

## **Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time***

### **Israel's Failure, Part 7**

Scripture: Romans 10:16-21

Code: 45-81

#### Israel's Future, Part 7

Let's look together then at Romans chapter 10 tonight and try to wrap up this great chapter. Now of all the nations ever to occupy the earth, the most privileged nation is Israel. That marvelous privilege that is given to Israel to be God's unique people is especially identified for us in chapter 9 verses 4 and 5. And in those two verses the Apostle Paul reminds us of the great benefits given to Israel. First of all, adoption...a divine act by which that nation as a whole became the child of God for blessing and inheritance, became uniquely the heirs of God's grace. And then they received not only the adoption but the glory. That is the presence of God, the Shekinah glory, God in their midst to dwell with them and guide them and lead them. And then they received the covenants. The covenants were those documents, those statements by God through which He established an abiding relationship with His people. We could almost say in substitute for the word "covenants," a relationship with God. And then he says you received the giving of the law, the revelation of God's will, the path of blessing, the truth which obeyed brings great blessing. And then he says you received the service, that is the means of access to God, the system of ceremonies by which they could enter into intimate fellowship with Him. And then the promises which basically are resolved in the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, His Kingdom, His land and His throne.

And so, God has placed upon this people the greatest of blessings ever given to any nation. Scripture tells us that He chose Israel for three reasons. Reason number one was to witness to the unity of God. The world worshiped many deities, many gods. And God called out one people to affirm in the world that there was only one God. And Israel was that nation to witness to the unity of God. That's what it says in Deuteronomy 6:4, "Hear O Israel, the Lord is one, the Lord our God is one Lord."

Secondly, Israel was chosen to preserve and transmit the Scripture. Not only to witness to the unity of God but to preserve and transmit Scripture. Given unto them, says Romans 3:2, were the oracles of God to preserve and transmit.

Thirdly, Israel was to be the channel for the Messiah. It was through that nation that God would bring the Savior of the world. So here is a tremendously privileged people...greatly blessed. And as we have been learning in our study in Romans and in our study in Matthew, the sad reality is that Israel so privileged is now rejected by God. Israel so blessed is now removed from the place of privilege. And that's why things are so exceedingly difficult for that people.

Do I need to remind you of Matthew 23:37? Listen to what it says again, a very important text. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them who are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings and you would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

In other words, the Lord Jesus said to them because you would not respond, because you would not believe, because you would not embrace the Savior, you are left to desolation. And that's what happened. And since the time they rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, the history of Israel has been a desolate history. God removed blessing. God took away His protection and let sin and Satan have its course. And, of course, Satan works overtime on Israel because if he can exterminate them he can thwart God's ultimate plan for the Kingdom of the Savior, which is a Kingdom involving Israel. So Israel then in rejecting the Messiah brought upon itself an unending holocaust of judgment which will culminate in the time in the future known as the Great Tribulation.

But during this period of time Israel is blinded, Israel is scattered and Israel is persecuted. These Jews who have been living in unbelief since the time of Christ, except for a remnant that's been called out of each generation, but the nation itself that has been living in unbelief since the time of Christ has wandered all over the earth, scattered and hated and persecuted. And I suppose again we have to ask the question why and the answer, first of all, as we learned in Matthew 23, is because they rejected the Savior. But then we might ask another question, why did they reject the Savior? And the answer to that is that they loved their sin more than they loved righteousness. Their deeds are evil, says John 3. And they don't want to come to the light lest their deeds should be reproved. They love darkness rather than light. They love their sin, they didn't want to give it away.

Now this isn't anything new for Israel. This didn't just happen in the time of Christ. You can go all the way back to Moses and Moses at the very outset of dealing with the nation of Israel said he is dealing with a stiff-necked people. That is to say they were rigid and unbending and unwilling to change and respond. He was continually confronting them about their murmurings and their complainings and their hardness of heart. In fact, in Deuteronomy 9:13 the Scripture says, "I have seen this people and indeed it is a stubborn people." And the command came to them, "Circumcise your hearts and stiffen your necks no more," Deuteronomy 10:16. They were a stubborn stiff-necked hard-hearted people.

