

Israel's Unbelief—Romans 9:30–10:21

Topics: Desires, Jesus Christ, Law, Righteousness, Salvation, Self-righteousness, Unbelievers, Zeal

Open It

1. When have you known someone who refused to listen to any advice or instruction?

Romans 9:30–11:1 (ESV)

³⁰What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith;

³¹but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law.

³²Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,

³³as it is written, “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

¹Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.

²For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

³For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness.

⁴For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

⁵For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.

⁶But the righteousness based on faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ down)

⁷“or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

⁸But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim);

⁹because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

¹⁰For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

¹¹For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.”

¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.

¹³For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

¹⁴How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

¹⁵And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

¹⁶But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?”

¹⁷So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

¹⁸But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for “Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.”

¹⁹But I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, “I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry.”

²⁰Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, “I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.”

²¹But of Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

¹I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.

Explore It

2. By what means have the Gentiles (non-Jews) obtained righteousness? (9:30)
3. What kept Israel from obtaining righteousness? (9:31–32)
4. Over what has Israel stumbled? (9:33)
5. What positive trait did Paul recognize in the Israelites? (10:2)
6. What had the Israelites done instead of submitting to God’s righteousness? (10:3–4)
7. How did Moses describe righteousness that comes by the Law? (10:5)
8. How does righteousness produced by faith come about? (10:6–9)
9. What were the simple instructions Paul gave regarding personal salvation? (10:9–10)
10. What promise is given to anyone who puts his or her faith in Christ? (10:11)
11. What distinctions did Paul note in the way that Jews and Gentiles obtain their salvation? (10:12–13)
12. What does it take to get the message of God to someone? (10:14–15)
13. How have the Israelites responded to hearing the message of God? (10:16–18)
14. How did Paul answer the argument that the Jews have not had adequate opportunity to hear God’s message? (10:18–21)

Get It

15. How can a person have great zeal for God or religious activities and yet be misguided?
16. Why is it essential to believe that God raised Jesus from the dead?

Apply It

17. When could you spend extended time in prayer to bring before God those groups or peoples who have shown little interest in the gospel?