

Israel's Present Rejection

Romans 10:1-21

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In Romans 9 we saw God's sovereignty, and the man Paul was arguing that salvation is according to the elective purpose of God; yet the Bible is a balanced Book, we're going to discover that tonight, and it also teaches the responsibility of man. If you just read Romans 9, you could become imbalanced in thinking that it's all about God's sovereign elective purposes not realizing that man is responsible for believing and receiving Christ. If he is lost, he has no one to blame but himself. That may not compute, but no big deal that in my brain something doesn't compute, right? My brain is what's called finite. God is infinite. That means we have little pea brains, and God knows everything. So many times what we seem to be thinking is a contradiction in Scripture reconciles by God in a higher unity, so we'll have to wait until we get to heaven before we can fully understand how that all works.

Paul now moves from divine sovereignty in Romans 9 to human responsibility. In Romans 10, Paul shows mankind's responsibility by giving us three simple facts. Those three facts are: 1) the gospel is within reach to all, verses 1-10, or you might say accessible to all; 2) the gospel has been offered to all, both Jew and Gentile, verses 11-15 (I'm going to go back over these, so don't get freaked out if you can't write this all down); 3) in verses 16-21, the gospel has not been obeyed by all. We're going to see these facts make it clear that if Israel has been rejected or set aside or if they are not saved, then there's no one to blame but themselves, and that's so very important for us to understand.

So, we don't want to become imbalanced and just stand on the sovereignty of God or develop what some would call a double predestination, where God chooses some to go to heaven and chooses others to go to hell, that's not taught in Romans 9, 10, or 11, nor is it taught anywhere in the Bible, even though we read last week that God is pictured as a potter and that the potter has power over the clay to make one vessel unto honor and one to dishonor.

Remember who hardened Pharaoh's heart, Pharaoh did, right? Pharaoh hardened his heart and God allowed him to harden his heart, allowed him to harden his heart toward Him so in that sense you might say, "God hardened Pharaoh's heart," but Pharaoh rejected the light that he had. There's not only an understanding of God's dealing with the nation of Israel—past, present, and future—but there's these important doctrinal theological truths taught in these passages.

Let's look at the first fact that the gospel is within reach of all people, or someone had that "accessible" to all. Beginning in Romans 10:1 Paul says, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel,"—remember again Romans 9, 10, and 11 is all about the issue of Israel. If God saves us by grace and Israel rejected Christ as Messiah, then can we believe that God is through with the nation of Israel? God's purpose and plan is not for the nation of Israel? So, Romans 10:1, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." I'm going to come back over these verses.

Verse 2, "For I bear them record that they,"—that is, Israel—"have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." That word "knowledge" in the Greek means an understanding or deep, full comprehension. They had knowledge about God, but they didn't fully understand who Christ was or God's plan and purpose of redemption through Him. Verse 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. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,"—that's faith—"For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. 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:) 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) 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; 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. 10 For with the heart man believeth,"—again, that's a reference to faith—"unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

In verses 1-10, the overarching message there is that the gospel is within reach or accessible to all. It is not only easily acceptable, but it is equally acceptable to Jew or Gentile. What Paul is doing, he's arguing with the Jew that would say, "I'm not responsible for rejecting Christ because I'm just a lump of clay. God is sovereign, and He's going to do whatever He wants to do, so I'm not responsible." Paul's trying to balance that out and say, "No, you're responsible to believe in Jesus Christ or to put your faith and trust in Him to be saved."

In each one of these chapters, Romans 9, 10, and 11, and I pointed it out earlier to you, it opens with Paul's affirmation of love and care for the nation of Israel. No doubt he was being accused of hating Israel when in reality he said, "No, my heart's desire and my prayer to God to Israel is that they might be saved." At the beginning of Romans 9, beginning of Romans 10, and the beginning of Romans 11, there's Paul affirming his love for the nation of Israel.

