

## GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION IS EXAMINED

**PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.**

**Introduction:** This chapter explains the fundamental reason why Israel was not saved. Some Jews thought they would be saved if they revered the holy words of the Law and protected the scrolls with their lives (10:2). Others believed God would let them into Heaven if they lived a decent moral life and kept their religious rituals (10:3). Still others believed they would be saved if they did their best to keep the commands of the Law (Mt 19:16-22). They did not know the Law was given by God to reveal their sins, not to remove their sins (3:19-20). Salvation would be granted only to those who believed God's promise as Abraham did (cf. Gen 15:5-6). Today, God's promise for salvation is given to those who put their faith in Jesus Christ. Most Israelites are not saved today because they refuse to accept God's gracious gift through His Son (10:18-21); only a remnant have received it.

Paul contrasted two types of righteousness. The first type of righteousness is by the Law (10:5). Those who keep the whole Law without one sin will be saved (10:5; Jam 2:10). Since all have sinned (Rom 3:23), no one can be saved by the Law.

The second type of righteousness is by Christ (10:6). God required the blood of a sinless man be shed for our sins. God gave His Son to be that Man because there was no other sinless man to do it (1 Pet 2:22; 1 Jn 3:5). He shed His blood on the cross to make the payment for the sins of every person. God was satisfied with His Son's sacrifice (1 Jn 2:2) and raised Him from the dead for our justification (4:25). Now whoever believes this and calls on the Lord shall be saved (10:13).

Israel had heard God's word, but they would not believe it (10:18). God warned them that He would turn to the Gentiles, who would hear and receive His blessing, but they refused to listen to His warning (10:19-20). God opened His arms to a disobedient and contrary people (10:21).

### God's Salvation Is Being Rejected in Israel's Present (10:1-21)

#### I. Salvation Described by Works of the Law (10:1-5)

10:1 — Paul begins this chapter with his heart-felt prayer for Israel to be saved. Paul knew his prayer would be answered (11:26-27), most likely in Christ's Millennial Kingdom. This gives us insight regarding the working of God's foreknowledge in our prayers. God foreknew all our prayers and included His answers in His pre-creation plan. How else could our prayers be answered? God does not change His plan on a minute-by-minute basis to answer our prayers. Be assured that all our prayers were foreknown by God and His answers were incorporated in God's sovereign plan before He created anything. Paul's prayer for Israel was known by God and His answer to Paul's prayer was included in His plan, even though it was offered thousands of years after He made His plan. This is the amazing truth of the foreknowledge of God at work. Since God's foreknowledge is used in His sovereign plan to answer our prayers for the salvation of others, why would we think it is not used in our prayers for our own salvation? Romans 8:29 states that the foreknowledge of God is the basis for His predestination (election) of sinners.

10:2 — Paul knew that Israel had a religious zeal toward God (cp. Acts 26:5, 8; Gal 1:14), but it was not according to knowledge. They did not know the Scriptures accurately. Jesus said many will seek to get into His Kingdom and say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? and in your name have cast out demons? and in your name done many wonderful works (miracles)?" And Jesus will tell them, "I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity" (Mt 7:22-23). They may have been blinded by false teachers in their synagogues, but their

religious zeal will not save them. We need zeal in our service for God, but not zeal in our works for our salvation, which is God's gift. We must receive it by faith, not by our works (Eph 2:8-9).

10:3 — Why was Israel's zeal for righteousness unacceptable to God? Paul tells us that the Jews' zeal was to establish their own righteousness by keeping the Law. This was impossible. They needed to have God's righteousness through Christ's sacrifice. When God gave them the Law, they misunderstood the purpose of the Law. They thought God gave them the Law to do "good works and earn their salvation. Not so! God gave them the Law to show them how they sinned against Him. The Law showed them their works did not come close to God's standard for salvation. They were far short of God's standard (3:19, 20, 23). Make no mistake about it, their works did not impress God. They were like filthy, bloody rags to God (Isa 64:6). Can you imagine anyone trying to get into Heaven by giving filthy, bloody rags to God? The idea is insane.

Paul indicates that Israel was ignorant of God's righteousness. This means that they did not grasp the importance of Christ's death and resurrection to obtain God's righteousness, but it was plainly stated in the Old Testament (10:18-21). Israel refused God's righteousness because it rested on Christ's death. They had convinced themselves that Christ broke the Law, was a wicked sinner, and deserved death. They demanded that Pilate have Him crucified. They could not bear the thought of receiving Christ's death for their sins in order to be accepted by God. Instead, they put their faith in keeping the Law of Moses to be accepted by God.

