

# ROMANS

THE GRACE OF GOD: A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

## Israel's Unbelief

• Romans 9 : 30 - 10 : 21 •

Week 18

### DEVOTION

One of the popular contemporary Christian songs, No Other Name (But the name of Jesus), sung by various Christian artists, is a simple yet powerful proclamation of Jesus' uniqueness and authority. Before we study Paul's assertion of this truth in our scripture portion for the week, we must first recognize and internalize the Godly fact, that Jesus is the only way to salvation.

In this passage, Paul contrasts the Gentiles, who attained righteousness through faith, with the Jews, who pursued righteousness through the law but failed to attain it (Romans 9:30-32). The Jews were so focused on works-based righteousness that they missed the very one sent to save the, Jesus Christ. We may wonder how this was possible, yet we often overlook the fact that generations of law-based practices had ingrained obedience to the law as second nature for them. Their discipline and devotion to the law became almost like muscle memory. When Jesus came, He completely upended their structured system of works-based righteousness. He became a stumbling stone (Romans 9:33), shattering their belief that righteousness came through the law rather than through faith. Ironically, they worshiped the very same God that Jesus was teaching about, yet they struggled to accept Him.

This truth still offends many today. The world resists absolute moral truth, preferring self-determination and personal righteousness. Jesus calls us to acknowledge our sinfulness and our need for His grace, something that challenges human pride. Some reject this truth, while others receive it with faith and find salvation (Romans 10:3-4). While the law still reflects God's standards, our righteousness comes from Christ alone. Salvation is not earned but received through confessing Jesus as Lord and believing in His resurrection (Romans 10:8-10).

Moreover, this gift of salvation is available to all. There is no distinction, for "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10:12-13). But with this promise comes a responsibility: people cannot believe unless they hear, and they cannot hear without someone preaching (Romans 10:14-15). God has entrusted His people with the mission of spreading the gospel. Despite the simplicity and accessibility of the gospel, many in Israel did not believe (Romans 10:16) as it had been prophesied (Romans 10:18-21). God had extended His hands to them, yet they remained disobedient. Meanwhile, those who were not originally seeking God, the Gentiles, including us, were found by Him and welcomed into His family (Romans 10:19-20).

How blessed are we! Praise God for His grace!

# Monday

## Read Philippians 3:9, Galatians 3:11

**The Contrast Between Gentiles and Jews in Pursuit of Righteousness:** In this section, Paul discusses how Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness through the law, found it through faith, while the Jews, despite their zealous adherence to the law, failed to attain it.

1. Why do you think the Gentiles received righteousness through faith, even though they didn't seek it? (Romans 9:30)
2. What do you think caused the Jews to miss the righteousness that comes by faith? (Romans 9:31-32)

# Tuesday

## Read 1 Peter 2:7-8, Isaiah 8:14, 1 Corinthians 1:23

**Jesus as the Stumbling Stone to the Jews:** Paul explains that Jesus became a "stumbling stone" for the Jews, a concept that challenges their understanding of salvation through works. This raises a question about how pride, tradition, or self-reliance can hinder the acceptance of God's truth, not only in Paul's time but also today.

1. Why do you think Jesus became a stumbling block for the Jews, and how do we see that happening today?
2. How does human pride or self-reliance affect people's acceptance of Jesus? (Romans 9:32-33)
3. Can you think of ways the world today still stumbles over the message of Jesus?

# Wednesday

## Read Romans 3:22, Galatians 2:16, Matthew 5:17

**True Righteousness Through Faith in Christ:** Paul makes it clear that righteousness is not achieved through works of the law, but through faith in Christ. This challenges the common mindset of relying on self-effort for salvation and invites a discussion on how faith, not works, is what makes us right with God.

1. In your opinion, what does true righteousness look like, and why is it only found through faith in Christ?
2. How does the law help us understand our need for faith, rather than works? (Romans 10:3-4)
3. In what ways can we see Christ as the fulfillment of the law today?

# Thursday

## Read Acts 16:31, Matthew 28:19-20

**The Accessibility of Salvation and Our Responsibility to Share It:** Paul emphasizes that salvation is near to everyone and is accessible through faith. He also stresses that this salvation requires us to hear the gospel, and we, as believers, have a responsibility to share it. This prompts a discussion on the importance of spreading the message of salvation to others.

1. What does Paul mean when he says salvation is near to us, and how can we share this good news with others?
2. How does it make you feel to know salvation is available to everyone, no matter their background? (Romans 10:12-13)

# Friday

## Read Isaiah 65:1-2, Ephesians 2:13

**Israel's Rejection and God's Plan for the Gentiles:** Even though the gospel was offered first to Israel, many rejected it. Yet, God's mercy extends beyond Israel, drawing in the Gentiles as part of His divine plan. This speaks to the mystery of God's grace and His desire to include all people in His salvation.

1. What do you think caused the Israelites to reject the gospel, even though it was prophesied? (Romans 10:16-18)
2. How does God's outreach to the Gentiles affect our understanding of His mercy and grace? (Romans 10:19-20)