

Notes on Romans 10

Intro: In chapter nine Paul begins by showing that the promise to Abraham has not failed because most Jews have not believed in the gospel. For in the first place, God's people are those whom the Lord has chosen and it is in keeping with this principle that the Jew makes his own claim to be the people of God. However, presently the Jews are not God's people because they have rejected the "good news" of salvation. This the main point of this chapter.

Though the message of faith is available to them they have not accepted it (10:1-21).

v. 1-4 Israel is lost because they have rejected the righteousness of faith and sought a righteousness by works.

Paul genuinely sought the salvation of the Israelites and prayed to that end.

They have a zeal for God; but not in accord with knowledge. Paul regarded those ignorant of the gospel as lost. They were lost because of sin. We should however not make the mistake of treating those unlearned in all matters of faith as lost. By faith they have access to his grace and are held accountable for a level of knowledge in keeping with their time and opportunity in the faith.

The Jews sought to establish their own righteousness by works. Cf. Paul's own experience in Phil. 3.

Paul explains the "end" of the Law unto righteousness.

v. 5-14 Righteousness of the law brings life by doing the things of the Law; but God's righteousness bring life through faith in Jesus Christ. This message has been made available to all.

Paul quotes Lev. 18:5 to establish the basis of legal righteousness.

Paul's own claim to "blamelessness" in Phil. 3: was based not on God's view but man's approval. This is why Paul counted it but rubbish and why he stressed that our praise should come from God, not men (Cf. Rom. 2:29).

Moses used the language of v. 6-7 to make clear to his generation that the way of righteousness was available to them. In a similar way, Paul adapts the language for similar purposes. One does not have to enter heaven, for Christ has come to us. One does not have to enter the abyss, for Christ has been resurrected from there. The word of faith is near, being in the mouths of those who preach it.

The word of faith is simply this that those who confess "Jesus is Lord" and believe in their hearts that God raised Him shall be saved. By these phrases Paul does not exhaust all human response to the gospel but calls attention to its inward and outward manifestations. There must be faith in the heart; there must be outward expression in confession. Just as this verse does not eliminate repentance, neither does it eliminate baptism

Trust in God's Messiah would not bring disappointing results (Cf. Is. 28)..

Joel's own prophecy of the "great day of the Lord" predicted that those who survive are those who 'call upon the name of the Lord" and this salvation is available to all.

Hence God has sent those who would proclaim the good news to everyone.

v. 16-21 Israel has not believed in the Lord. This unbelief was not due to not having heard. Though the Gentiles have heard the message and believed, the Jews have rejected it the gospel.

Isaiah had foreseen prophetically the Jewish rejection of their Messiah in the fourth Servant song. And it is implied that faith is the necessary response of the gospel and the means of righteousness.

Israel has indeed heard the message. Paul adapts the language of Ps. 19 for his purpose here to communicate that wherever Jews were the gospel had gone.

It was not that the Jews did not know the truth; but they were disobedient and stubborn whereas Gentiles gladly received it.

Conclusion: Thus in this way Paul accounts for the Jewish rejection of the gospel as suggested in chapter 9 and explains its true reason. God's promise has not failed; but Israel has rejected the message of grace offered to them. Yet, there is one other hopeful argument to make. There exists at the present time a remnant of believing Jews. Perhaps the conversion of the Gentiles will move some of them to jealousy and others will be saved. There is still hope of salvation for the Jewish people.