

Salvation is Still Available to Israel
Romans 9:30-10:21

Introduction

1. Paul has already established that God is not done with Israel as a nation/entity His Word has not failed.
2. It appear that God has abandoned Israel because the Church is currently God's focus, and it's made up of mostly gentiles
3. Because of this there are some Christians that hold to Replacement Theology
4. But, God has not substituted the Church for Israel, and will fulfill His promises to Israel
5. As such, salvation is still available to the Jews
6. Today, Paul will explain why Israel fell short and what will ultimately be required for the nation of Israel to receive God's promises and salvation

A. Israel missed the mark by pursuing the wrong kind of righteousness (9:30-10:4)

1. They sought a righteousness based upon works (9:30-33)
 - a. Paul starts by reminding us that Gentiles acquired righteousness (30): **"What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith;"**
 - 1) This sets up quite a contrast with Israel because the Gentiles weren't pursuing it
 - 2) But they acquired it by faith in Jesus
 - b. Israel failed to acquire righteousness (31-33): **"but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. 32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, 33 just as it is written, "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."**
 - 1) Unlike the Gentiles, Israel did pursue righteousness
 - 2) But, they failed to acquire it for two reasons:
 - a) They pursued it by works, not faith
 - b) They stumbled over Christ
2. Israel sought a righteousness of their own (10:1-4):
 - a. This is partly due to the fact that they lacked true experiential knowledge about God (1-2): **"Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. 2 For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge."**
 - 1) Paul writes that they were zealous for God, which means that they had a deep devotion or passion for God
 - 2) However, he also writes that this zeal or devotion wasn't informed by genuine experiential knowledge about God
 - 3) Israel had a passion for the Law, but that isn't the same thing as having genuine passion and devotion for the Law-giver

- b. This ignorance made it impossible for Israel to subject themselves to God’s righteousness (3-4): **“For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”**
 - 1) Earlier Paul wrote this: **“For in it [the Gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”** (Romans 1:17)
 - 2) Israel could not subject themselves to God’s righteousness because they rejected Christ, who is **“the end of the law [small law] for righteousness to everyone who believes”**
- c. So, Israel subjected themselves to their own brand or form of righteousness—one based on works and their own creation--rather than God’s righteousness which is based on faith

B. So, what does righteousness based on faith look like (10:5-13)

- 1. Paul starts with a contrast: Righteousness based on the Law demands perfect obedience (5): **“For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.”**
 - a. Living by the Law is unforgiving because breaking one law makes you a law-breaker
 - b. Paul wrote in chapter 7 that Law had dominion over you as long as you live
 - c. Paul also wrote that the Law stirs up sin within us, and then sin takes advantage of the Law to deceive us.
 - d. In fact, he said that while the Law is holy and good, trying to live by it doesn’t result in life, but death
- 2. In contrast, righteousness based on faith requires something different (6-13):
 - a. **READ 6-8**
 - b. Paul begins with a paraphrase of Deut 30:11-20
 - 1) The Lord had just given the Israelites the Law which makes up 30 of the 33 chapters of Deuteronomy—that’s a LOT of Law (over 600 commandments)
 - 2) He then promised to bless them if they did two things:
 - a) Keep His commandments
 - b) Turn to Him with all their heart and soul
 - 3) But, the Lord immediately followed this up with some encouragement and a warning—**Read Deut 30:11-20**
 - a) In essence, what God is saying here is that Israel could not claim ignorance regarding what God expected of them
 - b) He had given them His Word—it was near to them, in their mouth and heart
 - c) Paul uses parts of this Deuteronomy passage to make a similar point: that just as God had revealed His righteousness to the Israelites through the Law, which left them without excuse, He has now revealed His righteousness through Christ and the preaching of the Gospel (**“the word of faith which we are preaching”**; 8)
 - c. Rather than demanding perfect obedience like Law based righteousness does, faith based righteousness requires something different (9-13): **“that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;”**

- 1) Belief: **“for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness,”** (10a)
- 2) Confession: **“and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation”** (10b)
- 3) And two things apply to everyone, Jew and Gentile alike (11-13): **“For the Scripture says, “WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED [e.g. put to shame at the judgment].” 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 13 for “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.”**

C. The only thing hindering Israel’s salvation is their disobedience and obstinance (10:14-21)

1. Jump down to verse 17 where Paul writes: **“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”**
2. Therefore, in order for someone to have the kind of faith that saves (e.g. a righteousness based on faith), four things need to happen (and Paul lists these in reverse order): **“How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? 15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!”**
 - a. They must call on the name of the Lord (14a)
 - b. In order to do that they must hear the Gospel (14b)
 - c. In order the hear the Gospel must be preached to them (14c)
 - d. In order for that to happen, preachers must be sent (15)
3. This is at the heart of Israel’s problem, they heard the Gospel but did not call upon the name of the Lord (16-20):
 - a. They cannot claim they never heard (18): **“However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, “LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?” 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. 18 But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Indeed they have; “THEIR VOICE HAS GONE OUT INTO ALL THE EARTH, AND THEIR WORDS TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD.”**
 - b. They cannot claim they didn’t know (19-20): **“But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses says, “I WILL MAKE YOU JEALOUS BY THAT WHICH IS NOT A NATION, BY A NATION WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING WILL I ANGER YOU. And Isaiah is very bold and says, “I WAS FOUND BY THOSE WHO DID NOT SEEK ME, I BECAME MANIFEST TO THOSE WHO DID NOT ASK FOR ME.”**
 - c. Instead, it was/is Israel’s disobedience and obstinance that stands in their way of God’s promises, both the temporal and the eternal (21): **“But as for Israel He says, “ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE.”**

Conclusion

1. Last week we learned that God is not done with Israel yet
2. Today we got some insight into Israel’s current state and what stands in their way to receiving God’s promises
 - a. They sought the wrong kind of righteousness and when God revealed the right kind of righteousness to them through the Gospel, they rejected it

- b. But, like the Gentiles who did not seek after God, they too can be saved through faith in Christ
 - c. God has not rejected them, but is patiently waiting and enduring their disobedience as He harvests souls among the Gentiles
 - d. But, as we will learn in the next couple of weeks, God will ultimately fulfill His promises as a remnant of Israel will finally believe and confess
3. One final thought as we look for a way to make this personal and practical for us
- a. Can we find a picture of ourselves in Israel, at least maybe sometimes?
 - b. Do we ever seek a works-based righteousness or a righteousness of our own?
 - c. Do we ever say we believe or confess something with our mouths, but then live like we don't believe it?
 - d. Are we ever disobedient and obstinate?
 - e. For those of us that know Christ, all these things can still be true. They may not affect our eternity or cause us to lose our salvation, but they do affect our relationship with Christ. Do they not?