By the way, we should love Israel as well. Amen? We need to take a stand for Israel as well. I don't want to get sidetracked, but I'm praying for Israel in overdrive right now with what's going on over there. You say, "But, John, they're in unbelief there. They haven't believed nationally in Christ their Messiah, they've rejected Jesus their Messiah. It's a fault religion." Most Jews in Israel today, the state of Israel, aren't really even religious Jews, yet God still has a plan and we're going to see that in Romans 11. When I'm in Romans 9, I was telling you to hang in there for Romans 10; when I'm in Romans 10, hang in there for Romans 11, don't let me lose you. So, we need to pray for Israel, love Israel, but we also need to have a love for anyone who is lost, and we should desire them to believe in Jesus and be saved.

Isn't it interesting that Paul just spent Romans 9 talking about the sovereignty of God. He transitioned in Romans 9:30-33 talking about the Jews stumbling over the stumbling block which was Christ and that they didn't believe. From Romans 9:30, there's this marvelous transition into Romans 10 about the human responsibility of man. So, Romans 9, divine

sovereignty; Romans 10, human responsibility.

Let me say this, too, even though Paul made it clear that God is sovereign and that He chooses by His elective grace, we should be praying for those who are lost because wouldn't it be easy to say, "Well, if God's going to save whom He's going to save, and those who are going to be lost are going to be lost, why pray? Why witness? Why tell anyone about Jesus? Why preach?" All through this chapter, "I pray for them. I want them saved," and "We need to preach the gospel, and they need to believe; and if they don't, then they're responsible for being condemned or judged." So, don't become imbalanced thinking that because God is sovereign that we shouldn't pray. Again, it doesn't compute in my mind, but for some reason God has chosen not only the end, but the means to the end, and God has chosen to bring us through prayer, closer to Him, align us with His purposes and plan, and participate in what He wants to do on earth.

If you have a family member, a friend, a loved one, a co-worker, a neighbor, maybe a neighbor that bothers you, maybe if he got saved, he wouldn't bother you; so pray more for them. Even though God is sovereign and chooses who will be saved, God has also chosen for us to pray and to preach and to share the gospel with others. I love this statement of Paul, "I pray to God for Israel, I pray that they might be saved." They were religious, but they were lost.

You know, a lot of times Christians today kind of buy into the world's idea of: be nice, be loving, be kind, be accepting. I thank God that the bumper sticker "Coexist" is starting to die out and you don't see it very much anymore. Do you remember that "Coexist" bumper sticker? They don't even realize that those religions on that "Coexist" bumper sticker have diametrically opposed, contrary ideas about God and about salvation. It's not only important to love people, but we also must stand on truth. Amen? Jude says, "We must earnestly contend for the faith once and for all delivered to the saints." We don't want to be contentious, but we do want to contend. We need to know what is Christian doctrine and what's true and not compromise and stand for truth.

Notice in verse 2, "For I bear them record,"—"them" is a reference to Israel mentioned in verse 1—"that they,"—Israel—"have a zeal of God,"—how true that is—"but,"—their zeal is—"not according to knowledge." They're religious, they know about God, but they don't have a full comprehension about the truth of God. They're ignorant of the things of God. They can quote Scripture, they understand Bible concepts, but they don't really understand the gospel of Jesus Christ. If you reject Jesus—I've said this a million times in a million different ways—then you are rejecting God. Without Jesus, you have not God. If you don't have, not only Jesus, but the true Jesus, the Jesus of the Bible, then you do not have God. If you reject Christ, then you have no access to God, no atonement for your sins, no way to reach God. He's the one Mediator between God and man. We don't have to be haughty or proud about that, but we need to be uncompromising. You say, "Well, what gives you the right to speak with such authority on that subject?" The Bible, the B-I-B-L-E, yes, that's the Book for me! I stand alone on the Word of God, the B-I-B-L-E. If you don't stand on the Bible, then what are you going to stand on? Popular opinion? The views of mankind? Current trends? I believe we should

stand on the unchanging rock of Scripture.

So, they were sincere, they had a zeal for God. A lot of people think sincerity is all that matters. “Well, gee, Pastor John, that’s not very nice. You know, they’re sincere about their religion.” I’m sure they are, but it’s possible to be sincerely mistaken, sincerely wrong. You can grab unknowingly a bucket with poison in it and believe with all your heart that it’s Kool-Aid, and you can drink it in sincerity, but you’re still going to die because you’re drinking poison, right? Some people say, “Well, I’m sincere. I believe. I have faith. I’m sincere about what I believe,” but is what you believe right? Is it biblical? Is it true? We all need to ask ourselves, “How do I know the truth?” The answer I believe is found in the Word of God. They have a zeal, but it’s not according to knowledge. There are so many religious people today who are lost, sincerely religious, devoted to their religion—to their rites, their rituals, their belief system—but it’s a false system and they are not saved, they are lost.

