

St. Paul's Letter to the Romans

Collect for Pentecost-

O GOD, who by the leading of a star didst manifest thy only-begotten Son to the Gentiles; Mercifully grant that we, who know thee now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of thy glorious Godhead; through* Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

In this section we continue to focus on the inclusion of the Gentiles and the exclusion of those Jews who have not accepted God's Messiah

Romans 9:30 - 10:4

What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, righteousness through faith; but that Israel who pursued the righteousness which is based on law did not succeed in fulfilling that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it through faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone that will make men stumble, a rock that will make them fall; and he who believes in him will not be put to shame." Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened. For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law, that every one who has faith may be justified.

I. The Present Situation Restated

- A. One group that was not seeking Righteousness has received it (Gentiles)
- B. One group that was seeking Righteousness has not received it (Jews)
- C. The situation appears to be in conflict with God's promise to the chosen people

If A then B does it equal C?

This is precisely the situation that Paul is highlighting. He is now careful to separate Righteousness with Salvation as this will be his final answer to this question. Salvation is the final end product of being in the right relationship with God at the end time. The Eschatological Reality for Salvation, God's Plan verses our perception of the reality as creatures in time.

II. Salvation and Righteousness

A. Righteousness does not equal Salvations

1. Righteousness under the Law is impossible
2. The Jews may have missed Righteousness by following the Law, but may not have missed Salvation
3. God's Promise to the chosen People may be delayed, but not forgotten

B. The state of salvation however does imply righteous actions

1. The question is the type of righteousness
2. The race analogy again – One of Paul's favorites
 - a. Israel is in the race and pursuing the goal of winning (Salvation)
 - b. The Gentiles were not even in the race, but have won (Salvation)
 - c. The problem for Israel is that the rules of the race are not clearly understood.

C. The Purpose of the Law

1. Israel assumed that the Law was to lead them to Righteousness which meant Salvation
2. Paul says the purpose of the Law was a negative one – that is to convict the people of their lack of ability to find righteousness without God because of sin

This is another statement of Works and Faith questions. Israel failure was because works can not lead to righteousness, only faith can.

III. Israel's Failure

- A. Works themselves are not wrong, righteousness demands a certain behavior
- B. Depending upon the Law and our response to it as people is the issue
- C. Paul referred in Galatians to note the purpose of the Law and Jesus Christ

Galatians 3:19-26

Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made; and it was ordained by angels through an intermediary. Now an intermediary implies more than one; but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not; for if a law had been given which could make alive, then righteousness would indeed be by the law. But the scripture consigned all things to sin, that what was promised to faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. Now before faith came, we were confined under the law, kept under restraint until faith should be revealed. So that the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

IV. The Stumbling Block

A. Paul now uses the image from Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16

8:14 - And he will become a sanctuary, and a stone of offense, and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

28:16 - Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am laying in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: `He who believes will not be in haste.'

B. Paul suggests that God response to the failure of human being to be Righteous, Roman 3:23 – “since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” is the stumbling Block (Jesus) I Corinthians 1: 23 – “but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles,”

V. The Issue of Zealousness

A. The single minded devotion of Israel to the Law blocks Grace of God

B. Paul’s Argument

1. Israel did not acknowledge God’s righteousness
2. Israel sought to establish her own righteousness
3. Israel did not submit to God’s righteousness

C. God's Righteousness is:

1. Displayed in the Christ event as a response to the creation's failure (sin)
2. The state of being offered to believers in God's truth through belief in and union with Jesus (The Body of Christ)

For Paul, Jesus is the result and the *telos* (The end- the goal). The Law was given to Israel not so they would be righteous but to demonstrate clearly that they would fail to be righteous. To concentrate the sin of Israel so that they would be more aware of their need for the Messiah

Read Page 312 – Modern Nonsense

Roman 10:5-13

Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on the law shall live by it. But the righteousness based on faith says, Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?" (that is, to bring Christ down) or "Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart (that is, the word of faith which we preach); because, if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved. The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him. For, "every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved."

I. The Scriptural Confirmation for Paul's Argument

A. Verse 5 – Leviticus 18:5 to show the righteousness by the law

You shall therefore keep my statutes and my ordinances, by doing which a man shall live: I am the LORD.

B. Text from Deuteronomy to demonstrate righteousness by faith

Deuteronomy 30:11-14 - "For this commandment which I command you this day is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it."

This reference would seem to be distinctly Pauline – God is not removed from us or attendant to our will, rather he is present with to embrace us and never more does he demonstrate that fact than when he opens His arms of love on the Cross to embrace the world. Taking upon himself our sin to set us free.

C. The Ascending and Descending References

1. Ascending would mean that we deny what God has already done in sending Jesus to us from heaven
2. Descending would deny that God raised Jesus from the dead

Romans 10:14-21

But how are men to call upon 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 a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ. But 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." gain 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." Then 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." But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people."

I. How has Israel's failure occurred?

A. Paul does not blame either Jews or Gentiles or God – Rather we are to look at the process – there has been a failure now we ask why?

B. The Process according to St. Paul – Of calling upon the Name of the Lord

1. God has sent preachers – there has been a failure to respond
2. The failure is to respond to the proclamation of Scripture
 - a. Israel is to be faulted, because they have had the Scripture
 - b. Israel has had the proclamation of universal salvation from the beginning

C. Another look at the process – In reverse

1. Calling upon the Lord presupposes believing
2. Believing presupposed hearing
3. Hearing presupposes preaching
4. Preaching presupposes that someone has been sent to preach

Next Time Chapter 11 – Israel's ultimate Inclusion