

## Romans 10

Last time, we saw from Romans 9, that the Gentiles achieved that which the Jews could not achieve, because the Jews were seeking to find it by the Law; however, the Gentiles accepted by faith and attained the righteousness of God through faith.

Now, we will see Paul again reaffirm his love and desire for his fellow Jews after the flesh. Let's start today by reading the first four verses.

<sup>1</sup> *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.*

<sup>2</sup> *For I bear them record that they have a zeal [fervor, desire, enthusiasm] of God, but not according to knowledge.*

<sup>3</sup> *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish [secure, insure] their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.*

<sup>4</sup> *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes.*

Having stated the fact of Israel's stumbling in the preceding verses, Paul, now, explains the reason for that stumbling. But first, in words reminiscent of the opening verses of chapter 9, Paul expresses his deep, personal, spiritual burden for the salvation of the people of Israel. Perhaps with his own experience in mind, [Acts 26:11] Paul affirms, "For I bear them record" [I testify, bear witness] "that they have a zeal of God". Paul has to acknowledge, however, that their zeal was "not according to knowledge". [full knowledge] The Jews, obviously, had knowledge of God but not a full knowledge. Otherwise, they would not have stumbled over Christ by seeking to gain righteousness on the basis of works.

We see Paul continuing his explanation of Israel's failure and their misguided zeal; "For they being ignorant"[not understanding] "of God's righteousness", gives the impression that they did not know or comprehend. This could be true; however, they should have known from the reading and studying of their own Scriptures. [Gen.15:6;Ps.32:1-2]

But, we see the righteousness is viewed as the righteousness God requires for people to be accepted by Him, which is God's own infinite righteousness. The Jews did not really understand God's own infinite righteousness, which is why they were continuing to seek "to establish

their own righteousness".<sup>[Isa.64:6]</sup> Little wonder, then, that they did "not submit themselves to the righteousness of God"; the righteousness only God provides through Christ by faith.

Now in verse four, we see a crucial point that Paul wants to make, where he explains the reason for Israel's stumbling, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes". The word "end" shows that Christ is the designed end, termination, or another way to say 'the Purposed-Goal of the Law',<sup>[Gal.3:24]</sup> the Object to which the Law pointed us.

The Law did not and could not, of itself, provide righteousness before God for us.<sup>[3:20;7:7]</sup> But, Christ fulfilled the Law<sup>[Mt.5:17-18]</sup> by perfectly keeping it during His sinless life<sup>[Jn.8:46]</sup> and then, gave His life in payment for the penalty of sin and the broken Law.<sup>[Eph.2:15;Col.2:13-14]</sup> The Law then pointed to Christ as the Source of God's provided righteousness that it<sup>[the Law]</sup> could not supply.

*Galatians 3:24 (KJV) Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*

A godly Jew, who trusted in Yahweh and followed the Levitical system, including the sin offering and the trespass offering, would most likely be inclined to respond to Christ by faith and would receive God's righteousness.<sup>[be justified; Acts 13:39;Rom.3:24;4:3,5]</sup> He, then, could meet the requirements of the Law by the indwelling Holy Spirit.<sup>[8:4]</sup>

On the other hand, a Jew, who sought by works to establish his own righteousness, would not recognize Christ as "the end of the law" and would stumble over Him.

Now, let us look at the next four verses.

*<sup>5</sup> For Moses describes the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which does those things shall live by them.* <sup>(Lev.18:5)</sup>

*<sup>6</sup> But the righteousness which is of faith speaks on this wise, Say not in your heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)* <sup>(Deu.30:12-14)</sup>

*<sup>7</sup> Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)*

*<sup>8</sup> But what says it? The word is near you, even in your mouth, and in your heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;*

In presenting God's gracious offer of salvation in Christ and the provision of righteousness by faith, Paul, then, first states the contrast of the 'by works' approach to achieving righteousness. He writes, "For Moses describes the righteousness which is of the law." Now, Paul quotes Leviticus 18:5, "That the man which does those things shall live by them". If a Jewish person were to receive righteousness by keeping the demands of the Law, that would be by his own human achievements; it would not be from God. However, they would need to keep the entire Law, perfectly, all their lives, which is an impossible task.<sup>[Jam.2:10]</sup> But then, Paul also quotes Moses in support of his righteousness, by a faith position, centered in Christ as "the end of the Law" and the means by which righteousness is available for all who believe and accept Jesus Christ. Paul was not simply borrowing Moses' words and applying them to something foreign in Moses' thoughts. This, then, suggests, that "righteousness...of faith" is not a new concept but had been proclaimed to Israel by Moses.