Now, they go about to try to establish their own righteousness, notice they are ignorant of God’s righteousness, verse 3, “...and going about to establish their own righteousness,” this is going to be repeated a couple of times, but notice there are two kinds of righteousness—God’s righteousness and then their own righteousness, verse 3. Down in verse 5, there’s, “...the righteousness which is of the law,” and in verse 6, there’s “the righteousness which is of faith.”

You know, there are only two ways to be righteous: either you do it yourself by works of the law—by rites and ordinances, by being good—or God gives you His righteousness through faith in Christ, which is the only way you can be saved. There are only two ways. You can work to get to heaven or you can trust Christ. If you work to get to heaven you won’t get there. I don’t mean to imply by saying that—don’t let me confuse you—that you can work your way to heaven, you cannot. There’s only self-righteousness—man’s righteousness, which is religious works—or there is God’s righteousness granted to you by faith in Christ as a free gift, and that’s the only way we can be accepted by God is having Christ’s righteousness imputed to us standing in His righteousness, faultless before the throne. Amen?

And, how do we get that righteousness? By faith. Again, this marvelous chapter on Israel’s rejection is also teaching the doctrine of justification by faith, which has clearly been established in the book of Romans but is rejected by many religious folks today. They think that salvation is a process of good works, rather than a position of righteous standing in Christ imputed to us by faith. If you don’t understand what I’m talking about, you do not understand Christianity because that’s the essence of Christianity. Christianity isn’t doing good things to get to go to heaven, it’s having Christ who did all for you—done—giving you salvation as a free gift, and notice he mentions being saved there in the very first verse, so we need to make sure that we are saved, standing in the righteousness of Christ.

They try to get their own righteousness, verse 3, when you get a chance read Philippians 3 where Paul said, “My righteousness is just a pile of manure. My religious pedigree is nothing,” and the Bible actually says our righteousness are like filthy rags before a holy God. The problem is they had not, verse 3, “...submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." You should underline some of these key words, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Once you come to belief in Jesus Christ, it's not a matter of trying to perform in order to be right with God or keep the law, Christ's righteousness has been imputed to us, which goes back to Abraham in Genesis 15:6. One of the greatest verses in the Bible on the subject of salvation, "And he,"—Abraham—"believed in the LORD,"—there's faith—"and he,"—God—"counted it to him for righteousness,"—imputed to him righteousness, not gave to him righteousness. So, that's how God saves the sinner, by believing the promises of God, and God imputing the righteousness of Christ to us.

Israel missed all this. They were working very fervently and diligently to try to get "...their own righteousness, having not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Verse 5, "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them." They knew good and well they couldn't keep everything in the Mosaic Law. They knew that they had failed. There's no way they could be saved by keeping the law.

This chapter, and I'm going to give you another Old Testament reference, is full of Old Testament quotations alluding to verses from the Old Testament. In verse 5, when he says, "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law," he then goes on to quote Leviticus 8:5, "That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. 6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise,"—so faith righteousness—"Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven?"—that means, what do you need to do to bring salvation down from heaven—"(that is, to bring Christ down from above:)"—we don't need to do that, right? God so loved the world that He did what? He sent. I love that word "sent," God sent, God gave. God sent His only begotten Son. We don't go up and get Him and bring Him down, "Yay! Look what I did. I brought Christ down from above." No, He, in mercy and grace, came down; and the Father sent Him from above.

So, "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven?"—who shall work their way up to heaven? Stairway to heaven—"(that is, to bring Christ down from above:)" 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)" We had nothing to do with the incarnation, we have nothing to do with the resurrection. We didn't bring Christ down, we didn't raise Christ up, He did it all. I love, again, that song, Jesus paid it all, All to Him I owe, Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow. Amen? Jesus paid it all. Wow! What music to our ears! He paid a debt He didn't owe; I owed a debt I couldn't pay. So, I can't bring Him up from the dead.

