

Rom. 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

"Brethren" = fellow believers

Paul's desire is that Israel, the Jewish people, would accept Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, and turn to Him for their salvation. The Greek for the word *prayer* comes from a root meaning "to beg (as binding oneself)." This gives strength to the word *desire*; it is a deep longing. As I think about it, there is a difference in intensity regarding certain requests that I bring before the Lord. Those that are the closest to my heart are made with a great stirring of the spirit and with great passion before the Lord. It's like I can't word it enough ways to make sure He understands my heart. Paul feels this so intensely because he was once in their position of unbelief.

Rom. 10:2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

Paul is very aware, through past personal affiliation, that the Jewish people (and especially their leaders) were zealous/passionate about God. The problem was that their passion was not based on "recognition, full discernment" (from the Greek) concerning Him. The CJB words it this way, "But it is not based on correct understanding." Paul gave a prime example from his own life in the book of Acts as he spoke before Agrippa.

Acts 26:9-15 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

I believe that has been the truth of "Christians" throughout history as well, e.g., the Crusaders. They have acted with zeal to support/defend a wrong understanding of God and His will/purposes.

Rom. 10:3 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.

"ignorant" = not to know (through lack of information or intelligence), to ignore

I've always defined ignorance as lack of knowledge, but never associated the word *ignore* with it; that would include a conscious decision to refuse or reject the facts. When Jesus taught the righteousness of God in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), it was a revelation of how differently God looks at things vs. how men look at things. Through the centuries the spiritual leaders of Israel had developed an interpretation of the law that was far from the original intent of the Lawgiver; they had "established their own righteousness." The ministry of Jesus was full of examples of His revealing the error of that system. Matthew 23 contains one of His strongest accusations against the spiritual leaders; verse 23 emphasizes their wrong understanding of God's law. They were focused on outward acts of obedience with no understanding that it is the character of the inner man that is the key issue.

Matthew 23:23-25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

They were so caught up in their own "wisdom," that they *ignored* the wisdom of God in the person of Jesus Christ. They refused to accept the facts/proofs that He gave of His position as the Messiah, the Son of God. They did not recognize Him because they revered the teaching of men more than the teaching of God through the scripture. They should have recognized Christ at His coming from the teaching of the prophets.

Matthew 16:1-3 The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; **but can ye not discern the signs of the times?**

Luke 12:54-56 And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; **but how is it that ye do not discern this time?**

Rom. 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

"end" = the point aimed at as the limit, the conclusion

The whole of the sacrificial system pointed to the provision of Christ. Jesus said that He came to fulfill (complete) the law; He was the conclusion.

Matthew 5:17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

He was sent by God to provide righteousness for man. The sacrificial system allowed for the sins of the people to be covered on a temporary basis. I now think it is more correct to say “forgiven, but not once for all; they were dependent on continual sacrifices.” I found a quote from Arnold Fruchtenbaum, “Israelology,” that applies here:

“The law was never designed as a permanent administration, but only a temporary one, as is evident in Galatians 3:19, ‘Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made....’”

The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus allows those sins to be permanently forgiven for every person who will *believe* or have faith in that provision. Paul stated it this way in his letter to the Corinthians. (I like the NIV wording.)

2Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

No longer does man have to be judged according to the law; through Christ one can be declared righteous—not guilty—according to the law. If man chooses to try to earn his salvation by keeping the law and rejecting Jesus, he will be found guilty. To fail in one point of the law is to fail.

James 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

Scripture tells us that ALL have sinned; there is not one person that will be able to be declared innocent based on the law alone.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

Those who believe, put their faith in Jesus, however, will be declared righteous in Him and, therefore, not guilty. Those who choose to reject Jesus will be condemned.

John 3:16-18 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

2Corinthians 5:20-21 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Rom. 10:5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

I like the wording of the CJB for this verse: *For Moshe writes about the righteousness grounded in the Torah that **the person who does these things will attain life through them.***

The word *doeth* references observing these laws continually. Scripture was referenced above that states the truth that not one person is capable of such obedience. If that were possible, Christ would never have had to come to sacrifice Himself to redeem us.

Rom. 10:6 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:)

Rom. 10:7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

Rom. 10:8 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;

Rom. 10:9 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.

After reading through several translations and looking at a few commentaries, I think the key truth being presented is that faith doesn't depend on the presence of the Messiah to impute His righteousness; it is a matter of confessing with the mouth and believing in the heart—a matter of faith.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

That is why Paul references the words from Deuteronomy; the application of the truth is the same.