And you leave the time of Moses, you come, for example, to the time of the judges and you read in that period of time that everyone did what was right in his own eyes. They were a very self-centered, a very self-indulgent people. And the most often quoted Old Testament text...I'll say that again...the most often quoted Old Testament text, the one quoted more than any other Old Testament text in the New Testament is Isaiah chapter 6 verse 9, this is the commonest description of Old Testament Israel, and this is what it says, "Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed but understand not, see ye indeed but perceive not, make the heart of this people fat, make their ears heavy and shut their eyes

lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be converted and be healed." In other words, the most common description of the people of Israel stated in the New Testament is that they are deaf and blind and hard-hearted and unresponsive. They reject the things of God.

And so it's not anything new we're dealing with in the time of Christ. It's not anything new we're dealing with in the time of Paul. They are a stiff-necked, hard-hearted people. In fact, in that Isaiah passage a very interesting Hebrew word is used, it's the word *heshea*(?) it means to smear over and it describes their blindness as if it were a sticky secretion that is oozed out of their eyes and stuck their lids together. They're a blind people.

You come into the New Testament and that blindness is mentioned again and again and again. And so this hard-hearted, stiff-necked stubborn callous blindness reaches its zenith in the rejection of Jesus Christ. As centuries and centuries and centuries of stiff-necked stubborn hard resistance to God culminates in an inability to discern the Messiah and a rejection of Him. And Jesus on the cross looks out over them and says, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do," that's right, they didn't know what they were doing. They didn't know it was the Messiah, they didn't know. They couldn't know, they were blind. So ignorant, so unbelieving, so in love with their sin. And that's why Jesus said to them so often, "I would have gathered but you would not." Self-imposed ignorance.

Now that's the theme of Romans 10...self-imposed ignorance. They were ignorant. It wasn't that they didn't have the truth, it was they rejected the truth. It wasn't that it was not available to them, it was that when it was available they refused to see it. And they cultivated a kind of blindness from which they never could extract themselves.

Now in the tenth chapter of Romans then Paul is dealing with the whole matter of Israel's blindness. He is dealing with the fact that they have missed the Savior, they have missed the Messiah, they've missed the Lord Jesus Christ and they've done it because of their tremendous ignorance...tremendous ignorance.

Now remember what I told you many times before. Paul has to deal with this in this epistle to the Romans because he can't get by this hurdle. He's presenting justification by grace through faith and somebody's going to say, "If this is really the truth, this new covenant, this new message is really the truth, this message which contradicts the old truth, if this is really it, then why doesn't Israel believe it because they're the people who have always received the Word of God?" And it was obvious that they were rejecting it. It was obvious the Jews had rejected Jesus Christ and had Him crucified. If this is the truth from God, how is it that the people of God have rejected it? How can it be? And so Paul in order to defend his doctrine of justification by grace through faith has to explain the unbelief of Israel. And that's exactly what he's doing in chapter 10.

In chapter 9 he showed how the unbelief of Israel was already fit in to the plan of God, so it didn't surprise God. It didn't thwart God's plan. He already had knew it...He already planned it into the plan. And now in chapter 10 he describes how it is that they could be so ignorant and why they reject it. Let me give you just a quick review.

First, he says they were ignorant of the person of God. Verse 3 says they were ignorant of God's righteousness. They didn't know how righteous God was. They didn't know how holy He was. They were ignorant of His person. They thought He was less than He was, they thought they were more than they were. And they found a common ground. They pulled God down, pushed themselves up and thought they satisfied Him. It wasn't the true God. They didn't know how righteous He was. They invented a God less righteous that they could come up to His level. So they were ignorant of the person of God.

Secondly, they were ignorant of the provision of Christ. Verse 4, they didn't know that Christ ended...Christ ended a law righteousness for anyone who believed. They didn't realize that Christ made a provision through which salvation came by grace, not works.

Thirdly, they were ignorant of the place of faith. And from verse 5 to 10 he points that out. And it culminates in verse 9, "Confess with thy mouth and believe in thine heart that God hath raised the Lord Jesus from the dead and you will be saved." They didn't understand the place of believing, the place of faith. And we said at the time we looked at that that saving faith is more than merely believing something is true, it's more than believing it's true, it is committing your life to it, committing your life to the sovereign rule and reign of Jesus Christ.