The words, quoted by Paul, in verses 6-8 is taken somewhat freely from Deuteronomy 30:12-14. This was part of what Moses had instructed the children of Israel before they entered the Promised Land. This exhortation was the conclusion of Moses' prophetic description of God's dealings with Israel. Blessing was promised for faith and obedience, and curses would result from rejection and disobedience. If Israel forsook God, Moses said, she would face worldwide dispersion and affliction. When the people finally do turn to God in faith, He will restore them to blessing, prosperity, and prominence among the nations.<sup>[Deu.30:1-10]</sup> The point of Moses' exhortation<sup>[Deu.30:11]</sup> is that the generation to whom he was speaking had the message, "The word is near you", "even in your mouth"<sup>[Deu.30:14]</sup> and could respond by faith "in your hearts"<sup>[Deu.30:14]</sup> and walk with God in obedience. Since the Israelites in Moses' day had the message, they did not need to ask that it be brought down from heaven or that someone "go over the sea for us, and bring it".<sup>[Deu.30:13]</sup> Instead, "the word", Moses' instructed, was "near" them.<sup>[Deu.30:14]</sup>

We see Paul indicating that the same truth applied to his generation, with the added fact that Christ had come in the flesh and had been resurrected. John 1:14 says,

*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

Therefore, there was no need for anyone to ask "to bring Christ down", in His Incarnation, or "to bring up Christ again from the dead"; for He had already come and had been resurrected. The message of righteousness by faith in Paul's day was "near" his readers, available to them, and this was "the word", the 'rhema', saying of "faith" which we "preach", 'rhema', the spoken word. Thus, the gospel, "the word of faith," is available and accessible to all.

*Ephesians 5:26 says, That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, and 1 Peter 1:25 says, But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*

Let's now look at vs. 9-13.

*<sup>9</sup> That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.*

*<sup>10</sup> For with the heart man believes to righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made to salvation.*

*<sup>11</sup> For the scripture says, Whosoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed.* (Isa.49:23)

*<sup>12</sup> For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich to all that call upon Him.*

*<sup>13</sup> For whosoever <sup>[whoever]</sup> shall call upon the name of the Lord <sup>[i.e. power & authority of the Lord Jesus]</sup> shall be saved.* (Joel 2<sup>32</sup>)

We see, in these verses, Paul's message to us concerning faith. Confessing "with" the "mouth" that the "Lord Jesus" is mentioned first to conform to the order of the quotation from Deuteronomy 30:14 in Romans 10:8. The confession is an acknowledgement that God has been incarnated in Jesus;<sup>[v.6]</sup> that Jesus Christ is God. Also essential, is a "heart"-faith, in that God raised Him from the dead,<sup>(v.7)</sup> which results in our salvation. We see the true order given in verse 10:

*"For with the heart man believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation."*

Yet these are not two separate steps to salvation; they are chronologically together, with salvation coming to us through acknowledging to God that Jesus Christ is God and believing in Him.

Paul supports his position by re quoting part of Isaiah 28:16<sup>(9:33)</sup> "Whosoever <sup>[all, everyone]</sup> believes on Him shall not be ashamed". God responds with the gift of provided righteousness to each individual who believes. Paul reminds his readers of God's impartiality, as he did when discussing our sinfulness.<sup>(3:22)</sup> Just as all who sin will be judged, so all who believe will be saved and richly blessed. This is also supported by a quotation from Joel 2:32:

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

To "call upon" the Lord means to pray, in faith, for our salvation. In Bible times, a person's "name" represented him and his characteristics, which shows the importance of the "name" of the Lord.

Paul goes on to ask more questions in vs.14-15.

**14** *How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

**15** *And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*<sup>(Isa.52:7)</sup>

After proclaiming God's gracious offer in Christ, Paul confronts the natural questions that arise. God's promise of salvation to "whosoever shall call" on Him<sup>(v.13)</sup> begins the process. "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?" Previously, to call on the Lord was associated with trusting Him or believing in Him,<sup>(vs.11,13)</sup> but here, it follows the believing. When we believe in Christ, we "call" on Him. Believing, in turn, is based on hearing, and hearing is based on "a preacher" "And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" We see that the Greek meaning of "preach" means 'to be a herald, to announce', so this is not limited to proclamation from a pulpit only.