*Deuteronomy 30:11-14 For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. 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? 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, that thou mayest do it.***

Verse 9 ties it all together. Salvation is provided to the one who will confess publicly that Jesus is Lord. The word *Lord* is defined as “supreme in authority.” Every Jew would recognize that as an admission that Jesus was who He claimed to be—the Messiah, the Son of God, God in flesh. The Apostle John affirms this truth.

1John 4:15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

To confess Jesus as Lord implies a willingness to do what He says—to obey Him—according to Jesus.

Luke 6:46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Along with the confession of Jesus as Lord, one must believe that God raised up Jesus from the dead. The resurrection was divine proof of God the Father's acceptance and approval of His Son's sacrifice for man's sin.

Romans 1:4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

Rom. 10:10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

I thought the CJB translation was quite thought-provoking.

For with the heart one goes on trusting and thus continues toward righteousness, while with the mouth one keeps on making public acknowledgement and thus continues toward deliverance.

Salvation is a result of true faith and commitment to proclaiming the truth about Jesus. This type of faith will obviously be reflected in how you live. This ties in directly with more words from the Apostle John.

1John 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

It was the idea of continuance that jumped out to me from the CJB. I personally believe we are imputed the righteousness of Jesus at salvation, but that sanctification is a continuing process of becoming more righteous and Christ-like in how we live—our demonstration of God's righteousness in us to others.

Salvation brings about a miracle in the life of the person of faith; he/she becomes a new creation that is sealed by the Holy Spirit of God. It is the power of God that preserves the work He begins in us and carries it to fruition.

Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

1Peter 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

What God starts He will finish. Continuance in the faith is a proof of true possession of saving faith.

Rom. 10:11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

My first thought when scripture is referenced is to find where. The closest verse I found was in Isaiah 49.

Isaiah 49:23 And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: **for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.**

The word *wait* is a reference to expectation and patience in waiting. Obviously, those who are waiting on the Lord with expectation would describe those who believe Him and are looking to Him for deliverance.

I also found some beautiful verses in Joel that apply here.

Joel 2:26-27 And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and **my people shall never be ashamed.** And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and **my people shall never be ashamed.**

“My people” is obviously referencing those that have faith in God, those who have accepted Him as LORD and are trusting Him for their salvation.

Many of the commentators reference Isaiah 28:16 I think because the wording is a little bit closer and because Paul quoted it at the end of the last chapter, but I don't think the meaning is as clear in association with this verse.

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, 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.

The Hebrew for *haste* references “hurry, to be eager with excitement or enjoyment, ready.” When I looked back at my journal for Isaiah, I had really just glossed over this part of the verse. I made the contrast of being at rest to being in a hurry (staying busy at a task). The key seems to be in reference to the precious corner stone, Jesus, Who allows us to cease from our efforts, our *busy-ness*, to work out our own salvation. In Him we can find rest and peace because He has done the work necessary by laying down His life for our sin. All we have to do is accept what He has done.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Rom. 10:12 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.

At this point Paul is emphasizing the truth that in the matter of faith for salvation, there is no difference in Jew and Greek. He has been making this case throughout the whole first portion of this letter. All people are on level ground

at the foot of the cross. There is not one Savior for the Jews and another for the Gentiles. Jesus is the only Savior for all; He is “the way, the truth and the life” (John 14:6).

Again, the emphasis is made that all we have to do is call upon Him for salvation. To call upon Him includes recognizing that He is LORD and trusting in His provision—accepting it as a gift. A reminder, verse 9 defines LORD as Jesus. This is the key truth in this letter since the Jews rejected Jesus as LORD.

Those who accept Jesus as LORD will find that He is generous with His provision for them. Most often when we think of wealth, we think of material wealth. I believe the context here is regarding spiritual wealth—eternal life and all the blessings that accompany it. In Christ we become joint-heirs with Him to all of God’s power and authority through the Holy Spirit. God does not differentiate between spiritual blessings for believing Israelis and believing Gentiles. There will be some differences in material blessings for the two groups in the Kingdom Age, but there will be no differences in spiritual blessings for the body of believers based on ethnicity.

Rom. 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

This verse brings in the connection to the verses from Joel that I quoted above pertaining to verse 11.

Joel 2:32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered:

The key word in these verses is “whosoever,” meaning “any person whatever” (cf Webster). The Greek for *call* included “invoke for aid, appeal to.” The Lord will not refuse anyone who comes to Him in faith for salvation.

I just don’t believe the Spirit would have inspired these words if they didn’t mean what they said. God has sovereignly chosen to allow man to choose his own destiny. It is man’s choice to accept His gift of salvation or not. The offer is to all.

Rom. 10:14 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?

Rom. 10:15 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!

Again, Paul quotes from the prophet Isaiah.

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!

Those of us who know Christ as Savior are responsible for sharing the “good news” with others. The great commission is for all disciples—followers of Jesus.