And then fourthly, and this is where we are now, Israel was ignorant of the proportions of salvation. Having affirmed the place of faith in 9 and 10, verse 11 through 18 then he discusses the proportions of salvation. He says Israel was ignorant of the extent, how far-reaching salvation was. Now let me just give you the key to understanding this section. Many Jews in the past and many Jews in the present reject Christ because of who accepts Christ. Can you understand that? In other words, it's very difficult for Jews to accept Christianity because so many people who are Gentiles have accepted it. And they cannot understand that God would give to them truth through Gentiles...or give it first to Gentiles, as it were, and then to them. In fact, the whole idea that God has a covenant that embraces Gentiles equally with Jews is something they just find unacceptable. And so Paul explains that one of the reasons for their unbelief and their ignorance was they didn't understand the proportions of salvation. They didn't understand, look at verse 11, that the Scripture said in Isaiah 28:16, "Whosoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed."

In other words, "whosoever" is what you want to underline there. They didn't understand that salvation was a whosoever proposition. Verse 12, they didn't understand that there was no difference

between the Jew and the Gentile. They didn't understand that the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. And they didn't understand that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved, that's Joel 2:32. They should have understood it because it's in their own Old Testament text. And he quoted twice from it, Isaiah 28:16 and Joel 2:32. But the point was, they didn't understand that. In other words, they wouldn't accept it. It was a willful ignorance, will not tolerate a covenant which embraces Gentiles equally to us. And we talked, didn't we, about Jonah who founded it almost too bitter an assignment to conceive of to go preach salvation to Gentiles in Nineveh and he tried to escape going the other direction and the Lord had to send him through a fish and back to the shore and back to Nineveh. And when he preached and the whole town repented, he wanted to die because of all those Gentiles who were getting in on God's blessings.

So they had a problem with that and here Paul shows that the proportions of salvation were of great distress to them. Now having established the proportions in verses 11 to 13, he then shows how God sent the message out. You remember verse 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 and how shall they preach except they be sent?" And the whole point here is you can't believe unless you hear a message, you can't hear a message unless somebody gives it, you can't give a message unless you've been sent, you can't get sent unless somebody sends you. And the whole idea is that God sent preachers. In other words, God has sent preachers far beyond Israel. God has sent preachers across the world with a message of salvation to Jew and Gentile. That's what Paul says in Romans 1, "I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to...what?...everyone that believes, the Jew first, chronologically, and also to the Gentile." That's chronology not racial priority.

In other words, the gospel always is extended to all. And the crown of his argument here is that the gospel has been sent out by God. God is the sender. And the message is gone everywhere...even beyond Israel. As it is written, verse 15 says, "How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things." All who have heard the gospel can celebrate the beauty of that message and he pictures that, of course, from Isaiah, you remember, 52:7 where he borrows that quote and it's saying the gospel has gone out and all who have heard it have said how beautiful are the feet of those that preach it. And that's sort of a euphemism for how wonderful these people are who bring the message to them. So the gospel includes all. That's why Jesus said, "Go into all the world and make disciples," right? Go everywhere. That's why Jesus in speaking to the disciples said, "You will receive power after the Holy Spirit comes on you, you'll be My witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and...what?...the uttermost part of the earth."

And so there's a wide open call and this was a real problem to the Jew, a real problem. But there's even a greater problem in verse 16, and let's pick it up at that point. In spite of such a wide call, in spite of such an extensive invitation they have not all obeyed the gospel. That's the problem. Disobedience to the saving message. They haven't obeyed it. Again we note here, please, that

there's no absolute determinism here. In salvation there must be volition, there's choice on our part. You can't come up with a lopsided theology that puts everything on God's side and does not allow within God's plan and within God's power and within God's sovereign grace for human response, there has to be that. And he says, look, I have sent messengers out who have preached all across the world, the problem is not all have obeyed the gospel. They haven't had a right response. The word to obey is *hupakouo*, we get acoustics from it. It means to hear and *hupomeans* under, to hear under, to hear under means to get under somebody in submission like a servant...to line up under somebody. They have not heard it submissively with a heart of obedience. It is a rich word, beloved, by the way, and it implies that salvation has inherent in it obedience. It has inherent in it submission to Christ. And that's obvious if you study Scripture. In all the messages of salvation there is a sense of obedience. In other words, it isn't just believing, it is affirming that I will line up under and obey, that I will submit.

