



# ROMANS

## Lesson 9: Has God Rejected Israel?

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**Why has God rejected us his chosen people?**

A large section in Romans (9-11) is now given to the case of Israel. At the time this epistle was written the church was comprised largely of Jewish believers. There were difficulties to be cleared up. One serious problem for the Jew was how could God reject his chosen people?

### A. MAIN IDEA

With the conclusion of chapter eight Paul has completed his description of how God's righteousness was manifested in Christ, and the results of such being justification. However, some of Paul's readers may have received the impression that God's plan of saving man in Christ apart from the Law (Romans 3:21-22) implies that God has rejected His people of Israel and the promises made to them. In chapters nine through eleven, Paul explains that God has not rejected his people.

### B. CENTRAL QUESTION

Why did God could choose to reject the nation of Israel (except for a remnant) and accept people from among the Gentiles?

### C. ROMANS CHAPTERS 9 & 10 (NLT)

#### 1. PAUL'S CONCERN FOR HIS BRETHREN OF ISRAEL (9:1-5)

*With Christ as my witness, I speak with utter truthfulness. My conscience and the Holy Spirit confirm it. <sup>2</sup>My heart is filled with bitter sorrow and unending grief <sup>3</sup>for my people, my Jewish brothers and sisters. I would be willing to be forever cursed-- cut off from Christ!-- if that would save them. <sup>4</sup>They are the people of Israel, chosen to be God's adopted children. God revealed his glory to them. He made covenants with them and gave them his law. He gave them the privilege of worshiping him and receiving his wonderful promises. <sup>5</sup>Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are their ancestors, and Christ himself was an Israelite as far as his human nature is concerned. And he is God, the one who rules over everything and is worthy of eternal praise! Amen.*

#### 2. THE TRUE CHILDREN OF GOD (9:6-29)

<sup>6</sup> Well then, has God failed to fulfill his promise to Israel? No, for not all who are born

into the nation of Israel are truly members of God's people! <sup>7</sup> Being descendants of Abraham doesn't make them truly Abraham's children. For the Scriptures say, "Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted," though Abraham had other children, too. <sup>8</sup> This means that Abraham's physical descendants are not necessarily children of God. Only the children of the promise are considered to be Abraham's children. <sup>9</sup> For God had promised, "I will return about this time next year, and Sarah will have a son." <sup>10</sup> This son was our ancestor Isaac. When he married Rebekah, she gave birth to twins. <sup>11</sup> But before they were born, before they had done anything good or bad, she received a message from God. (This message shows that God chooses people according to his own purposes; <sup>12</sup> he calls people, but not according to their good or bad works.) She was told, "Your older son will serve your younger son." <sup>13</sup> In the words of the Scriptures, "I loved Jacob, but I rejected Esau." <sup>14</sup> Are we saying, then, that God was unfair? Of course not! <sup>15</sup> For God said to Moses, "I will show mercy to anyone I choose, and I will show compassion to anyone I choose."

<sup>16</sup> So it is God who decides to show mercy. We can neither choose it nor work for it. <sup>17</sup> For the Scriptures say that God told Pharaoh, "I have appointed you for the very purpose of displaying my power in you and to spread my fame throughout the earth." <sup>18</sup> So you see, God chooses to show mercy to some, and he chooses to harden the hearts of others so they refuse to listen. <sup>19</sup> Well then, you might say, "Why does God blame people for not responding? Haven't they simply done what he makes them do?" <sup>20</sup> No, don't say that. Who are you, a mere human being, to argue with God? Should the thing that was created say to the one who created it, "Why have you made me like this?" <sup>21</sup> When a potter makes jars out of clay, doesn't he have a right to use the same lump of clay to make one jar for decoration and another to throw garbage into? <sup>22</sup> In the same way, even though God has the right to show his anger and his power, he is very patient with those on whom his anger falls, who are destined for destruction. <sup>23</sup> He does this to make the riches of his glory shine even brighter on those to whom he shows mercy, who were prepared in advance for glory. <sup>24</sup> And we are among those whom he selected, both from the Jews and from the Gentiles. <sup>25</sup> Concerning the Gentiles, God says in the prophecy of Hosea, "Those who were not my people, I will now call my people. And I will love those whom I did not love before." <sup>26</sup> And, "Then, at the place where they were told, 'You are not my people,' there they will be called 'children of the living God.'" <sup>27</sup> And concerning Israel, Isaiah the prophet cried out, "Though the people of Israel are as numerous as the sand of the seashore, only a remnant will be saved. <sup>28</sup> For the LORD will carry out his sentence upon the earth quickly and with finality." <sup>29</sup> And Isaiah said the same thing in another place: "If the LORD of Heaven's Armies had not spared a few of our children, we would have been wiped out like Sodom, destroyed like Gomorrah."

