself. It's just God reaching out to us." He also notes that even God's use of "vessels of wrath" like Pharaoh served His ultimate purpose of revealing His glory and power, emphasizing, "God established Pharaoh to reveal God's power...so that God's name would be proclaimed in all the earth."
2. **God's Purpose for All Nations:** Keener highlights that God's actions, even those involving Israel and judgment, are ultimately intended to glorify His name and draw people from all nations to Himself. Paul's mission, as Keener says is "to bring about the obedience of faith among the Gentiles for God's namesake, for the honor of God's name." He supports this with examples from the Old Testament, where God's actions were intended to make Himself known to Egyptians, Philistines, and other groups, stressing, "God already cared about the Gentiles."
3. **Mercy and Hardening:** Keener discusses God's prerogative to show mercy or harden hearts, using the example of Pharaoh. This hardening doesn't negate human responsibility, but is related to God's sovereign purposes. He notes, "God shows mercy and hardens whom he wills," while also acknowledging that Pharaoh himself hardened his own heart. Keener says that Paul's point is more about, "God's sovereignty and how that exactly works out with human free will or human choices."

4. **The Problem of Human Complaint:** The lecture addresses the human tendency to question God's justice and sovereignty. Keener uses the analogy of the potter and the clay to illustrate God's authority and our limited perspective as created beings. "Will what's made say to its maker, oh, you didn't make me right?" He emphasizes that acknowledging God's sovereignty means we should not complain about his actions. He connects this idea to the concept of vessels of wrath and mercy, where God uses suffering and judgement for the ultimate benefit of those who will be his people. As Keener states, "God lets history play out for the sake of those who will be his people forever."
5. **Inclusion of Gentiles:** Keener emphasizes the inclusion of Gentiles into God's people as a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. He uses Hosea as an example of God turning "not my people" into "my people." He states, "if God could make Israel his people after them being rejected as his people, then certainly God could also make Gentiles his people, who had not been his people." The lecture cites Isaiah and other prophets, demonstrating a long-standing pattern of God's intention to draw people from all nations. As Keener notes, "God makes peoples for himself among many peoples of the earth."
6. **Faith vs. Works:** Keener stresses that righteousness is received through faith, not by striving through the law. He critiques a works-based approach to the law, saying, "if you pursue the law as a way of accruing right standing for yourself before God...you're pursuing the law from the standpoint of works." He contrasts it with Paul's concept of pursuing the law from the perspective of faith. He explains that the Jewish people, while chosen, "are not chosen on the basis of your ethnicity, you're chosen on the basis of Christ."
7. **The Law and Christ:** The lecture addresses the idea that Christ is the end (telos) of the law. Keener notes that the purpose of the law was never for self-justification but points towards Jesus, stating "ultimately what the law points towards is Jesus Christ." He explores different potential meanings of telos, including the possibility that it signifies the "end of the law for self-justification."
8. **The Stone Metaphor:** Keener examines the "stone" metaphor, highlighting how it represents both a foundation for believers and a stumbling block for those who reject Christ. He traces this metaphor throughout various Old Testament and New Testament texts, showing how it connects to both judgment and salvation. As Keener explains, "Israel stumbles over God as a stone," and conversely, "whoever trusts, whoever believes in the foundation stone...will not be ashamed."

9. **The Message of Faith:** Keener delves into Paul's use of Deuteronomy 30 to present the message of faith as something accessible and not dependent on human effort. He makes the analogy between God's salvation through Moses and God's salvation through Jesus. He explains how confession of the mouth and belief in the heart are connected with the accessibility of the gospel: "If you confess with your mouth, that Jesus is Lord...If you believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you'll be saved."
10. **Responsibility and Hearing:** Keener clarifies the relationship between hearing the gospel, believing, and responsibility. He asserts that faith comes from hearing the message, but not everyone who hears believes and, therefore, not everyone is saved. Keener notes, "Faith comes from hearing the message...the point is just that the message has to be brought to you." He also explores the idea of universal responsibility based on creation, but notes that the gospel gives more direct revelation of God's intentions. As Keener summarizes, "Israel has heard, and therefore Israel is responsible."
11. **God's Continuing Plan for Israel:** The lecture emphasizes God's ongoing plan for the Jewish people, challenging the idea that God has abandoned them. He uses the concept of the "remnant" to show that God has always preserved a faithful core within Israel, and that He will continue to do so. He states, "God still has a remnant in Israel, and still has a plan for his Jewish people to turn to him." He clarifies that the remnant is "something other than all Israel." He goes on to explain how God uses the Gentile inclusion to make the Jewish people jealous. As Keener puts it, "Paul wants to provoke Israel to jealousy by initiating this end time in-gathering of the Gentiles."
12. **Grafting and the Olive Tree:** Keener uses the metaphor of grafting to explain how Gentiles are incorporated into God's people. He calls Gentile believers "spiritual proselytes" and uses the metaphor of being "grafted in" to demonstrate their inclusion in God's covenant. He also cautions Gentile believers against arrogance toward the Jewish people.

