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Romans 10: Individual Salvation Available for Everyone in this Age

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Romans 10 Individual Salvation for Jews (or anyone) who is not part of the “chosen people” in this age remains a personal faith issue

Why did Israel stumble over their Messiah and reject Him? Because they did not understand the kind of righteousness that God demanded or how to get it. They were offended because Jesus did not accept their legalistic righteousness, by which they thought was good enough for God. In spite of temporarily choosing to set Israel aside God continues to keep the invitation open. ^{NET} **Isaiah 65:2**, “I spread out my hands all day long to my rebellious people, who lived in a way that is morally unacceptable, and who did what they desired.”

Paul begins this section by repeating (9:1-3) that his heart for Israel is the same as God’s heart for Israel. Their individual salvation has nothing to do with God’s choosing to bless the gentile nations as He had chosen to bless Israel with the promised Messiah.

I. The Promised Righteousness is for everyone. 10:1-4

^{NET} **Rom 10:1** Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God on behalf of my fellow Israelites is for their salvation.

^{10:2} For I can testify that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not in line with the truth.

^{10:3} For ignoring the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking instead to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to God’s righteousness.

^{10:4} For Christ is the end of the law, with the result that there is righteousness for everyone who believes.

10:1 Paul’s intense burden for Israelite people is reaffirmed (see 9:1-3).

With all the benefits that Israel possessed as the previously chosen people of God (9:4-5) they still needed individual salvation. Likewise, just because God had decided to choose the Gentile world for His favor (Rom 9), does not mean that they are all saved, only that they could be saved if they believed. The “choosing” of Rom 9 is not for salvation, but rather it is God choosing to make Gentiles the object of blessing.

- The word for prayer here is *deesis*, “supplication,” from the verb *deomai*, “to want, beg or pray.” It is evident that even though God had put aside Israel as His focus for a time, that did not mean that individuals could not be saved. As in 9:1-3, we must ask ourselves, who are the unsaved people that we are constantly praying for? Can you name some?
 - (1) Unreached people groups:
 - (2) Lost friends:
 - (3) Unsaved family members:

10:2 Zeal without knowledge is wasted effort. They had the basic knowledge of God so were superior to the Gentiles in opportunity and privilege (2:9-11), but they wanted God in an external or ritual way of rules and religious rites, thus they missed Him (9:30-33). They thought they were extreme in following the letter and form, instead of seeking God Himself. This is the same problem with all religions: they mistakenly believe their rituals make them acceptable to God, The word for “truth” or “knowledge” is *epignosis*, “personal experience, insight or knowledge.” What is the basis of believing in Eph 1:13?

10:3 Ignorance of the only acceptable righteousness and how to obtain it equals lostness. The word for “ignorant” is *agnoountes* from which we get the word “agnostic.” They did not grasp the “righteousness” of God, not understanding how holy real holiness is. They thought they could become good enough to be acceptable to His holiness. Being unwilling to “submit” themselves is the Greek *hupotasso*, “put yourself under orders, submit to the control, arrange under.” By refusing to admit their own unrighteousness, and to

submit their only hope for acceptance to the righteousness that God freely offers them, they foolishly sought to impress God with their own goodness.

- If 1 John was written to show us with certainty how we could know we were saved (1 Jn 5:13), likewise to know if we were not saved. What is the first sign of an unsaved person in 1 John 1:8?

10:4 Christ brings an end to the condemnation of the law to all men who accept it. All mankind is under the condemnation of the law. The reason God gave the law (e.g. Ten Commandments) was to give everyone the knowledge of their sins (Rom 3:20), with the objective that "all the world may become guilty (accountable) to God" (Rom 3:19).

- There is only one way to be relieved or forgiven of this knowledge of personal guilt of violating the law: Someone must pay the penalty of death for your sins ("For the wages of sin is death," Rom 6:23). Christ alone offers His death on the cross as full payment for all our sins, thus ending (*telos*, "termination, end of a series or state of being") the condemnation of the law to every individual who personally submits to trusting in Christ's death as payment for our sins.
- (Note: *telos* is in the emphatic position in the Greek sentence). Thus guilt and condemnation are ended and annulled. Hallelujah! Is the law still condemning those who have not believed?