Matthew 28:19-20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

We have all been “sent.” These verses explain why. We are to preach, to proclaim the divine truth of the gospel (from the Greek), so that people are encouraged to believe the truth of the gospel and will recognize their need to call upon Him as LORD in faith for salvation. What is the gospel? Paul sums it up in a nutshell in ICorinthians.

1Corinthians 15:1-4 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures....

Those who accept the gospel will experience peace, a relationship that is “at one” with God again. This is a message that is full of good news about good things, blessings, for the one who chooses to believe.

Rom. 10:16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

This time Paul identifies the quote he uses with the prophet Isaiah. These are the opening words to the beautiful chapter 53 that prophesies the truth about the coming Messiah as a sacrificial lamb to heal people from their sins.

Just as Isaiah expressed dismay at the response to God’s message to Israel in his day and prophesied that it would be the same response in the days of Messiah, so Paul makes the comparison to the Jews of his day.

I have often heard it said that Isaiah 53 is not allowed to be read in the synagogue. This is actually a testimony to the fact that the spiritual leaders recognize that it testifies of Jesus, but they aren’t willing to accept that truth.

Rom. 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

In this verse Paul seems to be connecting the response to God’s truth to the preaching of that truth. It seems that point is made often in scripture that those who would follow God in faith and be messengers of the truth were few (e.g., Caleb and Joshua, Jeremiah and his fellow prophets, the 120 disciples in the upper room) in comparison to the people they represented.

People can't respond in faith to a message they have not heard. They cannot hear unless someone tells them God's words of truth. Emphasis is made that the message is to be the "word of God," not the words of men.

Rom. 10:18 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.

Rom. 10:19 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.

Now Paul goes on to explain that Israel, the Jewish people, have no excuse to not understand God's message of truth concerning salvation. Verse 18 seems to indicate that God's dealings with the Jewish people and the revelation of His truth to them were well publicized in the known world of that time. God's deliverance of His people from Egypt made world headlines so to speak. I would tend to think that the words being referenced were the Ten Commandments. The words Paul uses here seem to be a quote from Psalm 19.

Psalm 19:1-4 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. 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 context, the Psalmist is referencing the testimony of creation, specifically the heavens, regarding the Creator. I think the comparison is that just as surely as the heavens declare the Creator, God's workings on behalf of the nation of Israel declare Him as their God, as the Almighty God who is powerful on behalf of His people and not impotent like the gods of the Gentile nations. If the testimony of the heavens send a message that can be understood "through all the earth," the Israelites certainly had no excuse since they had God personally interacting with them and delivering them through His miraculous power.

Verse 19 goes on to tell us that God even told the people through Moses that he would provoke them to jealousy and anger through the Gentiles. The reason—their lack of faith. God knows the future. He knew how His people would rebel against Him.

Deuteronomy 32:18-21 Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee. And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters. And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, **children in whom is no faith**. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and **I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people**; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

"No people" is a reference to those that were "nothing special" (from the Hebrew) in comparison to the people of Israel, who were God's chosen people. "Foolish nation" is a reference to wicked Gentile nations who had no spiritual understanding.

Rom. 10:20 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.

This is a quote from Isaiah 65.

Isaiah 65:1 I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.

Isaiah boldly reiterated the truth spoken by Moses so many years previously. The Gentiles would respond to a gospel that was preached to them by faithful believers. They weren't seeking God; men of faith shared the gospel in obedience to the command of Jesus. A good comparison would be the response of the people of Nineveh to Jonah's message of repentance. Gentile believers who responded to the gospel of Jesus Christ found Him willing to reveal Himself to them through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Again, they were able to learn about God because they responded in faith to the gospel of Jesus Christ that was brought to them by men of faith—not because they were asking about or desiring to know Him.

Rom. 10:21 But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

This is a quote from the next verse in Isaiah 65.

Isaiah 65:2-3 I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick;

“gainsaying” = to dispute, refuse, contradict, deny

In contrast, God was ever trying to get the people of Israel to turn to Him in faith and repentance. “Stretched forth hands” are a picture of open arms waiting to receive a repentant child who has been disobedient and rebellious. How did the people of Israel respond? In Isaiah's day, in rebellion and outright provocation through public rejection of God and worship of man-made idols. In the days of Jesus, through rejection of Him as the Messiah and by placing faith in their works according to a corrupted law. The Gentiles who responded in faith and repentance didn't have to be begged or cajoled. Once they heard and understood their need and that Jesus could meet that need, they responded in belief.

Sadly, as a whole, the people of Israel continue to reject Jesus today. They continue to disregard the “good news” of the gospel declared to them by people who love them and minister to them because they are God's chosen people.