**13. The Future Turning of Israel:** Keener discusses the future turning of Israel to faith in Christ, tying it to the “fullness of the Gentiles” coming in. He explores different views on the timing and nature of this turning. He stresses that this turning is essential to God’s ultimate purposes and that the Jewish people, as a whole, will turn to faith in the Messiah. Keener states, “when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, you have a turning of the Jewish people to faith in the Messiah.” He also addresses a potential understanding of “all Israel” which should not exclude ethnic Israelites but includes the remnant of believers.

**Key Quotes:**

- “it's by grace. It's nothing we did to merit God's love in our lives. It's nothing we did to merit God turning us to himself. It's just God reaching out to us.”
- “God established Pharaoh to reveal God’s power...so that God's name would be proclaimed in all the earth.”
- “God already cared about the Gentiles.”
- “God shows mercy and hardens whom he wills.”
- “Will what's made say to its maker, oh, you didn't make me right?”
- “God lets history play out for the sake of those who will be his people forever.”
- “if God could make Israel his people after them being rejected as his people, then certainly God could also make Gentiles his people, who had not been his people.”
- “God makes peoples for himself among many peoples of the earth.”
- “if you pursue the law as a way of accruing right standing for yourself before God...you're pursuing the law from the standpoint of works.”
- “ultimately what the law points towards is Jesus Christ.”
- “Israel stumbles over God as a stone.”
- “whoever trusts, whoever believes in the foundation stone...will not be ashamed.”
- “If you confess with your mouth, that Jesus is Lord...If you believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you'll be saved.”
- “Faith comes from hearing the message...the point is just that the message has to be brought to you.”

- "Israel has heard, and therefore Israel is responsible."
- "God still has a remnant in Israel, and still has a plan for his Jewish people to turn to him."
- "Paul wants to provoke Israel to jealousy by initiating this end time in-gathering of the Gentiles."
- "when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, you have a turning of the Jewish people to faith in the Messiah."

#### **Important Ideas/Facts:**

- The lecture is heavily based on biblical exegesis, using a variety of Old Testament texts to interpret Romans.
- Paul's use of scripture often involves blending different passages to evoke wider contexts or connect themes.
- Jewish interpretive practices, such as midrash and linking of texts by common phrases, influence Paul's arguments.
- The lecture is not just an academic exercise; it has practical implications for how believers view God's sovereignty, the place of Israel, the purpose of the law, and the responsibility to share the gospel.
- The lecture highlights the potential dangers of Gentile arrogance towards Jewish people and the need for a balanced understanding of God's plan.

This briefing document summarizes the key aspects of Dr. Keener's lecture and can serve as a comprehensive overview of Romans 9:17-11:32.

## 4. Romans Study Guide: Session 11, Romans 9:17-11:32

### Romans 9:17-11:32 Study Guide

#### Quiz

1. According to Keener, what is the primary point of predestination as discussed in Romans 9?
2. Explain how God used Pharaoh, according to Romans 9:17 and the related passage in Exodus.
3. How does the story of the Philistines and the ark of the covenant illustrate God's concern for the Gentiles?
4. What is the significance of the "vessels of wrath" and "vessels of mercy" in Romans 9:22-23?
5. How does Paul use the imagery of Hosea's children in Romans 9:25-26 to talk about the inclusion of Gentiles?
6. Explain the difference between pursuing the law from the standpoint of works versus the standpoint of faith, as discussed in Romans 9.
7. How does Paul interpret Deuteronomy 30 in Romans 10:6-10, and what is the significance of this interpretation?
8. According to Keener, what does it mean to "call on the name of the Lord" in the context of Romans 10:13 and the broader scripture?
9. What is the significance of the image of the olive tree in Romans 11 and how does it relate to the relationship between Jewish and Gentile believers?
10. What does Keener mean when he states "all Israel will be saved" and what textual evidence does he cite to support his interpretation?

