

Israel's Present Situation

Romans 10:1—13

Paul turns to the Jews, as his audience in chapters 9—11, to explain the dispensational changes that have been happening since the stoning of Stephen. Chapter 9 gives the basis for why God stopped Israel's prophetic program to begin a new work with the Apostle Paul. Since God is sovereign, He can use or not use people, nations or groups as He pleases to accomplish His will. In this case, Israel was removed from her place of honor as God's chosen people and put on the back burner. Israel is not currently the nation through whom God reveals Himself. Instead, God turned to the Gentiles to declare Himself to the world, and to accomplish this, He raised up the Apostle Paul and revealed to him the Mystery, including the Gospel of Grace.

This brings us to Romans 10 where Paul shows how God is dealing with Israel in this Dispensation of Grace. God is no longer using Israel to proclaim Himself to the nations, but has given the Church, the Body of Christ, the task to disseminate the message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18—20). The Gospel of the Kingdom is no longer being preached because the offer of the Kingdom has been temporarily removed. Israel will now have to wait before God fulfills the many promises surrounding the setting up of the Millennial Kingdom. Israel is now under the Gospel of Grace. Instead of Israel needing to accept Jesus Christ as their Messiah, we now are to preach the gospel given to Paul, which is to believe in the Person of Jesus Christ and in His work on the cross, His death, burial and resurrection.

In Romans 10:8, Paul says he is preaching the gospel of faith. They can't avoid it. He first says this word of faith is right in front of them, which was first in the form of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and now is the Gospel of Grace. Many mid-Acts teachers run from Romans 10:9—10 because of the word *confess*. They wrongly apply this to Israel's Kingdom program. However, Paul is speaking to Israel, and how the new Dispensation of Grace affects them. He then calls what he is preaching the word of faith, and then describes the word of faith the verses 9 and 10. Since Paul never changed his message throughout his ministry, this word of faith would have been the Gospel of Grace.

Confessing is not professing. A person who professes, publicly declares what they believe in front of men. The Greek word translated as *confess* is *homologeō* which literally means to say the same thing. To say the same thing is to be in agreement. In this case, to confess is to agree with God that Jesus Christ is Lord. It is not about making a public statement to people that you believe Jesus Christ is Lord. With a proper understanding of *homologeō* it should be clear that Paul is preaching that they need to believe in the Person of Jesus Christ, and in His work on the cross, which is to believe that He was raised from the dead. The confessing with the mouth is a spiritual activity, not a physical one. This conforms with believing in your heart. Both are spiritual in nature, otherwise a person who is unable to speak would never be able to become saved. The same can be said of Romans 10:17, that faith comes by hearing. It's not about physically hearing the words, but understanding and accepting what the words mean.

No difference (verse 12)

Paul continues to explain dispensational differences by declaring that there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek. Both Jew and Gentile are able to come to God equally. This statement could not be said while Israel was in the special position of being God's people. Jews were not to associate with unclean Gentiles. You will never see a verse in the Gospels or the Old Testament where Jews and Gentiles are treated equally. Jews were always above the Gentiles, and the Gentiles always needed to come through the nation of Israel to come to God (Mark 7:24—30). Now Paul claims that there is no difference between Jew and Greek (Gentile). Note the difference in the use of the terms Greek and Grecian. Grecians (Strong's G1675 *Hellanestas*) refer to the Hellenistic Jews who are Israelites, but have adopted

the Greek way of life. It generally refers to Jews who were born and living in foreign lands (see Acts 6:1; 9:29; 11:20).

The biblical use of the word *Greek* (Strong's G1672 *Hellen*) can refer specifically to those who are of Greek nationality, or to anyone who is not Jewish, in other words, Gentiles. The word *Hebrew* can refer to all those who are Israelites, or only to those who are actually living in Judea. It is important to understand this to see how the Gentiles were excluded from hearing the gospel by the Jews who were preaching only to Jews even 10 years after Israel killed Stephen (Acts 11:19), and how odd it was for Peter to be called by God to visit Cornelius. God was leading believing Israel slowly to understand how Paul was preaching a new revelation among the Gentiles.

This new revelation given to Paul by Jesus Christ was now being preached to those in Antioch. Paul came to Antioch when Barnabas was dispatched by the Hebrew church at Jerusalem to see what was happening in Antioch (Acts 11:19—26). Once he saw that the scattered remnant, of the persecution that followed Stephen's death, came back into Antioch preaching Jesus Christ as Messiah, he went to Tarsus to find Paul and bring him to Antioch to preach and teach the gospel that was given to him by Jesus Christ. Paul preached for one full year in Antioch before He and Barnabas traveled together on their first journey (Acts 13).

Romans 10 is showing Israelite salvation under this new Dispensation of Grace. Having no distinction between Jew and Greek (Gentile) is a completely new idea that Israel was in the process of learning. As always, Paul goes back to the Old Testament to prove who Jesus Christ is. This is important for the Jews back then, and even for us today. Without the backdrop of the Old Testament, we would not fully understand who Jesus Christ is.

Call on the Name (verse 13)

Another verse that seems to be misunderstood by certain mid-Acts teachers is Romans 10:13 where Paul quotes Joel 2:32 "And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered..." This verse is about Israel being delivered at the end of the Tribulation. They often say this verse cannot be applied to the Church, the Body of Christ, because it was originally given to Israel, and is about them calling on the Name of the Lord to be saved in the Tribulation. This is what Peter preached to Israel in early Acts (John 3:16; Acts 2:21).

Unfortunately, in their apparent rush to separate the Mystery program from Israel's Prophetic program, they seem to forget that there are also common threads that tie us together, the biggest being Jesus Christ. Calling on the Name of Jesus Christ is what also saves us in this dispensation. Paul makes that clear in 1 Corinthians, that in this dispensation we need to call upon the name of Christ for our salvation.

1 Corinthians 1:2 unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

Notice that this principle of calling on the name of Jesus is common between them (the Jews under the Gospel of the Kingdom) and us (the Gentiles under the Gospel of Grace). Christ is the common link as Savior to Jews and Gentiles in any dispensation. Trying to make Romans 10:13 only about Israel's gospel does not stand up to proper biblical exegesis. Paul is using Romans 10 to show Israel, which was specifically written to Jewish Kingdom believers in the church at Rome, what it takes today to be saved. He is not calling for them to believe this because they are already saved, but is highlighting how their gospel has been supplanted with our Gospel of Grace. He is also showing Israel, in general, the reason that God stopped working with Israel, as His favored nation, and turned to the Gentiles. He is doing so by using Scripture that they would be familiar with, and terminology that they can easily understand.

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