In Acts chapter 6 a couple of Scriptures just to sort of enforce this point...it says, "And the Word of God increased and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly," of course at the preaching of the Apostles and the early deacons, "and a great company of the priests...listen to this...were obedient to the faith." That is a synonym for salvation. To be saved equals to be obedient to the faith. There is no such thing as salvation apart from obedience...apart from hearing under, apart from submitting oneself to the Lord.

In Romans chapter 1, follow along with me now, this is a very important point. Romans chapter 1 verse 5, Paul says that God, His Holy Spirit has empowered Paul and in verse 5 he says, "By whom we have received grace and apostleship." All right, Paul, you have grace and you have apostleship. In other words, God has graciously sent you out. What for? "For obedience to the faith among all nations." Here's one of those preachers that God sent and He sent him not just to the Jew but to all nations. And He sent him to preach obedience to the faith, obedience to the faith. A very important concept again that saving faith implies submissive obedience.

In Romans chapter 2 verse 8 there's another description of those who are truly righteous. It says, "Unto them who are contentious and do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek." And again he says the same message goes to all and to those who do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness. The point is this people, salvation is a step into obedience to the truth. And being unsaved is not to obey the truth. It is not simply believing as if that's all there is to it. Oh yes, I believe in God, I believe in Jesus, I believe.... It is believing and submitting obediently. You can't get around that in the Scripture.

In Romans 6:17 would you notice, "God be thanked that whereas you were servants of sin..." Look how he describes their salvation. "You have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered," is the Greek text. You have obeyed. And in verse 16 he calls it the obedience unto

righteousness. And again, salvation is marked out by the term "obedience."

Look at 2 Thessalonians for a moment, chapter 1 verse 8, and here he talks about the coming of Christ who is going to judge the ungodly. He says, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels," and now verse 8, "In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God...now watch this...and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." You see, receiving the gospel has inherent in it obedience. In other words, I submit myself to the leadership, the headship, the lordship of Christ. I will obey.

Hebrews chapter 5 verse 9, one of the great sections in all of Scripture, describes Christ and says in verse 9, "He was made perfect and He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that believe." Is that what it says? "Unto all them that...what?...obey....unto all them that obey." That's always the mark, always the mark.

Well, I don't want to take it any further. There are other Scriptures. But true faith, saving faith is obedient faith. There's no way around that. That's biblical faith that saves. So the problem back in 10:16 of Romans, let's go back there, the problem is, they have not obeyed the gospel. They're not all genuinely believing because they're not submitting. That's the problem. The gospel went out beyond just the Jew. The prophets of the Old Testament and others took it beyond just the Jew. Jesus took it beyond the Jew. The Apostles took it beyond the Jew. It extends to the farthest corners of human life but not all obey. In fact, he quotes from Isaiah 53:1, look at verse 16, "For Isaiah says, Lord, who hath believed our report?" What a statement. Isaiah says, "Lord, we really can't find anybody who believes this. The question implies that most people didn't believe it. The prophet is looking around to see if there's anybody who believes it.

Now, by the way, if you remember Isaiah 53 you remember that Isaiah 53 is a prophecy about Christ's death, isn't it? "He was led as a sheep to His slaughter and as a lamb before his shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth," and so forth. "He was bruised for our iniquities," all of that. You see, it's a description of the cross. And the prophet starts that description of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ by saying, "Who's going to believe this? Where are we going to find somebody to believe it?" The prophecy of Isaiah 53 looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, looked forward to the death of Messiah. And this verse indicates that it will require a search to find people who believe it. How sad. The gospel went far, most people refused to believe it.

John 12:37, listen to this, "But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him, that the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled which he spoke, Lord, who hath believed our report?" You see, they didn't believe. And Isaiah anticipated that they wouldn't believe. So tragic...so tragic. It's still true today that the message is preached and very few believe.