"But what saith it?" Notice the question mark, verse 8. "The word is nigh thee," so we don't have to work, we just have to believe. It's just a word in our mouth. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach." Remember the context. He's talking about God saving us and how He saves us by faith. He's not talking about the doctrine of the Word Faith, Positive confession, health and wealth prosperity preachers. They take these verses and preach their unbiblical doctrine that if you just have enough faith, you can be rich; if you just had enough faith, you could be perfectly healthy and wealthy, that's

why it's called the health and wealth gospel. They use these verses that the word is in your mouth and if you just speak it out, but that's not what Paul's talking about here. They so foolishly take verses and twist them out of context and commit what's called eisegesis—they put into the text what they want it to mean.

Every text of Scripture has one primary meaning which is known as the author's intent or we call it authorial intent—what the Bible means by what it says. That's the goal of Bible study to get to what the author meant by what he said—what does it say, what did he mean—not just picking a verse here, picking a verse there, picking a verse here, picking a verse there, out of context, and then making it to support what I want to say.

I have to be careful because I can get on a soapbox here. But I listen even to so-called good evangelical pastors that preach topical sermons, which is fine, preach a topical sermon, but they support their sermon with verses from all over the Bible. They never set the context or exegete the verses, and many times the verses that they use to support their point is taken out of context. What they say is biblical, but it's not what the text means. They should pick another text or find a text to stay in and then expound—explain the text—rather than jumping all around. That's why many times you can sit under a preacher for many years and never learn your Bible because it's all topical—jumping around the Bible—and never expositional. You're not really even getting the Word of God. Paul said, "Preach the Word," and that's not really what I believe to be preaching the Word. That's neither here nor there in the text, but it's important that we take this in context. I'm going to come back to verse 8 in just a moment, "... the word of faith, which we preach."

Verse 9, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth,"—he's talking about being saved—"the Lord Jesus,"—you believe that Jesus is Lord—"and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved,"—there it is again. He opens with it in verse 1, and then he comes to it down in verse 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. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." He's not talking about how you get rich. He's not talking about how you get healed. He's talking about how you get saved.

Remember when there were two thieves hanging on the cross next to Jesus? Jesus hanging on the central cross, two thieves hanging next to Him? Both of them reviling Christ, mocking Christ. What happened to one of them? He turned to Jesus, didn't he? And, what did he say? "Lord," Lord, "remember me when You come into Your Kingdom." And, Jesus said, "Today you will be with Me in paradise." He didn't say, "Aw, man! You waited too long, dude! Have you been confirmed? Have you been baptized? Have you had communion? Have you gone to confession lately? Sorry, too late," nor did He mention any place called Purgatory, where you're going to have to go and get a little purging before so that you can be worthy to go to heaven. He didn't mention that. He said, "Today you'll be with Me in paradise." He was a crook, a thief, he was hanging being executed for his crimes, but he looked to Jesus and said, "I believe." He said, "Lord, remember me," and he was saved.

Do you know that right now, sitting right here, right now as I teach this chapter, you could be here totally unsaved on your way to hell? But before the sermon is over, while I'm preaching right now, you don't even have to wait, you can just say, "Lord, save me. Lord, remember me. Lord, I believe in You. I trust in You. Forgive my sins. Come into my heart." You could be born again right here, right now, instantaneously and have the righteousness of Christ imputed to you (SNAP!) and be saved and ready to go to heaven. All your sins can be forgiven. Isn't that a glorious truth? The Bible says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." How marvelous that is! So, "...the word of faith," here is that which is preached about the gospel of Jesus Christ, and if we believe in our heart, confess with our mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord, we will be saved.

Here's the second division (we won't tarry as long on these closing two sections). Verses 11-15, not only is the gospel within reach of all, but the gospel has been offered to all, in the context to Jew and Gentile. Let's read it. "For the scripture saith,"—again, when the Scripture speaks, God is speaking—"Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Now, get your pens ready if you want the references. This is Isaiah 28:16. Paul's quoting from Isaiah 28:16, "Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed," which means disappointed. If you've trusted Jesus Christ and been forgiven, when you get to heaven you're not going to say, "Wow, that was really stupid of me. It was really foolish of me to trust Christ and to believe in Him, now I'm saved and going to heaven for all eternity." Do you know you won't be disappointed? Christ won't disappoint you, He won't let you down—quite the opposite. If you reject Christ, you'll be disappointed or ashamed.