Carrying God's gracious offer involves us, whom God has brought to Himself, and then, being used as His heralds. We share God's message of salvation because He will save everyone who calls on His name.

Paul quoted from Isaiah 52:7 concerning the eagerness of the bearers of "good things". Those of us who bear it have "beautiful...feet", that is, our message is welcomed. In Isaiah 52:7, the messenger announced to Judah that God had ended their Exile in Babylon, however, Paul applies it to the Jews of his day to whom the gospel was being given. This would also hold to those we proclaim gospel to today.

Now, in vs. 16-18, Paul continues with Israel's rejection.

**16** *But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed our report?* [message] (Isa. 53:1)

**17** *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

**18** *But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily<sup>[truly]</sup>, their sound went into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.* (Ps.19:4)

Paul had made it clear that God's gracious offer of righteousness, by faith, was given to all, Jews and Gentiles alike.<sup>(v.12)</sup> His focus, in this chapter, however, has been on the people of Israel and their response to that offer.<sup>(v.1)</sup> Therefore, when he wrote, "But they have not all obeyed the gospel", Paul, obviously, had in mind the Jews' failure to respond, to accept, to hear with a positive response, and so to "obey", and to submit to "the gospel". We see this borne out by Paul's confirming quotation of Isaiah 53:1: "Lord, who has believed our report"?

This failure of the Jews to respond to the good news was true in Jesus' days on earth,<sup>(Jn.12:37-41)</sup> in Paul's day, and in ours, as well. However, the word "all" of the Greek text<sup>(v.16)</sup> is appropriate, because the response to the gospel among the Gentiles was also far less than total acceptance.

Paul goes on to explain, "So then faith comes by hearing," that 'is out of hearing';<sup>(v.14)</sup> "and hearing by the word of God", 'and hearing is through the saying concerning Christ'.<sup>(v.17)</sup> The Greek word for "hearing" can mean 'the thing heard, the message';<sup>(v.16)</sup> the act or sense of hearing'.<sup>(v.17)</sup> So it is through hearing the message, of God's Word, that our faith comes.

One, however, might insist that the Jews were not given adequate opportunity to hear the message. So, Paul says, "But I say, Have they not heard?" He, then, quotes Psalm 19:4, concerning God's general revelation in the cosmic heavens: "their words to the ends of the

world".<sup>(1:18-20)</sup> But that psalm also discusses God's special revelation in the Old Testament.<sup>(Ps.19:7-11)</sup> Paul's obvious answer to his question is that Israel had ample opportunity, by both general and special revelation, to respond to God and certainly Israel heard. Paul continues his thought in vs. 19-21.

*19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses says, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.*<sup>(Deu.32:21)</sup>

*20 But Isaiah is very bold, and says, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest <sup>(known)</sup> to them that asked not after me.*<sup>(Isa.65:1-2)</sup>

*21 But to Israel He says, All day long I have stretched forth My hands to a disobedient and gainsaying <sup>(back-talking, disobedient)</sup> people.*<sup>(Isa.65:2)</sup>

With these verses, the argument takes a turn. The apostle anticipates another objection. Someone might argue, 'Yes, Israel heard but she did not understand that God purposed to offer righteousness, by faith, to all mankind; including the Gentiles.' So, Paul wrote, "But I say, Did not Israel know"? His answer, this time, was from two Old Testament quotations, one as early as "Moses"<sup>(Deut.32:21)\*</sup> and the second by "Isaiah".<sup>(Isa.65:1)\*\*</sup> Both Old Testament leader wrote about God's turning to the Gentiles, whom the Jews thought had no understanding of the things of God.<sup>(1:21,31)</sup>

Deut. says, "I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you,"\* and Isaiah says, "I was found of them that sought Me not; I was made manifest to them that asked not after Me."\*\* And yet "But to Israel", God has been gracious in spite of her disobedience. Israel's continuing rebellious and unbelieving disobedience was judged by God's turning to the Gentiles.<sup>(v.20; Acts 8:1-8,10)</sup> At the same time, God has not withheld His salvation from the Jewish people. He has "stretched forth" His "hands", imploring them to return to Him.

So, God's grace and mercy extended towards the Gentiles. But still, all day long, God's hands stretched out to His people, who refused to come God's way through Jesus Christ, His Son. Does this mean then that God is through with the Jew forever? No, as we will see next time in Romans 11, God still has a plan whereby He is going to bring salvation to the Jew.