#### Answer Key

1. The primary point of predestination, according to Keener, is that it is by grace. It is not based on anything humans have done to merit God's love, but rather is God reaching out to them.
2. God raised Pharaoh up so that he would resist God's will, allowing God to demonstrate his power and glory through signs and wonders in Egypt. This also served to proclaim God's name throughout the earth.

3. The Philistines' experience with the ark, including the fall of their god Dagon, illustrates that God was working to reveal Himself to them so they might know Him, demonstrating His concern beyond just the Israelites.
4. The vessels of wrath are those upon whom God will execute judgment, while the vessels of mercy are those who will receive God's grace and mercy. God uses the former for the sake of the latter, allowing human history to play out to ultimately bring about perfect justice, and people to have a chance to become vessels of mercy.
5. Paul uses the imagery of Hosea's children, who were initially named "not my people" and "not loved," to illustrate that those who were previously not God's people (Gentiles) can become his people and receive His compassion through faith.
6. Pursuing the law from the standpoint of works means trying to earn righteousness through actions, often leading to self-justification and looking down on others. Pursuing the law from the standpoint of faith, however, means approaching it through trust in God's grace, recognizing that salvation is a gift, not earned.
7. Paul interprets Deuteronomy 30 in the context of Christ, arguing that salvation does not require ascending to heaven or descending into the abyss, because Christ has already done that. Instead, it's about the word of faith in your mouth and heart.
8. Calling on the name of the Lord means confessing that Jesus is Lord and believing in His resurrection. It is linked to acknowledging Jesus' divinity and accepting Him as the means of salvation, not simply invoking the divine name.
9. The olive tree is a metaphor for Israel. Gentile believers are grafted into this tree as a wild olive shoot. They are made spiritual proselytes through faith, thus not replacing, but joining God's existing covenant people.
10. Keener understands "all Israel will be saved" as referring to the Jewish people as a whole, not necessarily every individual Jewish person. He cites that this is understood in the Mishnah, and the broader context in Romans where when Paul says "Israel," he means the Jewish people, and how their salvation is through faith in Christ, like everyone else.

## Essay Questions

1. Analyze the use of Old Testament texts in Romans 9-11. How does Paul employ these texts to support his arguments about God's sovereignty, justice, and the inclusion of Gentiles?
2. Discuss the tension between God's sovereignty and human responsibility in Romans 9. How does Paul address the objection that if God is sovereign, then humans cannot be held accountable for their actions?
3. Compare and contrast the concepts of "works of the law" and "faith" as presented in Romans 9-10. How does Paul argue that salvation is based on faith rather than adherence to the law?
4. Examine the role of "jealousy" in God's plan for the salvation of Israel, as explained in Romans 10-11. How does Paul hope that the salvation of the Gentiles will provoke Israel to turn to faith in Christ?
5. Discuss the implications of the olive tree metaphor in Romans 11 for understanding the relationship between Jewish and Gentile Christians. How should Gentile believers view their place in God's plan, given that they are grafted into an existing root system?

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Predestination:** The theological concept that God has determined the fate of individuals before their birth, specifically in terms of salvation.
- **Sovereignty:** The supreme power and authority of God over all creation and human history.
- **Vessels of Wrath:** Those whom God has prepared for destruction or judgment to demonstrate his power.
- **Vessels of Mercy:** Those whom God has prepared for glory and salvation to display his grace.
- **Midrash:** A Jewish method of interpreting scripture, often involving analogy and expansion of a text to apply it to new situations.
- **Works of the Law:** The actions and deeds prescribed by the Mosaic Law, often seen as a means of earning God's favor.
- **Faith:** Trust in God and acceptance of His grace as the basis for salvation, rather than reliance on works.
- **Telos:** A Greek term that can mean either the "end" or the "goal" or "purpose". In Romans 10:4, it is debated whether it means the law is done away with, or if the law points to Christ as its ultimate purpose.
- **Remnant:** A small group of faithful people who remain loyal to God during times of apostasy.
- **Grafting:** A horticultural metaphor used to describe how Gentile believers are joined to the people of God through faith, as a wild olive branch is grafted into a cultivated olive tree.
- **Doxology:** A liturgical expression of praise to God, often found at the end of a theological section.
- **Sorites:** A chain of reasoning or argument in which each link in the chain is necessary for the argument to make sense.