II. God Gracious Offer of Salvation to Everyone (10:5-15)

10:5-8 If one's righteousness is by the law then you cannot fail once.

^{NET} **Rom 10:5** For Moses writes about the righteousness that is by the law: "The one who does these things will live by them."

⁶ But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down)

⁷ or "Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we preach),

10:5 The law can be obeyed some or most of the time, but not all of the time. If it is true that "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 Jn 3:4) and that "whosoever shall keep the whole law, but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it" (James 2:10), then all men are in deep trouble. This verse is not teaching how to be saved by the law, but if you try to be righteous by the law then you cannot fail even once. According to Rom 3:23, has anyone ever succeeded?

The question is not how good you are, but what do you do with your guilt for the times that you transgressed the law? God never said that if you were good, He would overlook your transgressions. That is an invention of human imagination and wishful thinking. Did you ever think this way?

10:6-8 Righteousness by faith is not a new idea, but rather had been proclaimed by Moses using Deut 30:12-14. This exhortation was the end of Moses' description of God's dealings with Israel as a nation. Blessings were promised for obedience and chastisement for disobedience. Israel would disobey and be destroyed as a nation, dispersed throughout the world, but they will be restored in blessing and prominence among the nations.

In Moses' day they already had the message, so they did not need someone to go up to heaven to get it, or confirm it, nor did they need to get Christ to be resurrected, because he already was resurrected. No one needed any extra revelations. These were probably taunts or ridiculous accusations of unsaved Jews. What are some ridiculous or absurd accusations made today?

“The message is close at hand” meaning that the “message,” *rhema*, “spoken word” is available to them. Peter said, “but the word of the Lord endures forever” (1 Pet 1:25), thus they knew of the message, which is the “sword of the Spirit” (Eph 6:17). They evidently knew the verses or the words of salvation but had failed to personally trust or appropriate it to their inner lives. What do these verses imply about the Jews of 1st century?

Luke 24:25

John 14:1 (this was after 3 years ministry with disciples)

Acts 8:37 (explain the requirement)

Rom 10:9 (what kinds of “believing” are there?)

10:9-10 The essentials of faith.

^{NET} **Rom 10:9** because 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.

^{10:10} For with the heart one believes and thus has righteousness and with the mouth one confesses and thus has salvation.

- The “confess with your mouth” means to unashamedly or publically affirm that Jesus is “Lord.” Salvation must involve faith in the One who is Lord. Salvation comes by acknowledging to God that Christ is God and His death and resurrection is full payment for sin. Public confession does not guarantee genuine believe in the heart, but it gives evidence of it.
- Luke 12:8
- 1 Tim 6:12
- What does “...Believe in your heart” mean? The Hebrew concept of the person was centered in the heart. It was the residence of the soul, the deepest, innermost part of man. The area where all thoughts, will, desires, values, convictions and motives are originated. The elements appear to be (1) total dependency, (2) desire to have Christ as a permanent, long-term, intimate part of one’s life – more intimate than a marriage, and (3) trust in all that He is and says as absolute truth and what’s right for one’s life. This certainly is not a quick-fix, bail-out or superficial acknowledgement of a gracious offer. Do you really mean it?
- What was the one condition for the Ethiopian to be baptized in Acts 8:37?
- What was the accusation Jesus made against the disciples after the resurrection in Luke 24:25?
- How important is the “heart” in our prayers? (Mark 11:23)
- The following will be a brief survey of the significance of the heart as the core of why we believe: It is the means of communication (Ps 4:4; 27:8); where convictions of reality are decided (Ps 14:1); the area of decided trust (Ps 28:7); the area of desires (Ps 37:4); place of secrets (Ps 44:21); where sins are cherished (Ps 66:18); Heart can be fixed on trusting (Ps 112:7) and seeking god (119:2); the heart determines the sincerity (Prov 23:7); and all false religions are not whole hearted (Jer 3:10). What is the tie between the mouth and the heart in mark 15:18?
- Why is the belief in the resurrection of Christ so important? (Rom 1:4) The resurrection was the divine validation of Jesus’ ministry. Jesus is the only resurrected being in Heaven, thus God proved that that His uniqueness was not goodness, but divinity. If He is resurrected, then He is still living, thus becomes a living, all-powerful divine Savior.
- The key to salvation is possessing a perfect righteousness acceptable before God. Salvation is not about heaven, rather it is all about how to acquire righteousness for our unrighteous lives. This was the greatest aspect of a relationship with God according to Paul in Philippians 3:8-9. How did Paul want to be found or known?
- Notice the importance of the resurrection in 1 Pet 1:3-4.