Paul and Barnabas grew bold, it says in Acts 13:46 and said, "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you but seeing you put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Said we came to the Jews, you pushed it away, you refused it, you rejected it, you wouldn't believe it.

In the sixth verse of the eighteenth chapter of Acts the Jews listened to the message of Christ and when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook his raiment and said to them, Your blood be on your heads. They opposed the gospel. Paul shook his garment and left.

Now the word "report" in 10:16 simply means message...simply means message. You wouldn't believe the message. And that's the real issue. So the gospel was preached to all, but not believed by all.

Then Paul sums up his idea in verse 17, very very familiar verse. It reads this way, "So then, faith by hearing," stop there. We'll just take that first part. So then, faith by hearing. In other words, they have to hear the message. We affirm that. Salvation doesn't come by intuition, it doesn't come by meditation, it doesn't come by speculation, it doesn't come by philosophizing, it comes by hearing a message, a message has to be given. That is an essential element in evangelism. We have to communicate the truth. We have to communicate the facts. That's why Acts 20 says Paul gave thorough testimony concerning repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It had to be a thorough diamarturomai, a thorough testimony. We've got to have the information before we can make the commitment. The gospel preacher is to give the message. And he says then, "Faith by hearing and hearing...watch this now...by the Word of Christ," is the proper Greek text.

The Word of Christ, what's that? That's a message about Christ. How do you get saved? Through faith. How do you get the message? It comes by hearing. What is the message? It's preaching about Christ. Salvation then comes to those who hear about Christ and believe, that's all he's saying.

Now it's important for us to remember in evangelism, then, that our object is to present the message, not to manipulate people but to present the message so that they have the proper hearing on which faith can act. They have heard the word about Christ. So knowledge precedes faith and that's obvious to us, although it isn't to many. I see people all the time on television who give invitations after never presenting the gospel, who call people to believe in something they haven't even explained. And so what happens is, people believe in believing and don't know what they believe in. And frankly, don't believe in enough to be saved. That's the message, first of all, the message of Christ then the faith in that message.

So the message he says is gone out into all the world. It is a message of salvation, a message about Christ. And he closes that thought in verse 18. "But I say, have they not heard...have they not heard...verily, yes, their sound went into all the earth and their words to the ends of the world." This is



a most fascinating verse. I want to show you why. It sums up his point that the message is gone to the whole world. They've all heard it. It went out. But what he does here is quote Psalm 19:4. He quotes it from the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew, but nonetheless it's Psalm 19:4 and it's a fascinating use of Psalm 19:4 because it shows the universal proclamation of the gospel. Listen, this is very important, people. People are always saying, "Well how are these people out here going to hear and how are these people over here going to hear and how are these folks over here going to hear? And what if they never hear? What about them?" He says, "Look, the sound of this message is gone into all the earth and the words to the end of the world."

What message? How can that be? Well he quotes from Psalm 19 and in Psalm 19 do you know what David's talking about? He's talking about the stars and the heavenly bodies. He says the heavens...what?...declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork. "Night unto night uttereth knowledge, day unto day speech, their line is gone out unto all the earth," you know it, it's this very text. And what David is saying in the Psalm is that the stars and all the celestial bodies proclaim to the whole earth that there is a God, right? That's what we call in theology natural revelation. But all of the stellar bodies, all of the glory of space communicates that there is a God. And Paul borrows this verse and says this is a symbol and this is a foreshadowing of how the gospel will extend to all the earth, even as the testimony of the stars and the stellar bodies do. It's a marvelous truth. The testimony of heaven, he says, is like a measuring line that marks out extent. And he uses the term "their line is gone out like a guy who marked out the extremities of an area and says the testimony goes to the very limits of the perimeter. And here Paul says that their sound went into all the earth. Their words to the end of the world, same idea, only he says as the stars have touched the earth with natural revelation, the gospel touches the earth with special revelation.

In other words, God has put His knowledge in all the earth. It's just what he said in Romans 1, "That which may be known of God is in them, that which may be known of God is around them so if they don't believe they are without...what?...excuse...without excuse." And in the same way the whole earth has given...has been given natural revelation, so the whole earth has been given special revelation in the gospel.