10:4 — "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness" – In what sense is Christ the end of the Law? Christ was the fulfillment of the Law (Mt 5:17). All that the Law demanded was fulfilled by His perfect life, which is imputed to us when we receive Christ as our Savior. Was Christ the "end" of Law for righteousness in sanctification? That also is true. In the Old Testament the blood of their sacrifices covered their sins so they could have acceptance and fellowship with God. Now believers are cleansed by the blood of Christ so we can have continual fellowship with God and with one another (1 Jn 1:3, 7).

10:5 — Paul appealed to the Mosaic Law to show why the Jews failed to obtain God's righteousness. Moses clearly stated that a man had to keep every part of God's Law in order for him to have life by that Law (Lev 18:5; cf. James 2:10). Paul had earlier proved that the Jews were guilty of violating the Law and so they were condemned before God (2:17-29; 3:9-20). Paul also revealed that the purpose of the Law was not for justification but, rather, it was for condemnation (3:19-20). Most Jews, however, trusted the way of the Law for righteousness and rejected the way of the Lord for righteousness and salvation.

## **II. Salvation Dispensed by Faith in the Gospel (10:6-17)**

10:6 — Paul went to the OT (Old Testament) to show that receiving the written Word of God by faith in Moses' day (Deut 30:11-16) was the same as receiving the living Word of God in our day. We do not go to Heaven to bring the Word of God down to earth. Both the written Word and the living Word have already come down from Heaven to earth. Justification by faith in God's Word has always preceded good works, but most Jews thought that their good works by keeping the Law preceded their justification. Today we need to receive Christ, the living Word, by faith to be righteous, just as Israel received the written Word of God by faith to be righteous.

10:7 — God's righteousness in Christ is near us. We do not need to go across the sea to find the written Word or bring up the living Word from the depths of the earth; He has already risen from the dead. Righteousness is dependent on our faith in Christ's resurrection as revealed in God's Word (Rom 10:17; 1 Cor 15:3-4). The Jewish leaders rejected the Gospel of Christ's death and resurrection to be justified, but it was the only way they could be righteous before God.

10:8 — The Jews did not need to make a long search to find the Word of God. It was as close as the Word preached in their synagogues. It was in their mouths when they read the Scriptures aloud and it would be in their hearts when they received the prophecies about Christ by faith. The Word of faith refers to the prophecy of Christ's death by crucifixion (Ps 22:14-18; Isa 53) and of His life by resurrection (Ps 2:7→Act 13:33; Ps 16:10→Act 2:29-31; Ps 110:1→Act 2:32-36; Isa 53:11-12; Zech 12:10).

10:9 — "Confess with your mouth" – Believers were required to publicly confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord to show that they were truly saved. What does a person have to believe about Jesus to confess Him as Lord? Paul had likened the written Word to the living Word in verses 5-8. So, let us look at John's statement about Jesus being the living Word in the introduction to his Gospel. He wrote, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God" (Jn 1:1-2). We are told three things about the Word in these two verses that we should believe about Jesus as our Lord. First, He was in the beginning before anything was created. Second, He was with God in the beginning, which says at least two persons lived before anything was created. Third, He was God. Since He was with God and was God, this shows they have the same God-nature and God-attributes. When Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father, Jesus replied, "He that has seen Me, has seen the Father" (Jn 14:9).

However, they differ in authority; the Father has greater authority than His Son. For instance, the Father sent His Son to earth to die for the sins of the whole world. His Son obeyed Him and He was propitiated, so He raised His Son from the dead. When we confess that Jesus is Lord, we confess that He is God in nature and attributes, but not in authority.

"Believe in your heart" — We also must believe in our heart that God raised Jesus from the dead to be saved. The heart has reference to our whole being and not only to our emotional nature. We must believe without a doubt that Jesus died to redeem us from our sins and that His Father raised Him from the dead for our justification (Rom 4:25).

"God has raised Him from the dead" — Jesus was physically dead. God revealed to David that He would resurrect His Son a thousand years before it was done (cp. Ps 2:7 with Acts 13:33). Note Paul's earlier comments concerning the importance of Jesus' resurrection (Rom 1:4; 4:24-25; 5:10; 6:4-5, 9-10). Following His resurrection, He ascended to the right hand of His Father where the glory was restored to Him that He had with His Father before the world was made (Jn 17:5; cf. Eph 1:20-23).

10:10 — Paul reverses the order of confession and faith found in Deuteronomy 30, that he followed in Rom 10:9, and he gives the logical order of faith and confession in this verse. If we believe with our heart that God raised His Son from the dead, we are made righteous. Then we can confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord to show that we are saved. Our mouth confesses what we believe (1 Jn 4:15).

10:11-13 — Paul had proved the nearness of salvation (10:6-8), the condition of salvation (10: 9-10), and here he proves the availability of salvation (10:11-13). Paul quotes from Isaiah 28:16 to remind them that they will not be disappointed with God's salvation by faith in Christ (cp. 9:33). Romans 10:13 is a quotation from Joel 2:32: "Whoever calls on the LORD shall be saved."

