

Chapter 10:1-21

As we begin chapter 10 of Romans, it might be well to notice that chapters 9-10-11 all begin with reference to the children of Israel. Ch.9, Paul's "kinsmen, or brethren, according to the flesh." Ch. 10, "My hearts desire for Israel, and Ch. 11 "Hath God cast off His people?" This reference to Israel shows how the gospel that Paul preached had special significance to the Jew. Their own scriptures spoke of it as "secret things" That is of God's grace Grace would provide a way for their blessing, when their covenants and promises based upon their doing them failed. Their own failure had lost their land of promise for them.

So we read in Deut. 29-30 "The secret [things belong] unto the LORD our God: but those [things which are] revealed [belong] unto us and to our children for ever, that [we] may do all the words of this law. And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call [them] to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee".

They failed to keep the law, but secret things of God, they had access to when driven out of their land. In this chapter Paul discloses some of those secret things which are found here in his gospel in Romans.

v 1 "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."

The desire of the apostle is that Israel "might be saved." according to the Christian sense of the word saved. (That is not simply their restoration to their land, but to God, with a "soul" salvation. Peter speaks of this mystery of grace to the Jews in this way.

"Receiving the end of your faith, [even] the salvation of [your] souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace [that should come] unto you" (1 Peter 1:9-10).

Paul brings this salvation message especially applicable to the Jews in this tenth chapter of Romans. We will see quotes from Deut. 30, which begins to reveal to the Jews, God's "secret things."

vv 2,3 "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."

It is beautiful to notice here that Paul places his entire nation under the phrase, "being ignorant." We know, in some cases this was not so. But "ignorance" opened the door for forgiveness. "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). The Apostle also speaks of himself when he writes, "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did [it] ignorantly in unbelief" (1 Tim.1:13). How kind and gracious of our Saviour!

vv 4,5 "For Christ [is] the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them."

Here we learn plainly there is no law for righteousness. It cannot be obtained by man's works. "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness [come] by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (Gal. 2:21). We cannot live before God, by our doing.

v 6 "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down [from above])".

This is quoted from Deut. 30 :12 "It [is] not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?" It might here be well to note that Deut. 30, while speaking of Israel doing, it is based upon the principle of their "new" covenant, under which the law will be written in their hearts. That is, they will be born of God. They lost all under the first covenant.

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day [that] I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this [shall be] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Jer. 31:31-33).

vv 7,8 “Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, [even] in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;”

Again we read in Deut 30:12-14) “Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it. Neither [is] it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word [is] very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart.” The gospel had been brought that close to Israel. What would the Jews do with it?”

vv 9,10 “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Even though God, through preaching, has brought His message so close to all, yet, we must believe with the heart and confess with the mouth. It is a Word of faith not law that is preached. It must be received by faith.

v 11 “For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed”

The actual Scripture referred to reads “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner [stone], a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” (Is. 28:16) No one trusting in Him shall be ashamed. This was spoken to Jerusalem when they had made lies their refuge, they were ashamed.

“Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves” (Isa. 28:15).

All of us in this life trust in Him Who is the Truth, or in lies. Trusting Him, we will not be ashamed.

vv 12,13 “For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”.

Paul here in Romans gives us the meaning by the Spirit of “he that” in Is. 28:16, the Spirit here says, “whosoever.” Blessed salvation message!

vv 14,15 “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? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”

This is searching for all of us who know Christ as our Saviour. We are here on earth to bear this wonderful Gospel message. The true Light from God.

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid” (Matt.5:14). Oh! To have “beautiful feet.” We have been ‘sent’—“As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world” (Jn.17:18).

vv 16 “But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?”.

This quote from Isaiah 53:1, follows Isaiah 52:7. “How beautiful upon the mountains are

the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!". As in Israel's past history so it is the same now. Some have believed, some have not (we might say that today, "most have not believed today").

vv 17 "So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God".

Faith must have something to believe. We cannot have faith from God in something we know nothing about. We believers have a solemn responsibility to bring the gospel to those who know not God. 1 Cor. 15:34 tells us; "Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak [this] to your shame". (This is not only by preaching, but by our conduct also, for our conduct should represent God).

"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us" (1 Jn.4:12). By the preaching the "Word of God" (the gospel), faith has something to act upon or respond to. There is no such thing as 'blind faith'. Faith from God knows what it believes.

v 18 "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."

While Paul refers to the voice of creation, there is an intimation here that this voice, was heard by all languages, thus teaching the Jew, God had in mind the blessing of all men by means now, of His gospel. It was for "whosoever." "[There is] no speech nor language, [where] their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun" (Psa.19:3,4).

v 19 "But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by [them that are] no people, [and] by a foolish nation I will anger you."

While the Apostle had attributed ignorance to Israel, as a means of allowing their salvation, he well knows the Nation as such, ha rejected and slain the Saviour. "But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours" (Mark 12:7).

However, God by means of the gospel going to Gentiles, would provoke Israel to jealousy. This is the mystery Paul refers to in closing this section, (Rom. 9-11) "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery...". "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable [are] his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom.11:25-33). "And so all Israel shall be saved" (Rom.11:26).

vv 20,21 "But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."

We continue to see in this chapter how often the old Testament Scriptures are employed in speaking of Israel (These Scriptures speak to believers, but they refer to Israel). Do we as Gentiles have anything to boast in? No! "I was found of them that sought me not" is the Lord's Word. We—Gentiles—wanted Him no more than the Jew. We will learn more of this in chapter 11.