Now you say, "Well how is this so?" Well I...all I can tell you is this, that this is what the Bible says, that it's gone out into all the earth. That is to say, I believe, that to the seeking heart and the believing heart, to the open heart, it is available...it is available. To say that it's gone out into all the earth is not necessarily to say the fullness of all the gospel has been exposed to every single individual, but that it is extended in such a way that where there is a seeking heart there will be a message given. And we have to leave that with God. It's something like John 1:9 where it says that Christ is the true light that lights every man that comes into the world, somehow, some way God communicates His truth beyond what we might understand. In fact, in Matthew 24:14 it says, "The gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world...preached in all the world."

And so, there is some sense in which the gospel is extended as an available truth, as an available gospel to those who desire to know the truth, to those who desire to find the truth. In Colossians 1:6 Paul says, "The gospel which is come unto you as it is in all the world," interesting. And he may be talking just about the world of his sphere, the world of his environment, but it's still a parallel because even though it was available in his world doesn't mean it had touched every single individual with the fullness of its message, it just was there available. And as they could tap into it in their world, so I believe God is saying that there's no part of His world, that greater world where a seeking heart cannot find the message of truth.

So, the gospel, Paul is saying, very important here, what he's...let me sum up verses 11 to 18 and it's a very difficult passage to pull together. Let me sum it up this way. Paul is saying the gospel is not just one more local sect, the gospel is not one more Roman mystery cult, the gospel is not one more local religion, but the gospel is the good news which God has sent over all the world...that's what he's saying. It's a whosoever thing. It goes way beyond Jews to embrace Gentiles. Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord. And God showed it by sending His messengers all over the world. Their line and their sound is gone out everywhere. And he's saying to the Jews, as long as you believe that this is unacceptable to you, that you can't take a faith that belongs to others beyond yourself, then you have bound yourself in ignorance because the truth of God extends to the whole world. And sadly, tragically, many Jews rejected the gospel because it involved Gentiles. And many still reject it for that same reason.

There's an interesting parallel to this in the seventh chapter of John. My head is filled with so many different Scriptures, I want to pull the salient ones. John 7:45, "Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees and said unto him, Why have you not brought Him? The officers answered, Never...they were sent to get Jesus, they said...Never man spoke like this man. And they answered...then answered them, the Pharisees, Are you also deceived?" And listen to this, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?" That was the issue. Well, you talk about cursed religious leaders, they had such power over the people. This was their defense against Christ, "Do any of the leaders believe on Him? If the leaders don't believe on Him, it can't be so."

Jews today still reject because traditionally the Jewish leaders have rejected Christ. And for them individually to embrace Christ is to go contrary to all their leadership. And one of the reasons the leaders have totally rejected Christ is because they see the gospel and the Christian faith as a Gentile religion. It's nothing new.

When Galileo was summoned before the inquisition to be tried for heresy in declaring the revolving of the earth, you remember, Galileo discovered that? He was brought in to be declared a scientific heretic. What he discovered, of course, was true. But the existing establishment denied it. He said to his judges these words, "I can convince you. Here is my telescope, look through it and you will see

the moons of Jupiter." The historian says they refused to look. They refused to look. They were so convinced the earth did not revolve around the sun no amount of evidence would ever make them change their mind, they wouldn't even look.

That's the way it is with Israel, they won't look. They've made up their mind. Ignorant of the person of God, ignorant of the provision of Christ, ignorant of the place of faith, ignorant of the proportion of salvation. They can't accept something that includes Gentiles equally to themselves.

Finally, Israel was ignorant of the predictions of Scripture...ignorant of the predictions of Scripture. By the way, this point's already been covered all the way through the chapter, hasn't it? And Paul's been laying out Old Testament quotes one after another, one after another, starting back in verses 5 to 10 section. And we've already seen that they really didn't know their Old Testament.

Jesus told them that on several occasions. And we see it here. They were ignorant of the predictions of Scripture. Look at verse 19, "But I say, Did not Israel know?" Didn't Israel know? Didn't they know? Didn't they know what? Didn't they know what? Didn't they know the gospel message was a message for the whole world? Didn't they know the gospel message would go beyond the Jew? Didn't they know that? Didn't they know there would be Gentiles included? Sure they knew, here's why. First Moses said, and when you quote Moses, folks, you're quoting the supreme authority to a Jew. "First Moses said, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people and by a foolish nation I will anger you."

