

Romans 10:1–4

- ¹ Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.
- ² For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.
- ³ For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.
- ⁴ For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

My Heart's Desire **Romans 10:1-4**

INTRO:

The Apostle Paul reveals in **Romans chapters 9, 10, and 11**, in God's plan, most of Israel will not believe and be saved. Why is this so? From the sovereignty side of the coin it is because God chose to do it this way. From the "human responsibility" side of the coin, it is because Israel will not submit to God and believe in her Messiah. This is the point Paul dwells on in the verses before us.

I. PAUL'S PRAYER (v. 1)

II. ISRAEL'S PROBLEM (v.2,3)

III. OUR HOPE (v. 4)

I. PAUL'S PRAYER (v. 1)

Romans 10:1 ***"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved."***

A. In **Romans 9**, Paul established that all Israel is not Israel. There are many who, although born of the line of Abraham, because they have no faith, are not of the people of God. In fact, he goes on to show that a majority of Israel will not be saved, only a remnant will be converted. So, what does this do for Paul's burden for Israel?

B. Paul told us in **verse 1**.

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

Paul wrote, in spite of the fact that I know many in Israel will not believe, still, my prayer and heart's burden is that they still may be saved. The fact many Israelites reject Christ does not limit Paul's burden for them.

C. A proper understanding of the doctrines of grace does not destroy our burden for the lost, it should increase it!

II. ISRAEL'S PROBLEM (v.2-3)

A. Israel's problem was not lack of effort. It was a lack of knowledge.

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

Zeal is a wonderful thing, if it is found in the way of knowledge. Although Israel sought after God with great zeal, it lacked an understanding of the truth.

1. It was tied to the keeping of the law of God, but it was ignorant of the fact that everyone begins already short of the standard that God requires.

Romans 3:23 ***“All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”***

Romans 3:20 ***“Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”***

2. Their zeal in this case was not unlike the misguided zeal that used to characterize the Apostle Paul's life.

Acts 22:3-5 ***“I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today. I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished.”***

Few could equal Saul the persecutor in his zeal for God. Yet, his zeal was not according to knowledge. Paul also wrote in **Philippians 3:6**, ***“concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.”***

B. The essence of Israel's problem is **verse 3**.

“For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.”

1. In writing that the Jewish folks were ***“ignorant of the righteousness of God,”*** Paul was not saying they did not understand God was righteous. On the contrary, they knew that very well. What they did not understand was the way to possess God's righteousness was not through keeping the law. Instead, we possess it through putting our faith in Christ alone to save us.

2. Not only were they ignorant of God's plan, even though it is seen in the Old Testament revelation, they did not recognize the Son of God who came into the

world to save them. They rejected their own Messiah. They refused to embrace the salvation He purchased by His blood.

3. Their condition is clearly stated in **2 Corinthians 3:12-16**.

“Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech—unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.”

C. Because they did not submit themselves to God’s righteousness, they made their own righteousness. The word translated **“submit”** means **“to subject oneself to someone else.”** They refused to submit to God and His Messiah.

1. One of the most difficult things about salvation is it requires us to let go of ourselves and submit to God. John Bunyan in his book, *The Fear of God* wrote: *“The method of God is to kill and then make alive, to smite and then heal. When the commandment came to Paul, sin revived and he died.”* Conviction brings us to the end of ourselves and then grace helps us believe and receive life eternal.

2. The Jewish folks Paul wrote about and others, who are not saved, usually are not saved because they cannot let God do it all. They have to keep a little bit of “do-it-myself” Christianity. If we are to be saved, we have to submit to the plan and purpose of God and believe in Jesus alone to save us!

III. OUR HOPE (v. 4)

A. Our hope, indeed the hope of all who believe is found in this one simple statement in **verse 4**.

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

What does this mean?

B. First, the word translated **“the end”** can mean the terminus of something. Does this mean that there is no Law of any sort today? This runs into trouble when we consider verses like we found in **1 John 2:3**.

“Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.”

This runs into problems when we considers the Lord Jesus words in **Matthew 5:17-18**,

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”

C. The word translated end many times means to fulfill. This is exactly what Jesus did. He perfectly fulfilled the Law in His life. It is that righteousness which is imputed to our account by the Father so that we can stand in righteousness before a holy God. As the hymn writer wrote:

*'Because the sinless Savior died,
my sinful soul is counted free.
For God the Just is satisfied
to look on Him and pardon me!'*

Apart from this none of us could ever be saved. All of us would be damned for all eternity.

Do we value the salvation that our Lord has purchased for us?

Let us not forget to glorify God for this so great a salvation which He provided for us at such a great cost to Himself.

Second, if we love this salvation and our Savior we need to share that salvation with others.

Hymn #406 *My Hope is In the Lord*