10:11-13 Scriptural support of Paul's salvation teachings.

- ^{NET} **Rom 10:11** For the scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."
 10:12 For there is no distinction between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, who richly blesses all who call on him.
 10:13 For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

10:11 Paul reiterates his support of the means of believing to receive

righteousness. Here the word "whoever" or "everyone" (Gk, *pas*, "all, anyone, each every") with the result that no one will be "ashamed," "disappointed," or "put to shame" (*kataischuno*, "to dishonor, disgrace, repulse or deceived"). What promise did God make to assure that we will not be shamed in Heb 10:17?

10:12- 13 God's impartiality backs up the emphasis on the "everyone" or "all" in v. 11. There is neither favoritism nor rejection towards anyone. Especially in this time, there is no distinctive nor privileged people, rather a general offering to all mankind. There is no hint of a limited offering or application. The word for "all" here is *panton*, meaning, "every kind of, all sorts of."

- The word "richly blesses" or "is rich unto" is a present tense, meaning He is continually and habitually "abundant, affluent, or increasingly generous." The context indicates the nature of the action of "richly blesses": the granting of salvation.
- The meaning of the words *pas hos* is "all the ones who..." Or "every single one who..." The offering of the gospel to every individual requires an imminent accountability to God for the response with eternal consequences. This is human responsibility with no favoritism or distinction. If there were a special group of previously determined elect then this offering is muted and meaningless.
- Those who "call" (*epikaleo*, "upon whom the name has been invoked") are thus indicating that the persons "calling" belong to the one named (Gingrich). Thus anyone could be saved who is willing to call upon Jesus as Lord of all. The tense of the verb is Aorist meaning a definitive act of dependence.
- Paul quotes the prophet Joel 2:32 which is a common reference to calling on God ("Lord" is God in Gen 4:26; 12:8; 1 Kings 18:24; Isa 6:4-7), with reference back to 10:9, "confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord." The key to the passage is talk to Jesus as God or Yahweh. This refers to His power, majesty, authority, sovereignty, and thus His total right of authority over our lives. Thus we have seen the following criteria for salvation:
 - (1) No additional revelation is required-all we have to do is to believe what has already been declared.
 - (2) Confessing with the mouth that Jesus is Lord (Yahweh) unashamedly
 - (3) Believing in the heart – not just the facts about Jesus but believing *in* Jesus with total trust – that He is alive and can be related to as a living Savior.
 - (4) Calling upon Jesus as Lord, then salvation is promised.
 - Is there any personal merit implied in any of these criteria?
 - Is there any requirement that any person on earth is not able to make should they so choose?
 - Is this a casual, momentary response or a purposeful and permanent commitment?

10:14-15 Universal offering of salvation implies universal responsibility.

^{NET} **Rom 10:14** How are they to call on one they have not believed in? And how are they to believe in one they have not heard of? And how are they to hear without someone preaching to them?

^{10:15} And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How timely is the arrival of those who proclaim the good news."

- A providential and purposeful sequence of events are required to bring the knowledge of the gospel to every lost person: someone must be sent or intentionally go, who knows how to clearly explain the gospel, to someone who will listen, who then chooses to believe, and then calls on the name of the Lord Jesus as Savior and Lord. This series of rhetorical questions makes it clear that faith and regeneration follow the hearing of the gospel, not precede it, as the Calvinist insist. If we care about lost people, what does this verse imply that we should do?
- Since Abraham (2,000 BC) God's intent was for those who knew Him would share this blessing that "the whole earth shall be blessed" (Gen 12:3). Likewise the entire nation of Israel were to be His witnesses before the whole earth, as "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex 19:5-6). There is little or no evidence that Israel ever cared or wanted to share this blessing with the world (Jonah's example). Is the church today very different?

