

THE BOOK OF ROMANS
"Causes of Israel's Failure"
Romans 10:1-4

1-11-87

INTRODUCTION

1. The trilogy of Romans 9-11 is a glorious statement of God's purpose for the nation. God is not through with the Jews, though they wanted to be through with God's Messiah (Jn 19:15).
2. God did not withhold grace from the nation, but He did deal with them selectively and sovereignly: Isaac over Ishmael (9:6, 7); Jacob over Esau (9:8-13); Moses over Pharaoh (9:14-18).
3. Scripture upholds God's position as God (vv 19-29). Yet, Israel is held responsible for failing to come through faith to God for righteousness. They stumbled at the annointed of God (9:30-33).
4. Why did this happen? What are the causes? They are listed: 1) They failed to see Christ as the end of the law (vv. 1-4). 2. They failed to see the free character of salvation (vv. 5-11). 3. They failed to see the universal character of salvation (vv. 12-18). 4. They failed to see all was predicted in the O.T. (vv. 19-21).
5. Before noting specific causes for their failure to see Christ as the end of the law (vv. 1-4), Paul again uncovers his own emotions. He writes in pity, not anger (v.1). NOTE: (cf. 9:1; 10:1; 11:1).
 - 1) His Desire His use of "brethren" is significant. The whole Christian brotherhood is addressed as opposed to Israelites. The word for "desire" is "good pleasure." It was Paul's good pleasure in behalf of Israel.
 - 2) His Prayer The verb from which the noun "supplication" comes means to want, beg, pray. The preposition used with "God" means "face to face" and "for" means "in behalf of."
 3. His Petition The Greek construction is literally "unto salvation," but in effect it means "in order that they might be saved." With all of Israel's problems and stumbling, their case was not hopeless! Salvation was a possibility, so Paul prayed!
6. Now consider the causes recorded for Israel's failure to see Christ as the end of the law.

1. CAUSE #1: ZEAL WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE v. 2

a. Witnessed

Paul is not going by hearsay. This is something which is confirmed by his own eyes. He is a witness (word for martyr).

b. Explained

Simply put, Israel had a useless expenditure of vital force. They had a zeal of which God was the object (objective genitive). The word "zeal" expresses an attitude for which one would feel pride. Problem: the zeal was not according to knowledge, a word meaning full knowledge, correct and vital. Hence, religious zeal was in fact blind fanaticism. This phrase "not according to knowledge" is the key to the entire chapter. How sad!

2. CAUSE #2: LACK OF DISCERNMENT v. 3

a. Ignorant

Here is a blunt statement. While one would expect them to be versed in the Bible, they were actually "not knowing, ignorant of." There is a verbal correspondence with "knowledge" in the Greek. What a powerful statement!

b. Seeking

While ignorant on the one hand, Israel sought (present tense) to establish their own righteousness. This is plainly one kind of righteousness, but alas, the wrong one.

c. Subject

The verb is passive and means to put oneself under orders, to obey. Israel did not do this re. the righteousness of God. Succinctly, God's work was rejected (3:26b). This is the only true kind of righteousness, but alas, few want it!

Note: The Pharisee with his phylacteries, the Chinese/Africans with their ancestor worship, the Romans/Moslems with their beads, the modern churchman with his intellectual assent to Scripture/church--all go about to establish their own righteousness. There is but one way: to rest fully upon Christ's precious blood for cleansing.

CONCLUSION

Christ is the end of the law (v. 4). No law could make alive (Gal. 3:21). The O.T. law came as a circumstantial thing (Rom. 5:20). Any works system is a law system. They all are ministrations of death (2 Cor. 3:7). Thank God for gift of His Son--Hallelujah!