Verse 12, "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek,"—or the Gentile—"for the same Lord over all is rich unto all,"—and here it is—"that call upon him." That's a parallel to believing in Jesus or confessing Jesus or trusting in Jesus. Verse 13, "For whosoever,"—notice verse 11, "Whosoever believeth," I've highlighted the word "whosoever" and then again in verse 13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Again, I've highlighted the words "whosoever." "Whosoever" means whosoever, and all I need to do is call upon the name of the Lord, and they shall be saved.

Remember when the Philippian jailer in Acts 16 asked Paul, "What must I do to be saved?" What did Paul tell him? "Get a haircut. Put on Christian clothes. Get baptized. Go to church. Stop eating meat. Worship on Saturday." What did Paul say? He said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." He actually said, "...thou...and thy house," but their household had to believe on Jesus Christ to be saved, too. It doesn't mean that if you accept Christ, everyone in your family's automatically going to heaven; it means that if they believe and they receive Christ, they'll go to heaven also. But he didn't say, "Be baptized." He said, "Believe." After he was believing and born again, then he was baptized as evidence of his salvation.

Verse 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?" I love that! Notice all these questions. "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not

believed?" Again, the Jews are probably arguing with Paul, "Well, we haven't heard," or "We haven't believed," and "How shall we believe if we haven't heard," and "How shall we hear without a preacher?"

Verse 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,"—I love that title for the gospel, "the gospel of peace." It brings us peace with God, and the result is the peace of God. "...and bring glad tidings of good things!" In this section Paul is saying that the gospel has been offered to all. They can't say, "Well, we haven't heard, we haven't been preached to." God sends the preacher, and the preacher preaches the gospel.

No matter what the culture, the time, the trends that are around us, there is no substitute for the preaching of the gospel. Again, this is one of my soapbox because a lot of churches are saying, "Well, we don't preach the Bible that much, we just interview people and have dramas and plays and concerts and pep talks and little helpful speeches. You know, people don't want preaching anymore." Whether people want preaching anymore or not, we should still be preaching. There is no biblical reason for any substitute of the preaching—the proclamation, the heralding—of the Word of God.

When Paul was passing the torch in what could truly be called his "swan song," 2 Timothy 4, the last words before he was executed, he said, "Timothy, preach the Word," k 7 ýss ÒÀ herald the Word. Preach, proclaim the Word. Do it with authority and clarity. "...reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." You say, "Pastor Miller, you're always quoting that verse." It's because I just feel it burning in my bones. It's so important. There are so many churches today that have abandoned preaching. Notice how Paul elevates the preacher and the importance of preaching. "...and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" —this is God sending them—"as it is written."

Now, I missed a couple of Old Testament references. At the end of verse 12, he's actually quoting from Joel 2:32, and then here in verse 15, he's quoting from Isaiah 52:7, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" You may not be called to formally preach in a church, but I believe we're all called to proclaim the truth and to proclaim the Word of God and to be preachers of the Word. Amen? "...and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?"

By the way, this is the priority of the church—sending preachers to preach the gospel. Sure, let's feed people; sure, let's clothe people; sure, let's house people; sure, let's help people, but what good does it do if you take care of their bodies and they die in sin and go to hell for all eternity? What good does it do if we pass laws in America—and I'm all for that—but that's all we do and we don't evangelize or proclaim or preach the gospel and people die in their sin and they go to hell? What does it profit? Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel." May God save us from not being devoted to the proclamation of the gospel. May God give us men and women who preach the true gospel of Jesus Christ and preach the Word

everywhere they go.

Notice we have, “beautiful feet.” You know, feet are probably the most unattractive part of the human anatomy. If someone says, “Let me take your picture.” “Oh, just take my feet! Let me take my shoes off, I have beautiful feet.” Feet are kind of gnarly. We like to cover our feet. We like to hide our feet. I better stop right there. Not too many people have very good-looking feet. But if you are a preacher of the gospel, you have beautiful feet. I love that! That’s the mission of the church.