"Whoever" — The LORD is ready to save all that call upon Him. He puts no distinction between Jew and Gentile for salvation (v. 12). He wants to save all people (1 Tim 2:4).

"Shall call" — Those who call for salvation must do so with a submissive spirit of worship. They are coming to the LORD Who is to be revered. They are coming to Him as the only One Who can save them from Hell. They must respect His holiness and recognize their sinfulness. They need to pray with the humble spirit of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Lk 18:13). With such an attitude, God will assure their hearts that He has heard their prayer.

"Name of the Lord" — Since this is a direct quote from Joel 2:32 in the OT, it is easy to tell from the Hebrew that God's name here is **Yahweh**. There are two words for God that are translated Lord in the OT. Many English translations put all the letters in caps (LORD) for **Yahweh** (or Jehovah), and only the first letter as a capital (Lord) for **Adonai**. **Yahweh** is often used for Savior; **Adonai** is used for Master or King, but never for Savior. **Yahweh** (LORD) is used exclusively for God, but **Adonai** can be used for God (Lord) or for man (lord).

The name, **Yahweh**, is of critical importance, because that is the only name used for physical or spiritual salvation. In Hosea 13:4, we read what God said to Israel: "I am the **LORD (Yahweh)** your God . . . there is no Savior beside Me." An angel came to Joseph about Mary's child and told him to "call His name Jesus" (which means Savior) "for He shall save His people from their sins" (Mt 1:21). Later John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29). The religious rulers in Jerusalem asked Peter by what name they had healed a man, lame from his birth. He told them that it was done by the name of Jesus Christ Whom they had crucified. Then he said, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Jesus Christ is the only One Who can take away our sins and save us, so He has to be **Yahweh** our God, since there is no other Savior.

Referring back to Romans 10:9, it says "If you shall confess with your mouth that **Jesus is Lord** and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved." What do we do when we confess that Jesus is Lord? Do we confess Him as our Master or do we confess Him as our Savior? In the Greek language of the NT (New Testament), there is only one word for "Lord" (**kurios**), not two words as in the Hebrew. Only the context will tell whether **kurios** refers to **Yahweh** (God) or to **Adonai** (God or man). The context for 10:9-10 is salvation so "**Lord**" in 10:9 must refer to **Yahweh**. Isaiah quotes the LORD, "I, even I am the **LORD (Yahweh)**; and beside Me there is no Savior" (Isa 43:11; cf. Hos 13:4). In Romans 10:9, we are told how to be saved. We must confess with our mouth that Jesus (Savior) is **LORD**, that is, Jesus is **Yahweh** (God). And we must believe that God (the Father) raised His Son (the Savior) from the dead. Chronologically, we believe from our heart first to be made righteous and then we confess with our mouth that Jesus is our God (Rom 10:10). Jesus is not **Adonai** (Master) in Romans 10:9-10; He is **Yahweh** (Savior). This agrees with the OT verse, Joel 2:32, that is quoted in 10:13.

It is important that we understand that Jesus is YHWH our God in 10:9. Except for YHWH our God, there is no Savior (Isa 43:11; Hos 13:4). He is the only one who can forgive our sins and save us. John the Baptist introduced Jesus to his disciples by saying, "Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29). By this statement, he recognized that Jesus was YHWH our God. Peter said this of Jesus, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Act 4:12). These powerful facts are no benefit for us until we fully believe with our heart that God raised Jesus from the dead for righteousness and we confess with our mouth that Jesus is YHWH our God for salvation (10:9-10).

10:13-15 — Paul presents a pattern of reverse logic for salvation, which begins with the salvation of a sinner (10:13) and then he works backward step-by-step to the LORD who sends a believer to give the sinner the Gospel of peace (10:15). Chronologically, a sinner is saved like this: The LORD sends a believer to preach (witness) the Gospel of peace to a lost sinner; the lost sinner hears the Gospel; the sinner believes the Gospel; the sinner calls on the LORD and is saved from his or her sin.

Christ sends all believers to lost people in all parts of the world to be witnesses for Him (Acts 1:8). How do you begin? Prepare yourself by learning how to give the Gospel to a lost person. Then pray for the salvation of family members, friends and neighbors by name. Ask friends to pray for you to have wisdom and boldness in witnessing (Eph 6:18-19). Set a time in your date book to visit or call some of them. Begin your visit with some general news to talk about and

look for the Lord to open a door to witness to them. You can always tell them what Jesus has done in your life. Then you can ask them if Jesus has done anything in their life. If they do not tell you how He saved them, ask them if they wanted to know how to be saved from their sins. The Spirit may lead you to do it differently, but this is merely a suggested way of witnessing. When you really believe that they will go to Hell without receiving Jesus as their Savior, you will find a way to lovingly encourage them to call on the LORD to save them.

