

Romans Verse-by-Verse

Romans 1:24-25 (A)

Student Notes:

The downward spiral of Romans 1: Revelation, Rejection, Rationalization, and Religion.

What does God do when the very humans he created and invested with relationship turn their backs on Him and pretend He doesn't exist?

Verses 24-342: A trilogy of statements beginning with the phrase, "God gave them over".

- **The Continuing Spiral:**

Greek words used for "God gave them over": Whereas what preceded this seems to indicate that the human race was fully in charge of its own destiny – verse 24 indicates God has initiated a process unlooked for by humans: "God gave them over..."

A scary thought: Humans insisted – on being free from God's limitations on their lives, so God gave them what they wanted.

God words to Pharaoh (through Moses):

"But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." – Exodus 9:16 (See: Romans 9:17-18)

By turning his back on Yahweh, Pharaoh's heart was judicially hardened – to the point where he would be destroyed by his own choices.

That's the same theme in Romans 1:24-25. C. S. Lewis: "There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, 'Thy will be done.' All that are in hell chose it."

- **Humans and Total Depravity:**

“God gave them over”. He gave them over to the terrible freedoms they demanded. He gave them over to a life of idolatry and a life of sexual immorality.

As I see it, humanity is on its second go around when it comes to total depravity. From the first murder of Abel to Noah’s Flood: God saw “how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.” – Genesis 5/6

So he wiped the planet clean of the human race, with the exception of eight souls. But then the cycle began anew.

Why hasn’t God been forced to consume the world with fire yet? The coming of Christ and the introduction of grace in our world is the only thing that has slowed the second steady march towards absolute depravity.

- **The Awful Reality:**

“How can a good God allow such evil in our world?” We demanded freedom from any godly limitations. We insisted on the right to live as if there was no God, no Law, and no limitations. So God gave us over.

Here’s the awful reality: We didn’t realize that when we gave our hearts to Satan he would fill the earth with every form of malice, hate, debauchery, degradation, lawlessness, and pain imaginable.

- **Giving Over – A New Concept? (Not really!)**

In Psalm 81:11 we find, "But My people would not hearken to My voice and Israel would have none of Me, so I gave them up."

In Hosea 4:17, we read these terrible words: “Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone!

God gives up on both Israel and Judah -- his wayward people who will have none of Him.

Jesus & the Pharisees: **Matthew 15:14**: "Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

There's only one force in the entire universe that can restrain evil and that is God. The problem is, God is not restraining humans.

Who is? How is any restraint possible?

The answer: Humans have been put in charge of trying to restrain humans. That's the function of governments, judiciaries, and police forces.

Had Judaism and Christianity, as well as Judaic and Christian values never been introduced to the world, humans would most likely have already completed the second plunge into total depravity.

Next time we will see how verses 24 and 25 tie together idolatry and sexual immorality.