Here’s the last section, verses 16-21, we have the gospel has not been obeyed by all. The gospel is accessible or within the reach of all, so if you’re lost, you have no one to blame but yourself. And then, the gospel has been offered to all, Jew and Gentile alike. There’s no difference. It’s not race, it’s God’s grace. Thirdly, the gospel has not been obeyed by all. Really, verses 16-21 is the culmination and the crux of Paul’s argument as to why Israel has been rejected or set aside because they did not believe the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Verse 16, “But they,”—who’s the ‘they’? Israel—“have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias,”—and he’s quoting Isaiah 53:1, what a great verse for Jews, by the way, Isaiah 53—“Lord, who hath believed our report? 17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” In the context, I’m going to come back to this, this is a message preached about Christ. This isn’t just a general statement that the Word of God brings faith, which it does, but this is actually about a message of Christ preached and responding to that in faith brings salvation. So, “...and hearing by the word of God. 18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth,”—it’s gone through the whole earth—“and their words unto the ends of the world. 19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people,”—I think that’s a reference to Gentiles, that Gentiles are coming to faith in Christ, the church is being formed, and many Jews are provoked to jealousy —“and by a foolish nation I will anger you.” He’s quoting from the book of Psalms 19:4 about the ends of the earth, the word has gone out.

Then Isaiah begins to speak again, verse 20, quoting Isaiah 65:1, “But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not,”—that’s a reference to Gentiles—“I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me,”—they weren’t even seeking Me or looking for Me, they were pagan Gentiles. We saw earlier in Romans, if you study the whole book, you saw that the Gentile world was guilty before God; the Jewish world was guilty before God; the moral man, the religious man, the whole world, guilty before God. So, he says, “I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.” But what a marvelous way to conclude, verse 21. Look at it with me, “But to Israel he saith,”—quoting Isaiah 65:2—“All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.”

This just jumps right off the page reminding me when Jesus looked over the city of Jerusalem with tears going down His face, the Son of God in tears, and He said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee,” God sent His

prophets, God sent His messengers. They stoned them, they killed them. "...how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens ...and ye would not!" Interesting, "I would have gathered you, but you would not." This is why I said this chapter's teaching human responsibility. If you're lost, don't blame God. "How often I would have gathered you, but you would not," as He wept over Jerusalem and He saw the future of Titus' armies in 70 A.D. destroying the city of Jerusalem. From 70 A.D. till 1948, the rebirth of the modern state of Israel, we had the wandering Jew, the persecuted Jew, the suffering Jew. It's no accident that antisemitism is on the rise. We're going to get into all the prophecies about that in Romans 11, but God elected them, they rejected the gospel and Christ, and they were dispersed. "His blood be on us and our children!" What a sad tragedy.

I just want to make mention of it and I'll wrap this up. In Matthew 21:33-46, and I'll probably tie it in when we get to Romans 11, Jesus told the parable about a landowner who had a vineyard. He had this beautiful vineyard, and he rented it or lent it out to farmers who wanted to work the vineyard. Then, he sent his servants to collect payment, and they beat them and persecuted them and sent them away empty. So, he sent more servants to them, and they beat them again, worse, and they rejected them and sent them back. Then, Jesus is telling the story says, "Last of all, he sent his own son, and when these wicked land renters saw that it was the son, they said, 'It's the son. Let's kill him, and the land will be ours.'" So they killed the son. Jesus turned to the crowds and said, "What would the landowner do to these wicked tenants?" They said, "Well, he'll come in and destroy them and lend his vineyard out to another." Pay attention, "...lend it out to another."

That was a picture of God sending His prophets to the nation of Israel, God sending His own Son to the nation of Israel, and they rejected His messengers and rejected His own Son, and then God lent the vineyard out to another. He says, "I'll be found in people who ask not for Me, people that were no people, the Gentile nations, and they will provoke you to jealousy."

This is what's going on as we live right now—God is forming the Church but He's going to keep His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and He has a future for Israel, that's Romans 11. We should pray for Israel to be saved, come to Messiah, come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, turn to Him, and believe in Jesus as Messiah. Amen?