That's right, he quotes Moses, Deuteronomy 32:21. And what he is saying there is, you knew, Deuteronomy told you that the day would come when God would embrace a no people, that's a Gentile people, a foolish nation, that's a Gentile nation, and provoke you to what? A jealousy about His relationship to them. You knew that, that was in Deuteronomy 32:21. And if you read the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy, verse 5 in that chapter marks the unbelief of Israel and verse 20 marks the judgment of God and verse 21 is this verse. I'm going to turn to another people, another nation, non-Jewish, Gentile and bless them and provoke you to jealousy.

You see, as they had given their love to another god, so God gave His love to another people. That's right. And this prediction of Isaiah, by the way, rather of Moses, as we'll see in a moment also Isaiah, but this prediction of Moses could find its fulfillment only in the conversion of the Gentiles through the gospel of Christ. They were the no people brought into intimate relationship with God. And the Jews should have remembered Deuteronomy 32, they should have repented, they should have seen the truth of the gospel as it went to the Gentiles. You see, Jesus made this so clear to them. He kept saying to them, remember how in chapter 21 and 22 of Matthew He kept saying to them, "Look, I'm going to turn from you to this other people. You don't want to come to the banquet, I'll get some people who will come to the banquet. You don't want to serve Me, I'll find some people who do. You want to kill My servants and kill My Son, I'll give out My vineyard to someone else who is worthy of it."

In Luke 14, "You don't want to come to My great supper, you don't want to eat this feast? Then I'll go in the highways and byways and I'll call the lame and the blind and the ??? and all the rest of them in here."

In other words, over and over and over had Jesus said in His ministry, if you don't want the Kingdom, I'll find somebody who does. And that's what He did. That's exactly what He did. And that's exactly what Moses said would happen in the prophecy of Deuteronomy 32:21. And it provokes them to jealousy.

Then in verse 20 there's a second Old Testament proof text from Isaiah, so you have the law and the prophets here. Moses representing the law, Isaiah the prophets. Isaiah's very bold and saith, "I was found by them that sought Me not, I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me." By the way, the words "very bold" mean clear, plain, easily understood. And this is a quote from Isaiah 65:1. And Isaiah said the same thing that God says I was found by them that sought Me not, that's a Gentile people. Not the Jews who were always seeking God, always seeking God...I was found by some who sought Me not and I was made manifest to them that asked not after Me. You see, the Jews sought God, sought God, that was their whole life. They have a zeal for God, Paul says earlier in the chapter, but not according to what? Knowledge. They sought for God...they sought for God, they asked about God, they asked about God. Never found Him. But there was as people who didn't seek and there was a people that didn't ask and God had a relationship with them.

And then the last verse in the chapter quotes Isaiah 65:2, the next verse, so both those verses come right out of that sixty-fifth chapter. "But to Israel He saith, All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient...and literally opposing...people." And that's right out of Isaiah 65...really sums it up.

Why did the Lord reject Israel and turn to the Gentiles? Because all day long He stretched forth His hands to a disobedient and opposing people. He couldn't get them to respond. Disobedient literally means to refuse to believe, to refuse to believe. They refused to believe Him. Contrary or opposing literally means to deny or to speak against, anti-lego, to speak against, to contradict. And so, God says you were ignorant of your Scriptures. If you had known the prophecy of Moses and you had known the prophecy and the words of Isaiah, you would have known that the day would come when Israel would be rebellious and I would reach out to the nations. I would go beyond you to provoke you to jealousy. And when that happened, this is what he's saying...when that happened, when Israel didn't believe and Jesus started reaching to the Gentiles and when the church went out to the Gentiles, a thinking knowledgeable believing Jew who understood his Old Testament should have said to himself, "This is that which was spoken by the prophets. It's happening. Therefore this is the Messiah and this is the true message." They should have concluded that. "All day long" means patiently and continually. "Stretched forth My hands" means lovingly to embrace you, to welcome you to intimacy and to security. A loving God has reached out to these people again and again and again

and they have resisted in disobedience.

