

## *Booklet Five*

### *The Problem of Israel*

#### *(Defense of the Gospel)*

<i>July 22nd</i>	<i>Romans 9:1-33</i>	<i>Anguish, Sovereignty, Stumbling</i>
<i>July 29th</i>	<i>Romans 10:1-22</i>	<i>Sent</i>
<i>August 5th</i>	<i>Romans 11:1-32</i>	<i>Promise Keeper</i>
<i>August 12th</i>	<i>Romans 11:33-36</i>	<i>God</i>

*"So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. And if by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace."*

*Romans 11:5-6*

## Romans 9:1-33

### Anguish...Sovereignty...stumbling...

Chapter 9 of Romans is an intermission in the outline of the gospel message. It is an intermission that addresses one of the great anguishes of Paul's heart. How could the Jewish people, God's chosen people, not receive the good news of righteousness and salvation in Jesus through faith? Had not God given them more than all people to be prepared to receive this good news? Paul's anguish is rooted in his own Jewish blood and upbringing. He was willing to lose everything that they may gain a relationship with Jesus. Do we feel a similar anguish for those who do not know Jesus? If Jesus is our greatest treasure we would want others to know Him as well. Paul struggles with God's sovereignty and the stumbling of many Jewish people over the scandalous nature of grace and salvation through faith in Jesus. We too struggle with these things and Romans does not shy away from addressing the tough questions and doubts that we face in the message of the gospel. Paul concludes that the God is faithful to His promise even in the anguish of wrestling with these questions.

1. In verses 1-5, Paul shares his personal anguish over the rejection of Jesus by many in the Jewish community. Why is Paul's anguish and sorrow so great?
2. How does Paul's anguish teach us about the importance of the gospel and our own commitment to share it with others? How has God placed a passion in your heart for others to know Jesus?
3. In verse 6, Paul highlights God's faithfulness to His Word. How does Paul define who the children of God are (v.8)? Why is it important to see the distinction between physical decent and spiritual decent through faith? Why is faith so important in the gospel message (Abrahams example in Chapter 4)?
4. In verses 10-29, Paul wrestles with God's sovereignty and His election of some for His glory. Paul looks back to see how God had chosen Jacob but not Esau for the special purpose of His blessing and redemption. Does this seem unjust to you? Why can Paul say so emphatically that this is not unjust of God (v.14)? How do we see the justice of God in His election?
5. How does the example of Pharaoh help us understand election from God's perspective and not our own? What is Paul's response to the question of God's sovereignty and human will (v.19-21)? How does understanding God's perspective change our understanding of these hard truths to grasp?
6. What is God's ultimate prerogative (v.23)? How does this ultimate end help us understand God's work in history and in our own lives?
7. How is the gospel at work in revealing God ultimate end for all things? Paul quotes 4 different old testament passages. What do these passages communicate to us about God's plan of redemption?



# UNASHAMED

Of The Good News Of Jesus Christ

## Romans 10:1-22

### Sent

As we move into chapter 10, Paul is still in his parenthetical discussion about Israel's rejection of the Messiah (chapters 9-11). In this chapter, he moves to talk about Israel's present (at his time) rejection. Why would God's chosen people dismiss the One who clearly fulfilled the prophecies given about the Messiah? Paul suggests several reasons with which we, today, can identify. 1. They didn't realize their need for salvation. They were zealous for God, but were comfortable in their self-righteousness. How often do we, too, rest comfortably in our good deeds, thinking they somehow give us favor with God? 2. They misunderstood the purpose of the law. Since returning from exile in Babylon, the Israelites had overcome idolatry, but had swung the pendulum the other way, adding tradition and man-made rules to the law God had established. Some of us have a back-story that includes legalism. We know the anxiety that performance-based religion produces. But when we move into a full understanding of grace, the law's purpose begins to crystallize. We see the law as a catalyst for our leaning into God, bringing an attitude of thankfulness because we can't fulfill the law perfectly.

Our culture is filled with people who don't recognize their need for salvation or live as if they can earn a place of peace through their good living. Both of these people will be disappointed. So what's the solution? The Good News provides it. But how can people believe unless they hear the Good News? How can they hear unless they are told? Who can tell except those who are sent? Believers have been entrusted with the life saving message and have been sent (Matthew 28:18-20). Who has God place around you (work, home, neighborhood, circle of influence) who is dying to hear the hope you have in Jesus? (2 Tim 4:2; 1 Peter 3:15)

1. How is Paul's "heart desire" (v.1) a testimony to the salvation (justification, sanctification, glorification) that Paul has experienced in Jesus Christ? How have you seen your desires changed by Jesus? How do you view those who do not know Christ?
2. In verses 3-13, Paul describes the process of salvation by grace through faith and how it produces true righteousness. How is Jesus Christ the culmination of the law (v.4)? Paul says his belief in Jesus is the gateway to righteousness for everyone? Why is this so radical and disruptive for the Jewish way of thinking? Our way of thinking?
3. The righteousness that is by faith takes place in the human heart. What are the three postures of the heart Paul describes in verses 6-8? Which is the one that Paul says opens the door to a relationship with God? What is the connection between belief of the heart and confession with your mouth? How do our words reflect the true condition of our hearts?
4. What is the confession of the gospel (good news) in verse 9? How does this confession "Jesus is Lord" capture the essence of the gospel message? What is the connection between the Lordship of Jesus and His resurrection?