### **3. THE BASIS OF GOD'S CHOICE: FAITH vs. NO FAITH (9:30-33)**

What does all this mean? Even though the Gentiles were not trying to follow God's standards, they were made right with God. And it was by faith that this took place. <sup>31</sup> But the people of Israel, who tried so hard to get right with God by keeping the law, never succeeded. <sup>32</sup> Why not? Because they were trying to get right with God by keeping the law instead of by trusting in him. They stumbled over the great rock in their path.

<sup>33</sup> *God warned them of this in the Scriptures when he said, "I am placing a stone in Jerusalem that makes people stumble, a rock that makes them fall. But anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced."*

#### **4. ISRAEL'S REFUSAL OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS (10:1-15)**

*Dear brothers and sisters, the longing of my heart and my prayer to God is for the people of Israel to be saved. <sup>2</sup> I know what enthusiasm they have for God, but it is misdirected zeal. <sup>3</sup> For they don't understand God's way of making people right with himself. Refusing to accept God's way, they cling to their own way of getting right with God by trying to keep the law. <sup>4</sup> For Christ has already accomplished the purpose for which the law was given. As a result, all who believe in him are made right with God. <sup>5</sup> For Moses writes that the law's way of making a person right with God requires obedience to all of its commands. <sup>6</sup> But faith's way of getting right with God says, "Don't say in your heart, 'Who will go up to heaven?' (to bring Christ down to earth). <sup>7</sup> And don't say, 'Who will go down to the place of the dead?' (to bring Christ back to life again)." <sup>8</sup> In fact, it says, "The message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart." And that message is the very message about faith that we preach: <sup>9</sup> If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved. <sup>11</sup> As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." <sup>12</sup> Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. <sup>13</sup> For "Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved." <sup>14</sup> But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? <sup>15</sup> And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!"*

#### **5. ISRAEL'S NEGLECT OF THE GOSPEL (10:16-21)**

*<sup>16</sup> But not everyone welcomes the Good News, for Isaiah the prophet said, "LORD, who has believed our message?" <sup>17</sup> So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ. <sup>18</sup> But I ask, have the people of Israel actually heard the message? Yes, they have: "The message has gone throughout the earth, and the words to all the world." <sup>19</sup> But I ask, did the people of Israel really understand? Yes, they did, for even in the time of Moses, God said, "I will rouse your jealousy through people who are not even a nation. I will provoke your anger through the foolish Gentiles." <sup>20</sup> And later Isaiah spoke boldly for God, saying, "I was found by people who were not looking for me. I showed myself to those who were not asking for me." <sup>21</sup> But regarding Israel, God said, "All day long I opened my arms to them, but they were disobedient and rebellious." (Rom. 9:1-10:21 NLT)*

## D. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. (9:4-5) In what ways has God blessed the nation of Israel?
2. (9:6-8) Are all physical descendants of Abraham the children of God and true Jew? Why or why not? (See also Romans 2:28-29; Ephesians 3:6; Galatians 3:7, 26, 29).
3. (9:33) Why is Jesus called the “stumbling stone”? (see <https://www.gotquestions.org/stumbling-stone.html>).
4. (10:3) What big misunderstanding did these Jews have?



5. (10:9-10) What is the only way to be saved and gain a right standing before God? (See also Romans 5:21)?
  
6. Should Israel, who is God's chosen people, have known that salvation would come to Gentiles? Why or why not? (See Deut. 32:21).

## **E. SUMMARY**

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Paul explained God's dealing with the nation of Israel repeating his expression of love towards them. Though as a nation they had plenty of zeal, unfortunately their zeal was not according to knowledge. Thus, they rejected the righteousness of God while trying to establish their own righteousness through the law of Moses. But Paul explains that Christ is the fulfillment of the law and has brought it to an end. Gaining a right standing before God comes *only* through faith in his Son, Jesus Christ.

### Sources used in this study

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