And so, he says you are ignorant of the predictions of Scripture. You should have seen Israel's unbelief, reaching to the Gentiles, provoking to jealousy fulfills the prophecy, this then is the Messiah, this then is the gospel. But you were ignorant of the Scripture.

So it's a profound message message in chapter 10. Israel is lost. Israel is set aside. Israel is excluded from salvation as a nation, though as I said, individual Jews in all ages have believed and been God's remnant. And God has gone beyond to touch the church made up of all peoples, tongues and nations. Why was Israel lost? Now listen as I just pull this together. Because they were ignorant of God's person, because they were ignorant of the provision of Christ, they were ignorant of the place of faith, they were ignorant of the proportions of salvation, they didn't want to get into something that wasn't exclusively for them, and they were ignorant of the predictions of Scripture. They should have been able to see that this was it when they charted what happened from their own unbelief. What a tragedy.

Now, is this ignorant unbelief of Israel permanent? Is it? Is it permanent? The answer to that question comes in chapter 11 and the answer is...what?...no, and we're glad for that.

Let me close with this story. I was reading a book this week by Dr. Charles Fineberg who was my professor in seminary. It's a book called Israel. And in the book he has an interesting little account, I want to read it to you. A minister was preaching on Glasgow Greene in Scotland once when someone asked permission to speak and made his way to the platform. "Friends," he said, responding to the words of the minister, "I do not believe what this man has been talking about. I do not believe in a hell, in a judgment or in a God for I have never seen any of them."

He continued talking this way for awhile when another voice was heard from the crowd. "May I speak?" The unbeliever sat down and the next man began. "Friends, you say there is a river running not far from this place, the river Clyde. There's no such thing. It's not true. You tell me there are grass and trees growing around me where I now stand. There's no such thing. That's also untrue. You tell me there are a great many people standing here before me and again I say this is not true, there's no one standing here except myself, I'm alone. I suppose you wonder what I'm talking about. Friends, I was born blind. I've never seen any of you. And while I talk it only shows I am blind or I wouldn't say such things. And you, you unbeliever, the more you talk the more it exposes your own blindness."

Good speech...good speech. Israel was blind and went around saying, "It doesn't exist...it isn't so," and showed their own ignorance. I pray, God, that you don't have ignorance in that regard because the same ignorance that condemned that people will condemn you. Are you ignorant of the righteousness of God? His holy standard? Ignorant of the provision of Christ? The place of faith? The proportions of the gospel called to the world? Are you rejecting Christianity because there's some

people that are Christians that you don't like and you won't accept? Are you ignorant of the predictions of Scripture? Have you missed the prophecies that have been fulfilled to demonstrate the truth of the gospel? You see, it's a message that relates to Israel but has wide ramifications. Let's come before the Lord together in prayer.

So many things open to us, Lord, in the Scripture, so many things fly before our minds as we grow in Your Word. And we thank You for the richness. And, Lord, tonight we have mixed emotion. On the one hand it's so fulfilling to understand Your Scripture, so fulfilling to understand history and why things are the way they are, so fulfilling to understand the unbelief of Israel because now we know how it can be that the gospel is true and yet Israel rejected it. It was because of ignorance and that ignorance was self-imposed because of unbelief and that unbelief was self-imposed because they loved their sin so much. And so we know, Lord, that even today people who love their sin more than they love You are going to be unbelieving. And in their unbelief they're not going to want to look through the telescope, they don't want to know the truth. Self-imposed ignorance. And how sad that they'll stand say things aren't so and all they do is show that they can't see...they can't see, for we who know You see so clearly. We understand, we understand the person of God, we understand as best we can how infinitely holy You are, we understand the provision of Christ, we understand that He died on the cross for us. We see the place of faith, we understand the proportions of salvation that it reaches across the earth to touch any and all who believe without regard for any human factor. We understand the predictions of Scripture. We understand the prophecies fulfilled relative to Messiah, relative to Israel, we understand.

And we thank You, Lord, that because You've taken the scales off our eyes and given us sight we see. We pray that no one would go from this place blind to the truth that condemns and give us, Lord, a great love for Israel, great compassion to call them out of blindness into the glorious light of their Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ in whose name we pray. Amen.

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