10:15 The last phrase comes from Isa 52:7 when it was announced the deliverance from years of captivity and bondage. Isaiah then writes of a future day when "the Lord has bared His holy arm in the sight of all the nations, that ***all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of our God***" (Isa 52:10). What is God's plan and purpose as seen in Rev 5:8-9?

- What one event is did Christ state that would happen before He returned to earth in Matt 24:14?

10:16-17 Sadly the offer of salvation (when heard) is not always accepted.

^{NET} **Rom 10:16** But not all have obeyed the good news, for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?"

^{10:17} Consequently faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the preached word of Christ.

- Paul reminds his Jewish readers that neither did Israel in the OT believe the good news, because there is a required human response, regardless of how illuminated, convicted, or drawn by the Holy Spirit as the gospel is proclaimed (this is the power of the gospel- Rom 1:16), man must be willing to trust in Jesus Christ as Messiah/Savior. God chose not to exercise absolute control over man in a divine determinism as the ultra-Calvinists insist. The condemnation of unbelief is magnified by the fact that God provides a perfect salvation, sends messengers to proclaim it, empowers the message by His Spirit, but the sinner must chose his sin or his Savior. What is the choice in John 3:16?
- The phrase "obeyed the good news" is similar to the phrase in Acts 6:7 when "a great many of the priests were becoming *obedient to the faith*." The verb is *hupakouo*, "to listen, respond to, to obey" and is in the Aorist tense meaning a past completed

action. The commands, "Believe the gospel" (Mk 1:15), "...believe also in me" (Jn 14:1) require an obedient response of trust and belief, not works.

10: 17 Summation of 10:1-16 – Salvation does not come by **intuition** (assuming you have it), **mystical experience** (a feeling or emotional reaction), **meditation** (thinking a lot about God or trying to love Him), **speculation** (God loves me so He won't condemn me), **philosophizing** (if there is a God he would never send someone to hell) or by **consensus** (what most people think). There is only one means of salvation: hearing what God has said in His revealed, written Word, then trusting completely and only in what He said.

10:18-21 Even God's choice of the Gentiles (Rom 9) had a purpose for Israel

^{NET} **Rom 10:18** But I ask, have they not heard? Yes, they have: Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.

^{10:19} But again I ask, didn't Israel understand? First Moses says, "I will make you jealous by those who are not a nation; with a senseless nation I will provoke you to anger."

^{10:20} And Isaiah is even bold enough to say, "I was found by those who did not seek me; I became well known to those who did not ask for me."

^{10:21} But about Israel he says, "All day long I held out my hands to this disobedient and stubborn people!"

10:18 David is quoted (Ps 19:4) showing that he understood the universal dimension of the gospel in a past tense. His Psalm opened stating, "The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the works of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge..." (v. 1-3). How does this compare to Rom 1:18-20?

- The offer of salvation has been to all men everywhere with only one condition. See Jer 29:13, what is it?

10:19 In spite of Israel's rejection God's plan was to further motivate Israel to be open to the gospel. As Galileo before the Roman Catholic inquisition was charged with heresy for teaching that the earth revolved around the sun, yet they would not even listen to his evidence, so Israel refuses to hear that their Messiah came and they crucified him! God's plan was always to bless the Gentiles (here he quotes Deut 32:21), but until the Apostle Paul, none of the Jews or Jewish Christians ever wanted to go to the Gentiles. Why would the Jews get jealous?

10:20 Isaiah (65:1) described Israel's rejection of her Messiah, which was not a surprise, but part of the plan to reach the rest of the world. Both of the verbs in this verse are Aorist tense meaning a past completed action

10:21 God had patiently dealt with the descendants of Abraham for 2,000 years, described as "disobedient" (*apeitheo*, "not to allow one's self to be persuaded, to refuse or withhold belief and obedience") and "stubborn" (*antilegonta*, "speak evil against, contradict, be obstinate"), yet God kept His hand of welcome open to Israel if she would repent, but she never did and finally crucified her Savior. Israel not only failed as God's witnesses, but rejected God's plan for their salvation. What do you learn about God in this situation as described in Matt 23:37?