## 5. FAQs on Keener, Romans, Session 11, Romans 8:17-11:32, Biblelearning.org (BeL)

### FAQ on Romans 9:17-11:32

1. **What is the central idea of predestination in Romans 9 according to the text?**
2. The central idea of predestination in Romans 9 is that it is fundamentally an act of God's grace, not something earned by humans through their actions. God's sovereignty in choosing who to have mercy on and who to harden is emphasized. The raising up of Pharaoh is given as an example of God using even those who resist him for his purposes and glory. This predestination is not arbitrary but ultimately serves God's plan for his name to be proclaimed throughout the earth and to bring people to himself from all nations, not just Jews.
3. **How does the example of Pharaoh illustrate God's sovereignty in Romans 9?**
4. God raised Pharaoh up not just to be a vessel of wrath, but so that God's power and glory could be revealed through his resistance and the resulting plagues. God could have destroyed Pharaoh, but chose instead to use him to demonstrate God's power and make his name known in the earth. This highlights God's control over events and how he can use even negative figures to achieve his purposes.
5. **What is the significance of God's desire for his name to be proclaimed throughout the earth?**
6. God's desire for his name to be proclaimed throughout the earth is a primary motivation for his actions in the world. This desire is shown through the events of the Exodus, the interactions with the Philistines in 1 Samuel, and his work among the Gentiles. God's actions are aimed at making himself known to all people, bringing them into relationship with him, and being glorified by all nations. It ties into Paul's mission to bring about the obedience of faith among the Gentiles for God's namesake and honor.

7. **How does Paul address the question, "If God is sovereign, why blame me for my sin?" in Romans 9?**
8. Paul responds to this question by emphasizing that God is the creator and humans are the created. Like clay cannot question the potter, we should not question God's methods or purpose. Even if we struggle to understand, it does not negate God's sovereignty or our accountability for our choices. God's sovereignty does not excuse human sin, and we are responsible for our choices. He explains God's patience with vessels of wrath is for the benefit of the vessels of mercy, those who will ultimately come to him.
9. **How does Paul use Old Testament passages in Romans 9 and 10 to explain the inclusion of Gentiles and the status of Israel?**
10. Paul uses Old Testament texts such as Hosea and Isaiah to illustrate that God's intention was always to include the Gentiles in his plan. He points out that God can restore his people, and if he can make Israel his people after rejecting them for sin, he can make the Gentiles his people too. Texts about many people coming to Zion and Egyptians knowing the Lord all point to a bigger purpose. He also uses the image of a stone from Isaiah, showing that those who trust in Christ (the cornerstone) will not be ashamed and God does not show ethnic favoritism. He shows how Israel, while pursuing righteousness, failed to achieve it because they pursued it through works, while the Gentiles who didn't pursue it grasped it by faith.
11. **What is the relationship between faith and the law, according to Romans 10?**
12. Paul contrasts those who pursue the law as a means of self-justification with those who pursue it through faith. He says that the law is not designed for self-improvement but to point to Christ. He uses Deuteronomy 30 to show how the way of salvation is not ascending to heaven for Christ or descending into the abyss, but the message of faith in Christ is accessible and "near you", in your heart and mouth. He emphasizes confession of Jesus as Lord and faith in His resurrection and that salvation is based on believing in Christ, not just following the law. He also explains that the law points towards Christ and can either be used as a means of self-justification or through the perspective of faith in Him.

**13. What is the message of Romans 11 regarding God's plan for the Jewish people?**

14. Romans 11 emphasizes that God has not rejected his people, Israel. There is a present remnant of Jewish believers, and God still has a plan for the Jewish people to turn to him. Paul uses the analogy of the olive tree, stating that Gentiles are grafted in, but Israel is the original tree. He argues that the inclusion of Gentiles is meant to provoke Israel to jealousy, leading them back to God. He also stresses that Gentiles should not boast against the natural branches and to avoid the temptation to replace Israel in God's plan. Paul anticipates a future turning of the Jewish people as a whole when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

**15. What is meant by "the fullness of the Gentiles" in Romans 11, and how does it relate to the salvation of Israel?**

16. "The fullness of the Gentiles" refers to a point when the gospel has been preached among all nations, leading to a significant number of Gentiles believing. This concept is tied to a belief that after the fullness of the Gentiles comes, there will be a turning of the Jewish people as a whole toward faith in Christ. The timing and details are debated, but Paul believes that the conversion of Gentiles and the turning of Jewish people are connected aspects of God's end-time plan. It is not that *all* Gentiles will be saved but rather that the gospel has been preached widely and effectively to them.