Paul gave eight reasons in 2 Cor 5:9-21 why he witnessed so fervently, but notice one reason: "we are ambassadors for Christ" (5:20). He pled with sinners to be reconciled to God as though God did beseech (or, beg) them . . . he prayed for them in Christ's stead . . . to be reconciled to God (5:20). Why would Paul beg sinners to be saved as though God begged them to be saved? Paul knew God does not elect sinners by His sovereign independent will. Why would Paul pray that sinners be reconciled in Christ's stead, if it were up to God to elect them by His sovereign will? Paul knew he had to graciously, but persuasively plead with sinners to receive Christ. (Acts 18:4; 19:8; 26:28; 28:23-24; 2 Cor 5:11). He was convinced that God depended on him to persuade sinners to receive Jesus as their Savior before He would elect them. God foreknew who would be persuaded and then He predestined them to be conformed to His Son.

Paul quoted Isaiah 52:7 to remind believers who bring "glad tidings of good things" to lost sinners that their feet are beautiful. The LORD is delighted with such believers that enter into the work of saving lost people. Do not be afraid to witness for Him. The Holy Spirit is in you to help you. If you feel you have messed up your witness, you have not failed. You obeyed the LORD. He will use your witness. Ask Him to teach you through that experience. If you do not witness, you have failed! You have failed the LORD by not witnessing and you have failed to give the Gospel to lost sinners.

10:16 — Paul, after showing the process whereby sinners hear the Gospel, returns to discuss Israel's unbelief. Israel had heard, but the majority had not believed. Once again Paul quoted the OT to show Israel's history of unbelief: "Who has believed our report" (Isa 53:1). This quotation is found in a prediction of Israel's rejection of the Messiah's sacrifice of Himself for their sins.

10:17 — Faith comes from hearing the word of God about Jesus Christ's death and resurrection for our salvation (Acts 5:20; 1 Pet 1:23). Lest there be any misunderstanding, hearing by itself does not produce faith: hearing must be accompanied with learning. Both are needed to produce the faith that draws sinners to Jesus Christ. Christ told the people crowded around Him that no one can come to Him except the Father draws him. The next verse tells how the Father draws sinners to His Son. Jesus quoted a verse from the prophets: "They shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that has HEARD and has LEARNED of the Father, comes to Me" (Jn 6:44-45). Notice, the Father teaches all sinners. Some hear, but many do not learn. Israel had heard but most of them did not learn. But those that hear and learn will come to Jesus.

Romans 10:6-17 is connected to the previous section (10:1-5) in that it shows LORD's program for the salvation of sinners among the Jews (also among the Gentiles). However, it is also related to the following section (10:18-21) because in it, Paul says the LORD sent His preachers (proclaimers) but they were rejected by the Jews. To be sent implies a divine authorization to proclaim a divine message. The Jews of Paul's day, for the most part, had rejected the Gospel (cp. Acts 13:50; 18:6; 28:27-29).

### **III. Salvation Denied by Israel's Defiance to God (10:18-21)**

10:18 — Paul's quotation of Psalm 19:4 does not mean there is a Gospel message in nature. God uses nature to teach sinners about Himself where they have no access to the Gospel. Those that learn some truth about God from nature are given more truth by various means until they are ready to hear the Gospel (cf. the Ethiopian and Cornelius in Acts 8 and 10).

But in this case Paul was dealing with Israelites who had God's Word and he quoted Psalm 19 to let them know that God had taught them by nature and by His Word, but they still

refused to learn. These two revelations were ignored by them, so they were without excuse!

10:19 — There is a distinction between hearing (v. 18), knowing, and obeying (v. 19). Israel had knowledge, but did not obey. Israel's failure to respond in faith to God's Word cannot be blamed on ignorance. The Gentiles' reception of Paul's message should have proved that Moses' prophecy about the Gentile reception of God's Word was fulfilled. Moses rebuked Israel in his day for their unbelief, and warned them that God would turn to the Gentiles, who would believe (Deut 32:21). The Gentiles who did not have all of the blessings, promises, and privileges of Israel were the very ones who responded to God's invitation to be saved. This action was designed to make Israel jealous and return to God, but Israel stubbornly refused to do it.

10:20 — The Old Testament reference in Isaiah 65:1 confirms again that Israel had been told that their unbelief would cause God to turn to the Gentiles. Hence, Paul says that Isaiah was very bold or forthright in his prophecy. Many of the Gentiles, who had ignored the natural revelation of God (1:18-32), received the special revelation when they were presented with the truth of the Gospel.

10:21 — This verse emphasizes man's responsibility and God's grace and love. Israel knowingly and stubbornly refused God's gracious and repeated invitation to be saved by faith in Jesus Christ. Sinners still have the ability to respond to God when He offers to save them from their sins. They have the responsibility to receive the Gospel that He offers to them or to reject it. The Jews for the most part chose to reject it.