The logo for 'UNASHAMED' is displayed on a black rectangular background. The word 'UNASHAMED' is written in a bold, sans-serif font. The 'UN' is in blue, and 'ASHAMED' is in white. Below the main text, the phrase 'Of The Good News Of Jesus Christ' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

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5. Salvation in Jesus happens the same way for everyone whether Jew or Gentile. How does this salvation occur according to verses 10-13? How do these verses reflect Paul's purpose in writing Romans as stated in chapter 1:16-17?
6. In verses 14-21, Paul outlines the logical conclusion of responsibility for those who have believed the gospel message. To share this message with others.
7. Read John 17:17-18. How does the theme of being sent permeate the person and life of Jesus? How does Paul connect the incarnation of Jesus with the mission Jesus gives to those who receive Him? How does this reflect the beauty and honor for those who are sent?
8. There is a connection between faith and hearing the message (v.17). How does this connection between the message and the faith it produces get realized in our lives and in the lives of others?
9. How do the Old Testament passages that Paul quotes in verse 18-21 point to God's sending of messengers and Israel's response? Also how do they point to Israel's response to Jesus and God's sovereignty and plan in this response?

## Romans 11:1-32

### Promise keeper

Paul's struggle with the rejection of Jesus by many in Israel causes him to raise the question if God will be faithful to His covenant with the people of Israel. "Did God reject his people?" As Paul states in Romans 3:3-4 even if man is unfaithful God will remain faithful. He says, emphatically, "Let God be true, and every human being a liar". So, no, God does not reject Israel! On the contrary, God is faithful and keeps His promise by electing a remnant chosen by grace. Paul illustrates God's covenant like an olive tree. A tree rooted in the holy promise of God that will not fail. God's grace and sovereign plan allows branches (Gentiles) to be grafted into this holy root. Some natural branches (Israel) are broken off because of unbelief. The power and grace of God that grafts (the Gentiles) can also graft the natural branches as well. The conclusion? God has sovereignly allowed the hardening of Israel so that a full number of Gentiles might be brought into the Kingdom of God. Yet, Israel will be awakened to the good news of Jesus so that they might, too, experience the amazing mercy of God. As Gentiles our response to this reality is to be one of humility and gratitude of God's extraordinary mercy. We are warned not to respond with pride or superiority towards Israel.

1. How does Paul see his own faith in Christ and the story of Elijah as evidence of God's faithfulness to his promise (verses 1-6)? Why is grace so important in understanding God's faithfulness to Israel?
2. What is God's role in the hardening of some of Israel (v.7-10)?
3. How does Paul understand God's purpose for this hardening (verses 11-24)?
4. How does the image of the olive tree help us understand God's plan and purpose in His covenant to Israel and His new covenant in Jesus to all nations?
5. How does fear of God and humility play such an important role in our response to God's sovereign plan (v.17-24)? Historically the church has not heeded these verses very well. What has been some of the consequences in church history of not heeding God's call to fear and humility concerning the subject of Israel?
6. In verses 25-32, Paul invites the church to understanding and humility in light of God's salvation plan. What are the specific promises we can hold on to in these verses concerning God's character and purpose? How do these promises give us confidence in the faithfulness of God?
7. Share ways you have experienced God's faithfulness to His promises in your life?



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OF THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST

## Romans 11:33-36

### God

There are those moments of epiphany in life when everything is clear and beautiful. After struggling through the difficult question of Israel's place in the good news of Jesus, Paul steps back and looks at everything the Spirit of God has revealed to him in the gospel. These verses provide a moment of epiphany. A clarity of understanding of the wonder of who God is and what He has accomplished in Jesus for the salvation of everyone who believes. These words flow from a deep place of worship and praise in the heart of every person that has heard, understood, and accepted the good news of Jesus. You cannot help but be moved in every way by who God is and what He has accomplished for humanity and all of creation. What is most wonderful is the realization that all things are from God; through Him, and for Him. It is the ultimate realization of why we exist and who we exist for. God Himself is the ultimate glory!

1. Verse 1 exudes the movement of Paul's heart towards God. How have you seen your heart moved by who God is? Why is poetry, song, and praise a wonderful response to God?
2. What is the significance of Paul's realization that God himself is the ultimate good news of the gospel?
3. How does the gospel reveal the wisdom and knowledge of God?
4. How is God above and beyond humanity? How does this realization change the way we live and relate to God?
5. Verse 36 says, "all things" are from God, through God, and for God. What is included in all things? What are some things in your life that you need to let go of and realize they are from, through, and for God?
6. Spend some time in your group praising and worshiping God for who He is and what He has revealed in the gospel.